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A CRITICAL EDITION WITH TRANSLATION
AND
ANALYTICAL STUDY OF
DIUAN QADAHA RBA D-DMUTH KUŠŤA
(THE SCROLL OF THE GREAT CREATION OF THE
IMAGE/LIKENESS OF TRUTH).

A thesis submitted in fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Doctoral of Philosophy
The Department of Hebrew, Biblical and Jewish Studies
The University of Sydney

by

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2005

ABSTRACT

This thesis provides a translation and critical study of one of the most important Mandaean-Naṣōraean secret scrolls which has hitherto remained hidden, not only from the (lay) Mandaeans but also from the majority of the Mandaean priests and lay Naṣōraeans. Even the complete name of this scroll *Diuan Qadaha Rba d-Dmut Kuṣṣa*¹ (The Scroll of the Great Creation of the Image/Likeness of Truth) has been hidden and remained a puzzle for Mandaeans in general and for most, if not all, well known Mandaean scholars until now. Furthermore, this study reveals the nature and some elements of the secret contents of *DQRDK* and proves, with substantial evidence, that this scroll is neither a ritual nor an exorcism scroll (as some scholars have previously believed) but rather a very esoteric mystical scroll.

A weakness of previous translations of Mandaean material, especially the secret scriptures, has been a failure to give adequate attention to, or explain in depth, the hidden Mandaean-Naṣōraean connections and secret levels of meanings. This thesis uses the processes of translation and an analysis of *DQRDK* to examine these connections and levels of meanings.

As an introduction to these matters, which form the core of Mandaism, Chapter One offers perspectives on the Mandaean religion to assist in the understanding of *DQRDK*. Chapter Two discusses the status of the scroll, emphasising that it is a very rare and highly treasured text in Mandaean literature. Other matters covered include its recent history, its acquisition by the Bodleian Library, the confusion surrounding it, the nature of its contents, the problem in translating its title (combined with linguistic and theological remarks), a survey of all *DQRDK* manuscripts known to be extant in the world, and a critical description of the scroll itself. That is followed, in Chapter Three, by a discussion of scriptural and technical aspects of the scroll. Chapter Three also provides a general analysis of the scroll's syntax, orthography, grammar, and special mystical features. Establishing the history of *DQRDK* and its authorship are very important matters that are discussed in Chapter Four. The chapter also focuses on the dating of *DQRDK* and gives an overview of the contemporary history and local events which are revealed in this scroll. Chapter Five explains the significance of the contents of *DQRDK* and thus establishes its place and overall value within the Mandaean literary tradition. Theological and artistic values are also highlighted.

These five chapters can be considered the first step of this study. They introduce the reader to key issues in preparation for the translation in Chapter Six of this very esoteric and complex text. Much of the complexity and difficulties are addressed in the translation chapter by extensive notes and commentaries, which, it is hoped, will be valuable as a tool of enlightenment throughout the journey into this 'secret' scroll/knowledge. The conclusion summarises the key ideas and issues raised in the thesis and aims to establish a new direction for further studies in Mandaism.

¹ Hereafter *DQRDK*.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I would like, firstly, to express my special thanks to Professor R. Ebied who provided me with valuable and careful guidance from the beginning to the completion of this work.

Sincere thanks, special indebtedness and deep appreciation also go to Jan Friar of Liverpool College of TAFE for her warm support and careful editing throughout every stage of the work on this dissertation.

I am likewise grateful to Dr William Long for his kind help in reading and editing many parts of this thesis, especially in the early stages. My thanks and appreciations must also be addressed to Dr. Chris van Rompaey of Deakin University for his kind and careful reading and editing of the final stages of this research. Thanks also due to Mr. Hussam Kiauze Al-Idani for his assistance, especially with technical computing matters.

In addition, I would like to express my thanks and gratitude to Dr Erica C.D. Hunter of Cambridge University, Prof. Jorunn Jacobsen Buckley of Bowdoin College, Prof. Garry Trompf of the University of Sydney, the Al-mubaraki family, my family and many others who supported my work and encouraged me along the way during the long years of this study. Their support, encouragement and/or their own work on Mandaism have made it possible for me to complete this extensive study.

Finally, this special work is dedicated to my enlightened children, the sons of Light and Life, who are working very hard to promote Love, Purity and Peace in this world.

Rabbi Brikha H. S. Nasoraia
Sydney, 2005

ABBREVIATIONS

- AF* *Die Aramäistische Forschung seit Th. Nöldeke's Veröffentlichungen*, F. Rosenthal, E. J. Brill, Leiden, 1939.
- AM* *Aspar Malwašia*, tr. E. S. Drower, *The Book of the Zodiac, Oriental Translation Fund*, vol. 36, The Royal Asiatic Society, London, 1949.
- AOSTS* *American Oriental Society Translation Series*.
- ARR* *Alma Rišaiā Rba*, tr. E.S. Drower, *A Pair of Naṣoraeān Commentaries* (Two Priestly documents: The Great 'First World' and the Lesser 'First World', E. J. Brill, Leiden, 1963.
- ARZ* *Alma Rišaiā Zuta*, tr. E.S. Drower, *A Pair of Naṣoraeān Commentaries* (Two Priestly documents). The Great 'First World' and the Lesser 'First World', E. J. Brill, Leiden, 1962.
- ATŠ* *Alf Trisar Šuialia*, tr. E. S. Drower, *The Thousand and Twelve Questions: A Mandaean Text*, Akademie Verlag, Berlin, 1960.
- BASOR* *Bulletin of the American School of Oriental Research*.
- CCPM* *The Colophons in the Canonical Prayerbook of the Madaeans*, J. J. Buckley, JNES, no. 51, 1992, pp. 33-49.
- CP* *The Canonical Prayerbook of the Madaeans*, E. S. Drower, E. J. Brill, Leiden, 1959.
- CSD* *A Compendious Syriac Dictionary*, R. Payne Smith, ed. J. Payne Smith (Mrs. Margoliouth), Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1957
- DA* *Diwan Abatur*, tr. E.S. Drower, *Diwan Abatur or Progress Through the Purgatories*, Studi e Testi 151, Vatican City, 1950.
- DC* *Drower Collection*, the Bodleian Library, Oxford.
- DM'L* *Diwan Malkuta 'Laita*, tr. Jorunn Jacobsen Buckley, *The Scroll of Exalted Kingship: Diwan Malkuta 'LaitaII*, American Oriental Society Translation Series, vol. 3, New Haven, 1993.
- DMHZ* *Diwan Mašbuta d-Hibil Ziwa*, tr. E.S. Drower, *The Baptism of Hibil-Ziwa*, Vatican City, 1953.
- DQRDK* *Diuan Qadaha Rba d-Dmuth Kušṭa*.
- DRA* *Diuan Razia d-Abahata*.
- DTP* *Diuan Tapsir Pagra*, tr. E.S. Drower, *The Baptism of Hibil-Ziwa*, Vatican City, 1953.
- DZRK* *Diuan Zahrun Raza Kasia*, (=DC 27).
- ER* *Encyclopaedia of Religion*, ed. M.Eliade.
- ERE* *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, ed. J. Hastings.

- Ginza* *Ginzá Der Schatz oder das grosse Buch der Mandäer übersetzt und erklärt*, M. Lidzbarski, Göttingen, 1925.
- GR* *Ginza Rba*, (edited in H. Petermann, *Thesaurus sive Liber Magnus, vulgo 'Liber Adami' appellatus*, tom. 1, 2, Leipzig, 1867), tr. M. Lidzbarski, *Ginzá Der Schatz oder das grosse Buch der Mandäer übersetzt und erklärt* Göttingen 1925.
- GS* *Ginza Smala*, (edited in H. Petermann, *Thesaurus sive Liber Magnus, vulgo 'Liber Adami' appellatus*, tom. 1, 2, Leipzig, 1867), tr. M. Lidzbarski, *Ginzá Der Schatz oder das grosse Buch der Mandäer übersetzt und erklärt*, Göttingen, 1925, pp. 423-596.
- GY* *Ginza Yamina*, (edited in H. Petermann, *Thesaurus sive Liber Magnus, vulgo 'Liber Adami' appellatus*, tom. 1, 2, Leipzig, 1867), tr. M. Lidzbarski, *Ginzá Der Schatz oder das grosse Buch der Mandäer übersetzt und erklärt* , Göttingen, 1925, pp. 5-419.
- HCMM* *Handbook of Classical and Modern Mandaic*, R. Macuch, Berlin, 1965.
- HG* *Diwan Haran Gauaita*, tr. E.S. Drower, *The Baptism of Hibil-Ziwa*, Vatican City, 1953.
- HG* *Diwan Haran Gawaita*, tr. E.S. Drower, *The Haran Gawaita*, Studi e Testi 176, Vatican City, 1953.
- HGBHZ* *The Haran Gawaita and The Baptism of Hibil-Ziwa*, E.S. Drower, Studi e Testi 176, Vatican City, 1953.
- HJ* *The Hibbert Journal*
- HpGn* *Hauptprobleme der Gnosis*, W. Bousset, Göttingen, 1907.
- HR* *History of Religions*
- HTS* *Harvard Theological Studies*
- HUCA* *Hebrew Union College Annual*
- INEAS* *Institute of Near Eastern & African Studies.*
- IOS* *Israel Oriental Studies*
- JAOS* *Journal of the American Oriental Society*
- JB* *Das Johannesbuch der Mandäer*, tr. M. Lidzbarski, Giessen, 1915.
- JMS* *Journal of Mandaean Studies*
- JNES* *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*
- JNT* *Journal for the New Testament*
- JRAS* *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*
- JRH* *Journal of Religious History*
- JSS* *Journal of Semitic Studies*

- JThS* *Journal of Theological Studies*
- KL* *The Knowledge of Life: The Origins and Early History of the Mandaeans and Their Relation to the Sabians of the Qur'an and to the Harranians*, Şinasi Gündüz, *Journal of Semitic Studies Supplement* 3, Oxford UP, 1994.
- M* *The Mandaeans Ancient Texts and Modern People*, Jorunn Jacobsen Buckley, Oxford UP, Oxford, 2002.
- MB* *Mašbūtā: Studies in the Ritual of the Mandaean Baptism*, E. Segelberg, Uppsala, 1958.
- MD* *A Mandaic Dictionary*, E.S. Drower and R. Macuch. Oxford, Oxford UP, 1963.
- MG* *Mandäische Grammatik*, Nöldeke, Th., Halle, 1975.
- MII* *The Mandaeans of Iraq and Iran: Their Cults, Customs, Magic, Legends and Folklore*, E.S. Drower, Oxford UP, Oxford, 1937.
- ML* *Mandäische Liturgien mitgeteilt, übersetzt und erklärt*, tr. M. Lidzbarski, Berlin 1920.
- MLG* *The Mandaeans: The Last Gnostics*, Edmondo F. Lupieri, tr. Charles Hindley, Grand Rapids, Mich. 2002 (Italian original, 1993).
- MR* *Die mandäische Religion*, Brandt, W., Leipzig, 1889.
- MSchur* *Mandäische Schriften*, Brandt, W., Göttingen, 1893.
- OMTS* ‘*The Origins of the Mandaens and Their Script*’, *JSS*, 16, 1971, pp.174-92.
- PNC* *A Pair of Naṣōraean Commentaries*, tr. E.S. Drower (*Two Priestly documents*): *The Great ‘First World’ and the Lesser ‘First World’*, Leiden, 1963.
- Q* *Qolasta*, tr. E.S. Drower, *The Canonical Prayerbook of the Mandaeans*, Leiden, E. J. Brill, 1959.
- Qolasta* *Qolasta oder Gesänge von der Taufe und dem Ausgang der Seete*, J. Euting, Stuttgart, 1867.
- RA* *Revue Asiatique*
- SA* *The Secret Adam*: E.S. Drower, *A Study of Naṣōraean Gnosis*, Oxford 1960.
- SAMRMR* *Study of the Ancient Mesopotamian Roots of Mandaean Religion*, A. Al-Zuhairi, PhD thesis, University of Manchester, 1998.
- SM* *Studia Mandaica*
- SEK* *The Scroll of Exalted Kingship: Diwan Malkuta ‘Laita*, tr. Jorunn Jacobsen Buckley, American Oriental Society Translation Series, vol. 3, New Haven, 1993.
- ŠQŠ *Šarh d Qabin d Šišlam Rba*, tr. E.S. Drower, *Explanatory Commentary on the Marriage-Ceremony of the Great Šišlam*, Rome 1950.
- SSNI* *Studia Semitica Necnon Iranica*
- ThLZ* *Theologische Literaturzeitung*

- TTŠ* *Traša d-Taga d-Šišlam Rba*, tr. E.S. Drower, *The Coronation of the Great Šišlam: Being a Description of the Rite of the Coronation of a Mandaean Priest According to the Ancient Canon*, E. J. Brill, Leiden 1962.
- UC* *The Colophons in the Canonical Prayerbook of the Mandaeans*, J. J. Buckley, *JNES*, no. 51, 1992, pp. 33-49.
- WW* *Water into Wine: A Study of Ritual Idiom in the Middle East*, E.S. Drower, London, 1956.
- ZNW* *Zeitschrift für die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der Älteren Kirche*.

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

1. 1 Aim and Overview

*Diuan Qadaha Rba d-Dmut Kušta*¹ ('The Scroll of the Great Creation of the Image/Likeness of Truth') is one of the most important, ancient, secret, esoteric Mandaean illustrated scriptures in existence. Thus, it has been carefully preserved for centuries in Mandaean religious libraries. Until very recently, however, this scroll has remained concealed from lay Mandaeans and scholars alike because the secret knowledge it contains is intended for the consumption of enlightened Mandaeans (Naṣoraeans) only. When its existence was finally revealed by a Mandaean priest to Western scholars in the 1950's, it still was not critically studied because those scholars did not apprehend its true esoteric value.

The aim of the study is not only to address this gap in Mandaean scholarship by translating and discussing this hitherto untranslated secret scroll which is full of hidden teachings and ambivalent symbols, but also to use *DQRDK* as a key for scholars to unlock the mysteries of Mandaean mysticism and develop a broader and deeper understanding of the Mandaean religion. Specifically, through its engagement with *DQRDK*, this study aims to unveil previously hidden meaning and symbols, the nature of the dualistic, Mandaean-gnostic belief system, and the importance of central terms like *Kušta*, *Qadaha Rba*, *Yardna*, *Aina*, *Mia*, and so on, so that scholars can better understand what Mandaeans believe. In addition, this study will attempt to lead those interested to a new level of understanding of the Mandaean secret writings, including *DQRDK*.

The specific purpose of this study, therefore, is (i) to ascertain what knowledge *DQRDK* contains and what its true value is, and (ii) to indicate possible directions for further study by establishing a model of translation that may assist in studying the Mandaean religion as well as in translating and retranslating Mandaean documents, especially the esoteric secret scrolls. To achieve this aim, this thesis will provide a full and accurate a translation of the scroll; it will also offer an analytical study of important aspects of the scroll, a comparative study of the scroll with other

¹ Hereafter *DQRDK*. Also see Chapter 2.3, The Problem in Translating the Title of *DQRDK*, below.

similar Mandaean materials and, an examination and, where needed, a correction of the works of other Mandaean scholars whose work relates to this study.

In addition, this thesis will try to answer some key questions, including the following: To what extent can we rely on the information that is provided in this scroll? What is the value of this work compared to other Mandaean works? What new knowledge can the study of this scroll bring to Mandaean scholarship? Why this scroll is so highly respected and preserved as a sacred object? Why has it been kept a secret from foreigners, lay Mandaeans and even lay Naṣōraeans. (Naṣōraeans are considered to be the most enlightened people in Mandaean society.) Under what historical and social conditions was this scroll created? Does its teaching fall into the mainstream of Mandaic culture? What is its mystical, literary and artistic value?

The study is organized into two sections. The first five chapters cover the necessary background information on Mandaeans and their religion and analyse the scroll's history, authorship, nature, contents and value. The second part is the detailed translation of the text of *DQRDK*, enriched with extensive notes and commentaries. Specifically, Chapter 1 of this thesis introduces perspectives on the Mandaeans and their religion with regard to many important aspects of their belief systems. These perspectives are provided essentially to help highlight central views and concepts that might assist readers to understand *DQRDK* as they undertake the difficult task of reading the translation in Chapter 6.

Chapter 2 will show that *DQRDK* is one scroll, although until recently, it was believed that *DQRDK* comprised two separate scrolls. This chapter will also highlight the problems that have faced Mandaean scholars in their efforts to translate the title of *DQRDK*, thereby offering important linguistic and theological insights. In addition, to highlight and elucidate relevant issues, this chapter will cover the existing status of *DQRDK*, its very interesting recent history, and other information about the scroll.

Next, to help readers understand more fully the writing in *DQRDK*, along with its socio-cultural and religious context, Chapter 3 will examine certain palaeographic considerations, such as the script, the style of writing and the materials that were used in the work. In addition, some discussion about the grammar, syntax, and orthography is included in the chapter, as well as a general examination of essential syntactic features of the Mandaic of this scroll,

Two of the most important questions about *DQRDK* are its history, and, more importantly, its authorship. In Chapter 4 a new theory will be provided regarding both

of these matters. In addition, this chapter will discuss and analyse important historical information revealed in the colophon of *DQRDK*.

The religious value of the text and the special place that it holds in the Naṣoraeen libraries and the esoteric Mandaean-Naṣoraeen teachings will be explored and explained in Chapter 5. This chapter will also study the value of the artwork in the scroll and its unique style.

The second part of this thesis is a translation of *DQRDK*. During the process of the translation, one important task will be to examine and question some previous Mandaean scholarly works. Previous translations of Mandaean documents, done by such leading scholars as M. Lidzbarski, E.S. Drower, Kurt Rudolph, Jorunn Jacobsen Buckley and others, usually did not or could not pay much attention to the secret Naṣoraeen interpretations of these documents. Thus, this study will try to bring to light some links that have been missed by those scholars.

In addition, the translation chapter will include a detailed linguistic analysis that builds on what was covered in Chapter 3. Because the structure of Mandaic sentences is important for an analysis of *DQRDK*'s literary value and for an appreciation and understanding of its other qualities, a study of the origin, grammar, syntax, and morphology of many important Mandaic words in the scroll will also be included in the notes. Thus, this chapter will closely examine terms, expressions, idioms, important words and other linguistic forms that appear in *DQRDK*, many of which have not been dealt with adequately by previous scholarly works or have not been mentioned in Drower and Macuch's *Mandaic Dictionary*²

In attempting to achieve the goal of this thesis to provide a key for scholars to unlock Mandaean mysticism, I have found that it is necessary to undertake a comparative study of other Mandaean documents, especially *Diuan Tapsir Pagra*,³ in the translation section. This has involved a major re-translation of some important passages from these documents and the need for extended commentaries on many points.

The translation of *DQRDK* relies on a new approach to Mandaean texts. This approach is based not only on dealing with the literal textual words, as previous scholars have done, but also on dealing with the Mandaean-Naṣoraeen interpretation of deeper mystical meanings. This addition to scholarship will hopefully provide a

² E.S. Drower and R. Macuch, *A Mandaic Dictionary*, Oxford UP, Oxford, 1963 (hereinafter *MD*).

³ Hereinafter *DTP*.

valuable source of information that is missing from most of the previous scholarly works that have been done on the Mandaean documents. For instance, I have found that in this text different terms for concepts such as *Naširuta*, *Qadaha*, *Dmuta*, *Kušta*, *Aina*, and so on, have led to a new level of meaning. My discoveries have necessitated that I clarify many obscure meanings and symbols in the work of *DQRDK*.

In preparation for this study, I have not only done extensive scholarly research on the Mandaeans, their history, religion, writings and language and gathered the fullest possible information about the Mandaean secret teachings in *DQRDK*, but I have also contextualized all of this information within an informed understanding of the religious, cultural and social practices among Našoraeans and Mandaeans. This intimate understanding is based on my initiation as a 'Brikha' (Blessed) Mandaean-Našoraeen Master/Rabbi.⁴ Thus, all items covered in this study have been treated from both the traditional Našoraeen perspective and also, wherever applicable, from the modern Našoraeen understanding, as well as from a western scholarly perspective.

It is hoped that this study and its approach will provide new perspectives on the Mandaean-Našoraeen religious and secret linguistic systems not only of *DQRDK* but also of many other Mandaean documents. Insofar as it succeeds in providing these new perspectives this study should shed new light on and provide a clearer understanding of Mandaeans than has hitherto been achieved.

1. 2 Perspectives on the Mandaean Religion to Assist in the Understanding of *DQRDK*

1. 2. 1 The Mandaeans Today

In 1915, William Brandt states:

The Mandaeans claim our interest not only as being a separate surviving branch of the Semitic stock, but also on account of their religion, their language, and their sacred literature. Besides the records of their religious teaching and their religious poetry, that literature includes fragmentary remains and revisions of ancient Gnostic speculation and myth. Adherents of the Mandaean faith, either as larger communities or as distinct family groups, were to be found some forty years ago—and may perhaps still be found—in cities and smaller market-towns on the lower Euphrates, the lower Tigris, and the rivers which water the eastern Iraq al-arabi and the adjacent Persian province of Khuzistan (Arabistan). It is, indeed,

⁴ *Brikha* is one of the highest ranks in the hierarchy in the Mandaean Našoraeen society.

necessary for them to live in the neighbourhood of rivers, since immersion in flowing water is an essential, and certainly the most characteristic, feature of their religious practice.⁵

Since Brandt's earlier observations, this picture of Mandaean life has of course undergone considerable change. Today, Mandaeans are often articulate and well-educated and trained in modern professional fields as diverse as engineering, medicine and computer programming. At the same time, it is undeniable that the vast majority of Mandaeans continue to earn their living in traditional artisan trades, such as gold, silver and iron smithing, carpentry and boat building. They live mostly in villages and cities like Suq Al-šuiokh, Chebaieš Našreiah, Rifa'I, Maimona, Halfaiah (Mšarraḥ), Mijar, Mesan, Mdainah and Qurna.

Most Mandaeans today live in the centre of the big cities, especially of the southern and the middle regions of Iraq. However, Baghdad contains the largest number of Mandaeans anywhere. Moreover, most Mandaeans no longer live close to rivers, perhaps because of the availability of tap water, which is now allowed to be used in their daily living and even in important rituals like baptism in instances of high pollution. Despite the strong pollution of the rivers (especially those in Iraq), and the difficulties with fundamentalist Islamic people in Iran, Iraq and Jordan, Mandaeans, however, still prefer to use fresh running water from rivers to perform their rituals.

Many early twentieth-century scholars speculated that the Mandaean religion would fade out of existence by the end of the twentieth century. Contrary to their speculations, however, there has been a reinvigoration of religious education and cultural traditions, especially in the late nineteen seventies to mid-nineties⁶ in Iraq. At

⁵ W. Brandt, 'Mandaeans', *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, ed. James Hastings, T. & T. Clark, Edinburgh, 1915, p. 380.

⁶ This period was very critical for the Mandaeans in Iraq. See Hathem Saed (Brikha H. S. Nasoraia), 'A Call to Manda', in *Mandaean Thinker*, Sydney, No. 2, 1996, pp. 3, 18; also *ibid.*; pp. 9-10.

that time, the foundations of a new era in Mandaean modern history were laid, and the implementation of ambitious religious and educational programs began.⁷ This included the formation of active youth organizations,⁸ and the establishment of many Mandaic schools in various cities.

Of particular relevance to this thesis is the fact that this project also included the documentation of most of the oral and written Mandaean traditions, especially the rewriting of critical copies of most Mandaic scriptures and documents.⁹ Significantly, this led also to the revival of the mystical traditions of deep knowledge, *Naširuta*, thus reviving the moribund Našoraean community.¹⁰ The Mandaean religion is now thriving. According to the author's survey and investigation through local Mandaean channels in 2002,¹¹ there are around ninety to one hundred thousand practising believers of Mandaicism over the entire world.¹²

⁷ This movement was established and led mainly by Brikha Nasoraia, who originated, developed and continued this program despite great danger, persecution, and continuing threat from many political and fundamentalist religious factions.

⁸ This included the following three organizations established by Brikha Nasoraia: *Ahia d-Kušta* (the Brothers of Kušta, established on 9 September 1981), *Brikha Našoraia* (established on 8 September 1986), and The Mandaean Youth Movement *Mandaiia* (established on 10 October 1993).

⁹ Such work included also the release of Arabic translations of many scriptures and various secret scrolls designed strictly for a special local Mandaean use, and the publishing of books, articles and local magazines in Arabic for the benefit of general readers.

¹⁰ Such work includes the preparation of youth and *Ašualias* (novices for priesthood) to join the priesthood to overcome the lack of Mandaean priests. In 1981 the Madaeans of Iraq had only five priests, so the present twenty-seven Iraqi priests are one of the important fruits of that revolutionary program launched in 1979. Today, there are twenty-seven Iraqi Mandaean priests, but only five Iranian Mandaean priests, one of whom has moved to Australia. The fifth Iranian priest was initiated only recently. There is a shortage of Iranian priests, apparently because of a lack of encouragement for young males to become novices and no teaching or preparation offered to those who might wish to become priests within the Mandaean community in Iran over the last seventy years.

¹¹ J. J. Buckley mentioned in 1995 that their estimated number vary considerably, and may be close to 100,000. See her 'Madaeans in the USA Today: The tenacity of traditions,' *ARAM*, no. 7 (1995), p. 353. Also see Buckley, *The Madaeans: Ancient Texts and Modern People* (hereafter *M*), Oxford (2002), p. 6.

¹² Many Mandaean migrants are now living separately or in small unstable Mandaean communities in a number of Western cities. This Diaspora to the western world raises new questions about the ongoing survival of the Mandaean culture and religion. It is to be seen whether the dispersed Madaeans will find a healthy environment in which to continue and develop their long history of unique culture, faith and traditions. This is a question that continues to interest scholars, historians and sociologists today. See Hathem Saed, 'A Call to Manda', pp. 9-10

1. 2. 2 What do Mandaean believe?

Dealing with such a vast area of study as the Gnostic Mandaean religion, one can only hope to give a general overview. Many interesting events and issues are covered only in a very cursory manner and others have to be omitted altogether.

Gnosticism

Mandaean (i.e. *mandaia* adj. from *manda*; γνώσις ‘knowledge’) means ‘holder of knowledge’ or ‘knower’ or ‘enlightened one’, γνωσιός.¹³ Madaeans understand *manda* as a kind of deep spiritual truth, experienced directly and internally, and viewed as a divine knowledge sought since the earliest human existence. Thus, Madaeans are Gnostics. That is to say, they believe in spiritual knowledge/enlightenment in the tradition of Gnosticism, which flourished during the later Classical, pre-Christian period, and played an important role in the first centuries after Christ.¹⁴

It is generally accepted by scholars¹⁵ that the Madaeans are the last surviving Gnostics.¹⁶ Unlike other Gnostics, however, the Madaeans abhor asceticism and

¹³ Cf. *MD*, p. 247a-b; Nöldeke, Th., *Mandäische Grammatik*, Halle, 1975, pp. xx, 10f. (hereafter *MG*).

¹⁴ See Kurt Rudolph, *Mandaeism*, E. J. Brill, Leiden, 1978, p. 1. For a discussion of different views on the early history of Madaeans, see Rudolph, *Problems of a History of the Development of the Mandaean Religion*, *History of Religions*, 1969, pp. 216-234.

¹⁵ See, for example, Kurt Rudolph, *Gnosis: The Nature and History of Gnosticism*, ed. R. McL. Wilson, P.W. Coxon and K H. Kuhn, New York, 1983, p. 344, and also pp. 366, 367; Edwin M. Yamauchi, ‘A Mandaic Magic Bowl from the Yale Babylonian Collection’, *Berytus*, 17, 1967-68, p. 49; Edwin M. Yamauchi, *Gnostic Ethics and Mandaean Origins*, Harvard Theological Studies, XXIV, Cambridge (1970), p. 1; Şinasi Gündüz, *The Knowledge of Life: The Origins and Early History of the Madaeans and Their Relation to the Sabians of the Qur’an and to the Harranians* (hereafter *KL*), *Journal of Semitic Studies Supplement* 3, Oxford, 1994, p. 1.

¹⁶ See Edmondo F. Lupieri, *The Madaeans: The Last Gnostics*, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, Mich. 2002, translated by Charles Hindley (Italian original), 1993, pp. 38 ff. (hereafter *MLG*); J. J. Buckley, ‘Mandaean Religion’, *Encyclopaedia of Religion*, ed. M. Eliade, Macmillan, New York, 1987, p. 150; *ibid.*, *KL*, *ibid.*; E. S. Drower, *Nvmen*, *International Review for the History of Religions*, International Association for the History of Religions, Volume II, E. J. Brill, Leiden, 1955, p. 68; E. S. Drower, *The Secret Adam: A Study of Naşoraeen Gnosis* (hereafter *SA*), Oxford UP, Oxford, 1960, xvff. See also: William D. Halsey, et. al. eds., *Collier’s Encyclopedia*, Vol. 15, Crowell Collier, 1968, p. 327; E. Segelberg, ‘The Mandaean Week and the Problem of Jewish Christianity and Mandaean Relationship,’ in *Judéo-christianisme: recherches historiques et théologique offerts en hommage au Cardinal Jean*

emphasize fertility. As such, they trace their roots to the ancient Gnostics who preceded John the Baptist and Jesus Christ.¹⁷ To Mandaeans, John the Baptist is the last Great Teacher, prophet and messenger. They continue to follow his teachings,¹⁸ practising ‘mysticism’ and ‘majesty’ from the written and oral Gnostic tradition. Many elements of their practice are based on inherited ancient wisdom from both Western and Eastern cultural and mystical traditions, especially from the pre-Christian period.

Mandaeans possess a revealed religion and a divinely inspired code of laws and traditions. They have developed a definitive body of knowledge and they have put forward their own theories to explain nature and the universe. For this reason, scholars like Kurt Rudolph consider this religion as ‘a self-contained, unique system belonging to the general stratum of the Gnosticism of the late antiquity’.¹⁹ Rudolph comments:

Daniélou, ed. B. Gerhardsson et. al., Paris, 1972, pp. 273f., 284; Gilles Quispel, ‘Jewish Gnosis and Mandaean Gnosticism: Some Reflections on the Writing Brontè’, in *Les Textes de nag Hammadi*, VII, ed. J. É. Ménard, Nag Hammadi Studies, ed. M. Krause, J. M. Robinson and F. Wisse, VII, E. B. Brill, Leiden, 1975, pp. 82-122ff.

¹⁷ K. Rudolph, *Die Mändaer I. Prolegomena: Das Mandäerproblem* (Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments, n.F.56), Göttingen, 1960, pp. 77f.; E. Segelberg, ‘Old and New Testament Figures in Mandaean Version’, in *Syncretism*, ed. S. S. Hartman, Scripta Instituti Donneriana Aboensis III, Stockholm Uppsala, 1969, pp. 236f.; SA, p. 101 and n.1.

¹⁸ Some non-Mandaean sources seem to confirm that John the Baptist left disciples to follow his path. See for example Acts xviii. 25, xix. 2 and Matt. xiv. 12. Also consult Abraham A. Neuman, “A Note on John the Baptist and Jesus in Josippon”, *Hebrew Union College Annual*, Volume XXIII, part II, Cincinnati, Ohio, 1950-1951, pp. 137-49. For the Mandaeans, John is called *Yahia Yuhana -br 'Nišbai Qinta*. See, for example, E. S. Drower, *The Canonical Prayerbook of the Mandaeans* (hereafter CP), E. J. Brill, Leiden, 1959, No. 1996, pp. 12-13; or *Yahia br Zakria* (e.g. *Ginza Yamina*, (hereafter GY) [combined with *Ginza Smala*, (hereafter GS) and cited by Petermann, H, as *Thesaurus sive Liber Magnus, vulgo 'Liber Adami' appellatus*, tom. 1, 2, Leipzig, 1867], tr. M. Lidzbarski, *Ginzá Der Schatz oder das grosse Buch der Mandäer übersetzt und erklärt* (hereafter *Ginza*), Göttingen, 1925, pp. 5-419, 231: 10, 218: 23; *Das Johannesbuch der Mandäer* (hereafter JB), (tr.) M. Lidzbarski, Giessen, 1915, passim. He is considered *nbiha ušliha* (‘prophet and messenger’) and *nbiha d-kušta* (‘the prophet of *Kušta* [Truth]/the true prophet’ [of the last age after Sam of the Flood]). When he was born he was called *yalda nbiha d-aba rba d-'qara* (‘a boy, an offspring/a prophet of the Great Father of Glory’), and also he was a great healer. See E.S. Drower, *The Haran Gawaita and the Baptism of Hibil-Ziwa* (hereafter HG), Studi e Testi, 176, Vatican City, 1953, pp. 5ff., p. 5 n. 7; and cf. MD, p. 288a.

¹⁹ *Encyclopedia of Religion*, p. 150.

[It is] a completely independent gnostic tradition, although one which also belongs to oriental and Semitic culture [and] is preserved by the communities of the Mandeans.²⁰

DQRDK significantly captures the doctrines of the Mandaic gnostic system through frequent use of specific terms and expression, which convey various theological, cosmological and theosophical concepts, including the dualisms of good and evil, truth and falsehood, spiritual and material, life and death, and light and darkness.²¹

The Elect/Chosen/Proven of Righteous Ones

Mandaeans believe that they constitute the true and ideal congregation of the Earthly 'Sons of Light' as direct and continuing descendants of '*utria bnia nhura*, 'the 'Utras, (Heavenly) Sons of Light' (and the Great Life).²² Their lives are destined to the perpetual light, which is called *Malka (Rama) d-Nhura*, 'the (High) King of Light'.²³

In addition, Mandaeans describe themselves as *Bhiria (Zidqa)*²⁴ or *Bahiraia (d-) Zidqa*²⁵ (the Elect/Chosen of Righteous[ness] Ones), which is parallel to another important title, that is, '*Bhiria Kušta*²⁶ (the Chosen/Elect of *Kušta* [Truth]). Further, Mandaeans know themselves as *Šalmania* (the 'Perfect Ones'),²⁷ as *Bhiria u-Šalmania* (Elect and Perfect Ones),²⁸ and as *Šitlia Ṭaba* the (Good

²⁰ Kurt Rudolph, *Gnosis, op cit.*, p.30. Cf. *Mandaeism*, pp. 4ff.

²¹ See for example, *DQRDK*, folio 3 (O, Q).

²² The term (*a*)*bnia nhura* ('Sons of Light') is used in various ways and Mandaean sources; *Ginza*, II 13, 246; *Mandäische Liturgien mitgeteilt, übersetzt und erklärt* (hereafter *ML*) Berlin, 1920, 17-18, 24-5, 36-7, 41-2, 71; Euting, J., *Qolasta oder Gesänge von der Taufe und dem Ausgang der Seete* (hereafter *Qolasta*), Stuttgart, 1867, vol. 25, p. 24.

²³ For instance see *GY*, 5: 11, 6: 9; *Ginza*, II 31; *MD*, p. 244b f.; *HG* p. 3.

²⁴ See for example *DQRDK*, 14; J. de Morgan, *Études Linguistiques. Deuxième Partie, Textes Mandäites* (with notice of C. Huart), Paris, 1904, vol. 10: p. 1. Also frequently in *GY*, I, II, for instance, *GY*, 24: pp. 10 ff. For many examples and references, see *MD*, p. 53a-b. Also consult, W. Brandt, *Mandäische Schriften*, Göttingen, 1893, p. 27 n. 4.

²⁵ *JB*, p. 50.

²⁶ *GY*, 299:14.

²⁷ See for example *GY*, 367: 2; *JB*, 180: 13. Also see *MD*, p. 442b; Brandt, *Mandäische Schriften*, pp. 8 n.5, 36 n. 1.

²⁸ *Ginza*, II 35-45; *CP*, (no. 43, 71) = *ML*, pp. 75, 106-7.

Plantation/Plantation of the Pious).²⁹ Furthermore, in the scriptures, the practising faithful perfected Mandeans are called *Bhiria Zidqa Bnia Nhura*³⁰ (The Chosen Elect Beings, Sons of Light).³¹

Mandaean View of Human Nature: The Great Mind, Knowledge and Wisdom

Mandaean teaching emphatically stresses the centrality and primacy of the Great Mind, Knowledge and Wisdom. *Mana Rba*, the Great (Perfect) Mind, is held to be the source of all things. It works with the soul *Nišimta* on one side, while the spirit *Ruha* and the human body stand on the other side. Their union contains the possibility of enlightenment and immortality. Mandaean teaching also views the Great Mind as the purest enlightened Being, as is found in *DQRDK*, especially in its art work depicting various illustrated figures. Such images are exclusive to *DQRDK*. That is, no illustrated figures can be found in other illustrated Mandaean scrolls, as far as we can tell.

Mana Rba, the Great Mind, is viewed as a Divine Helper, Saviour and Baptizer. *Mana Rba* is also an intelligent mysterious Power.³² *Mana* can associate with the human life and soul and still retain its purest form. This primordial mind precedes all manifestations of human life and embodies the meaning and substance of

²⁹ *Ginza*, II 61-2; *CP*, 124: 11ff. (no. 83) = *ML*, pp. 149-50 (no. LXXXIII); *JB*, pp. 219-20. The Covenanters also represent themselves as the 'Elect of Righteousness' and as the 'Perfect' (T ii 13) and as 'Eternal Plantations'. (D viii 5, ix 10; Z 17). In addition, we find later, that the Christians also designate themselves as the 'Elect' (Cf. *Odes of Solomon* XXXIII 13.) and as the 'Perfect', (P p. 520.), while they regard the Church itself as the 'Planting of God's Vineyard' (Connolly *Apostolic Constitution* 2-3 §). This may indicate a connection with some Jewish traditions. K. Rudolph defined the importance of the Mandaean religion to the other Gnostic movements. See: Rudolph, *Mandaeism*, p. 16. Furthermore, Rudolph continues, in his long introduction on Mandaeism, to attach importance to the Mandaean gnostic community and its roots. *Ibid.*, p. 16. Lady Drower suggests earlier in *SA*, that this gnostic sect may have spread into places like the Jordan Valley, Galilee and Juadea, and had further divided into sub-sects which developed into Christianity, and which 'recognized in Jesus its crowned and anointed king'. *SA*, p. xi.

³⁰ See for instance, *CP*, no. 23, pp. 30, 19-20.

³¹ See also, *ibid.*, p. 19.

³² For references to and images of *Mana Rba* in *DQRDK*, see *DQRDK*, 17f., 22, 38, 100, folio 3, Y, folio 6, U4, V4, O5, folio 7, F5, I5. Also see Brikha Naşoraia, 'The Image of the Dark Side *Ruha*' in *Humanity*, to be published in December, 2005.

reality. In terms of other aspects of the mind, this primordial mind remains buried, deep within human beings. Most of the time, it is unnoticed and unseen.

According to Mandaean teachings, both positive and negative attributes are present in the Earthly mind, because of the influence of evil which devitalizes material forces. The mind consists of positive attributes like insight, compassion, and tolerance. These positive characteristics are ascribed usually to the secret effective power of *Nišimta*, ‘the soul’. The mind also consists of negative tendencies that can cause sinful thoughts and actions, like hatred, sadness, anger, fighting, killing, impurity, adultery. The negative aspects are attributed to *Ruha* (and its followers) as well as *ruha* ‘spirit’, the vile and evil influential powers of the World of Darkness.³³ These negative influences include the zodiacal and planetary effects. Thus, dualism—for example, Worlds of Light and Worlds of Darkness; Good and Evil; Male and Female; Father and Mother; Heavens and Earth; Soul and Spirit; Adam and Eve, and so on—is well represented in Mandaeism, especially in the work of *DQRDK*.

True Mandaeans, including the true lay Mandaeans, priests and Naṣōraeans, practise numerous techniques for awakening, for eliminating negative thoughts, and for revealing the hidden *Mana*. Various teachings offer contemplative practices, such as prayers, enlightened teaching, philanthropy, and rituals, including baptism, in order to reduce the pollution of darkness or negative energies, while enhancing the positive aspects of the human earthly nature.

Through these practices, Mandaeans act correctly to heal themselves and direct themselves so that they can connect with *Mana Rba* the Great Mind, *Hiia Rbia* the Great Life, and *Almia d-Nhura* the Worlds of Light. The Mandaean Naṣōraean teaching indicates that by hearing, reading and knowing these instructions, and by

³³ See, for instance, *CP*, 10:14; *GY*, 226:24, 381:20 f; *ML*, p. 12 n. I; *Ginza*, pp. 189 n. 2, 227 n. 4; S.A. Pallis, *Mandaean Studies*, London, 1926, pp. 79 f. Also consult *MD*, pp. 428b f.

fully internalizing them, all human beings will be able eventually to throw off impurities, sadness and painful uncertainties. They will be empowered to transform themselves by replacing the misery of the average human being's condition with a clarified and purified mind, heart, soul and spirit. Such will allow human beings to be at peace, as well as be filled with knowledge and understanding. Mandaean are usually encouraged to engage frequently in these practices, especially to undertake frequent baptism, with the assistance of enlightened beings.³⁴

These teachings also show Mandaean the means to search for and to recognise their pure primordial mind and soul; thereby to gain knowledge to enlighten their thoughts and understanding. The following example is from the opening of one of the chapters of *CP*.

In the name of the Great Living One(s)
 May my thoughts, my knowledge and my understanding
 Enlighten me, Adam-Yuhana son of Mahnuš,
 By means of these (devotional) Responses and Homilies-
 for Baptism and the *Masiqta*.³⁵

In addition, these teachings guide Mandaean in the means to know and to experience a contented life, the right way of knowing the path, and the way to live as enlightened Lightworld beings with the Great Life and Light. The Našoraean, as enlightened people, hold the power of destiny (*Hiia* 'Life'). They find their own way towards the '*Ziua*' radiance of '*Nhura*' the clear Light of '*Kušta*' Truth, because they already see this light of truth from within. The clear Light of '*Kušta*' exists in '*Manda* (*d-Hiia*)' the True Knowledge (of Life), in the person's *Nišimta* (soul) and in their *Mana* (Mind).

Fundamental Features of the Mandaean Religion

³⁴ Such practices and teachings are often repeated in various ways in most of the Mandaean sources. In *DQRDK*, important inner Mandaean Našoraean teachings are depicted in many passages and illustrations.

³⁵ Cf. *CP*, p. 88 (no. 78).

Other important fundamental features of the Mandaean religion are listed below:³⁶

- (i) Belief in a supreme, formless Entity. The idea of *Hiia Rbia* the (Absolute) Great Living One(s) is the basic idea of the Mandaean religion, especially in its early form.
- (ii) Mandaism is monotheistic. *Hiia* 'the Living One(s)', God, created *Hiia (Rbia Qadmaia)* 'the First Great Life (/Living Ones)'. He also created the Divine Environment Primordial Fertilising Elements of creation, manifestation and emanation systems in the universal existence.
- (iii) The Mandaean religion is found initially in the World(s) of Light and the Ethereal Beings, like *Utria* and *Malki*, understood as the first believers who practised this religion.
- (iv) The radical idea of dualism, contrasting a transcendent realm of pure spirit with the world of gross matter. Other forms of dualism include: Father and Mother, Light and Darkness, Right and Left, syzygy in cosmic and microcosmic form (macrocosm and microcosm).
- (v) Belief that the human spirit originates in the higher realm, but is imprisoned now in the form of a soul within the human body. The human spirit has two levels, the higher/divine level, which comes from *hiia* 'the Divine Life', and *ruha* the lower spirit. Mandaean aim to liberate their spirits from all attachment to material things, and thereby return the elected minority to ultimate happiness.

³⁶ Also consult SA, p. xvi.

- (vi) Belief that *Nišimta* (the human soul), has its origin in an extensive upper and mysterious World of Light created and inhabited by *Hiia*, the (Great) Living Lives/One(s).
- (vii) Belief that there are no earthly founder(s) of the religion; rather, there are Great Teachers, such as *Adam*, *Šitil* (Seth), *Ram*, *Šurbai*, *Šum* (Sam, son of Noah) and *Yahia Yunaha* (John the Baptist) who are great preservers or keepers of the Divine Word of *Hiia* (God) and ‘the Knowledge of the Holy Wisdom of Life’, *Manda d-Hiia*, which they received from *Hiia* and the World(s) of Light. These are passed on to the Mandaean generations, who are in turn inspired by the life and work of these Great Teachers.
- (vii) A set of beliefs, ethics and morals which are enshrined in a cult-language of symbol and metaphor. The centre of these traditions is *Hiia Rbia*, the Great Living One(s), the Absolute Eternal Supernatural Power, the Creator, who has total power and influence over the destiny of everything in the whole universe, including the destiny of human beings and earthly events.
- (viii) The main Holy Book is named *Ginza Rba Sidra d-Adam* (the Great Treasure, the Book of Adam). There are also secret writings containing the main teachings of the religion.
- (ix) Special people are consecrated to be religious leaders. They are blessed in special ceremonies; their main duties include teaching, performing rituals and leading the world on the path of enlightenment.
- (x) A set of strict rules and precepts prescribing the ways in which the Mandaean people should behave in both general and in specific situations. There are also strong taboos against some modes of behaviour and particular actions, including murder, adultery, rape, etc.. Most Mandaeans adopt a puritan ethic.

- (xi) Rites of passage and ceremonies that mark important events in the lives of Mandaean, including the transition from one stage of pure life and enlightenment to another; such ceremonies comprise the *Mašbuta* (Baptism), *Masiqta* (Ascendant, Rising).
- (xii) Belief in the importance of Living Water (*Yardna d- mia hiia*). As a tool of baptism, Living Water symbolizes the Light and Great Life. Respect for the sanctity of rivers is such that Mandaean always try to live near their banks.
- (xiii) Belief in the continuation of life after the death of the material body. There is belief in a system of rewards and punishments, usually received after a person's earthly life, for the beliefs, actions and behaviours of the individual during their lifetime. The punishments for the sinners are, for various purification purposes, held in special cosmic places named *Maṣarata* (purgatories). There is no reincarnation or resurrection of the material body for Mandaean; they consider themselves as enlightened beings already. However, there is a belief in the obstruction for the great sinners until 'the judgement day', *Yuma d-Dina*.
- (xiv) Belief in divine healing and victory, ie. *asuta uzakuta*, over Darkness and any injuries that may be caused by Darkness. Believers can recover their power and fulfil their enlightenment. This is one of the factors that strengthens the Mandaean faith in *Hiia Rbia*.
- (xv) Belief in the integrity of the physical body.
- (xvi) There is no earthly redeemer, but rather the divine Ones, Lightworld Being(s), such as *Manda d-Hiia* (the Knowledge/Gnosis/Wisdom of Life). The Redeemer or Saviour or Helper frees the souls of the believers from *Maṣarata*.

- (xvii) The need for a special place where Mandaeans gather for prayer, worship and perform other religious activities. This area is termed *Manda*, *Bith Manda*, or *Bimanda* (the House of (the Divine) Knowledge). Today, the laity call it *Mandi*.

Conclusion

This chapter has offered a brief introduction to the Mandaeans, their particular approach to Gnosticism, and their view of “human nature.” It has also outlined the fundamental features of the Mandaean Religion, which is practised today in the same way it has been practised for centuries. It is hoped that the perspectives provided in this overview will help readers gain a greater understanding of the Mandaean Religion and of *DQRDK*, which has so successfully captured the fundamental mystical doctrines and strong dualistic nature of Mandaean Gnosticism.

CHAPTER 2

The Scroll of *DQRDK* (Qadaha Rba d-Dmut Kušta)

2.1 Introduction

This chapter deals with *DQRDK* scroll. Section two consists of a discussion, review and revision of the story of *DQRDK*'s acquisition by the Bodleian Library; the difficulties that leading scholars, like Drower and Buckley, and Mandaeans themselves faced regarding identifying the original name of *DQRDK*; the confusion that surrounded *DQRDK* and the nature of its contents. These revisions are examined in comparison with another scroll, *Diuan Razia d-Abahata*,¹ with particular reference to their interrelationship.

In section three, there will be a discussion of the difficulties surrounding the translation of the title of *DQRDK*. This translation is supplemented by linguistic and theological commentaries. Section four will comprise a survey of all *DQRDK* manuscripts known to be extant in the world. Section five will include a critical description of the scroll of *DQRDK*, and its Mandaic script.

2.2. Recent History of the *DQRDK* Scroll - Acquisition by the Bodleian Library and Confusion Surrounding the Scroll

The scroll of *DQRDK* that is currently preserved in the Bodleian Library is the only copy of the scroll in the West.² The story of its acquisition by the Bodleian library

¹ Hereafter *DRA*.

² This fact has been kindly confirmed by J. J. Buckley in her correspondence during April 1999, in which she also states that the work has not attracted scholarly attention to date. See also *The Bodleian Library Record*, vol. V, Charles Batey, Oxford, 1954-56, pp. 167-8; *M*, p. 16 and n. 67.

goes back to the early stages of the direct connection between Lady Drower and the Mandaeans, which might have begun in the early 1930s. Drower first went to live in Baghdad in 1920,³ the year when her husband was appointed as an adviser to the government there during the British Mandate.⁴ She approached the Mandaean communities and for many years studied the Mandaean religion, language, traditions and culture. Drower is recognized by contemporary scholars as being among the great scholars in Mandaicism after Noldeke, Brandt and Lidzbarski. She is famous for doing some magnificent work in this field, including translating many Mandaean documents, writing significant books, book-chapters and articles,⁵ and collecting large and important Mandaean manuscripts which, in turn, were acquired by the Bodleian Library.⁶

At some point in her studies, Drower learned from the local Mandaean community that, in addition to the scrolls she had seen, there were 'two' particular scrolls

³ For details on Lady Drower's life, works and her connection with Mandaeans, see the paper of her daughter, Margaret Hackforth-Jones which she presented at the First International Conference on the Mandaeans, ARAM, Thirteenth International Conference at the University of Harvard. See also *The Life of Lady E. S. Drower*, ARAM, no. 11-12, 1999-2000, pp.321-325.

⁴ See J.J. Buckley, 'The Mandaean Correspondence', in *Gnosisforschung und Religionsgeschichte*, Marburg, Verlag, 1994, p. 55.

⁵ See the Bibliography. See also *M*, p. 17; *KL*, p. 10.

⁶ The Bodleian Library, Oxford, contains the largest collection of Mandaean manuscripts existing in official world libraries. The 'Drower Collection' in this library (Hereafter DC), (there are more than 54 documents), the MS. Asiat. misc. c.12 (R), the MS. Asiat. misc. c.13 (R), MS. Syr. f. 2 (R) and MS. Syr. g. 2 (R); all represent the majority of Mandaean manuscripts in the Bodleian. Many of these manuscripts remain unstudied and unpublished. See *M*, p. 15. At the beginning, Drower used the Bodleian Library as a place to keep DC. Later in 1958, Drower officially donated all the DC MSS to the Bodleian Library. I searched for a long time for evidence to establish when and how Drower gave the DC to the Bodleian. Finally, in 2003, with the kind help of Mrs Doris Nicholson from the Bodleian library staff, I was able to find the answer recorded in 'The Annual Report of the Curators of the Bodleian Library for 1958-9' in the section 'Donation' on p. 16. This section reads as follows:

The most notable donation of the year has been that of the Drower collection of Mandaean manuscripts. Lady Drower, who is the foremost authority on the Mandaean sect and has edited or translated many of her manuscripts, has for some years allowed the latter to remain on deposit in the Library, and has made no secret of her intention that they should ultimately pass into its possession. She has now formally effected the gift, and the thanks of the University were expressed in a decree.

entitled *Qadaha Rba* and *Dmutha Kushta*. Both of these had been referred to in her important book *The Mandaean of Iraq and Iran*, in which she stated:

Other manuscripts which I know to exist but have yet to see are ... the *Qadaha Rba*; and the *Dmutha Kushta*.⁷

The above quotation reveals not only her awareness of the existence of these MSS but interestingly, too, some confusion regarding the title of the ‘two’ scrolls and their misspelling. These two scrolls are, in fact, a single scroll, though for many years it was thought by many scholars, even by Mandaeans themselves, that they were two separate scrolls. The two scrolls that were respectively called ‘*Qadaha Rba*’ and *Dmuth(a) Kušta* were actually one scroll entitled *Diwan Qadaha Rba d-Dmuth Kušta = DQRDK* ‘The Scroll of the Great Creation of the Image/Likeness of Truth’.

The confusion about this scroll probably exists because the scroll is variously referred to by Mandaeans and by the priests in a shortened form as *Qadaha (Rba)* and rarely as *Dmuth (Kušta)*, probably because they have not been taught or studied its contents according to the Naṣōraean way. As a result, Lady Drower mistook the terms as representing two different scrolls when she made the first reference to the work of *DQRDK* in *MII* in 1937, and her misattribution was followed by many Western scholars.

With the publication of Drower’s work on the Mandaean writings in 1953, sixteen years after publishing *MII*, she repeated the mistake in her article ‘A Mandaean Bibliography’. Here, she concluded her article regarding *DQRDK* with the statement:

To conclude this article and for the benefit of future collectors I give the name of the two manuscripts which I failed to charm out of the tenacious old gentleman in Southern Persia.

They are Diwan *Qadaha Rba* and *Dmuth Kušta*. I saw a copy of one, and amongst the illustrations was a delightfully formalized drawing of a bee, holiest of insects.⁸

⁷ E. S. Drower, *The Mandaean of Iraq and Iran: Their Cults, Customs, Magic, Legends and Folklore* (Hereafter *MII*), Oxford UP, Oxford, 1937. p. 28-9.

At the beginning of her article, she also referred to these two scrolls and to the same aged man in South Persia, about whom she also gave some telling information:

It was my good fortune to amass by degrees from the priests [a] goodly number of scrolls and codices, and these are passing gradually into the keeping of the Bodleian Library, Oxford. I think that I reached what is vulgarly known as ‘the bottom of the bag’ except for two scrolls, both ritual, preserved as an heirloom by an aged man in South Persia. He is of priestly birth, and refuses either to sell or to allow them to be photographed. They were copied lately by a *ganzibra*⁹ living in Basra,¹⁰ but modern copies are so often careless that I have not entered into negotiations for these.¹¹

Her initial mistake in *MII* is understandable. However, it is difficult to understand why she mentioned them again as two scrolls in this later article. After spending more time with the Mandaean religious communities and attending many important occasions and ceremonies (eg. *Traša d-Tarmida*), she must have learnt that this ceremony—this ‘initiation and consecration/coronation of the Mandaean Priest’ with his *Rbai* (Master/Initiator) and other priests—requires the initiate’s master to collect all the available Mandaean scriptures and put them in the ‘*Ndiruna*¹² as an essential preparation

⁸ E. S. Drower, ‘A Mandaean Bibliography’, *JRAS*, 1953, p. 39.

⁹ *ganzibra* pronounced *ganzovra* in the Iraqi Mandaic accent and *ganzura* (in the Iranian-Mandaic accent): lit. means ‘treasurer’. But it also could be the seal of the treasurer. It means the person who holds the seal. Originally, it might also be derived from the following two words: *ginza + abra* (lit. crossing over, traversing, passing over or through), after which one *a* was deleted from the middle. The meaning could be the crosser of the *Ginza* (treasure). It refers to the Mandaean priest who completes the study of *Ginza*, the holy book. This clergyman is the high priest. He is the ecclesiastical rank above that of Tarmida (priest). He is equivalent to the patriarch, archbishop. The *Ganzibra* is necessary for most of the Mandaean ceremonies, i.e. *masiqta*, marriage, the consecration of the *Tarmida*. Cf. *MD*, pp. 77a, b, 4a; *MII*, Ind; *AM*, p. 67 n. 1; *MG*, p. 51: bottom.

¹⁰ I assume that this *Ganzibra* is (Sheikh) Negm, the high Mandaean priest in Basrah, Iraq. During my Coronation Ceremony ‘*Traša*’, in 1991 I was able to steal a brief look at the modern copy of *Ganzibra* Negm’s *DQRDK*, and I was able to read a few paragraphs and check parts of his short zhara. Comparing with the original copy, i.e. *DQRDK*, it seems that *Ganzibra* Negm’s *DQRDK* copy was full of misspellings and careless illustrations, as far as I can remember.

¹¹ *Ibid.* p. 34.

¹² *Ndiruna* is a ritual and liturgical Mandaean term. It refers to the special reed hut chamber that is used mainly in two important ceremonies Marriage and Consecration, the *Šuailia* ‘novice’ into the priesthood to become a *Tarmida*. Usually it represents the earthly world. See *MII*, pp. 28, 63ff., 149ff.; *MD*, pp. 26a, 353a; Buckley, ‘The Making of a Mandaean Priest: The Tarmida Initiation’, *Numen*, 32, 185, pp. 194-217.

for the ceremony. Furthermore, in her letter of 1951 to Sheikh (*Ganzibra*) Negm, which she wrote after she had seen a copy of this scroll and had perhaps examined the whole scroll, she referred to it as one scroll in the opening sentence, lines 5-6:

One roll has just arrived, it is the Admuth Kushta Qadaha Rabba.

Her statement was made in 1953 and evidence from her correspondence of 1937 and 1951 (above) reveals some interesting inconsistencies.

We know from various sources, including the Mandaean priests and the community in Iraq, as well as from the exchange of letters¹³ between Sheikh Negm and Drower, that she had asked Sheikh Negm at various times to purchase for her good and old Mandaean manuscripts.¹⁴ Regarding this Mandaean priest, Buckley says:

He was one of Lady Drower's primary procurers of Mandaean manuscripts, and about half of the 54 documents comprising the Drower Collection¹⁵ in the Bodleian Library at Oxford University are results of his efforts to secure texts.¹⁶

As we mentioned earlier, these two manuscripts, i.e. *Diwan Qadaha Rba* and *Dmuth Kušta*, were, according to Drower's statement in 1953, in the possession of a tenacious old Mandaean gentleman who was living in Southern Persia.¹⁷ Furthermore, we know from Drower's letter of 1951 that she had already read that manuscript and neglected to purchase it as 'one roll'. Then, in 1953, she wrote that she failed to charm these two manuscripts from that old Persian Mandaean.¹⁸

Curiously, in 1954, *DQRDK* appears in the Bodleian Library Record as one manuscript, carrying the complete title, but side by side with another separate manuscript

¹³ For these correspondence letters, consult Buckley, J, 'The Mandaean Correspondence,' pp. 55-60.

¹⁴ Ibid. See also Drower, 'A Mandaean Bibliographies,' p. 34.

¹⁵ That is DC. See p. 14 n. 6, above.

¹⁶ Buckley, 'The Mandaean Correspondence', p. 55.

¹⁷ See Drower, 'A Mandaean Bibliography', p. 39; Buckley, 'The Mandaean Correspondence', pp. 55ff.

called *Divan (Diwan/Diuan) Razia d-Abahata*.¹⁹ In addition, the Bodleian Record stated that these two manuscripts were noted in E. S. Drower's 'A Mandaean Bibliography' of 1953. The Bodleian Library Record reports the following:

Divan Qdaha Rba d Dmuth Kušta, a Mandaean ritual text, copied in 1818 (MS. Asiat. misc. c.12 (R)); and *Divan Razia d Abahata*, another text of a similar nature, copied in 1823 (MS. Asiat. misc. c.13 (R)). These two texts are noted in Dr. E. S. Drower's 'Mandaean Bibliography' (*J.R.A.S.*, 1953, p.39) as the only two items in Mandaean literature of which no copies have hitherto reached Europe, and it is through her kind offices that the Library has been enabled to acquire these two rolls. Both are lavishly illustrated with a highly stylized drawings characteristic of Mandaean manuscripts.²⁰

This record does not mention from whom Drower bought these manuscripts, nor does it record the name of the original owner. We now see the scroll correctly named as one in the title, yet again there is a misspelling in the title of *DQRDK*, which is confusing.²¹ There is also an error in the writers' understanding of the nature of *DQRDK* and its relation to *DRA*.²² Furthermore, there is confusion in this record because we know from Drower's article²³ that:

(i) The two items could not be *Divan Qdaha Rba d Dmuth Kušta* and *Divan Razia d Abahatha*²⁴ because these two manuscripts are in reality in one roll²⁵ and the acquired manuscripts are recorded as two physically separate scrolls.

¹⁸ Drower, *ibid.*; Buckley, *ibid.*, pp. 55, 57, 60.

¹⁹ That is, *DRA*.

²⁰ *The Bodleian Library Record*, vol. V, Charles Batey, Oxford, 1954-56, pp. 167-8.

²¹ Again, there is misspelling in the title of the former one: Qadaha is spelt Qdaha.

²² We can consider the later scroll as a Mandaean ritual text. However, it is not 'similar' to *DQRDK*, because *DQRDK* is not a ritual but rather a theological (or theogonic) cosmogonical text. Regarding the nature of the two scrolls, it seems that the record of the Bodleian depends on Drower's description, rather than on an accurate analysis. Cf. Drower, 'A Mandaean Bibliography', p. 34.

²³ In the record mentioned above, we find that it presents the title of her article without 'A'. See, *The Bodleian Library Record*, p. 167; Drower, 'A Mandaean Bibliography'.

²⁴ Cf. Drower, *ibid.* p. 39.

²⁵ The roll of these two manuscripts is the same roll that Drower received in 1951, and which she mentioned in her letter to Sheikh Negm. In addition, *DQRDK* represents the same 'two' manuscripts that

(ii) No mention is made that the two manuscripts are ‘the only two ... of which no copies have hitherto reached Europe’.²⁶

(iii) The two items are not the only ones that are missing from the European libraries. There are few other Mandaean manuscripts in existence today which are only in private libraries and have never been made generally available.

These inconsistencies raise several questions.

(i) What does the ‘two’ mean? Does it refer to two separate scrolls or does it mean two in one (*DQRDK*)?

(ii) Why did Drower in her article of 1953 give the names of two manuscripts when it was known from her letter of 1951, that she knew the two names of these manuscripts represented one title of one manuscript, that is, *DQRDK*?

(iii) Why did she mention in that article that she had failed to charm the ‘two’ out of the man whom she described as ‘the tenacious old gentleman in Southern Persia’ when she apparently had succeeded in doing just that as the scroll appears in the Bodleian in 1954?

(iv) Did the inaccuracy and confusion occur in that record of the Bodleian?

(v) Did the roll that Drower received from Sheikh Negm in 1951 contain only one manuscript, or did it contain more? If more, was she aware of this fact?

(vi) Did Drower really return that roll to Sheikh Negm, as she had promised him in her letter of 1951, or did she keep and purchase it from Sheikh Negm and send him the money instead, as she had done before?

were noted mistakenly in Drower’s ‘A Mandaean Bibliography’. The Bodleian Library has purchased these two manuscripts through Drower’s generosity.

²⁶ *The Bodleian Library Record*, p. 167.

(vii) Did she return it to Sheikh Negm and later ask him to send it back to her, whereupon she purchased it and sent the money to him?

(viii) Did she receive and purchase the other two rolls/manuscripts that were mentioned in both Drower's and Sheikh Negm's letters?

(ix) How many rolls and manuscripts were in the hands of Sheikh Negm and the original owner, the Persian Mandaean person, and what were they?

(x) What is the meaning behind the inaccuracy and the mistakes appearing in her article, 'A Mandaean Bibliography'?

(xi) Why is there no mention of *DRA*, which is in the same roll of *DQRDK*, in any publication or record or even in Drower's and Sheikh Negm's letters, until the year 1954, when it is mentioned with *DQRDK* in the Bodleian Library Record?

Some of these questions cannot be answered definitely. However, some general theories might explain what happened.

For a start, Drower was probably looking for three manuscripts (scrolls) to purchase. They may have been:

- (a) *Diwan Qadaha Rba*
- (b) *Diwan Dmuth Kušta*
- (c) *Alf(u)Trisar Šuialia*²⁷

In all likelihood, they must have been important to her, especially the first two, since she did not see or know their contents, as she mentioned in *MII*, pp. 28-9. She apparently asked Sheikh Negm to find and purchase good copies for her, because she was living in London at that time. Sheikh Negm found them in the possession of the old Persian Mandaean. Sheikh Negm examined these three manuscripts and found them to be

in good condition, and offered to negotiate with the owner on her behalf to purchase them for her. Sheikh Negm obtained these manuscripts from the owner for her inspection, probably with great help from his brother Sheikh Yahia who was spending some time in Persia, as mentioned in Sheikh Negm's letter of 1950 to Drower,²⁸ answering some of her previous inquiries.

In that letter, the translator called these three manuscripts three 'books',²⁹ which were understood by Drower to be three rolls. In fact, all these three manuscripts exist in just two rolls. This fact may explain the confusion in her letter of 1951. Having received one roll from Sheikh Negm in 1951, not the three she expected, she mentioned³⁰ in her reply to Sheikh Negm 'the other two rolls'³¹ that remain with the owner and/or the Sheikh. It is evident that the roll that Drower received and referred to is *DQRDK*, for she wrote:

'One roll has just arrived, it is the Admuth Kushta Qdaha Rabba'.³²

It is also evident from her reply that she did not realize that both of the first two titles listed in Sheikh Negm's letter (a and b above) represent one manuscript. Interestingly, Drower also did not mention the other manuscript which is attached to the *DQRDK* manuscript in the same roll. It is possible that she did not know about the other manuscript, but it would be expected that a specialist scholar like Drower would recognize that there were two different manuscripts in that roll.³³

²⁷ See appendix B, Sheikh Negm's letter of 1950, lines 17-22.

²⁸ See *ibid.*, lines 22-5, 29-30.

²⁹ Probably because Sheikh Negm's scribe translated them as books rather than as (sc)rolls.

³⁰ See appendix B, Lady Drower's letter of 1951, lines 5-6.

³¹ See *ibid.*, ff. 28-30.

³² See *ibid.*, lines 5-6.

³³ The roll was available to scholars for study and examination just a few years later in the Bodleian Library, Oxford.

In her letter of 1951, Drower expressed her disappointment with the condition of the roll that she took to be entitled ‘Admuth Kushta Qdaha Rabba’. However, close examination of the roll, suggests that almost all her points, such as the misspellings, lack of clarity in the writing, and the lack of information in the colophon, were probably more applicable to the other manuscript, i.e. *DRA*, because *DQRDK* is not nearly as faulty as Drower tried to suggest in her letter.³⁴ In fact, the *DQRDK* manuscript is in good condition and seems like ‘it is correctly copied in all details’, as Sheikh Negm assured Drower in a letter (now missing) to which Drower refers.³⁵ All this may indicate that Drower was a good haggler who may have criticized the rolls to reduce their price. Whatever the case may be, Drower later clearly bought that roll as well as the remaining roll(s) from the owner through Sheikh Negm. The roll that is known as *Alf (u)Turisar Šuialia* also appears later as DC 6 in the Bodleian Library Record.

The confusion of the naming of the *DQRDK* Scroll, whatever its cause, necessitates a detailed reconsideration of at least two of the letters discussed by J. Buckley. These letters discuss the matter of purchasing the “two” scrolls, Qadaha Rba and Dmuth̄ Kušta, and two other scrolls.

The Letter from Sheikh Negm to Lady Drower of February 1950

The letter from Sheikh Negm to Drower on February 1950³⁶ is considered to be Sheikh Negm’s last letter to Drower in the collection of J. Buckley.³⁷ This letter was written in response to a previous letter from Drower.³⁸ In that letter, Drower may have

³⁴ See appendix B, Lady Drower’s letter of 1951.

³⁵ See *ibid.*, lines 12 ff.

³⁶ See appendix B, Sheikh Negm’s letter of 1950.

³⁷ Buckley, ‘A Mandaean Correspondence’, pp. 55, 59f.

³⁸ We don’t have this letter. This is probably because the letter is in the possession of his son Rabbi Abdulla as part of his father’s inherited treasure, which we hope will become available to academics and the public one day.

exerted her efforts to obtain the book(s) or manuscripts that she had requested earlier. It may well be that Drower and Sheikh Negm had discussed previously the terms of the purchase and the means of transportation to England. Here, Sheikh Negm appears to have misinterpreted Drower. He took her as meaning that she wanted him to return the book *Aspar Malwašia*³⁹ which she had sent him, probably as a gift if Buckley is right in her analysis of this. Buckley says:

Drower has inquired about a book, which Sheikh Negm takes to be *Sfar Malwašia*⁴⁰ and which Drower published in 1949. Sheikh Negm thinks that Drower wants this book back (which I cannot quite believe). I think he misinterprets her, and that Drower really is referring to another book, one she wishes to buy. In any case, the book(s) are in the care of a fellow-priest, Sheikh Yahia,⁴¹ who is in Iran and will not be back in Iraq for a long time.⁴²

From the same letter, we learn that Drower had previously wanted to receive from him certain books, i.e. three manuscripts. Replying to her, Sheikh Negm wrote:

You say about the *Diwan Dimouth Khoôhta, wa diwân dasfir Owaly, wa Diwan Kadâha rabâlm*, all these books are at Sheikh Yihia hand but as soon as I get them I will send it back to you.⁴³

Buckley reads the title of the manuscripts slightly differently when she comments on this paragraph:

Drower is interested in these texts: *Diwan Dimouth Khoota, Diwan Dasfir Owaly*, and *Diwan Kadaha Rab Alm*. I cannot identify the first or the third, but *Alf Trisar Šuialia* may hide behind the garbled title of the

³⁹ See *AM*; Buckley, 'The Mandaean Correspondence', p. 59, n. 14.

⁴⁰ The usual form of this book is *Aspar Malwašia*. See *AM*, pp. 1, 6-7; *MD*, pp.29a, 356b, 334b, 335a, where it is pronounced 'Asfar Malwaisia'. Sheikh Negm's letter of 1950 (line 18) also contains 'Asfar' instead of 'Sfar'.

⁴¹ Sheikh Yahia in fact is Sheikh Negm's brother. It seems that he was acting on behalf of Sheikh Negm to obtain Mandaean manuscripts from the Mandaeans in Persia, including the Persian old person who appears in Drower's article and in the correspondence, and Sheikh Abdulla Khafagy, the head of the community in Iran at that time.

⁴² Buckley, 'A Mandaean Correspondence', p. 59.

⁴³ See appendix B, Sheikh Negm's letter of 1950, lines 19-24.

second one. All three are with Sheikh Yahia, says Sheikh Negm, but he will too send them to Drower as soon as he can.⁴⁴

However, it is more likely that Sheikh Negm's English scribe mistranslated these titles. His letter has many English misspellings and grammatical mistakes. For example, the scribe spelt the word 'Sheikh' as 'Sheisk',⁴⁵ and at the end, it is rendered as 'Sheiskh'.⁴⁶ This may have occurred because he had never heard of these Mandaic titles before, or because he is somewhat careless as shown, or because of Sheikh Negm's speech impediment (he could not pronounce some letters clearly, as he was a lisper and had a harsh speaking voice).⁴⁷ In addition, he was an elderly man who spoke the Southern rural Iraqi Arabic dialect. All of these factors could have caused confusion in interpretation.

Based on the above notes, I believe that the three titles are really as follows:

- (i) *Diwan Dmuth Kušṭa* -- pronounced: *diwan, edmūth kušṭa*
- (ii) *Diwan Alf (u-)Trisar Šuialia* -- pronounced: *diwan alf (we-) trissar šoyalye*
- (iii) *Diwan Qadaha Rba* -- pronounced: *diwan qadāha rabba.*

Buckley identified the second title and it is likely that she is correct in her surmise. This work bears the number DC 6 in the catalogue.⁴⁸ This was confirmed to me by the Bodleian Library staff during a personal visit I made to the library. They said that DC 6 had been given to their library in 1958 by Drower.⁴⁹ This would indicate that after Drower had received one roll in May 1951, she received the other roll of *Alf Trisar Šuialia*. She later gave it to the Bodleian Library, where it was labelled DC 6.

⁴⁴ Buckley, 'A Mandaean Correspondence', pp. 59-60.

⁴⁵ See appendix B, Sheikh Negm's letter of 1950, lines 14, 23, 30.

⁴⁶ Ibid., line 37.

⁴⁷ I personally met and heard him. His son, Rabbi Abdullah, also lisps.

⁴⁸ See Buckley, 'A Mandaean Correspondence', pp. 59-60, and p. 60, n. 15.

The text of DC 6 is an incomplete but valuable copy of the *Alf Trisar Šuialia*, written in several hands. The date of one part is 969 A.H.⁵⁰ A summary of the contents was published by the RA (from DC 6 and DC 36).⁵¹ This is an old copy compared with other Mandaean MSS. Drower was always looking for old manuscripts and that is what Sheikh Negm tried to purchase for her. Buckley could not identify the first or the third titles, and she states that these two scrolls are not in the Bodleian Library, nor is the scroll of '*Admuth Kushta Qdaha Rabba*'.⁵² This latter scroll is referred to, as is seen below, in Drower's letter to Sheikh Negm, as the major issue.

It appears on closer examination that Buckley is mistaken in four things:

(i) In spite of the clear similarities between these three titles in her reading of Sheikh Negm's and Drower's letters, i.e., *Diwan Dimouth Khoôhta, wa diwân dasfir Owaly, wa Diwan Kadâha rabâlm*, Buckley considers them as three separate scrolls. In fact, they are two scrolls.

(ii) In 1994, Buckley states that the scroll of *Admuth Kushta Qdaha Rabba* 'is not in the Bodleian (and neither are the so-called *Diwan Dimouth Khoota* and *the Diwan Kadaha Rab Alm*, as far as I can tell).'⁵³ This statement is incorrect for this scroll has been preserved in the Bodleian Library since 1954.⁵⁴ Perhaps Buckley only searched the MSS of the DC. In addition, Buckley did not seem to have consulted Drower's *MII*, pp.

⁴⁹ Also see p. 14 n. 6, above and p. 35 n. 85, below.

⁵⁰ A.H. stands for "after hegira" (migration). This refers to the Muslim calendar and the Muslim era. The Muslim era is considered to have started when Muhammad migrated from Mecca (his original city) to Yathreb (Medina), where he became ruler on July 16, 622 of the Western calendar. The Muslim era is considered to have officially started on the above date.

⁵¹ I am grateful to Mrs Doris Nicholson from the Bodleian Library, who kindly provided me with various lists of MSS of the DC, which contain some of this information. One of the lists is written in Drower's hand. See also Drower, E. S., *The Thousand and Twelve Questions: A Mandaean Text* (hereafter *ATS*), Akademie Verlag, Berlin, 1960.

⁵² See Buckley, 'A Mandaean Correspondence', p. 60.

⁵³ *Ibid.*

28-9, and ‘A Mandaean Bibliography’, p. 39. Had she done so when she wrote the article, she would probably have discovered the similarities and how complicated the matter was. It was not until 1996 that she found this scroll in the Bodleian.⁵⁵

(iii) She states in her comment on Drower’s letter to Sheikh Negm that Drower “has received one roll from him”.⁵⁶ It is here argued that she may have received the two scrolls mentioned before, specifically:

(a) *Adamuth Kushta Qdaha Rabba* = *Qadaha Rba d-Dmuth Kušta* = *DQRDK*

(b) *DRA*, housed (like *DQRDK*) in the Bodleian Library, but not with the MSS DC 6. This scroll was also written by the copyist of *DQRDK*, *Yahia Ram Zihrun* in 1823. However, this scroll is glued on the end of *DQRDK* no doubt by the copyist, and until now they have been kept as one roll in the Bodleian.⁵⁷

(iv) Buckley also states that after Drower received the roll of *Admuth Kushta Qdaha Rabba*, she returned it to Sheikh Negm “in disappointment.”⁵⁸ Buckley concludes from this: “[a]s a result, this scroll is not in the Bodleian”.⁵⁹ Later, after finding this scroll in the Bodleian, Buckley writes regarding her article mentioned above, that she has

⁵⁴ See, *The Bodleian Library Record*, 1954, pp. 167-8.

⁵⁵ As she told me in her kind email of 12 April 1999. Buckley’s recent publication of 2002 also mentioned *DQRDK* in the following places of her *M*, pp. 16, nn. 67, 70. On p. 16 she recorded her three finds of 1996, among which *DQRDK* was the first. She confirms that many scrolls ‘attain no mention in scholarly works...’. This seems to be inaccurate insofar as *DQRDK* is concerned. Both Drower and Macuch used and quoted from *DQRDK* many times in their *MD*. See p. 37 n. 93, below. In addition, Buckley’s record provides an inaccurate title and translation for *DQRDK*’s original title. Regarding the difficulties that Buckley faced in finding the correct name and the correct translation of the title of *DQRDK* in her recent publication, consult 2.3, below.

⁵⁶ Buckley, ‘A Mandaean Correspondence’, in p. 60.

⁵⁷ In her email of 27 May 1999, Buckley was kind enough to explain in reply to my question why some cut-off illustrations appear at the end of the copy of *DQRDK* that she sent me.

⁵⁸ Buckley, ‘A Mandaean Correspondence’, p. 60.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, loc. cit.

changed her mind about her findings in 1996 and has “other things to say about it [ie. the scroll] now.”⁶⁰

The Letter from Lady Drower to Sheikh Negm of 14 May 1951

The letter from Drower to Sheikh Negm dated 14 May 1951⁶¹ is the only letter from Drower to Sheikh Negm which is in the possession of Buckley.⁶² Here, Drower was disappointed and angry, and the letter was written in an ‘unhappy tone’.⁶³ Buckley comments on Drower’s letter as follows:

Her letter is stern, explaining that the condition of the scroll does not measure up to her standard: there is no colophon and misspellings occur. ‘I cannot think that you would make such mistakes, so that perhaps the manuscript itself was written by a *yalufa* who was careless, or one who did not know the language very well.’ To ensure that Sheikh Negm will understand the import of this letter, Drower addresses it to him in care of the American Mission, where he can have the letter translated. ‘I had hoped that I might make an offer to the owner of the roll that might have tempted him to part with his rolls, and that he might have taken the copies instead’.⁶⁴

A careful examination of both Drower’s letter and the roll which arrived to her from Sheikh Negm points to some conclusions which can be drawn regarding the following selections from Drower’s letter:

1: In lines 9-11 of the letter, Drower says:

I noticed that it does not have the usual *ansa min* part which is important as it establishes the origin of a writing.

Buckley seems to have misinterpreted these lines of Drower. She finds that ‘there is no colophon’⁶⁵ in the (sc)roll. In her statement, Buckley has relied only on Drower’s

⁶⁰ Private correspondence of 12 April 1999. Also see n. 55, above, and 2.2, below.

⁶¹ See appendix B, Lady Drower’s letter of 1951.

⁶² See Buckley, ‘A Mandaean Correspondence’, pp. 55, 60.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 60.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, loc. cit.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, loc. cit.

letter because she had not seen the (sc)roll, believing it was not in the Bodleian and that Drower had returned it to Sheikh Negm.

Interestingly, the scroll does have a colophon. It is in *DQRDK*, 127-163. The colophon is the same standard as most of the available Mandaean scrolls, especially those that exist in the Bodleian Library. Furthermore, it has the acceptable usual *ansa min* form.⁶⁶ Thus, Drower seems to be incorrect in her objection on this point, since Sheikh Negm actually seems to have chosen a good copy.

There are only two explanations for Drower's argument with Sheikh Negm: she had either examined the roll superficially and had not studied it thoroughly, or was not referring to the colophon of the *DQRDK* but was referring to the colophon of the other scroll, that is *DRA*, which is glued to *DQRDK* in the same roll that first reached her. The latter explanation is favoured because *DRA* has a short and poor colophon, and Drower probably considered that these two scrolls represented two parts of one scroll,⁶⁷ which she called incorrectly: *Admuth Kushta Qdaha Rabba*. The way she wrote this title in her letter could be seen to support both explanations. It may be said that she took the first part of this title, which consists of two words, 'Admuth Kushta', from *DQRDK* line 5, ie. *Dmuth Kušta*. Drower begins with the letter A, probably because she was unfamiliar to beginning a title with *d-*, which is in the original document, ie. *DQRDK* 5.⁶⁸ The other part of her title also consists of two words, *Qdaha Rabba*, which she might have taken from *DQRDK*, line 11, *Qadaha Rba*.

⁶⁶ See *DQRDK*, 127-150.

⁶⁷ Like *ATŠ* consists of several parts even if some carried the title of Diwan, eg. *DTP*.

⁶⁸ She may also have begun her title with the letter 'A' to help pronounce the first consonant letter, i.e. 'D'. However, for most of Drower's written pronunciations for the words that begin with two consistent letters, she has never vocalized the first consonant with the sound of the letter 'A' before it, although Mandaic pronunciation in this case usually requires the sound of /a/ at the beginning, as for the word *brak*

It can thus be concluded that:

(i) Drower did not spell and probably did not vocalize the first word, ie. *Qdaha*, correctly. It should be like the original, *Qadaha*.

(ii) She did not join these two parts together and her title remains without significant meaning.

(iii) In fact, she reversed these two parts, perhaps because she found the first one in the original document of *DQRDK*, and also because she did not know what to call it. This is because both of these two parts, in the original document, are followed by the word *šumH* ('its name'), so that we find in *DQRDK* line 5: *Dmuth Kušša šumH*, 'its name is *Dmuth Kušša*', and in *DQRDK* line 11: *Qadaha Rba šumH*, 'its name is *Qadaha Rba*'. The same problem of identifying the right title faced Buckley. In 2002, she provided a translation to a title that is not appropriate for *DQRDK*.⁶⁹

To explain why Drower (and Buckley) could not figure out the right title or its parts in the correct order, the complete title needs to be sought in the proper place. In most Mandaean scrolls, and even in the codices, it is usually written at the end in the colophon. It is written in *DQRDK* line 151 where we read: *diuan qadaha rba d- dmut kušša*, 'the scroll of *Qadaha Rba d- Dmuth Kušša*'. Considering her statement in her letter and the issues raised above, it appears that Drower looked at the whole roll as one. Instead of looking at the long colophon in *DQRDK*, she focused on the very short colophon of *DRA*.⁷⁰ From the way that Drower writes the title of the roll in her letter, it

pronounced *ebrakh*. See Hathem Saed (Brikha Nasoraia) and N. Badawi, *Introduction to the Mandaic Grammar*, Al-Adib Al-Baghadadiah, Baghdad, 1993, p. 12 n.2.

⁶⁹ See 2. 3, below.

⁷⁰ The second part of the roll which she kept silent about and never referred to by its name in her letters, or, it would seem, in her publication. *DRA* has not been mentioned in any previous publication of any scholar. It has only been found recorded in *The Bodleian Library Record*, 1954, p. 167.

may be concluded that she did not examine the roll with sufficient thoroughness. She may have been confused or unaware that the two scrolls—ie. *Diwan Qadaha Rba* and *Dmuth Kušša*—which she mentioned many times in her publications and in her letters and discussions with Sheikh Negm and other Mandaeans, are in fact one scroll. Therefore, it appears that the interested parties, including Drower, Sheikh Negm, and his brother Sheikh Yahia, the Persian Mandaean who sold the roll and many other manuscripts, were also ignorant of this fact, like most Mandaean priests and laymen were at that time.⁷¹

Personally, I have never heard any Mandaean priest or laity call this scroll by the full title. The full title of the scroll is known as *DQRDK*, but the Mandaean custom is to abbreviate the title by referring to the first part of *Qadaha (Rba)*. The second part, i.e. *Dmuth Kušša*, seems to them strange.

2. In lines 12-14 of the letter, Drower writes:

You assure me that it is correctly copied in all details. If this is really so, then I am sorry, for it is of very little worth.⁷²

From these lines, we know that there has been a previous letter from Sheikh Negm to Drower regarding this roll, in which he assures her ‘that it is correctly copied in all details’.⁷³

In order to ascertain who is right, Drower’s and Sheikh Negm’s accounts need to be examined in greater depth. It is arguable that they are right and wrong at the same time. Each of them has apparently looked at the roll from a different perspective. Drower

⁷¹ See *MII*, pp. 28-9; Drower, ‘A Mandaean Bibliography,’ p. 39. See appendix B, Sheikh Negm’s letter of 1950; See appendix B, Lady Drower’s letter of 1951.

⁷² See appendix B, Lady Drower’s letter of 1951.

⁷³ Her final words are extremely critical of the roll.

considered it one manuscript (roll) and called it '*Admuth Kushta Qdaha Rabba*',⁷⁴ while Sheikh Negm considered it two rolls, i.e. manuscripts/scrolls in one roll. He called them books (i.e. scrolls)⁷⁵ and named them as follows:

(i) *Diwan Dimouth Khoota* (ie. *Diwan Dmouth Kušta*)

(ii) *Diwan Kadaha Rabalm* (ie. *Diwan Qadaha Rba*)

However, Drower's and Sheikh Negm's titles represent only one manuscript—*DQRDK*, i.e. the first part of the roll. The second part is *DRA*.

Apparently, Drower has concentrated her criticism on the second part of the roll—*DRA*. The shortness of the colophon of this scroll surely suggests that it is incomplete compared with other scrolls. More importantly, when the formal preface or beginning of this *Diwan* is read, it is found that the copyist (*Yahia Ram Zihrun*) has bequeathed a note to future readers. Here, he emphasizes strongly and clearly that there is an error and missing parts in this copy, not because of him but because of the original from which he is copying i.e. the copy of *Yahia Yuhana Br Šarat Mamania*,⁷⁶ who also copied it from the flawed copy of *Rbai Mhatam Br Yahia* who said about his copy: 'This scroll was cut off at its beginning and at its end'.⁷⁷ All those three copyists confirmed this statement in their copies. This leads us to conclude that it is quite possible that this error and the missing parts occurred, were recognized and were mentioned many centuries ago.

⁷⁴ See appendix B, Lady Drower's letter of 1951, lines 5-6.

⁷⁵ Probably because of Sheikh Nejm's English scribe.

⁷⁶ Rabbi Yahia Yuhana, his father's name is 'Adam-Zihrun', was a high priest 'Ganzibra'. He did the same thing at the beginning of *Diwan Mašbuta d-Hibil Ziwa*, (Hereafter *DMHZ*). He said: 'I copied from the manuscript of Rabbi Zihrun son of Adam-Yuhana'. He said: 'The beginning of this (scroll) was cut off; but all that there was, I wrote down'. See E.S. Drower, *The Haran Gawaita and The Baptism of Hibil-Ziwa* (Hereafter *HGBHZ*), *Stude e Testi* 176, Vatican City, 1953, p. 30, and pp. 85-6. Also see, 4. 2, below; *HGBHZ*, pp. x f., 3, 22f., 30 f.; E.S. Drower, *A Pair of Naşoraeen Commentaries (Two Priestly documents). The Great 'First World' and the Lesser 'First World* (Hereafter *PNC*), E. J. Brill, Leiden 1962, pp. 54 f; *DRA*, 2-5, and especially, line 4.

⁷⁷ *DRA*, 4; consult also lines 2-5.

This observation is likely to have been made by copyists who preceded those (latest) three copyists, who, in fact were copying one another and not making an original comment, following the traditional Mandaean rule of copying strictly and not adding anything. This is the case not only in relation to this document; it also occurs in a similar way with the last four copyists of *DMHZ*⁷⁸ and in other forms, in some other documents, such as *Diwan Haran Gauaita*⁷⁹ and *Diwan Alma Rišaia Zuṭa*.⁸⁰

At the end of the *DRA*, in the last line before the colophon, *Yahia Ram Zihrun* repeats that this scroll is without beginning and end and this causes the copyist to pray for forgiveness. When Drower read this, she may have thought the whole roll was not copied in all details. *DQRDK*, the first manuscript on the roll, by contrast, has been copied in satisfactory detail. Even though Sheikh Negm read the main part carefully, he might not have paid sufficient attention to the beginning and the end, which is before the colophon of the second part, the part which might have disappointed Lady Drower. In spite of Drower's assertion, however, the copyist of both *DQRDK* and *DRA* seems to be reliable, honest, and to some extent, precise in his copying. His note at the beginning and at the end of *DRA* may be seen as a testimony of his good character and humility. In addition, the latter *Diwan* is very rare in the Mandaean private collections. It is the only one that exists in public world libraries, as far as can be determined. It was written by a reliable copyist before 1831. All the Mandaean priests and the new priests, who have been

⁷⁸ See n. 74, above.

⁷⁹ Hereafter *HG*. For example see *HGBHZ*, pp. x f., 3, 22f., 30 f

⁸⁰ Hereafter *ARZ*. For example see *PNC*, pp. 54 f.

consecrated after that date, took many years to learn all the Mandaean and Naṣoraeen crafts. Thus, it is not ‘of little worth’, as Drower has said.⁸¹

3. In lines 14-27, regarding the roll and the copyist, Drower asserts the following:

It is sadly misspelt and the writing is not clear. The spelling is to me all-important, as the sense and grammar depends upon this. To give you examples of misspelling (in English letters and Mandaic).
mashqita (drink) is spelt *mašqta*
snun (they hated) is spelt *skun*
mištarar (were formed) is spelt *maštarar*
 and there are many many more words written and spelt wrong.[sic]
 I cannot think that you would make such mistakes, so that perhaps the manuscript itself was written by a *yalufa* who was careless, or one who did not know his language very well.⁸²

Having found this to be untrue of either *DQRDK* or *DRA*, I made a thorough search through both *DQRDK* and *DRA* to check Drower’s statement. As a result, I found that:

(i) Regarding the first example, Drower wrote and spelt correctly both the English transliteration of both the correct and misspelt words (in line 18 of her letter), but wrote incorrectly the equivalent Mandaic of these two words. In line 19 instead of *mašqita* and *mašqta* Drower spelt *mašita* and *mašta*, respectively. She probably excluded the *q* – letter intentionally.⁸³

⁸¹ Regarding the existence of the scroll of *DQRDK*, Buckley kindly brought to my attention in her email of 12 April 1999: ‘In Iran the priests did not know about it until I told them’. That was during her visit to Iran in April 1996 to meet the Mandaeans there. See also Buckley, ‘Glimpses of a Life: Yahia Bihram, Mandaean Priest’, *History of Religions* 39, no. 1, 1999, p. 35 n. 7. Also Issam K. Al-Zuhairy, as a Mandaean *Yalufa*, did not know about it; thus he did not include it in his dissertation, in which he provided a long list of the Mandaean holy books. See Al-Zuhairy, ‘A Study of the Ancient Mesopotamian Roots of Mandaean Religion’(hereafter *SAMRAM*), Unpublished Thesis, University of Manchester, 1998, pp. 9-12. Also, Gündüz, Şinasi, did not mention this scroll in his dissertation in the nineties in which he included lists of Mandaean literature. See *KL*, p. 2. The Mandaeans in Iran, Al-Zuhairy and Gündüz also did not know about the other scroll, i.e. *DRA*.

⁸² Italics are mine.

⁸³ We also see on the right side of line 18 of her letter, three of the following Mandaic letters: m, a, š (the third letter half of it was illustrated). Drower may have tried to write the second Mandaic word at that place originally and then changed her mind to write it underneath, similar to the first Mandaic one.

(ii) I did not find any of the above three examples of misspelling which were listed in Drower's letter in *DQRDK*.

(iii) At the beginning I thought that the above three examples of misspelling, if not in *DQRDK*, could quite possibly be found in *DRA*. However, after checking all of *DRA*, I can confirm that none of these three words exist in *DRA*.

Consequently, it seems that Drower has been mistaken in citing the three examples. If so, then two very important questions must be raised. If these examples are not from *DQRDK* or *DRA*, then from where did Drower get these examples? And why did she ascribe the errors to *DQRDK*?

There are some misspellings in *DRA*, but Drower made no reference to *DRA*. The misspellings in *DRA* probably occurred because they were in the original copy that *Yahia Ram Zihrun* copied from, and not because he was a beginner in Mandaic or that he was careless.

In fact, the copyist, *Yahia Ram Zihrun*, was a 'great, lofty, revered and reliable *tarmida*'⁸⁴ (priest of the first rank). Moreover, he was a *Rbai*, master or teacher, who taught and initiated the *šualias*, and not a *Yalufa*,⁸⁵ as Drower suggests in line 26 of her letter.

4. In lines 28-33, Drower writes:

I do not know if the other two rolls are better, but this one, as it is now, would be of little good to any student of the language.

From the above information, it is apparent that she received a single roll as she states in line 5 of her letter, not two. It is further surmised that Drower received two scrolls in one bundle while one roll remained in the hands of the owner, the Persian

⁸⁴ See 4. 2, below.

person, and Sheikh Negm. This is probable because Sheikh Nejm mentioned three scrolls, which he and the Persian person and Sheikh Yahia named as follows: (i) *Dmuth Kušta*, (ii) *Alf Trisar Šuialia*, (iii) *Qadaha Rba*. It is arguable that the first and the third are one scroll, representing the first part of the roll that Drower received, while the second part is *DRA*, which no one has mentioned by name. Drower sold both of the scrolls to the Bodleian Library in 1954.⁸⁶ Furthermore, Drower received the only remaining roll from Sheikh Negm. This is referred to as the second book (i.e. roll) in the list of books of Sheikh Nejm's letter, and as the 'other two rolls' in Drower's letter, that is, *Alf (u)Trisar Šuialia*, which appears in the DC as DC. 6 in 1958.⁸⁷

The issues raised by Drower's seemingly contradictory and confusing statements can be summarised as follows:

(i) Drower named two manuscripts. She said: 'They are *Diwan Qadaha Rba* and *Dmuth Kušta* ... I saw a copy of one'. This part seems incorrect, for both of these manuscripts are one manuscript and comprise a single text called *Diwan Qadaha Rba d-Dmuth Kušta*.

(ii) Drower in her letter to Sheikh Negm in 1951 knew very well that both of these titles represented one manuscript. She named it '*Admuth Kushta Qdaha Rabba*'. However, this manuscript had been in her possession for about two years, when she insisted that they were two manuscripts.⁸⁸

(iii) When the two titles that she gave are read, the mistakes or misspellings that occur in both *MII*, pp. 28-29 and her letter lines 5-6 are not found. It seems she corrected

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ *The Bodleian Library Record*, pp. 167-8.

⁸⁷ See p.14 n. 6 and p. 48 n. 25, above.

⁸⁸ In 1953 in her statement.

the mistakes after she received and bought the manuscript. However, she did not connect them with 'd-' to be one title to one manuscript.

(iv) When she referred to '... the two manuscripts which I failed to charm out of the tenacious old gentleman in Southern Persia', it is probable that her statement was incorrect from the evidence of Sheikh Negm's letter and also her letter in lines 33-36. She had succeeded in 'charm[ing] out' from that Persian man not only the 'two' manuscripts but all the manuscripts that appear in Sheikh Negm's letter of 1950, including the unlisted one, *DRA*. They or *DRA* reached the Bodleian Library and appeared in its record in 1954.⁸⁹ Drower, seemingly, sold the manuscript to the Bodleian in that year. She may have bought them all in the second half of 1951.

(v) She said: 'I saw a copy of one, and amongst the illustration was a delightfully formalized drawing of a bee, holiest of insects'. Not only is this true, but Drower also saw the *two* copies, which combined to form one manuscript. However, in these lines Drower seems satisfied with these illustrations in the scroll. She described the drawing as "a delightfully formalized drawing of ---" and this statement may indicate at least some kind of contentment with something in this manuscript.

(vi) She did not mention in that statement the name of the second part in the roll in her possession, which is attached to the end of the *DQRDK* roll, i.e. *DRA*.

(vii) No one knows really why Drower made the negative conclusion she made in her statement,⁹⁰ since she had had the manuscript for a long time before the publication of her article. It may be that Drower was confused and did not fully appreciate the contents

⁸⁹ See *The Bodleian Library Record*, 1954, p. 167.

⁹⁰ Drower, 'A Mandaean Bibliography', p. 39

of the roll that she had received from Sheikh Negm in the early 1950s, or she did that for some unknown reason.

In summary, it is apparent that Drower bought these two manuscripts through Sheikh Negm with the help of his brother Sheikh Yahia, from the tenacious old gentle Persian Mandaean man who was living in Southern Persia. Furthermore, I have been unable to find out from the local Mandaean communities the name of that man who I suspect to be a descendant from the family of the Yalufa 'Stad (Master): *Aziz Dizpulia* for whom *DQRDK* was copied in 1818.⁹¹ I start to think that this person might be Sheikh Yahia himself. Drower, later in 1954, sold both of these scrolls to the Bodleian, where they are preserved now, holding neighbouring numbers. The above discussion may explain why these two manuscripts are not in the DC,⁹² 'given by Lady E.S. Drower toward the end of her long career'⁹³ in 1958.⁹⁴

In addition, Drower and Macuch included various examples and references from *DQRDK* in their Dictionary, ie. *MD*, which they refer to as 'Bodl. 12', especially the textual explanations of the illustrations. That means that both of them had studied this scroll. However, they did not include many important words, especially nouns and linguistic meanings and forms that are derived from root verbs.⁹⁵ Thus, contrary to her initial remarks, it is a good and very valuable source for scholars.

Finally, it is argued that Drower's misconceptions came to an end in 1954, the year in which she gave the whole roll to the Bodleian Library. She may have re-read and re-examined the roll to identify the exact title, the name of the copyist, the date of

⁹¹ See *DQRDK*, 129-132.

⁹² Cf. *M*, pp. 16 nn. 67, 70.

⁹³ *Ibid.* p. 16.

⁹⁴ See p. 14. 6, above.

copying, and therefore the age of the roll, the place of copying, the contents and their nature. Then she may have realized that there were two separate manuscripts in a single roll. This makes the total number of the existing manuscripts (three—two) separate scrolls that are folded together plus the one she had at the end. Thus, at that time, Drower presented to the Bodleian Library two manuscripts, *Diwan Qadaha Rba d-Dmuth Kušta* and *Diwan Razia d-Abahata* in one roll, as both of them were mentioned in the record of the Bodleian.⁹⁶

2.3 The Problem in Translating the Title of *DQRDK*

It was a surprise for me to find three references to *DQRDK* in recent publications. These references were made by Buckley. The first reference appears in her conference paper entitled, ‘The Use of Colophons and Scribal Postscripts in Envisioning Mandaean History’, presented at the ARAM conference in 1999.⁹⁷ In this paper Buckley includes *DQRDK* with some others that she called ‘esoteric-ritual commentaries’ which have old colophons:

Many Mandaean texts exemplifying what I call ‘practical thought’ patterns ... Among these documents, which may be called ‘esoteric-ritual commentaries’, these with old colophons are: ... and The Scroll of the Great Prayer of the Image of Truth. Not surprisingly, these are among the least studied documents in the entire Mandaean tradition.⁹⁸

As we can see, Buckley has seemingly repeated the previous mistake of classifying *DQRDK* as a ‘ritual’ document.⁹⁹ In addition, and most importantly,

⁹⁵ For the many references of *DQRDK* in *MD*, see Chapter 6.

⁹⁶ See p. 17 n. 19.

⁹⁷ See Buckley, ‘The Use of Colophons and Scribal Postscripts in Envisioning Mandaean History’, ARAM, 11-12, 1999-2000, pp. 281-292.

⁹⁸ Buckley, ‘The Use of Colophons’, pp. 287-88.

⁹⁹ Consult 2. 2, above.

Buckley's translation of the title of *DQRDK* was mistaken. One can assume that she translated the key word of the title, that is *qadaha* as 'prayer,' which is an incorrect translation, as we will discuss later on.

The second reference to *DQRDK* by Buckley is in her most recently published book *The Mandaean*. Her reference to *DQRDK* in this book appears with other strange mistakes. In the introduction she records her finding of *DQRDK*, as follows:¹⁰⁰

In 1996, I made a few such finds in the Bodleian Library at Oxford. First, an impressively illustrated scroll called *The scroll of Exorcism (of) the Great Name of the Lord of Greatness and the Image of Truth* is indicated as having been bought through Drower in 1954. The text's contents are unknown to me.¹⁰¹

These comments indicate that Buckley has seemingly not yet connected her Bodleian find with the correspondence between Sheikh Negm and Drower reported in Buckley's own article, 'A Mandaean Correspondence'. Apparently, she has also not consulted Drower's comments in *MII*, pp. 28-9, and "A Mandaean Bibliography" p. 39, or the *Bodleian Library Record*, vol. V, 1954-1956, pp.167-8, as mentioned earlier.

Despite her recent references to the *DQRDK* scroll, Buckley, like Drower and all other scholars, is apparently confused about the title as well as the classification of *DQRDK*.¹⁰² She has not identified the correct and complete title of the scroll; rather, she has seemingly chosen a few sentences from *DQRDK*, 11 and has mixed them uncomfortably. The mixed mistranslation of these sentences creates serious linguistic and theological mistakes.

¹⁰⁰ See also p. 26 n. 53, above.

¹⁰¹ *M*, p. 16.

¹⁰² See 2. 2

One suspects that the title Buckley offers, i.e. *The scroll of Exorcism (of) the Great Name of the Lord of Greatness and the Image of Truth*, is a translation of the following Mandaic words:

*diuan d-qadaha rba šumH d-mara d-rabuta udmuṭ kušṭa*¹⁰³

If so, Buckley's translation of these words is, however, also incorrect. For example, she omits the key word of the title of the scroll, that is *qadaha* (creation/blossoming). Instead, she inserts an alien word, that is 'Exorcism', which might be a repetition of the translation of the first word *diuan*. In this case, the word *diuan* produces two similar meanings. The first is the usual one, that is 'scroll'.¹⁰⁴ The second, rather obscure meaning of the word *diuan* could be 'exorcism, manuscript in a form of (sc)roll'.¹⁰⁵ If so, a partial explanation for her mistake is that Buckley may have read the word *qadaha* as *qmaha*. This word means 'exorcism' or 'roll of written phylactery'.¹⁰⁶ However, this does not explain fully why she presented the translation the way she did. For example, the word *rba* 'great' as an adjective for *qadaha* has been removed and the focus has been shifted to the word *šumH*. Thus, the syntactic emphasis is on *šumH* rather than *qadaha*; so instead of 'the Great *Qadaha* (Creation, Manifestation)' she translates it as 'the Great Name', which makes no sense in the real title at all and, in fact, destroys the whole meaning. Buckley's translation of the title gives a contrary impression as to the nature of *DQRDK*, that is, that the scroll may be classified as one of the Exorcism

¹⁰³ *DQRDK*, 11.

¹⁰⁴ See *MD*, p. 107a.

¹⁰⁵ Cf. P. د یوان. *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.* p. 413b.

(sc)rolls that are usually used for protection, like many other Exorcism (sc)rolls among the DC (for example, DC: 12, 40, 43, 44, 51).¹⁰⁷

In any case, this line is not the correct place to look for the complete title of the scroll,¹⁰⁸ because this line contains only the first part of the title, i.e. *diuan d-qadaha rba*. The following word *šumH* ‘its name’ concerns the previous part of the line, while the rest of the words of the line, which follow and are separated from the first part by using the particle *d-*, are not related to the title at all. They clearly contain continuing, explanatory sentences, that is, *d-mara d-rabuta udmu kušša bgauH šarara*. If we want to hold the whole picture, we can view the words in complete sentences, starting from the beginning of line 11, as follows:

hazin hu diuan d-qadaha rba šumH d-mara d-rabuta udmu kušša bgauH šarara

This *Diuan*'s name is *Qadaha Rba* (the Great Creation Manifestation/Emanation), in which *Mara d Rabuta* and *Dmu Kušša* (the Image/Likeness of Truth) were formed ...¹⁰⁹

To imagine how the translation of *DQRDK*'s title of the above (second) reference developed in the way it appears in her *M*, we most look at it first in the following third reference. This third reference appears in another previous article, in which she uses some information on the exile of the Mandaean *Ganzibras* (high priests) in Persia from *DQRDK*'s colophon.¹¹⁰ Here she refers to the title of the source of this colophon as follows:

¹⁰⁷ Cf. Buckley's notes and translation of the title of DC 12, in her *M*, p. 6 n. 16.

¹⁰⁸ For the discussion and places regarding the complete title of the scroll, see 2. 2, above; also the discussion in the 'Linguistic Remarks Regarding the Title of *DQRDK*' pp. 42 f., below.

¹⁰⁹ Consult the translation and comments on this line in chapter 6, below.

¹¹⁰ This information in fact was also interpreted by Buckley in an inaccurate way. For details see 4. 4, below.

The Scroll of the Great Exorcism (of) the Name of the Lord of Greatness
and the Image of Truth¹¹¹

As we can see, this reference contains slight differences and one less mistake than in her second reference. In the above reference, Buckley put the word *rba* ‘great’ as an adjective for *qadaha*, which is quite right, but she translated the noun *qadaha* wrongly as “exorcism,” instead of correctly as “creation” or “maifestation.”

Comparing this translation with Buckley’s reveals a good example of the kind of mistake that still appears concerning *DQRDK*’s title, even in the leading scholarly publications on Mandaeanism.¹¹²

Part of the problem in identifying or translating (correctly) the title of this scroll could lie in the typical Naṣōraean way of writing *DQRDK*. The problem may be understood when we know that the ‘smart way’ of playing on the words that structure the early appearances of (what it is thought to be) the title(s) and the omission/hiding of the complete title from non-Naṣōraeans is part of the Mandaean-Naṣōraean mystification. We have found that, directly after the first illustration section, *DQRDK*, folio 2 shows many places, (like *DQRDK*, 4, 5, 11, 12, 15), that may appear to the non-Naṣōraean readers as if they contain the title, but yet they cause more confusion than confirmation. Furthermore, after the main illustrated section of the scroll, i.e. *DQRDK*, folios 3, 4, 5, 6, we found another indication to the first part of the title, that is at the beginning of *DQRDK*, 34 (folio 7). Moreover, another strong indication appears at the beginning of *DQRDK*, 127 (folio 11), which contains the second part of the title. This could be considered as one of the clearer cases that could easily confuse the non-Naṣōraean reader

¹¹¹ Buckley, ‘Glimpses of a Life’, p. 35 n. 7.

¹¹² All other important recent studies, which contain overviews of Mandaean literature, do not mention this scroll.

about the title, because it appears at the beginning of the colophons, the usual place that may contain the complete title in most of the Mandaean documents. Despite all of that, however, these cases/appearances could be used as an assisting evidence/tool to identify the title of this scroll and its inner theological dimensions. In some cases these places contain even additional words, like *Tapsir* (Explanation), which is sometimes identical with or parallel to the word *Diuan*. However, none of these places contains the full title. And as we said earlier, the confusion in identifying *DQRDK*, its correct title and its nature occurs not only in the few scholarly references to the *DQRDK* title but also among the Mandaean themselves, including most of the priests. Thus, we feel that it is important at this stage to mention some linguistic and theological remarks concerning translating the title of the work of *DQRDK*.

Linguistic Remarks Regarding the Title of *DQRDK*

The complete title of *DQRDK* is *Diuan Qadaha Rba d-Dmuth̄ Kušṭa* as in *DQRDK*, 151. This could be translated as ‘The Scroll of [the] Great Creation of the Likeness (Image) of Truth’, as we have already mentioned several times. The title contains three important words: *Qadaha*, *Dmuth̄* (*Dmutha*) and *Kušṭa*. These words have complex meanings which shift depending on the use and place used in the Mandaic sentence. Their meanings range between the literal and the deep mystical of typical Mandaean terminology. In the translation part, chapter 6, we have explored some examples of the inner web of their meanings and relations within various Mandaean texts and symbolic illustrations, including *DQRDK*. However, here we can give examples from *DQRDK*, which may explain this point.

In *DQRDK*, 11 we read *qadaha rba*. The name ‘Qadaha’ derives from the Mandaic verb (QDH I = QDA I), which literally means ‘shoot’, ‘burgeoning’, ‘sprout’, ‘blossom’. Here combined with *rba*, the two words form the first part of the title of this scroll. This part of the title is used metaphorically to refer to the Creation which was created by the Great Living One(s)/Great Life Force(s). Thus, another translation of this title could be: ‘The Great Blossoming’ or¹¹³ ‘The Great Explosion’,¹¹⁴ for this scroll explains very briefly the idea of the Creation which is obviously based on the story of the creation which is explained fully in *GR* and the other Mandaean writings.

In *DQRDK*, 34, these two words are used as follows:

This is the Great *Qadaha* (Creation) from which all Mysteries emanated and were formed; for everything was formed one after ...

While in *DQRDK*, 37 regarding the relationship between *Mara d-Rabuta* and all *Qadahs*¹¹⁵ (as: Creatures/creations), we read:

He is the Father of all Mysteries, Kings [ie. Lightworld Beings] and *Qadahs* (Creatures). He is the Origin (Source) without limit, number or nullity (or uselessness).
This *Aina* (Source) of Mysteries ...

In addition, in the plural form in *DQRDK*, 15 these two words mean either ‘the great creations’ or ‘the great blossoms’. In *DQRDK*, 29 the word *qadahs* mainly carries the meaning of ‘blossoms’.¹¹⁶

Turning to *Dmuta*, we also find various wide meanings, such as: archetype, appearance, counterpart, likeness, shape, picture, Divine counterpart, Divine image, the

¹¹³ Or ‘The Big Bang’. This is also a title of one of the well known theories of creation in physics.

¹¹⁴ Consult *MD*, pp. 398b, 404b (QDA I), 405a (QDH I), 405b (QHD I). See, too, the translation of the full passage in chapter 6.

¹¹⁵ Cf. Sy. *Qadha* and Ar. *Qadah* both = ‘vas’, . See Carolo Brockelmann, *Lexico Syriacum*, Halis Saxonum, Sumptibus Max Niemeyer, 1928, p. 646a.

¹¹⁶ See chapter 6.

Ideal counterpart, spiritual ideal, the ideal of life, the idealized image or well-ordered Ideal (or World), counterpart of the Chosen Elect or the righteousness.¹¹⁷ Drower described this last meaning further, as follows: ‘The *dmuta* is the over-soul, the counterpart of the earthly being in the ideal world of *Mšunia Kušťa*. It often acts as conscience or guardian angel, according to commentaries’.¹¹⁸ In Mandaean religious thought the idea of the Counterpart (Prototype or the double) in the Good World (the ‘hidden-Good City’) is applied to all existence and sooner or later the two parts will purify, rise and join together in the Ideal World (well ordered) of *Mšunia Kušťa*.¹¹⁹

In *DQRDK*, 22 *mana* combines with *dmu(H)*. The meaning of *dmuH* found here matches the general meaning of *dmuta*. However, in *DQRDK*, 22 the combination refers to the meaning of High Lightworld Creative Being identified with the prime emanation of the Great Life and considered as One twin divine male and female universal power, parallel in many aspects to *Dmut-Hiia* (Counterpart of Life). Both correspond with *Hiia* (or *Hiia Qadmaia*) and *Mara d-Rabuta* and they procreated the Mysteries, Ideals, Wisdom of Life.¹²⁰

Dmuta combines with *Kušťa* to form ‘*Dmuth Kušťa*’, an expression representing (part of) the title of *DQRDK*. For example, *dmu kušťa* appears in *DQRDK*, 4 as an expression used also as a short name for this scroll. Other than that, it is personified as a Supreme (Divine) Being who emanated from *Hiia* (or *Mara d-Rabuta*) into two separable parts: the ‘*Dmut(a)*’ or ‘Divine Likeness/Image (of the Great Life)’ and the *Kušťa* ‘the Divine Truth, the Divine Law’. This Divine Being is identified sometimes with *Gabra*,

¹¹⁷ See *MD*, pp. 111b-112a; *ATŠ*, pp. 11, 168 (I: 229).

¹¹⁸ *CP*, p. 236, n. 5.

¹¹⁹ Consult *SA*. See also many places in *MII*, such as, pp. 41, 54-6 n. i, 78, 95, 330, 92-3, etc.; K. Rudolph, *Mandaeanism*, p. 15; *JB*, p. 127; *ATŠ*, p. 11. Cf. the ‘well ordered city/state of Plato’.

Aba Rba Qadmaia, *Paršufa (Šbiha)*, *Mara d-Rabuta*, *Mana (Rba)* and *Kušṭa* (when they are personified—especially in this scroll).¹²¹

In *DQRDK*, 11 *dmut kušṭa* is personified as a supreme Lightworld Being. Here (He) is identified with, and is on the next level in importance straight after, *Mara d-Rabutha*, who is also personified as the Head of all the Lightworld Beings and realms.¹²² This personification of anything in, or originally related to, the World of Light (or described as a Lightworld Being) is normal in the obscure language of the Naṣōraeans. It applies even to some adjectives (e.g. *Naširuta*, *Kušṭa*, *Manda*, *Mana*, *Paršufa*; *Škinta(s)*, *Yardna(s)* etc.). That is because the *Naṣōraeans* know (from their esoteric and spiritual knowledge sources) that the nature of the spiritual world(s), especially the World(s) of Light, is different from the material world(s).¹²³

Finally, *Dmuth Kušṭa* is like *Qadaha Rba* regarding its references in this scroll, which is a source of secret knowledge. Mystically, it means ‘Likeness/Image of Truth’ as we read the following part from *DQRDK*, 40-44:

... [40] so the name of this source (wellspring) is *Aina* (the Source/Wellspring) of *Kušṭa*, and it is called *Dmut Kušṭa* (the Image / Likeness/Counterpart of Truth).

For everything [41] in it appeared (or became manifest, seen) and became firm and each Mystery saw His Companion. There are some of those Mysteries who loved one another, and there are some of the/those Mysteries who hated [one another] and they did not accept (or receive) that *Kušṭa*. [42] For the *Kušṭa* is Two Mysteries. It is Male and it is Female. It is Water and it is Wine. It is Fire and it is Wind. It is [43] Sky and it is Earth. It is *Nišimta* (Soul) and it is *Ruha* (Spirit). It is the Mystery (or source) and it is Origin (or lineage). It is Sun and it is Moon.

¹²⁰ e.g. *GY*, 134: 5, 7, 135: 8, 152: 9; *ATŠ*, p. 168 (I: 229). Also see 1. 2.

¹²¹ This meaning has seldom been mentioned before by scholars, especially in *MD*, pp.111b, 209b ff., and in both detailed studies which were done (on *Kušṭa*) by W. Sundberg i.e. *Kušṭa: A Monograph on a Principal Word in Mandaean Texts, I. The Descending Knowledge*, Lund, 1953; *Kušṭa: A Monograph on a Principal Word in Mandaean Texts II, The Ascending Soul*, Lund, 1994.

¹²² See chapter 6.

¹²³ See the Introduction; also consult *SA*, pp. 81ff.

It is Night and it is Day. It is [44] Thought and it is *Mamla* (the Word) that emanated from *Liba* (the Mind/Heart) ...¹²⁴

Theological Remarks Regarding the Title of *DQRDK*

The title of *Diuan Qadaha Rba d-Dmut Kušta* as the first part of the title also means ‘The Scroll of the Great Beginning (or Big Bang)’ of Creation. This beginning is holy, it is the blossoming of the offshoots of ‘*Lana Rba d-Hiia* ‘the Great Tree of Life’, which bears *Pira Rba* ‘the Great Fruit’, for it is about the creation of the First Universal Divine Order. This Beginning is, in Naṣoraean thinking, a timeless and endless opening: the story of the creation of the universe continuously has as a result the story of this world and human beginnings on earth and the relationship humans have with their Creator(s), or in other words, with the ‘Beginning’. We can also call this work *Qadaha*, which, in another sense, is a kind of ‘mystical radiance’, since the beginning of the creation is described in Mandaeism as *Ziua Rba Qadmaia* ‘the First Great Radiance’ and *Nhura Rba Qadmaia* ‘the First Great Light’.¹²⁵ This suggests another translation for this title, ‘*Diuan-Qadaha Rba* ...: ‘The Scroll of the Great Radiance/Great Beginning/ ... of ...’,¹²⁶

In ATŠ I no. 18, *Dmut Kušta* is the Divine Manifestation of *Mara d-Rabuta*, on the Fourth day of the *Paruanaiia*. Accordingly, *Dmuth Kušta* is treated by Naṣoraean as a male Force or Manifestation (which contains both, female and male, genders in his two parts, i.e. *Dmut-Kušta*, respectively, or in deeper fact is without or is above the gender

¹²⁴ For more explanations on this text see chapter 6.

¹²⁵ Consult *GY*. See also *CP*, no. 171. In Mandaean mystical teachings *Ziua* carries the divine male aspect while *Nhura* carries the divine female aspect. Both are working together in the Worlds of Light and are necessary for the creation. As a divine pair, *Ziua* and *Nhura* are parallel with the well known male and female divine pair, *Sindirka* and *Aina*, respectively.

¹²⁶ In respect to the linguistic meaning, this may be similar to the translation of the title of the Jewish Cabbalistic Mystical book, the *Zohar*, as ‘Book of Radiance’. See Isaiah Tishby, *The Wisdom of the Zohar*, Oxford: The Littman Library, 1989.

issue), that is as one of the Five Kings and Mysteries of the Beginning, which concerns the Great Fruit of the One(s), that is *Mara d-Rabuta*.¹²⁷ Thus, other theological possibilities of translating the title could be as follows:

- (i) 'The Scroll of the Great Creation of the Likeness (Image) of the Truth'
- (ii) 'The Scroll of the Great Creation of *Dmut Kušša*, (that is also, *Dmut Manda* or *Dmut Hiia*)'
- (iii) 'The Scroll of the Great Radiance of *Dmut Kušša*'
- (iv) 'The Scroll of the Great Beginning of the Universe'
- (v) 'The Scroll of the Great Blossoming of Life'
- (vi) 'The Scroll of the Great Manifestation of *Dmut Kušša*'

The mystical, theological Naṣoraean translations of this title are, in fact, endless. They could go even deeper to mean for example:

'The Scroll of the Great Manifestation(s) of the Great Fruit of *Hiia* (the Living One(s)/Life)/*Mara d-Rabuta*, that is *Dmut Kušša*'.

2. 4 The MSS of *DQRDK*

As far as we know, there is only one *DQRDK* manuscript (MS) held in any of the official libraries around the world, that is the *DQRDK* MS of the Bodleian Library.¹²⁸ However, there are a few other unexamined *DQRDK* manuscripts (MSS) held in private Mandaean collections, as follows:

- (i) One MS is held in the collection of Rabbi Abdullah, son of Rabbi (Sheikh) Nejm. I saw this manuscript in 1991 during the seven day period of my

¹²⁷ See *ATŠ*, pp. 116 f.

¹²⁸ See 2. 2, above.

initiation/coronation into the rank of Master/Priest. As part of the coronation ritual, this MS had to be placed in the initiation hut (*Škinta/Maškina* or celestial dwelling of enlightened Beings), along with all other treasured copies of Mandaean holy books and scrolls. As far as I can remember, it was copied by Rabbi (Sheikh) Negm himself in the 1950s and it is not a good copy for it contains many mistakes and miscopying. In addition, the illustration is done in a careless and inartistic way.¹²⁹ I believe that this copy is the one that is mentioned by Drower.¹³⁰ It has since been taken out of Baghdad and kept in the home of his son, Rabbi Rafid, in the Netherlands, along with the majority of their large and most valuable Mandaean collection. Although I contacted them several times requesting a copy of their *DQRDK* MS, or the other *DQRDK* MS that they have just received from the keepers of the collection of *Tarmida* Abdullah Khafaji in Iran, as they informed me, they have not cooperated.

(ii) I have heard rumours that another *DQRDK* MS is in the collection of Rabbi Abdulla, son of Rabbi Sam. It is still kept in his Baghdad home, which is occupied by his two daughters, Fewia and Banu. I tried through various means (including through the mediation of their relatives such as Dr Sinan Abdulgabbar, Rabbi Abdulla's grandson), to obtain a photocopy of this MS. Unfortunately, they have not granted me any access nor have they allowed even a visual perusal, photograph or other examination of it.

(iii) Another *DQRDK* is in the collection of *Ganzibra* Fawzy, son of *Tarmida* Gharib. This *DQRDK* MS has a long story of investigation, started in 1996, when I was consulted by the Cambridge University Library, through Dr Erica Hunter, to evaluate a hand written copy of a list of thirteen different Mandaean MSS accompanied by a copy of

¹²⁹ See p. 16 n. 9.

¹³⁰ Ibid. See also E. S. Drower, 'A Mandaean Bibliography', p. 34.

a few pages from *Niania d-Maşbuta* (as a sample), which had been offered for sale to the Library. Among them was a *DQRDK* MS. The list contains only the titles of the manuscripts written in Arabic and Mandaic with many mistakes in both languages. I replied with a detailed letter of evaluation. After that, I did not hear anything about these MSS, until 1999 when I started my investigation on their fate, especially that of *DQRDK*. After some investigation, the Cambridge University Library staff confirmed that the people who offered to sell these MSS never came back to them. However, Mrs Butterworth (from the staff of the library) kindly informed my supervisor, Professor Ebied, and me that they had got in touch with Mr Alun Powe from Wales, who had contacted them about these MSS. Apparently he was acting on behalf of his colleague, Dr Al-Samarrai (from the Iraqi Muslim faith who was living outside Iraq at that time), who himself was acting for an Iraqi person who had the MSS and who was living in Jordan. However, no further information was provided to me about the owner of these MSS. I suspect, though, that the owner was *Ganzibra* Fawzy, son of *Tarmida* Gharib. Thus, In October, 1999, I visited him at his new settlement home in Michigan, USA, and asked him if he was the owner; he answered positively, and he claimed that all the MSS were still in Iraq. He offered to provide me with a copy of his *DQRDK* MS, but unfortunately to this day he has not sent it to me.

(iv) One *DQRDK* MS is said to exist in Khozistan, Iran, in the collection of a Mandaean family, who inherited it many decades ago from a priestly family. However, the Iranian Mandaean priests with whom I spoke could not confirm this information for me. Indeed, according to J. Buckley, who visited the Mandaeans in Iran in 1996, the Iranian Mandaean priests did not “even” know anything about *DQRDK* until she

mentioned it to them!¹³¹ Thus, they could not supply me with a copy when I asked for one or any information about the scroll. According to my sources, however, I believe that there may be one or two *DQRDK* MSS still existing, hidden in private collections in Iran.¹³²

My effort to obtain copies of the *DQRDK* manuscript has been long and arduous. It began in 1994 when I first decided to undertake a study and translation of *DQRDK* after I completed the first year of my Master's Degree at Baghdad University. At that time, I was unable to obtain a copy of the scroll from the local Mandaean collections because Rabbi Abdullah, son of Rabbi (Sheikh) Negm, was unwilling to cooperate with my request for help. This was due to some religious and political disagreements between us.

In 1997, as part of my work with Mandaean Research Centre¹³³ in Sydney, I was able to hand-copy the copy of the scroll of *DQRDK* from the Bodleian Library held by Mr Almubaraki. He had received it from a Mandaean person who had indirect contacts with Buckley. However, I was not permitted to keep either that copy or the new hand copy because both scrolls were in the possession of Mr Almubaraki, who likewise refused to provide me with any copies for my research, perhaps because he wanted to use it for his own work.¹³⁴

¹³¹ See p. 32 n. 79, above.

¹³² See the reference to the copy in the collection of *Tarmida* Abdullah Khafaji at, number (i), above.

¹³³ One of many Mandaean associations in Australia, this association was established in Sydney in 1994 to foster research into the Mandaean culture and religion.

¹³⁴ In late 2002 Mr Al Mubaraki did a transliteration, in a Mandaic font, of my handwritten copy mentioned above. However it contains numerous typing and other interpretative mistakes with many gaps, which makes it an unreliable copy for scholarship.

I encountered the same problem in 1999, when I first began my studies at the University of Sydney. A number of people who had copies of the scroll refused to grant me access to them.

At that time, I did not know the exact call number of the scroll, so in May 1999, I wrote to Professor Buckley asking her for a clear copy of *DQRDK* and its exact call number in the Bodleian Library, as this information was not listed in Drower's collection. She was kind enough to provide me with the information. Thereafter, I contacted the Bodleian Library, which provided me with a microfilm of *DQRDK* and information regarding the scroll and its previous owners.¹³⁵ Although problematic for me, the refusal to help me obtain a copy of *DQRDK* by all but Professor Buckley confirmed my belief in the important place and value of *DQRDK* within the tradition of Mandaean esoteric literature.

While attending 'Second Mandaean ARAM Conference', held at Oxford University during July 2002, my supervisor Professor R. Ebied, with the assistance of Dr Bogdan Burtea, kindly helped me by measuring and checking some unclear and missing words in the *DQRDK* MS at the Bodleian Library. For their efforts, I am very grateful. Luckily, in July 2003, I had the opportunity to visit the Bodleian Library myself and consult *DQRDK* MS first hand. This examination made it possible for me to clarify many, previously uncertain issues, especially regarding the artwork of *DQRDK* and the physical description of the manuscript.

2. 5 The Scroll of *Qadaha Rba d-Dmut Kušta*

Description of the Scroll

The *DQRDK* manuscript is written on eleven stained white, nearly brown sheets of paper, with an additional piece used within the cover of the scroll. These sheets are not equal in their size. They are glued together one after the other in the form of a long scroll, ruled plainly without any additional arrangement, from its end horizontally towards the beginning.¹³⁶ A second scroll, i.e. *DRA*, is attached (glued) to part of the blank space, left at the end of the last sheet of *DQRDK*.

The scroll is 373.5-374.1 cm long and 30.5 cm wide at the beginning, and 30.8 cm wide at the end of the scroll. It is of average size compared to other Mandaean scrolls. Because of the frequent use of *DQRDK*, some tears appear on both of the horizontal borders of the scroll. However, these tears are small and they affect only some areas of both of the vertical blank space at the edges that are usually left by the scribes of all scrolls for protection. Nothing is missing from either side because we can recognize the two vertical lines that usually border the contents of this scroll and all other Mandaean scrolls. In addition, nothing is missing from the beginning or from the end. In general, the scroll remains in good condition. At the top of the scroll there is some blank space, which is followed by many illustrations and sections of written text, comprising 162 lines. Within the illustrated sections there are many explanatory texts and symbols.

The script is somewhat smaller than the average script found in many other Mandaean scrolls, like DC 34, DC 50, DC 8, DC 24, DC 41 etc. The words are closely aligned. Its horizontal and vertical lines are slightly crooked. Thus, the scribe seems to

¹³⁵ Mrs Doris Nicholson was the person in charge of the Department of Oriental Manuscripts in the Bodleian Library. She kindly provided me with some useful information even though she did not have an explanation for the mystery behind the existence of *DQRDK* in their library.

have relied on his own ability to align the writing. It is likely that he did not use a ruler or other device in copying these lines. Like the majority of the Mandaean scrolls, *DQRDK* contains no marks that would show it has been processed by the well known technique of *doss* ('press, scoring'), a technique that is normally used in copying Mandaean codices, such as *GR*, *Q*, *DY*, *AM*, in order to leave indented lines and graphical guidance on the paper so as to provide straight lines for writing and aligning letters and words horizontally.¹³⁷ However, the scribe has generally succeeded in presenting the writing in a neatly schematic manner.

Despite the sensitivity of *DQRDK*'s material, one cannot easily see tooling marks on the surface or in the borders or beneath the paper. One can only find holes in the centre of many of the illustrated circles. This clearly indicates the use of a compass for drawing these circles. Also, the geometric illustrations indicate the frequent use of a ruler. This indicates that *DQRDK*'s scribe worked with only a few simple tools and relied mostly on his own natural talents, which are remarkable.

For binding, the scribe used one layer of white muslin cotton material glued to a piece of paper and then rolled into a cylinder and glued from its end with the beginning of the

¹³⁶ In the Jewish tradition, the scriptures 'must be written in ink on skins ruled with a reed', Palestinian Talmud, *Megillah*, 7 Id (i.9).

¹³⁷ It seems that a similar technique called ruling (scoring) was used historically in the preparation process of copying biblical and many non-biblical scrolls, including many of the Dead Sea Scrolls. That may indicate that this technique was widely known in the Middle East in ancient times, not only among many Jewish scribes but also among many others from various Semitic nations, including some Gnostic sects. This technique was mostly applied to the texts that were written on leather or parchment. However, some biblical and non-biblical scrolls which are written on papyrus used dots or strokes, while many did not use ruling at all to indicate the horizontal and vertical lines. This fits with the case of *DQRDK* and other Mandaean scrolls. See Emmanuel Tov, 'Copying of a Biblical Scroll' in *The Journal of Religious History*, vol. 26, 2002, pp. 190 ff., n. 3. Tov did not explain the reason for that. However, I suggest that this probably happened because the material was used on both sides. Papyrus and paper material is very sensitive and delicately thin; thus, the ruling could have caused damage or made its quality effected and/or damaged by frequent use. The leather and the parchment are strong and more expensive; thus, this material needs more professional work to look good and rich.

scroll to be shaped into a cylinder shell or cover. The colour of the binding is now faded to brown.

The scroll folios (pages) included in this thesis are photocopies scanned in black and white. The original paper showed its age (190 years) when it was photocopied, but the ink was still bright, dark and shiny. The paper was slightly faded yellow and there were some darkened areas. The scroll is for the most part clearly legible, with the exception of some areas, mostly around the lines at the end and some words within the illustrations.

The beginning of the scroll starts with the pattern that is used on the introduction sheet. It has been manually glued on. The edges of the material are used to cover the introduction sheet to protect it and to prolong the life of the scroll. The material covering the introduction sheet has been damaged by the extensive use of the scroll. The scroll has several holes at the top. In addition, the writing on the top line of the material is not that clear because the material has absorbed a lot of the ink. On the lower line of the first paragraph, the ink at the right of the scroll is starting to fade away due to dampness. At the bottom of the sheet, the edges are starting to rip and crease. The back of the material of the second sheet is in better condition. The colour of the second sheet of paper is whiter. The colour of sheets varies. The first sheet is the most faded. The subsequent sheets vary in colour from yellow sand to caramel or beige.

It appears that the copyist (or some other person) has attempted to preserve the scroll by gluing either small pieces or whole sheets of paper onto the back of sheets, which have become thin or damaged through use. The result is that the glue, which is yellow or caramel in colour, has come through in places on those sheets (especially on

the right-hand side of the scroll) and has affected the colour of both the paper and the ink of the writing and drawing, which is unfortunate. The glue which runs outside the material looks as if it has faded during the process of storage. When opening the scroll, one can see that the ink has been duplicated from the first page onto the back of the scroll. Also, one can see that when the scroll has been rolled, two lines are duplicated on the back *msaba marai blibH d-msalam* 'my lord be praise with a peaceful heart/mind'. At the end of the scroll there is evidence that its last page was joined later or glued together with a different type of sheet. The last page has a different texture and a different colour from the sheet at the start of the other scroll.

In the illustrations, many circles have come through to the back of the pages they were drawn on and also been reproduced onto the back of other pages when the scroll was rolled. This may be due to the ink running and/or to the fact that the ink used in these areas is stronger than in other areas. It also looks as if glue, which was applied to the back side of the pages, has run into the print and dampened the colour of the paper, especially on the left hand margin, where the ink has run and is not in a straight line. After the main sections of illustrations, the lines of written text continue with a different texture of colours between them, in *DQRDK*, 34 ff. On the right side of the scroll, five Persian numbers appear. In addition, some small lines, x signs, and other signs, appear on both sides.¹³⁸

Conclusion

This chapter has presented the results of my close investigation of the purchase of an original copy of *DQRDK* by Lady Drower and her sale of it to the Bodleian Library in

1954. My revelations solve the problem of how this scroll found its way into in a non-Mandaean library. I have also managed to clear up the confusion generated because the scroll *DRA* was attached at the end of *DQRDK* in the same roll. In addition, I have decoded and revealed the true and complete title of the scroll to correct previous misapprehensions by Mandaean scholars and most Mandeaeans and to establish the true purpose and nature of this mystical and esoteric scroll. Finally, I have recorded the locations of all known original copies of this scroll for scholars who may wish to further investigate it and provided a very detailed physical description of the copy of *DQRDK* used in my study to help readers of this dissertation visualise the text being discussed in chapters three and five and translated in chapter six.

¹³⁸ See appendix A, Copy of *DQRDK*.

CHAPTER 3

The Nature of the Scroll of *DQRDKDK* (Scriptural and Technical Aspects)

3.1 Introduction

As we will see, *DQRDK* like the other illustrated Mandaean Scrolls is hand written scroll in Mandaic with illustrations and calligraphy, read horizontally from right to left and downwards to the end.¹ These scroll manuscripts are rolled in the direction of text, section by section. Scribes have made numerous copies of the scrolls (*Diuans*). A scroll was always written on fine papyrus/paper, bordered by a marginal line on each right and left side.

At the *Škinta*, the Naṣoreans sometimes read out the scrolls aloud, with everyone of the Naṣoraeans admiring and commenting on the illustrations and the text. It seems that the form of scroll represents the main early scripture status/form in the Naṣoraeans ancient religious tradition.² This may also be due to a practical reason which suggests the use of plant sources like the papyrus, which was cheap and available to the vast majority of people.

The Madaeans and Naṣoreans had to recite the prayer of *šumhata*³ and copy the text several times over (hence the large number of scrolls with symbolic illustrations and ideograms in black ink with no colour in the background).

¹ This is similar to the Hebrew and the Dead Sea Scrolls which are always read from the right to the left. However, this is opposite to the Torah scripture where the horizontal sections are written in columns to be read horizontally.

² In the New Testament the word 'scroll' appears several times and may refer to the Bible, for example Revelation: 10:1-2 reads as follows:

1. Then I saw another mighty angel coming down from heaven. He was robed in a cloud, with a rainbow above his head; his face like the Sun, and his legs were like fiery pillars.
2. He was holding a little scroll which lay open in his hand. He planted his right foot on the sea and his left foot on the land.

The identity of this mighty angel might refer to Jesus while the little scroll may be interpreted as the Bible.

³ *CP*, pp. 157 f. (no. 173).

During important and mystical ceremonies and secret gatherings, Mandaean-Naṣoreans wear white symbolic tunics (*rastas*) like priests, and carry out ritual purifications, which have religious significance.⁴

Mandaeans-Naṣoreans consider their *Ginzia* (Treasures of Holy Writings) to be the “Word of *Hiia* (God)”, that is *Mimra/Mamla*, and the Word is said to be sweet to the taste. Those who read the *Bith Ginzia*, (the House or Collection of the Divine Treasures or Words) receive a great blessing when they read it and are drawn closer to *Hiia*.⁵

This chapter will give some consideration to the special nature of the scripture of *DQRDK*. Section two contains some preliminary remarks on the historical provenance and calligraphic features of the scripts of *DQRDK*. Section three expands on these ideas and discusses, in a brief and general analysis, the Syntax, Orthography, Grammar, and Special Mystical Features of *DQRDK* Syntax.

3. 2 The Script of *DQRDK*

DQRDK is written in Mandaic, a form of the northern Old Eastern Aramaic⁶ dialect that was common in Southern Babylon.⁷ Mandaic, together with Syriac and Babylonian Aramaic (including the Babylonian Talmudic), make up the main Eastern

⁴ For the usual Mandaean rituals consult for example *MII*; Hathem Saed (Brikha Naṣoraia), ‘Al-ehfefalat Al-mandaeah’, *Studies in Mandaeanism*, ed. Majid Fandi Al-Mubaraki, Sydney, 2000, pp. 83-99; *M*; E. S. Drower, *Water into Wine: A Study of Ritual Idiom in the Middle East* (hereafter *WW*), London, 1956; E. Segelberg, *Maṣbūtā: Studies in the Ritual of the Mandaean Baptism* (hereafter *MB*), Uppsala, 1958.

⁵ In the Old Testament similar meanings accord in Ezekiel: 3:3-4:

‘Then he said to me: ‘Son of men, eat this scroll I am giving you and fill your stomach with it’. So I ate it, and it tasted as sweet as honey in my mouth. He then said to me: ‘Son of man, go now to the house of Israel and speak my word to them’.

Eating the scroll may mean ‘refer to the reading of the Bible’.

⁶ Klaus Beyer, ‘The Old Eastern Aramaic spoken dialects of Mesopotamia, Babylonia and the area east of the Tigris are attested as early as the 9th to 3rd century BC’, *The Aramaic Language, Its Distribution and Subdivision*, translated from German by John F. Healey, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, Göttingen, 1986, p. 30.

⁷ See *ibid.*, p. 31 and pp. 43ff.

Aramaic group of the North-Western Semitic languages that were once spoken in and around the area of the ancient Assyrian and Babylonian empires.⁸

Tracing the origin of the Mandaean, and accurately mapping the evolution of the old or middle Aramaic script, or, even later, the Nabataean or Palmyrene scripts, into Mandaic, is no easy task.⁹ On purely geographical grounds, one might suppose that especially the middle Aramaic script spread in two main directions: northward into Palestine and surrounding areas, and eastward into Mesopotamia, as Talmudic, Syriac, and Mandaic. Mandaic represents the Aramaic (that is spoken in) of Southern Babylon while the Babylonian Talmudic could represent the Northern Babylonian Aramaic.¹⁰ Mandaic also has a strong connection to and similarities with the Characanian and Elymaean¹¹ scripts. Both groups may have adopted the Mandaic script after the settlement of a large number of Madaeans in Southern Mesopotamia and Khuzistan¹² in the first Century CE¹³ or even before that.¹⁴ Regarding the special forms of the old

⁸ See Joseph Lawrence Malone, 'A Morphologic Grammar of the Classical Mandaic Verb', University of California (Berkeley), Unpublished PhD thesis, 1967, p. 4; Sabatino Moscati, *Lezioni di Linguistica Semitica*, Universita di Roma, Centro di Studi Semitici, Sussidi Didattici 1, Roma, 1959, p. 11-14.

⁹ See R. Macuch, 'The Origins of the Madaeans and Their Script', *JSS*, 16, 1971, pp. 176ff.; E. Yamauchi, *Mandaic Incantation Texts*, American Oriental Society, Connecticut: New Haven, 1967, p. 69.

¹⁰ See B. Nasoraia, 'The Mandaic Language', *Journal of Mandaean Studies*, I, 2005, p. 5.

¹¹ The Elymaean inscriptions from Tangi-Sarvak (between Fars and the region of Khuzestan), are likely to be dated in the second Century CE.

¹² It seems that *DQRDK* was copied the first time somewhere between these two large regions, as we will see. See chapter 4, below.

¹³ R. Macuch's arguments emphasise this point strongly in several studies. For instance, see his studies on Mandaean history, 'Alter und Heimat des Mandäismus nach neuerschlossenen Quellen,' *ThLZ*, vol. 82, 1957, pp. 401-408; 'Anfänge der Mandäer', in *Die Araber in der Alten Welt*, eds. F. Altheim and R. Steihl, vol. II, Berlin, 1965, pp. 76-191, and his important study, 'The Origins of the Madaeans and Their Script' (hereafter *OMTS*), *JSS*, vol. 16, 1971, pp. 174-192, in which he said:

My postulate of a Mandaean script as prior to the Characanian and Elymaean scripts was neither the only, nor the first, but the last in the long chain of my historical argumentation for the western origin of the Madaeans and their migration to north Mesopotamia early in the first Christian century, and subsequently to southern Mesopotamia, also in the first century A.D. (p. 175 and n. 2).

For details about the various theories and discussions about the origin of the Mandaic script, see *OMTS*; Coxon, P. W., 'Script Analysis and Mandaean Origins,' *JSS*, vol. 15, 1970, pp. 16-30; Naveh, J., 'The Origin of the Mandaic Script,' *BASOR*, vol. 198, 1970, pp. 32-37; A. Klugkist, 'The Origin of the

Mandaic script, A. Klugkist has said: 'Because of the special forms of its characters the old Mandaic script is one of the most interesting middle Aramaic scripts'.¹⁵

Mandaic writing runs from right to left and top to bottom, as is typical of most Semitic languages,¹⁶ especially those from the Western Semitic group, which also includes Aramaic.¹⁷ However, the strokes of the individual letters are executed in various directions. Several basic hand movements are characteristic of Mandaic writing: individual curves, strokes or small lines are produced by hand movements that mainly go from right to left and obliquely downwards; however, certain strokes and curves in the writing are drawn upwards, while few others move from left to right.¹⁸

When we examine Mandaic writings, works and manuscripts from different times and places, we can see that, despite their varied appearance, the letters are constructed of similar basic components.¹⁹ The intricacy of Mandaic scripts in the early manuscripts and inscriptions requires that one be trained in reading and identifying the individual script or inscription because the letters stem from ancient traditions of writing.²⁰ These traditions are usually influenced by priestly and Naṣōraean circles which dominated the writing trade.

Regarding the Mandaic script of *DQRDK*, the following points should be noted:²¹

Mandaic Script,' in *Scripta Signa Vocis*, eds. H. L. J. Vanstiphout, K. Jongeling, F. Leemhuis and G. J. Reinink, Groningen, 1986, pp. 111-120.

¹⁴ For more evidence to support the latest theories of the settlement of the Mandaeans in Mesopotamia during or a long time before the three centuries BCE, see Khaz'al Al Majidey, *Gedhor Al-Dianah Al-Mandaeah*, Şafaa Husain Al-Naşir, Baghdad, 1997; *SAMRAM*.

¹⁵ A. Klugkist, *The Origin of the Mandaic Script*, p. 111 n. 1.

¹⁶ See B. Nasoraia, 'The Mandaic Language', p. 6.

¹⁷ See *ibid*; *Introduction to Mandaic Grammar*, p. 12.

¹⁸ For details and examples on the hand movements in Mandaic writing, see B. Nasoraia, *Reading, Writing Mandaic*, Sydney, 2005.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

²¹ Some of these remarks could be noted also in some other Aramaic scripts like Syriac. Also some similar remarks could be found in the Hebrew script.

- (i) *DQRDK* is made up of clear, self-contained lettering which merits the description ‘script.’ Like all other Mandaic works, *DQRDK*’s text is written from right to left and read in the same way.
- (ii) The illustrations in general are meant to be read first from the left of the scroll, which is considered the right of the illustration.
- (iii) Like the written script of the scroll, the text attached or within the illustrations of *DQRDK* may be ‘read’ from right to left. Within each section, however, the illustrated details and writing may also be read in various other ways and directions—from the centre, from left to right, from bottom to top or top to bottom, etc., depending on the idea being expressed and the hidden Naṣōraean symbols. No other known Mandaean scroll operates in this way.²² The text may proceed sometimes in any direction, turning according to the space available within the illustrations and symbols.
- (iv) The script on the scroll contains no punctuation. The meaning is implied by the linguistic structure. However, the double (or triple) circles, @., are used as a full stop or comma to separate some sentences or paragraphs.²³
- (v) The paragraphs (and sometimes chapters) conclude with “@” (or sometimes O) which may indicate a full stop to end an idea, or the

²² For these readings consult the eleven folios of *DQRDK*. The precise system we used in the reading of this scroll and its illustrations is quite important and unique. It is different from the usual reading of the other scrolls, which is done by the previous Mandaean scholars with so many mistakes. Our reading is based on the mystical Naṣōraean reading, which, in turn, is based on the inherited tradition of the Naṣōraean art. This kind of Naṣōraean reading has not been given much attention by previous scholars, most probably because they have not have access to the secret Naṣōraean teachings.

beginning of a new idea, paragraph, section, etc, or even as an indicator of a missing bit of text.²⁴

- (vi) O, <, > (*a, i, u*) are used as vowels or short vowels. In writing, they are used as letters that join consonants and serve the main structure of the words. The pronunciation of the vowels depends on the content of the script.²⁵
- (vii) A clear spacing system is used only as a method to separate the words. When there is not enough room for a word to fit in, rules for clear spacing are disregarded: the end of *DQRDK*, 2-3 is one example.²⁶
- (viii) When there is no space to complete a word in a line or in a certain space in an illustration or even in the lines of the writings, the copyist usually completes it in one of three ways: either above the word of the line, or as close to the word as the copyist could in small and thin letters, or in any available or appropriate place in the text.²⁷
- (ix) Words are often linked together in a systematic way. This mode of writing is found in most Mandaean manuscripts that exist today and

²³ For more details on the significance of the double circles in the Mandaean scrolls, see for example *HCMM*, pp. 461f.; *PNC*, p. xi.

²⁴ Regarding the significance of the double circles of *HG* in comparison to other Mandaean texts, Drower explains:

Here and there, especially in the first part, the narrative is sprinkled freely with double circles. Now the double circle in other Mandaean texts indicates either a complete break in matter or subject corresponding to the period or full stop, or it is a sign that a recitation in antiphon is to pass to the other priest or priests participating. It dawned upon me that the lavish use of the symbol represented breaks in a manuscript badly damaged by the fire or water, passages which were either missing or unreadable. The conscientious copyist, unwilling to leave any part of so precious a document unrecorded, filled in blanks by the double circle. My theory was confirmed by the fact that as the roll continued, the double circle disappeared. *HGBHZ*, p. XI.

²⁵ See B. Nasoraia, *Reading, Writing Mandaic*, op.cit., pp. 4f.; *Introduction to Mandaic Grammar*, pp. 8ff.

²⁶ Also see nn. 27, 28, below.

²⁷ See for example *DQRDK*, 2, 3, 13, 33, 56 etc.

may be an inherited custom from the early stages of writing in Mandaic. Confusion seldom occurs because readers are expected to pronounce each word they read. This systematic method of linking words may have been used to save writing material, which was scarce and expensive. It may also be used as an indication for the compound words especially the compound nouns or particles or particle and noun.²⁸

- (x) While the characters in many of the other Mandaean manuscripts varied in the size of the letters, there is no much significant variation in the size of the letters of *DQRDK*. This practice is also noticeable from one script to another. Letters are usually five to twelve millimetres in length or in height.
- (xi) The ends of significant sections (especially prayers but sometimes paragraphs) are usually indicated by the following: (a) s-----a;²⁹ (b) a drawing line (sometimes more than one),³⁰ (c) a line space (sometimes more than one),³¹ (d) a blank space, especially if the following section is also an illustrated section.³²

²⁸ Some of the combined nouns like *Hibilziua* in *DQRDK*, 108, 111 are linked together while they should be written with a space, as *Hibil Ziua*, as in *DQRDK*, folio 5, Q4. This is similar to *Br* when it is combined with another name. It is connected in *DQRDK*, 2 as *Brhaua* while it is separated in most cases, as it is frequently repeated in the *Zhara* folio. 11 (such as *Br Haua* in *DQRDK*, 130). This is found also with some words with genitive construction status, for example *kul mindam* (everything), which are written separately in *DQRDK*, 115 but are connected in *DQRDK*, 33, 34 as *kulmindam*. *Kul man* is written separately in *DQRDK*, 5, 7, 13, 50, 116, 119 as *kulman*; *kul had* is written separately in *DQRDK*, 113, but they are connected in *DQRDK*, 117.

²⁹ See for example *DQRDK*, 10.

³⁰ See for example *DQRDK*, folios 1, 2.

³¹ See for example *DQRDK*, folios 2, 8.

³² See for example *DQRDK*, folios 1, 2, 4-5.

- (xii) Although this scroll is written in classic and post classic Mandaic, most of the colophon is written in modern Mandaic. This Mandaic seems to derive from an Iraqi Mandaic dialect, which is slightly different from the Iranian ones. However, it also contains many Arabic and Persian names and words, a possible indication of a strong relationship between the Mandaeans in this Mesopotamian Arab region, which is located now between Iraq and Iran.³³
- (xiii) The Mandaic explanatory texts of the illustrations follow the same conventions as listed above. However, the reading of these pieces of text usually does not follow one rule. They usually follow several rules based on the Naṣōraean secret way of reading or interpreting which, in turn, relies on knowledge of certain secret Naṣōraean codes, symbols and metaphors available only to those who are initiated into the Naṣōraean tradition.
- (xiv) Three main sizes of letters can be recognized in *DQRDK*. (a) The writing in the unillustrated folios is generally reproduced in a normal and similar size. (b) The writing in the illustrated folios is usually in a smaller size and looks tiny. (c) The writing of the *Zharas* (colophons), which is in the last folio (folio, 11), is smaller than in both the first and the second.

³³ For the history of this area, especially Basrah and the cities that are bordering it, see Thabit A. J. Abdullah, *A Short History of Iraq from 636 to the Present*, Pearson Longman, 2003; idem, *Merchants, Mamluks, and Murder – The Political Economy of Trade in Eighteenth – Century Basra–*, State University of New York Press, 2001.

3.3 The Syntax, Orthography, Grammar, and Special Mystical Features of *DQRDK*'s Syntax

The structure of the Mandaic sentences is important for an analysis of *DQRDK*'s literary values. If we ignore it, it becomes difficult to appreciate and understand the qualities of *DQRDK*.³⁴

Mandaic is a rich language in particles and conjunctions, which are used in various ways in the sentences and phrases, but usually without any punctuation marks,³⁵ except the '@', which is used in special ways and for special purposes.³⁶ For the professional, they are "marker-words," but for beginners and students, they contain helpful qualities of the language. Mandaic sentences can on occasion be very long, but the parts of which they are composed are usually short.³⁷

One can usually get a sense out of the various separate parts of a complex sentence, enough sense to have a fair idea of the meaning of certain passages, but not enough to understand the development of the whole scroll. It is often the plentifulness of these marker-words in Mandaic that makes it difficult for beginners to understand the meaning of the author's ideas as the original readers experienced them.

Here, I will point out five main types of sentence structure, which are used frequently in *DQRDK*, and many other secret Mandaean writings, such as *ATŠ*, *DM'L*, which have been inadequately mentioned by scholars in their studies of the other Mandaic texts, as far as this author can tell. These styles are as follows:

³⁴ Regarding an important early study to the syntax in classic Mandaic texts, R. Macuch suggests that the 'importance of syntax in cl. Mandaic was fully understood by Nöldeke, to whom we owe a detailed syntactic description of this language, comprising about half of his Mandaic Grammar'. *HCMM*, p. 383. Also consult *MG*.

³⁵ See B. Nasoraia, *Reading, Writing Mandaic*, p. 4. Also refer to Nöldeke's *MG* and Macuch's *HCMM* (especially, pp. 245ff), two seminal grammars of Mandaic which have served many generations of scholars.

³⁶ See nn. 23, 24, above.

(i) The running style (or the loose style): In this style sentences form a chain where one sentence follows another to build meaning.

(ii) The periodic style: The word 'period' refers metaphorically to the retraced courses where the starting and finishing lines are the same. In this style contrasts and markers of various sorts, mostly invisible in Mandaic secret writings, mainly introduce phrases or clauses subordinate to the main idea to indicate its path ahead and highlight the main point(s).

(iii) The esoteric style, which usually mixes both running and periodic styles in its striking and complex sentences. The idea may start with a sentence or phrase but it takes special knowledge to unlock the structure to complete the logical meaning. It is used to hide the immediate or direct meanings, that is, the mystical, from beginners or foreigners.

(iv) The cyclical style, which also uses both running and periodic styles to construct and reconstruct the ideas in a repetitive, sometimes seemingly tedious, pattern.

(v) The elliptic locution style, which uses various kinds of incomplete short sentences and exists within the esoteric passages that are usually poorly understood by beginners and new priests and Naṣōraeans. This style is rendered between the normal primitive elliptic locutions (like clausal conditional phrases, which usually use the two classical conditional conjunctions, 'if', i.e. 'u and *hinn*) and the frequent ellipses of the style characteristic of the secret scrolls (e.g. omitting some words to be understood, unfinished or interrupted sentences, defective logical structure, etc.).³⁸

Orthography

³⁷ See B. Nasoraia, *Reading, Writing Mandaic*, p. 5.

³⁸ For more details on this style which is also used in most other Mandaic scriptures, like *GR*, *CP* and many secret scrolls, such as *ATŠ*, *ARR*, *ARRZ*, *DM'L*, *DMHZ*, *HG*, see *HCMM*, pp. 461-63.

In the majority of Mandaean writings, not only are consonants written, but also most long and short vowels and diphthongs find their way into orthography.³⁹ The word *u* ‘and’ generally retains its consonantal force in the text of *DQRDK*, as well as in all Semitic languages. When a consonant is doubled and no vowel intervenes between the letters,⁴⁰ this consonant is not repeated in Mandaic and in other Semitic languages in general, for the orthography does not accept its repetition (eg. *mia* [‘water’], *puma* [‘mouth’], *rba* [‘great’]).⁴¹ However, in cases where prepositions like *b* and *l* precede words that begin with similar letters, they should both be written, eg. *bbaita*, *llišana*, *lliba*, *lilgra*. This also happens if this kind of word is connected with the conjunction *u* (e.g. *ubbaita*, *ulliba*, *ulligra*).

Grammar

The general features of grammar of *DQRDK* do not add many insights to what previous scholars, like Nöldeke, Macuch, Drower and Yamauchi, have presented. Therefore, there are only a few comments on grammar worth making at this point. These comments concern verb tense and certain mystical features that affect grammar.

Most of the passages of *DQRDK* are written in the past tense. They are concerned with recording events and messages that happened in the past and the ‘universal’ knowledge concerning the earthly world. It is notable, however, that sometimes the tense of the words changes from past to present, especially in sections where instructions are imparted to the Mandaean people who are living on earth. This change confirms the

³⁹ For many examples, see B. Nasoraia, *Reading, Writing Mandaic*, p. 5; (H. Saed) *Introduction to the Mandaic Grammar*, pp. 8 and n. 1, 13, 16ff. This seems to be slightly different from many Aramaics, and some other Semitic languages such as Hebrew and Arabic, which generally do not write the short vowels in the body of the words. Some of these Semitic languages (eg. Syriac and Talmudic) write the vowel points above or under the letters.

⁴⁰ This corresponds to a *shaddah* in classical Arabic.

Mandaean belief that primordial activities and words of the Lightworld Beings are capable of direct articulation by the Mandaean and Naṣōraean teachers.

The unity of past, present and future is an important concept in Mandaean-Naṣōraean philosophy. Their unity is captured in the language via the cosmic ‘tense’ of the moving cycle that is universal and unstopping. While in most cases, the past tense is the most appropriate form of linguistic and theological usage, the universality of its meaning is implied, and readers would understand past, present and future within the verb.

Special Mystical Features of *DQRDK*’s Semantics and Syntax

As we are dealing with a scroll containing esoteric textual explanations, we must be sensitive to the inherent mysticism and the secret meanings that go beyond the literal meanings of the words. For example, *Gabra*⁴² does not only mean ‘man’, but also refers to different kinds of cosmic beings in the various worlds. It becomes a title for many Cosmic Beings.⁴³ Other examples can be found in *DQRDK*, where *Dmuta* (the divine image/likeness, counterpart, heavenly double, pure mind, etc.),⁴⁴ *Kuṣṣa*, (divine Truth/Law, heavenly Being, the pure Mind, spiritual union, Wisdom, sincerity, good-faith, pact, the ritual hand-clasp, etc.),⁴⁵ *Aina* (divine eye/ wellspring/ source/ womb/ wisdom/

⁴¹ See H. Saed, *Introduction to the Mandaic Grammar*, pp. 8 n. 1, 12 n. 2. These examples appear in *DQRDK*, e.g. 73, 72, 127, respectively.

⁴² See *DQRDK*, 4, F1, J5, 53, 77.

⁴³ Such as:

- (i) *Mara d-Rabuta* as a universal Perfect Being.
- (ii) *Adam Kasia* as a cosmic perfect Being/Man
- (iii) *Adam Pagria* as a First perfected man in the earthly world
- (iv) Some Messenger of Light, such as *Manda d-Hiia* and *Hibil Ziwa*.
- (v) *’Ur* the King of Darkness.

Also consult *MD*, p. 73a-b.

⁴⁴ For examples of the mystical use of *Dmuta*, see *DQRDK*, Y, H1, C5, G5, I5, 38, 45, 88, R5. Also see *MD*, pp. 111b-112a.

⁴⁵ For examples of the mystical meanings of *Kuṣṣa*, see *DQRDK*, 4, 5, 9, 11, 12. Also see *MD*, pp. 209b-211a.

etc.),⁴⁶ *Raz(i)a*, (divine mystery(ies)/ secret(s)/ heavenly Being(s)/ symbol(s)/ creation element(s)/ element(s) of Wisdom, etc.)⁴⁷ and even simple word like *man* (who) have strong esoteric meanings. *DQRDK*, 15-16 reads as follows:

And then herein [15] the *Tafsir* of all *tafsir*[s] taught and said and gave explanation about ... and about *Man* (What), [16] *Man* (What), *Man* (What) and *Man* (What) which are: the *Mašbuta* (Baptism), the *Masiqt* (the Raising up), the *'Ngirta* (the Letter) and the *Rahmas* (the Devotions), [respectively].⁴⁸

man: lit. means 'who'. However, here it is also used for other interrogative forms (e.g. 'what', 'whose', 'whom', 'whoever' etc.).⁴⁹ The word *man* when repeated four times, resembles the English This, that and the other and refers to the four main aspects of life and enlightenment in the life or duty of the Naṣōraeans and the Mandaeans in this universe.

Another word like, *dH* (this, that), has even stronger esoteric meanings.⁵⁰ For example *DQRDK*, 16 reads the following:

After that He explained about *DH* (This) and *DH* (That), who are: *Ruha* (the vital spirit) and *Nišimta* (the soul), [respectively].⁵¹

DH: lit. means 'this'.⁵² However, in this text the meaning is 'this and that'.⁵³ In a similar phrase in *ATŠ* (I: no. 227), Drower explains *dH udH* as 'the womb and the male

⁴⁶ For examples of the mystical uses of *Aina*, see *DQRDK*, C, E, G, 24. Also see *MD*, p. 15a-b.

⁴⁷ *Raz(i)a* is an important term used frequently by the Naṣōraeans to express their mystical thoughts, such as those defined above. For examples, see *DQRDK*, H, 5, 6, 11, 21, 25, P, R, K1, G2, I2, C4, H5, I5, 35, 36, 37, 41, 42, 44, 60, 61, 63, 64, 67, 69, 72, 73, 78, 83, 85, 86, 89, 100, 101, 103, 104, 105, 113, 115, 116, 117, 121, 125, Y5, K6, L6, R6, V6, W6, X6, Y6 etc. Also see *MD*, p.420a-b. Because of its a large variety of special use of its mystical meanings, this word appears more than seventy times in *DQRDK* forming many meanings. For a more extended commentary on these four terms, consult chapter 6 below.

⁴⁸ For more comments on this passage see chapter 6, pp. 159 f., below.

⁴⁹ See *MD*, p. 246a, *MG*, pp. 4:2, 94:2, *HMM*, pp. 15, 167, 168, 385, 402, 409.

⁵⁰ See *DQRDK*, 15-6. For more details on this word consult chapter 6.

⁵¹ For more comments on this passage see chapter 6, p. 166, below.

⁵² See *MD*, p. 106a. Cf. *HMM*, pp. 165, 408, 419.

⁵³ Cf. *MG*, p. 339.

organ'; but she translates it as, 'the former (i.e. *Ruha*) and latter (i.e. *Nišimta*)'.⁵⁴ This seems to be incorrect. According to the Mandaean teachings (especially in the secret scrolls), *Nišimta* is the former, the senior or the older, who formed and took shape in the Body before *Ruha*: 'For when the Body was formed, a Soul (*nišimta*) was formed, and when the Soul took shape in the Body, the Body formed the Vital Spirit (*ruha*). When both had taken shape, the Womb was formed'.⁵⁵ However, according to some passages in *GR* (especially in the story of creation, the Man *Adam* by *Ptahil*, the demiurge, e.g. *GR* III, X), *Ptahil* and his evil helpers (the Planets) cast *ruha* into Adam and Eve and later *Ptahil* and/or other Lightworld Beings invited, brought and cast *nišimta*, i.e. *Mana*, into the Body. In the following two similar *GR* passages, the same thing is described:

(i)

The Planets... spoke to Ptahil:
 'Grant us, that we may cast into him (Adam) some of the spirit (*ruha*)
 which you brought with you from the father's house'.⁵⁶

It is argued here that the 'him' referred to is *Adam*. After the *ruha* entered the Body successfully, Adam's creation seems to be still unsuccessful, so *Ptahil* went to *Abatur* (the father of 'Uthras) and asked him for assistance.

...The 'father of thras' raised himself up,
 went forth, and hastened to the secret place.
 He fetched the great Mana,
 That he might illuminate all corruptible things;
 That he might illuminate the coat of the body.⁵⁷

(ii)

Ptahil cast into him a kind of spirit (*ruha*) from his own spirit, and all the planets cast into him (some) of their own mysteries. However, *Ptahil* and the planets which accompanied him were unable to raise up Adam and his wife Eve. Thereupon *Ptahil* went to his father *Abatur*, obtained a

⁵⁴ See *ATŠ*, p. 167-n. 5.

⁵⁵ *ATŠ*, p. 164 (I: no. '218). See also *DQRDK*, 30 and our comments on *man* in chapter 6, below.

⁵⁶ Werner Foerster, *Gnosis*, trans. R. McL. Wilson, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1974, p. 188.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

hidden mana, which was given him from the House of Life, brought it, and cast it into Adam and Eve his wife. *GY 241: 10ff.*⁵⁸

These two passages confirm that *Nišimta* is there, in the World of Light, and so she/he is senior to and older than *Ruha*.⁵⁹

In addition, with words like *Hiia* (the Living One/Life, i.e. God), or *Hiia Qadmaia* (the First Living One/First Life) or *Hiia Rbia* (the Great Living One/the Great Life) or *Hiia Rbia Nokraia* (the Sublime Great Living One/the Sublime Great Life), a ‘royal’ plural is used to indicate their divine attributes.⁶⁰ Further in the passage, we can see the reference to what we call ‘the Mystical Chain of the Celestial Lightworld Beings’: *Mana* (divine, sublime Mind) and His *Dmuta* (divine Counterpart) on the one hand, and *Mara* (divine, sublime Lord) and His, (divine Counterpart), *Rabuta* (Greatness), on the other hand,⁶¹ which means that the two parts of each name are parallel and identical to the other two parts. The case of this Chain applies to other pairs of celestial Lightworld Beings, like *Dmut-Kušṭ*, *Dmut-Hiia*, *Dmut-Manda*, *Dmut-Rbia*, *Simat-Kušṭa*, *Simat-Hiia*, and so on.

To explain that we may view a passage from *DQRDK, 22-23* as follows:

[22] Then He explained about *Mana* (Mind or *Nous*) and *DmutH* (His Likeness or Counterpart), which they called *anin* (Us), because the ‘Worlds and Generations’ know them [i.e. *Mana* and *DmutH*] not, nor [do they know] our mysteries except for what ‘We’ [i.e. *anin*, ‘the Great Lord’] reveal to him (any person of the ‘World and Generations’, that I am *Mara* [23] *d-Rabuta*. ‘The Great Crown’ is My Name, and *Rabuta* ‘Greatness or Majesty’ is the Head in which *Ruṣumas* (the Signs), *Klilas* (the Crowns/Wreaths) and *Malalas* (the Words) are grasped.⁶²

⁵⁸ Ibid. p. 198. For similar translation to these texts, see Robert Haardt, *Gnosis Character and Testimony*, trans. J. F. Hendry, E. J. Brill, Leiden, 1971, pp. 371-372.

⁵⁹ See also *DQRDK*, 30 and the comments in chapter 6; *SA*, p. xv, 37, n. 2; K. Rudolph, *Mandaeism*, p. 14. See also *CP*, no. 353 and pp. 29 n.1, 246f., 246 n. 4, and many other places.

⁶⁰ For instance see *DQRDK*, 1, 10, 33. See also many notes and discussions about *Hiia* when it appears in the translation in chapter 6.

⁶¹ See *DQRDK*, 22-23. For more comments on this passage see chapter 6.

⁶² For detailed and extensive important comments on this passage see chapter 6.

Anin: literally means ‘we’ represents *Mana uDmutH*. Here for the first time *Anin* is used as both subject and object. This royal “we”/“us” is used by the kings and queens and refers to *Mara d-Rabuta* (the Lord of Greatness),⁶³ who is the ‘speaker’ in this passage and who appears here as *Mana* and his *DmutH*, ‘the (Great) Mind and Its (or His) Vision, the Counterpart’.⁶⁴ *Mara d-Rabuta* plays a central role in the Mandaean religion. He appears as One and Many. All the Worlds of Light and their Beings are represented in Him and He represents them. He also alternates with some of them.⁶⁵ He is the highest Lightworld Being. In many cases His name is used to refer to the Great Creator, parallel with *Hiia* or *Hiia Rbia*⁶⁶ and *Mana Rba*, First Great Radiance, *Ziwa rba Qadmaia*, Father of ‘Uthras⁶⁷ as well as Great Father, the First Great Naṣōraean, Great First Teacher and First Great Rabbi who initiates Lightworld Beings (e.g. *Šišlam Rba*, *Adam Kasia*), the Master of ‘the Teacher of Rabbinical instructions’.⁶⁸

Here *anin* is not translated as a verb, a variation of ‘*niun*, ‘*niunia* (they answer) or (they [cor]respond), as Drower did. It makes more sense as the personal pronoun, ‘we/us’, for it fits with the meaning of the whole passage. The similar passage in *ATŠ* is regarded by Drower to be obscure and her translation seems to be confused, but by looking to *DQRDK*, the precise meaning of this passage might be known in both scrolls.⁶⁹

⁶³ See *ATŠ*, pp. 167-168, I:228-229. See also chapter 6 n. 41 (*dmuṭ Kušṭa*).

⁶⁴ See *SA*, p. 43ff.; M. N. Siouffi, *Éludes sur la religion des Scoubbas ou sabéene*, Paris, 1880, pp. 41, 63; *MD*, p. 247b.

⁶⁵ E.g. see *ATŠ*, pp. 110ff. (I:4ff.), p. 116 n. 9, p. 116 (I:17ff.).

⁶⁶ E.g. *GY*, 2:14, 29:17, 69:11; *ATŠ*, p. 168.

⁶⁷ See *ATŠ*, pp. 110-111.

⁶⁸ See *ATŠ*, pp. 112ff (I:66ff); W. Brandt, *Die mandäische Religion* (hereafter *MR*), Leipzig, 1889, p. 8; *Mandäische Schriften* (hereafter *MSch*), Göttingen, 1893, p. 74; *CGŠ*, p. 1 n. 4, K. Rudolph, *Mandaeism*, p. 13; *SA*, pp. 9, 12, 18, 26, 80 n. 1; see also nn. 29 (*Hiia*), 41 (*Dmut Kušṭa*), 109 (*Šišlam Rba*), 127 (*Mana*), 132 (*taga rba*), 136 (*mara d-...*).

⁶⁹ Cf. *ATŠ*, p. 174 n. 7 (I: 245); consult *MD*, pp. 27a, 24a.

Some similar problems in translation and interpretation have been noticed by scholars dealing with Mandaic texts. Drower, for instance, states the following problem in her preface to the translation of the scroll of *Šarh d Qabin d Šišlam Rba*:⁷⁰

Problems offered by this interesting poem are of another kind; we are dealing here with the language of mysticism. Arbitrary meanings are attached to simple words in an effort to convey the mystical and divine. *Nukraia*, for instance, means more than 'strange' in the plural, it means that which is not of this world, something beyond human understanding, remote, sublime, transcendent. *Tušlimia*, literally 'consummated-perfections' is an epithet applied to the Great Life, who in Itself (or Themselves) personifies being and existence, future, present and past, and is both passive and active. The use of the abstract plural for Divine being makes the number of the verb somewhat confusing. I have tried to convey this plural-individuality by the use of capital letters; for example *abahata* (the active and creative principle of life) I translate 'Father' and not 'fathers'.⁷¹

Elsewhere, Drower comments on the symbolic esoteric meaning of the Mandaic texts.⁷² Buckley, following Drower's path to some extent, also notices some semantic and syntactical difficulties in her translation of *DM'L*. Buckley's argument concerning *DM'L* is highly applicable to this thesis's argument about *DQRDK*. Regarding this issue, Buckley writes:

DM'L is a document strictly for priests, who know their craft well, who delight in puns, mystical speculations, and (to outsiders) obscure references, and who have a penchant for secret correlations and number speculations; in short, the kinds of esoterica that a religious elite enjoys.

All priests impersonate Lightworld beings, *ūtras*. Therefore, throughout the initiation ritual, when the text states that the instructing priest does or states something, one cannot always know whether to attach this information solely to the present ritual moment or to take it as a scene referring to a primordial, mythological situation involving *ūtras*. I have chosen to translate using the present tense in the recurring 'and he says' clauses, i.e. the phrases where the text clearly emphasizes the effect a

⁷⁰ Trans. E.S. Drower as *Explanatory Commentary on the Marriage-Ceremony of the Great Šišlam* (hereafter *ŠQŠ*), Rome 1950.

⁷¹ *ŠQŠ*, pp. 3f.

⁷² *CP*, p. viii. Also consult Drower's notes in most of her introductions to the Mandaic documents she translated. See the Bibliography.

certain act or statement has on the priest novice. Priestly activities on earth echo those of their heavenly forbears, the *'utras*, so these acts are effective in the present, ritual moment. When the context seems to stress the mythological past, I use the past tense.

Another grammatical problem is the vacillation between singular and plural—the lack of agreement between subject and verb. A majestic plural is used of the most ephemeral, impersonal Lightworld beings such as the Great Life or First Life. But variations in singular and plural are most often due to nothing more than the author's/copyist's lack of consistency.⁷³

Conclusion

In this chapter the scriptural and textual features of *DQRDK* has been discussed. I have included not only an examination of the obvious grammatical and syntactical features that must be considered for proper understanding of the meaning of the scroll, but also an examination of the significant mystical features that are essential for delving into the hidden meanings of *DQRDK*.

⁷³ J.J. Buckley, *The Scroll of Exalted Kingship: Diwan Malkuta 'Laitall* (hereafter *SEK*), American Oriental Society Translation Series, vol. 3, New Haven, 1993, p. xvi. Also see p. iv; and consult the primary notes of Macuch in his important work, *HCMM*, pp. 461-63.

CHAPTER 4

Establishing the Authorship and History of the Scroll of *DQRDK*

4.1 Introduction

The previous chapter concentrated on the scriptural and technical aspects of *DQRDK*. This chapter will focus on establishing the history of *DQRDK*. Section two puts forward several theories about the authorship of *DQRDK*, its scribes, its place(s) of composition and copying. The section will cover the most recent scribe of the work of *DQRDK*, the earliest copyist of the work of *DQRDK*, Zazai, and the importance of Zazai.

Section three will cover the dating of *DQRDK*. Many problems concerning its dating and deciphering are discussed. In particular, the section will examine the following topics: the difficulties in dating Mandaean literature, linguistic evidence for the time frame; using the colophons and their genealogies to establish time frames, and historical evidence based on the dates of migration from Palestine to Mesopotamia and the identity of Zazai.

The final section will provide an overview of the contemporary history and local events, which are revealed in *DQRDK*.

4.2 Establishing the Authorship of *DQRDK*

The Mandaean tradition emphasises that there are no earthly authors for the Mandaean scriptures, including *DQRDK*. For this reason, no one has ever managed to find the name of any author for any Mandaean scripture. However, the various colophons of these scriptures record many names of earthly copyists/scribes and editors, who appear to have received, produced or copied scriptures from various primordial sources.

Furthermore, no Mandaean colophon has ever mentioned any of the extended recorded lists of names as authors, but has rather described them as copyists or as early scribes or as editors. These colophons usually describe the role of the person named, using words, like *nasaka* ‘copyist’, ‘scribe’.¹ They also make use of divinities or derivatives of the root NSA, ‘to copy (out)’.² Sometimes they use the derivatives of the roots KDB or KTB, ‘to write, inscribe, ascribe’,³ but mostly carrying the meaning of the root NSA.

As there is no recorded author for *DQRDK* and other scriptures, we will concentrate mainly on the latest copyist and on the earliest recorded copyist/scribe/editor.⁴ Further study is definitely required to establish the authorship of all Mandaean works.

The Most Recent Copyist/Scribe of the Work of *DQRDK*

The Bodleian copy of the work of *DQRDK* was completed by the copyist, according to the Mandaean Calendar,⁵ on Friday, the twenty second of the month of *Mišai Giṭa*⁶ (mid Summer), which is *Šumbulta* (Virgo),⁷ in the year of Friday,⁸ which is

¹ See *MD*, p. 284a.

² See *MD*, p. 302a.

³ See *MD*, pp. 204a, 225a-b

⁴ Later in chapter 5, we will also put some perspective on the literary and artistic work of the unknown author of *DQRDK*.

⁵ The Mandaean calendar is similar to the Babylonian and Persian calendars. It contains twelve months and five intercalary days of the *Parwanaiia*. Each month contains thirty days, as follows: *Šabaṭ, Adar, Nisan, Aiar, Siuan, Tamuz, Ab, 'Lul, Tišrin, Mašruan, Kanun, Ṭabit*. See *AM*, 107: 15 ff.; *MII*, p. 84. For more details and comparative studies on the Mandaean calendar see S. H. Taqizadeh, ‘An Ancient Persian Practice Preserved by a Non-Iranian People: the Mandaean Calendar’, *Bulletin of the School of Oriental Studies*, vol. 9, 1938, pp. 603-619; *SAMRMR*, pp. 208-226; Francesca Rochberg, ‘The Babylonian Origins of the Mandaean Book of Zodiac’, *ARAM*, vol. 11-12, 1999-2000, pp. 237-247.

⁶ The Mandaean calendar contains four seasons—*Situa* (winter), *Abhar* (spring), *Giṭa* (summer) and *Paiz* (Autumn)—and each season contains three months which are classified into: *Aual, Mišai*, and *Ahir* (beginning, middle, end) respectively. See *MII*, p. 84.

1233 AH (approximately 1818 CE). It was copied by *Rbai* (Rabbi) Yahia Ram Zihrun, son of Mhatam Yuhana, son of Bihram son of Majad son of Našmia son of Karam son of Kairia son of Haiat, from the Sabur family.⁹ As a Mandaean priest and copyist,¹⁰ Yahia Ram Zihrun is well known among other Mandaean priests¹¹ and copyists. We find that in

⁷ The Mandaean calendar contains also twelve Zodiac signs, each one corresponding to one specific Mandaean month. The following table, provided by Lady Drower, may further clarify the above notes. See *MII*, p.84:

1st Month	Awwal Sitwa (or Shetwa)	Qam Daula	Shabat
2nd Month	Misai Sitwa	Qam Nuna	Adar
3rd Month	Akhir Sitwa	Qam Umbara (Ambar)	Nisan
4th Month	Awwal Abhar	Qam Taura	Ayar
5th Month	Misai Abhar	Qam Silmia	Siwan
6th Month	Akhir Abhar	Qam Sartana	Tammuz
7th Month	Awwal Gita	Qam Arya	Ab
8th Month	Misai Gita	Qam Shumbulta	Ellul
9th Month	Akhir Gita	Qam Qaina	Tishrin
10th Month	Awwal Paiz	Qam Arqba	Mashrwan
11th Month	Misai Paiz	Qam Hatia	Kanun
12th Month	Akhir Paiz	Qam Gadia	Tabit (Tabith)

⁸ Traditionally, the Mandaean year is named by the first day that begins the year, for the Mandaeans did not date the years and did not give much attention to writing their history. In the last century, Ganzibra Najim was the first Mandaean who included in the traditional dating two additional dates:

i) The Christian year

ii) The Mandaean *Yahiaia* or *Yahiauia*, starting from the birth of *Yahia* (*Yuhana*), i.e. John the Baptist. Using several Mandaean works that were copied by Ganzibra Negm, we can calculate why there is a period of 26 years' difference between the birth of John and the birth of Jesus. He dated the birth of John as 26 BCE, which seems to be approximately correct. According to the Mandaean story of John the Baptist, John was 22 years old (*HG*, p. 7 n. 3) when he was initiated as a Mandaean priest. From that age, he baptized people for 42 years (*HG*, p. 7). That means he died at the age of 64 years old.

We assume that he baptized Jesus when he was between 61 and 64 years old. That margin is offered by the New Testament story which says Jesus was baptized when he was 30 years old and his mission continued for three years. John was in prison, probably in the third year of Jesus's mission. In addition, there is a margin of three to five years, or may be more, as to the exact year of the date of the birth of Jesus. The Mandaean story disagrees with the Biblical story, mainly in two things:

(i) John is not older than Jesus by six months, but rather by around 29-34 years.

(ii) John was not killed by Herod in prison, but died naturally on the bank of the Jordan River, where he usually baptized people. Mistakenly, *Ganzibra* Abdulla (son of *Gauzibra* Negm) and his son *Tarmida* Raffed, *Ganzibra* Salah Choheili, the three Mandaean Priests in Iran and many others did not follow *Ganzibra* Negm and have stuck with the margin of six months to now. This is probably for political reasons.

⁹ See *DQRDK*, 128-29.

¹⁰ The majority of the Mandaean priests, as I have noted, are also copyists, especially in the past. However, based on some works in my private collection, there is evidence that there are several scribes in the last century who are not priests.

¹¹ The Mandaean priesthood has three main ranks as follows: (i) *Tarmida* is the lowest rank; (ii) *Ganzibra* is the next highest rank; (iii) *Riš-Ama* is the highest rank, higher than *Ganzibra*. See *MD*, pp. 481b f., 77a f., 434a ff., respectively. Also see *MII*, p. 173.

the first third of the nineteenth century, he copied many other Mandaean works, such as *DRA* in 1823 CE,¹² *GR* in 1825 CE; *Niania* in 1810 CE.¹³

According to our investigation of the Mandaean oral tradition, it is believed that Rabbi Yahia Ram Zihrun lived in the late seventeenth century and may have been crowned as a *Tarmida* in the very early part of the eighteenth century, before 1810 CE (the year of copying his copy of *Niania*, that is mentioned earlier). He continued his life as a *Tarmida*.¹⁴ A few years later, before 1818 CE (the year of copying *DQRDK*), he also became a *rbai* (Rabbi). It is believed that he died from cholera in 1831 CE, along with all other Mandaean priests. The life of this copyist and his works is worth further investigation because he came from the last generation of the Mandaean-Naṣōraean old school, which differs from the new schools which began flourishing since 1831 CE.

It is worth mentioning that the latest copyist of DC 31 (*AM*), Ram Zihrun, son of Rabbi Bihram Sam, in fact, copied his copy of this document from a manuscript copied by Rabbi Yahia Ram Zihrun (who is also the copyist of *DQRDK*). In addition, the latest copyist of DC 35 (*DMHZ*), Rabbi Yahia Bihram, son of Adam Yuhana, also copied his copy from a manuscript copied by Rabbi Yahia Ram Zihrun himself, who had in turn copied it for the *Yalufa*¹⁵ Baian, the same owner of *DQRDK* and *DRA*. Rabbi Yahia Bihram said in his colophon DC 35:

¹² This scroll is very rare in the local Mandaean libraries. Only one copy has reached the world libraries through Lady Drower. It is preserved in the Bodleian Library, Oxford. The copyist, *Yahia Ram Zihrun*, seemingly glued and attached *DRA* to *DQRDK*, and until now they are kept as one roll, which is a rare way of keeping scrolls, especially compared with other Mandaean scrolls, in particular, the illustrated ones. See 2. 2, above.

¹³ Found in a private Mandaean collection.

¹⁴ See 2. 4, above.

¹⁵ 'Literate or learned Mandaean layperson, especially in Mandaean religion and language'. See also *MD*, p. 186a.

d-ansit lnapšai mn diuan d-rba urama uiaqira tarmida taqna rbai iahia ram zihrun br mhatam br mhatam iuhana br sapar¹⁶ Br mašhad br našmia kinianH sabur laqab blaha d-ansa lnapšiH mn ansata d-napšiH d-ansa lhad šalmana umhaimna ialupa baian br ram kinianH sabur d-ansalH mn diuan d-ansa lnapšiH aba d-'mH d-hu rišaia uprišaia ganzibra taqna nasaka d-ginza kaiala rama bnaširuta br šarša taqna mara šualania umrahma laniia umiskinia uhaiasa lnišmata d-iatimia uarmalata d-hu rbH utaga samlia brišiH d-hu rbai iahia iuhana br rbai zihrun adam br zihrun br dizpolia br šugdia br našir br zakria kinianH sabur

This may translated as follows:

I copied for myself from a Diwan which a great, lofty and honourable (revered) [person], the reliable *tarmida*, Rabbi Yahia-Ram-Zihrun, son of Mhatam, son of Mhatam Yuhana son of, Sapar son of, Mašhad, son of Našmia, Sabur by name,¹⁷ his family name Blaha, copied for himself from the Diwan which he had copied himself for one [who is] righteous and faithful, a *yalufa*, [namely] Baian son of Ram, his family name Sabur. He copied for him (the *yalufa*) from the Diwan of his grandfather,¹⁸ which he (the grandfather) copied for himself. He who is noble and distinguished, the reliable *Ganzibra*, copyist of the Treasure 'Ginza', a lofty paragon of *Naširuta*,¹⁹ son of the perfect race, master of *Šualias* (novices for priesthood), loving to the poor and wretched and compassionate to the souls of the orphans and widows, who was the master who crowned his head. He is Rabbi Zihrun Adam br Zihrun br Dizpolia br Šugdia br Našir br Zakria, whose family name (is) Sabur.

Unfortunately, Drower translated this text, with many changes and mistakes, as follows:

I copied for myself from a Diwan which Rabbi Yahia-Ram-Zihrun copied, the son of Mhatam, son of Mhatam-Yuhana son of Bihram son of Mašadu son of Našmia son of Karam son of Kaidia son of Haiat, his family name Sabur. He copied for himself from the Diwan which he copied himself for a *yalufa*, namely Baian son of Paizia, his family name Sabur, Manda-d-Hiia forgive him his sins! (*This*) he copied from the Diwan of the great, lofty respected *ganzibra*, reliable and chosen, perfected highly in priestcraft, teacher of all pious, father of *ganzibras*, who was the master who crowned his head – Rabbi Yahia Yuhana son

¹⁶ Read as *Safar*.

¹⁷ *Laqab* also means 'tribal or family name'. See, *MD*, p. 228.

¹⁸ Literally, the father of his mother.

¹⁹ Or: highly perfected in Naṣoraeism, greatly (highly) skilled in the Naṣoraeism and priestly knowledge (or teaching). For the deep meaning of *Naširuta*, see, chapter 6.

of Rabbi Zihrun-Adam son of Zihrun, son of Dizfulia son of Šugdia grandson of Našir son of Zakria, of the children of Dihdaria; his family name Sabur.²⁰

Regarding this colophon text from DC 35 and Drower's (mis)translation, the following important points should be noted:

(i) Most of the lineage of Rabbi Yahia Ram Zihrun given in the original DC 35 manuscript contains many different names and additional words to what was written and translated by Drower in her translated text of *HGBHZ* (p. 85), above. In fact the original manuscript reads as follows: *mn diuan d-rba urama uiaqira tarmida taqna rbai iahia ram zihrun br mhatam br mhatam iuhana br sapar br mašhad br našmia kinianH sabur laqab blaha*. Consequently, we must ask why Drower changed that and from where did she get the names in her translation, of *HGBHZ* (p. 85), quoted above. Part of the answer may be found in the other notes below.

(ii) Most of the names in the lineage of Rabbi Yhia Ram Zihrun inserted by Drower are the names that fit more closely those recorded in *DQRDK*, 128-29 and also in *DRA* and *AM*, 255: 14 ff. (*AM*, trs. p. 155), although with some mistakes. Does this mean that Drower changed her translation of the lineage because she was confused and wrote these names from her notebook and her knowledge from other Mandaean manuscripts because he was a well-known copyist and priest? Or did she forget to put notes for the changes and corrections that she made? Nobody has noticed or commented on this point before now and it may be evidence that Drower was not always accurate. This is another reason why the rest of her work may need to be rechecked and reexamined.

²⁰ *HGBHZ*, p. 85.

(iii) In the lineage of Rabbi Yahia Ram Zihrun, Drower's translation of the above colophon of *DMHZ* (DC 35) has the name of *Bihram* instead of the original name *Sapar*. However, the colophons of *DQRDK* and *DRA* also have *Bihram* instead of the *Sapar* of *DMHZ*'s colophon. On the one hand, this similarity may indicate the dependency of Drower on some other Mandaean colophons written by the same copyist instead of the colophons of *DMHZ* or even *DQRDK* and *DRA*, because the latter two scrolls were held by Drower, after her translation and publication of *DMHZ*. On the other hand, the variance in these two names of the lineage of the copyist Rabbi Yahia Ram Zihrun, may not be a mistake or inaccuracy, but may simply indicate that *Bihram* is the Mlwaša name, while *Sapar* is the official earthly name.

(iv) Drower mistakenly wrote one name in the lineage of Rabbi Yahia Ram Zihrun as Mašadu. However, the original DC. 35 manuscript contains Mašhad, as it is in note 1. However, *DQRDK*, 129, *AM*, 255: 15 and *DRA* (the second line in the colophon), may have the right spelling, i.e., Mašad,²¹ instead of Mašhad or Mašadu.

(v) All the DC 35, *DQRDK*, *AM* and *DRA* manuscripts have the word 'Kairia'. It is another name in the lineage of Rabbi Yahia Ram Zihrun, mistakenly read by Drower as 'Kaidia'. Drower read the letter *r* as *d*, probably because the shapes of both letters in Mandaic are close. However, the name is a well-known Arabic name and it is easy to recognize its letters. It seems that in many cases it has become very difficult for western scholars to recognize the Arabic names or words without consulting Arabic native/local speakers or Dictionaries.

(vi) Rabbi Yahia Bihram, the copyist of DC 35 (lines 10-11), mistakenly wrote, in the formula of the beginning of the scroll: *rbai iahia iuhana br rbai adam zihrun*. The correct lineage names should be *rbai iahia iuhana br rbai zihrun adam*. We know this from comparing it with: (a) the above colophon (at the end of the manuscript) of the DC 35 manuscript itself, which also reads *rbai iahia iuhana br rbai zihrun adam*; and (b) other manuscripts, for example DC 31 (*AM*, 18 f.). Drower did not seem to realize Rabbi Yahia Bihram's mistake as she did not put a note in her translation.²²

(vii) The copyist, Rabbi Yahia Ram Zihrun (who is also the copyist of *DQRDK* and *DRA*), copied DC 35 for the *Yalufa* Baian, the same owner of *DQRDK* and *DRA*. However, the copyist of DC 35, i.e. Yahia Bihram, did not record the correct full name of the owner, from which Rabbi Yahia Bihram had copied. For, as we can see, it is written as *d-ansa lhad šalmana umhaimna ialupa baian br ram kinianH sabur* ('which he copied for one [who is] perfect and faithful, [namely] Baian son of Ram, his family name Sabur'). Seemingly, Drower either did not have the correct translation or she did not translate all the words. Instead she inserted additional words that were not in the original text. She translated this passage as: 'which he copied himself for a *yalufa*, namely Baian son of Paizia, his family name Sabur, Manda-d-Hiia forgive him his sins!' The name 'Baian son of Paizia' has, in fact, erroneously combined the first part of his Malwaša name, that is 'Baian', with his earthly grandfather's name, that is, 'Paizia'. We know from the colophons of *DQRDK* and *DRA* and some other

²¹ Read it Majid. It is an Arabic name.

²² See *HGBHZ*, pp. 30, 85.

manuscripts, that the correct full name is as follows: ‘The baptizmal Malwaša name is *baian br haua* (Baian son of Hawa); the complete earthly name is *'ustad iaqira ialufa ... ʕaziz br 'ustad dizpolia br paizia br qasum br našmadin kinianH sabur*²³ (‘*Ustad* (master) *Yalufa* (disciple, knower) ... ʕaziz son of *'Ustad Dizpolia* son of *Paizia* son of *Qasum* son of *Najmadin*, family name *Sabur*’).²⁴

This error in naming shows the importance of examining every Mandaean manuscript, especially the colophons, to compare the related information. Studying any manuscript or colophon in isolation would, therefore, be extremely unwise.²⁵

(viii) According to the colophon of DC 35, we know that Rabbi Yahia Ram Zihrun was a venerable and respected priest, and a *Tarmida*, as we can see from the way Rabbi Yahia Bihram describes him: *d-ansit lnapšai mn diuan d-rba urama uiaqira tarmida taqna rbai iahia ram zihrun...d-ansa* (‘I copied for myself from a Diwan which a great, lofty, revered and reliable *Tarmida*, Rabbi Yahia-Ram-Zihrun copied ...’).²⁶ As we can see, Drower omitted translating many of these words as if they were not in the DC 35 manuscript.

(ix) According to the colophon of DC 31 (*AM 255: 17 ff.*), we know that the famous, Rabbi Yahia Yuhana, son of Rabbi Zihrun-Adam, is the father of Rabbi Yahia Ram Zihrun's mother²⁷ Rabbi Yahia Yuhana was the *Rbai* (Master/teacher) and the initiator of the copyist of DC 31, i.e. Ram Zihrun. This is

²³ *DQRDK*, 131-132.

²⁴ See chapter 6.

²⁵ All credit to Buckley for understanding this and taking on the task of studying the Mandaean colophons. However, she seems also following Drower's translation of many colophons without studying the original Mandaic text or checking or questioning Drower's translation of these colophons. This clearly appears in her article ‘Glimpses of a Life’, as we will explain in number xi, below.

²⁶ Cf. Drower's translation in her *HGBHZ*, p. 85.

sufficient to suggest the argument that all the above copyists (Rabbi Yahia Ram Zihrun, Rabbi Yahia Bihram and Ram Zihrun) are from one school led by Rabbi Yahia Ram Zihrun. In addition, they have good social and religious relationships with each other.

(x) Regarding this small passage of Drower's translation, we have only mentioned the most important notes. However, in other passages we can find many, many more examples where re-translation is needed. Indeed, a separate study would be necessary to correct similar errors which have been circulating in the area of Mandaean scholarship.²⁸

(xi) Despite Buckley's lengthy, ongoing research project to reconstruct segments of Mandaean history²⁹ by studying, comparing and correlating the colophons of the available manuscripts (including DC 35 and some other manuscripts copied by Rabbi Yahia Bihram, such as DC 24, (part of 28), 37, 43, 47, 50),³⁰ despite her separate study of the life and works of Rabbi Yahia Bihram³¹ and despite her long use of Drower's works, Buckley has not yet identified these mistakes, as far as we can tell.

(xii) Though more than fifty years have passed since Drower's translation, these and other mistakes and/or mistranslations have unfortunately not yet been discovered by other scholars. Instead, scholars like K. Rudolph, Ş. Gündüz, E. F.

²⁷ Also see, *AM*, p. 155.

²⁸ As a long term future project, I plan to address, study and correct Drower's translations wherever they are flawed.

²⁹ Although this project is still incomplete, Buckley has included in many of her publications much information, comments and small parts from this ongoing research. See for instance, Buckley, 'Glimpses of a Life'; *The Mandaean* (passim); 'The Colophons in H. Petermann's Sidra Rbba', *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 3d ser., 5, no. 1, 1995, pp. 21-38; c, pp. 33-50; *UC*; *SEK* (Preface and Introduction).

³⁰ See Buckley, 'Glimpses of a Life', p. 34 n. 2.

³¹ *Ibid*, pp. 31-49

Lupieri, J. C. Greenfield, A. Al-Zuhairy, and J. J. Buckley have merely followed Drower's work without carefully consulting the original Mandaic texts. Clearly, there is still an enormous amount of work which needs to be re-examined, retranslated and re-evaluated, despite Drower's groundbreaking research. This study, hopefully, will open the gate to this path and encourage other Mandaean scholars to take up the challenge.

The Earliest Copyist/Scribe of the Work of *DQRDK* – Zazai

According to *DQRDK*'s colophon, it seems that the earliest copyist/scribe is Zazai d-Gawazta, son of Hawa.³² His father's name is Naṭar.³³ Zazai d-Gawazta is one of the most well known and one of the first historical Mandaean copyists/scribes/editors/writers. He appears as the earliest (earthly) copyist/scribe of the following Mandaean works: many parts of *CP*,³⁴ *ATŠ*, *ARR*, *ARZ*, *DM'L* and *DMHZ*.

It is necessary also to mention another three secret scrolls. They are *DRA* and *DQRDK* and *DZRK*. As far as we can tell, no previous scholars have added these three scrolls to the list of scrolls that name Zazai as the earliest copyist or editor.³⁵ Based on the Mandaean material/manuscripts that have reached the world, we can see that Zazai dealt with and appreciated certain mystical writings and traditions preserved in the Mandaic language. The main focus of Zazai's work appears to have been to reinstate the

³² The Malwaša name of his mother.

³³ *Naṭar*, sometimes called 'Anuš', as father/master/*rbia* of Zazai. See the colophon of *DMHZ*. Probably, he was a copyist from whom Zazai may have copied some of the Mandaean documents. See *DQRDK*, 149; *Diuan Zahrun Raza Kasia DZRK* (=DC 27) (Hereafter *DZRK*), 535.

³⁴ Out of the eight colophons of *CP*, Zazai is recorded in: 1, 4, 5 and 8 of *CP*'s colophons, as the last/earliest earthly copyist of these four major important parts of *CP*. For details, consult *CP* and *CCPM*, pp. 33-50.

remnants of Mandaean and Naṣōraean texts which had been preserved from ancient times, inherited before the Christian era.

Regarding Zazai, the earliest copyist of *DQRDK*, we read the following in the colophon:

[148] ... *mn ktab d-`dH* [149] *d-ramuia br `qaimat kitbH bñib mata InapšiH mn diuan d-zazai[d-] gauazta br haua uabuia naṣar šumH*
 [148]...and was from the [original] handwriting [149] of *Ramuia*, son of 'Qaimat, who wrote it in the town of *Tib*. [He wrote it] for himself from the *Diuan* of *Zazai* [of] *Gauazta*, son of *Haua* and the name of his father is *Naṣar*.³⁶

But from where or whom did Zazai copy the scroll? Consulting the *DQRDK* colophon, we read the following:

...*uasata d-napša lahuatalH hazin diuan udukrana rba*³⁷
 [149] ...and he himself has [150] no copies of this *Diuan* and the Great Memorial (or commemoration).

It initially appears from this statement that Zazai actually 'had no copies of this Diwan' and was therefore the original compiler of the text. At least this is the way that many scholars who have dealt with Mandaean scriptures and come across a similar phrase³⁸ seem to translate or understand it, especially when it appears at the end of the list of copyists, following the name of Zazai. Drower and Buckley, for example, have generally taken this phrase to mean that there was no copy of this or that scripture at all

³⁵ In addition, Zazai is mentioned as father/master of an ancient female copyist/priest, that is Ṭabia, in *GS*. However, both of them were not the earliest ones, See for example Buckley, *UC*, pp. 283, 285. Also see 4. 3, below.

³⁶ See chapter 6.

³⁷ *DQRDK*, pp. 149-50.

³⁸ For closed or similar phrases ended its copyists list's names with the name of Zazai, see for instance: *HGBHZ*, pp. x f., 3, 22f., 30 f.; *PNC*, pp. 54 f.; *DRA*, 4; *DZRK*, 535. Also consult *DQRDK*, 2-5, noting its similarity to *CGŠ*, p. 36. For closed or similar use of the phrase written by late copyists, see the following example from *DMHZ*, in which we read about Rabbi Yahia Yuhana that his father's name is 'Adam-Zihrun', and he was a high priest 'Ganzibra'. He did the same thing at the beginning of *DMHZ*. He said: 'I copied from the manuscript of Rabbi Zihrun son of Adam-Yuhana. He said: 'The beginning of this (scroll) was cut off; but all that there was, I wrote down'. (*HGBHZ*, p. 30, and pp. 85-6). Also see, 4. 2 (The Most Recent Copyist/Scribe of the Work of *DQRDK*), above. Also consult *DZRK*, 11-13, 558-59.

before the one copied by Zazai, who was the first and earliest earthly person who had the document, probably from a heavenly source. However, the initiated reader would understand this phrase literally to mean that Zazai copied and edited this work, as he did with the other Mandaean works, that is, (re)copying from his earthly grand masters and/or from his heavenly fathers, the 'Lightworld Beings', like *Hiia Qadmaia* (the First Living One(s)/the First Life) or *Manda d-Hiia* (the Knowledge/Gnosis of Life),³⁹ or *Hibil Ziua*.⁴⁰ This topic will be the crux of our later discussion.

Contrary to popular belief, it is contended here that this phrase probably means that the copyist (Zazai) had only one source, or that he was using a copy (probably fragments) which belonged to an unknown writer/copyist, maybe from the secret circles of his Naṣōraean initiators and teachers (a practice which is part of the priestly-Naṣōraean school to the present day). This practice would not have been unusual at all. In fact, it seems to have been quite common in ancient times, especially in the pre-Christian era,

³⁹ See *CP*, p. 71; *DM'L*, 1353, p. 72; *ATŠ*, no. 206. Also see, *KL*, p. 50; *CCPM*, p. 36. Also see the colophon of the other scrolls and documents that mention Zazai. In *HGBHZ*, p. 84, we read:

[T]hat which Zazai copied from his father Manda-ḡ-Hiia. And Manda-ḡ -Hiia copied from Šišlam-Rba and Šišlam-Rba copied from his father Shaq-Rba. Shaq-Rba copied from Ayar-Rba and Ayar-Rba copied from Nbaṭ-Rba. And Nbaṭ-Rba copied from Ziwa-Sagia (Great-Radiance) and Nhura-ḡ -kabir-(ḡ)-almia-kulhun (Light-that-is-mightier-than-all-worlds). And Ziwa-Sagia copied from his innermost mind and the habiliment in which He existeth and that which (*was in Him* ?).

In his *SAMRMR*, pp. 8f., I. Al Zuhairy even argued that these names after Zazai, in fact, are also names for earthly scribes earlier than Zazai. Al Zuhairy also confirms Buckley's comments (in *CCPM*, p. 41) about the colophons of the *GL*, which also have copyist names before Zazai. He says:

[T]hough many scholars have assumed these names to be those of divinities and not of actual people, such as Zazai. They were, therefore, ignored and only Zazai was used to fix a probable dating for the Mandaean manuscripts. However all Madaeans are given the names of divinities, *malwaša*; even Zazai himself, i.e. Zazai, is a religious name and not an actual personal name. These religious names are used during rituals and ceremonies and it is quite possible that writers who lived earlier than Zazai would use such names.

⁴⁰ *DZRK*, 535-38 state the following:

uzazai ansa mn diuan d-hibil ziua uhibil ziua ansa mn diuan d-haiašum uhaiašum ansa mn diuan d-abatur [536] *uabatur ansa mn diuan d-manda d-hiia umanda d-hiia ansa mn diuan d-ansa mn abuia kušṭa d-ansa mn diuan d-bihram rba ubihram* [537] *rba ansa mn diuan d-iukašar rba uiukašar rba ansa mn diuan d-iauar rba uiuar rba d-ansa mn*

lasting at least several centuries, for copyists to omit their names from the colophon. Evidence supporting this view has been documented elsewhere.⁴¹

Importance of Zazai

Zazai copied parts of the *Qulasta*, along with many other scrolls, including *DQRDK*, at around the end of the first half of the first century CE.⁴² After immigrating to Mesopotamia, Zazai brought with him a collection of ancient Mandaean-Naṣōraean scriptures which later became the canon of the Mandaeans. During his life time, in the first century CE, and through the revelation that he obtained, as tradition has it, by dwelling in the heavens for sixty-two days,⁴³ Zazai may have gained some authority for editing and interpolating these texts, which formed the main features of the present body of scriptures used by the Mandaeans to the present day.⁴⁴ Zazai established his wide and strong base in the city of Ṭib, in Wasit, southern Mesopotamia.⁴⁵ With an ever increasing

diuan uginza ukušfa iaqra [538] ukušfa iaqra ansa mn lbuša d-huabH urbabH uhiia zakin.

⁴¹ Further study is required to confirm or reject the author's interpretation of 'he has no copies of this Diwan', but the author is satisfied for now that this interpretation is the most probable, especially based on the work on colophons. To confirm the probable meaning of 'he has no copies of this Diwan' given above, we first have to understand the use of colophons better. Two important questions to ask here are the following: Have the colophons been used by other groups? When did Mandaeans start to include colophons giving the history of copyists and the lineage lists? In response to the first of these, it might be observed that we know from various pre-Christian sources, like the Mesopotamian tablets of clay, that the use of the colophon is not only a Mandaean practice. That means the Mandaean copyists may have been influenced by traditions around them, especially in Mesopotamia. However, the Dead Sea Scrolls have no colophons.

With regard to the second question, nobody can possibly confirm when the Mandaean copyists began to include colophons in their scriptures. However, J. Buckley and some other scholars like E. Lupieri and I. Al Zuhairy have now successfully confirmed that there are a few other copyists before Zazai, going back a few earthly generations before Zazai. See n. 39, above. Also see *GL* 138: 11 ff; Buckley, 'The Evidence for Women Priests in Mandaeanism', *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*, vol. 59, 2000, pp. 93-106.

⁴² The year is not currently agreed on by most scholars. See 4. 3, below.

⁴³ See *HG*, 5 (DC 9).

⁴⁴ See *MLG*, pp. 168 ff.

⁴⁵ See *HG*. About the city of Ṭib, Yaqut Al-Hamawi Al-Rumi, recorded in about 626 A.H., that Ṭib is a small town/city between Wasit and Khuzistan, is inhabited by the Nabateans who spoke Nabataean, and claimed to be descendants of Seth, son of Adam, and were the Ṣābiāns. See Yaqut Al-Hamawi Al-Rumi, *Mu'ajjam Al-Buldan*, vol. 6, Cairo, p. 76. Scholars who have come across Yaqut's note confirm that this

population of Mandaeans, the city blossomed and became one of the most important leading cities of the Mandaeans in Mesopotamia. In addition, it has become 'the center of a strong scribal activity, with copyist centers, and prominent ethnarchs (*riš amia*) and their helpers collecting and editing Mandaean literature'.⁴⁶

With his familiarity with the scriptures, Zazai d-Gawazta would have seen the similarities between himself and the Great fathers, especially Adam, Šititl (Seth), Ram, Šurbai, Šum br Nu (Sam son of Noah), Yahia Yuhuna (John the Baptist) and Miriai. Nonetheless, he would also have recognized their differences in rank, since his forefathers were most of them the great originators, teachers and prophets of the Mandaean spirit, whereas he was simply a follower of their path of Naṣoraeen enlightenment, i.e. *Naṣiruta*.⁴⁷

It seems that at the time of Zazai there were several versions of Mandaean writings. This appears to have been a particularly challenging matter for Zazai, for he was the top *Riš Ama*, the leader and head of the Mandaean nation.⁴⁸ Zazai faced the real possibility of losing the scrolls and seeing the destruction of the Mandaean religion, by virtue of the fact that Mandaeans had entered a new phase of life in Mesopotamia and were facing difficulties integrating into the lives of the local inhabitants. Seeing this, Zazai took upon himself the full responsibility of teaching, collecting, organizing, rewriting and copying most of the Mandaean scriptures (literature), especially the liturgical esoteric scrolls that needed more effort editing and recording from oral and

information fits very neatly the Mandaeans who are today called Šubbā. Consult for example, Drower's, *CP*, p. 32 n. 2; *ATŠ*, p. 4. See also *KL*, p. 57 n. 13; *M*, p. 5, n. 14.

⁴⁶ *UC*, p. 282.

⁴⁷ Zazai, after the death of John the Baptist, suggested that John died in the first half of the first Century, and was in a similar position to his predecessors. See also, *MLG*, pp. 144 ff., 224 ff.

⁴⁸ We know this from Mandaean oral sources and also from reciting his *Malwaša* name in the important ritual prayer that is *Abahatan Qadmaia* 'the First Fathers'. See *CP*, p. 170.

badly written sources. Zazai received, reproduced and copied them from various primordial sources. Some Mandaean colophons, for example, indicated sources as ‘pristine original’ Lightworld forces, like the First Life⁴⁹ and Manda d-Hiia,⁵⁰ and as we will see soon, Zazai was even then mythologized as a ‘son of Manda d-Hiia’.⁵¹ In his twilight years, he indeed became a semi-celestial figure, ‘an ’Utra or the son of ’Utria’ like the other great teachers.⁵² But despite his greatness and importance for the development of Mandaean literature, religion and history, our knowledge of Zazai’s life remains limited.

4. 3 Dating *DQRDK*

Difficulties in Dating Mandaean Literature

As anyone who has studied Mandaean literature will know, dating these scrolls and the traditions which they transmit is one of the hardest problems which scholars of Mandaean literature have to confront.⁵³ The following discussion of some issues regarding dating the material will illustrate the problem.

Parts of the Mandaean literature were brought to Europe in the sixteenth century through the offices of Portuguese monks.⁵⁴ Probably the first Mandaean manuscript

⁴⁹ For example we read in *CP*, p. 71; *DM’L*, 1353 (*SEK*, p. 72) that one of the earliest copyists called Zazai d-Gawazta had copied ‘from the Diwan of the First Life’. Buckley comments in *CCPM*, p. 36:

‘The First Life’ refers to the primary Lightworld entity in Mandaean mythology, and so this statement guarantees Zazai’s text as a true copy of the highest possible, mythologized source.

⁵⁰ See nn. 39, 40, above.

⁵¹ See *ATŠ*, no. 206.

⁵² See *MLG*, p. 171; *SEK*, p. v.

⁵³ For the problem of dating the Mandaean literature, see for example, Şinasi Gündüz, ‘The Problems of the Nature and Date of Mandaean Sources’, in *Journal for the New Testament*, vol. 53, 1994, pp. 87-97; R. Macuch, ‘The Origin of the Mandaeans and their Script’, pp. 174-92.

⁵⁴ See K. Rudolph, *Gnosis: The Nature and History of Gnosticism*, translation edited by R. McL. Wilson (trs. R. McL. Wilson, P.W. Coxton & K.H. Kuhn), New York, 1983, p. 30.

brought to Europe was a scroll brought by Ignatius à Jesu in 1652.⁵⁵ Despite the fact that the scroll had been located in Europe in the Vatican since that time, no pre-twentieth-century scholar had attempted to date or even to study this or any other Mandaean scroll.

In spite of much work done on other Mandaean literature at the beginning of the twentieth century,⁵⁶ the Mandaean scrolls remained almost completely unknown to scholars⁵⁷ until Lady Drower's discovery of a large portion of the 'treasury of Mandaean writings'.⁵⁸ Drower was the first to translate and comment on many of these writings, especially many of the secret scrolls.⁵⁹

Most scholars of Mandaicism in the twentieth century, from Lidzbarski to Buckley, who have dealt with the Mandaean literature and history, have discussed the problem of dating the Mandaean writings. However, as with the problem of the origin and history of the Mandaeans,⁶⁰ scholars have seemingly been unable to find an answer. They have not even been able to agree on critical dates for Mandaean writings (including the scrolls),⁶¹ nor have they finalized their own views on the dating.

⁵⁵ It is the (Dîvân) manuscript found in Rome. For details see, S. A. Pallis, *Essay on Mandaean Bibliography 1560-1930*, Philo Press, Amsterdam, 1933, p. 32 and n. 1.

⁵⁶ For the Mandaean literature, see K. Rudolph, 'Die Mandäische Literatur', in *Studia Mandaica*, ed. R. Macuch, Band I, de Gruyter, Berlin, 1976, I, pp. 147-70.

⁵⁷ As Macuch notes, there are only a few exceptions in Europe:

'The only exceptions were a *diwân* published photomechanically by J. Euting and B. Poertner (1904) and a long scroll of the Bibliothèque Nationale (Paris) containing a text of *The Thousand and Twelve Questions (Alf Trisar Šuialia)*, published by Drower (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1960). Earlier, M. Lidzbarski used it for the preparation of his planned Mandaic Dictionary, but it was not published, and its contents remained unknown until Drower's publication of it', *SEK*, p. iii.

⁵⁸ Drower did not discover 'the complete treasury of Mandaean writings' as R. Macuch and most other scholars, including Drower herself, believe. See *SEK*, p. iii; Drower, *A Mandaean Bibliography*, pp. 34ff. However, according to our knowledge, there are some other writings, which still remain untouched and undiscovered by scholars and have never been in any library in Europe.

⁵⁹ For the works done on the Mandaean writings by Drower, see the Bibliography. Also see *HCMM*, pp. 468-69; *SEK*, p. iii.

⁶⁰ For a brief survey on the history of the research on Mandaicism and the problem of the origin of the Mandaeans, see *KL*, pp. 3-15.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 55-62. Also see *M*, pp. 3-20

Despite Drower's numerous pioneering works on Mandaean writings and her recognition of the importance of colophons, her dating of most of the Mandaean material, especially that copied by Zazai, such as *Q* and most of the secret scrolls, lacks a deep historical, linguistic or geneological investigation and solid evidence. In addition, because of the limited effort and time spent attempting to date *Q* collections and the scrolls, the efforts to date the longest, well-known secret scroll, i.e. *ATŠ* (including *DTP*) by Drower as well as the efforts by most of the scholars who followed her, including Macuch, Rudolph and Gündüz, have not provided us with a solid dating of these scrolls. Instead, scholars after Drower seem to have blindly accepted the approximate initial dating proposed by Drower. Thus, further study and redating of most of Drower's work needs to be undertaken (this will be the subject of a later research paper by the present author).

In their continuing attempts to reconstruct the history of Mandaean literature as well as the history and canon of the Mandaean religion, many recent scholars have come to realize the great importance of the Mandaean colophons. Scholars like Macuch, Rudolph, Gündüz, Lupieri and, lately, Buckley, have given their attention to, and to some degree discussed or examined, many of the Mandaean colophons and the role of Zazai. Regarding this topic, Macuch has made some important comments, which appear in the preface to Buckley's *SEK*, in which he also refers to, and encourages, the author's (i.e. Buckley) ongoing research project of reconstructing a history of transmission of Mandaean text on the basis of the colophons. Furthermore, he states:

In her last note to the Commentary (n. 82), the author announces her research project of reconstructing a history of transmission of Mandaean text on the basis of the colophons. I have already pointed out the importance of close scrutiny of the latter for the reconstruction of the

history of Mandaean literature in *HCMM*, LXVII. Apart from the legendary *Haran Gawaita* (published by Drower ...) ⁶² and a Mandaean 'world history' in the *Right Ginza* (pp. 379-94), the colophons are the only historical documents written by Mandaeans. Their schematic lists of copyists-only rarely accompanied by any further date-constitute no pleasant reading. But since they retrace the origin of each book or scroll back to the most ancient known copy, they at least provide us with material for approximate computation according to the enumerated generations of copyists. This may lead us very close to the time of the first copy.

Some of the colophons end abruptly with a name that may still be considered as historical; others, especially in the rituals, prefer to transgress this reasonable limit and go back, as discussed above, to *Zāzai*. A critical researcher will, of course, know how to treat this naive belief of the Mandaean copyists who concealed from us the beginnings of their anonymous literature. Although we shall never know the names of its authors and their exact ages, a close and critical scrutiny of Mandaean colophons from this point of view would be a meritorious piece of work. We may only encourage Mrs. Buckley to this hard but important task which 'involves hundreds of priest-lineages, thousands of names, and detailed comparisons of colophons'. ⁶³

In 1993, Buckley stated the following, regarding the difficulties of studying and dating *DM'L* and some other liturgical, esoteric commentaries:

DM'L is not a piece for someone just starting out in Mandaean studies. As noted, this type of priestly text closely resembles *CCŠ*, *ARR*, *ARZ*, and *ATŠ*, all of which presuppose *CP* as their liturgical 'canon'. At this point, it is impossible to date *DM'L* and these other liturgical, esoteric commentaries, but we at least know that they do not antedate *CP*, which may go back to the third century CE. ⁶⁴ All these commentaries belong to a genre one might call 'priestly esoteric texts'. ⁶⁵

Linguistic Evidence for the Time Frame

Without clear evidence, scholarly comment on the time frame of dating Mandaean works must remain conjecture. The best that can be achieved at present is the establishing

⁶² I.e. *HGBHZ*, see the table of Abbreviations, and the Bibliography.

⁶³ *SEK*, p. vi.

⁶⁴ She may be referring to the time of *Zazai*, according to *CP* colophon's note that was recorded by *Ramuia*, and to the fact that the Manichaean psalms of *Thomas*, which were dated to the late third century CE., are an adoption and almost direct translation from *GS*. See T. Säve-Söderbergh, *Studies in the Coptic Manichaean Psalm-Book: Prosody and Mandaean Parallels*, Uppsala, 1949, pp. 160ff. See also pp. 97ff. and nn. 74, 78 below.

of a time frame, starting with the available evidence of the second century CE, during which the Mandaic script appears in relation to the Characenic coins script and the Elymaean inscriptions and the coin script, which were dated by Macuch and other scholars to belong to the second century CE.⁶⁶ Based on scholarly acceptable evidence and strong argument, Macuch has clearly proved that the Mandaean script is prior to the Characenic and the Elymaean scripts.⁶⁷ Macuch highlights the early Mandaean infiltration into the region of southern Mesopotamia and Khozistan, saying:

The emergence of the Characenic and the Elymaean scripts will always have to be considered in connection with the early Mandaean infiltration into the southern Mesopotamia and Khozistan, and research will have to follow my later rather than my earlier opinion in this respect.⁶⁸

In another place of his important argument, Macuch states the following:

As, however, an atomic bomb has to be used with the greatest care, I contented myself with keeping to myself my convictions about the Mandaean influence on the script of the Elymaean inscriptions and publishing only the less 'dangerous' view that the Mandaeans must have come in contact very early with the script and language of these inscriptions. My further discussions of the problems of Mandaean origins with F. Altheim have encouraged me to state openly my original opinion that these inscriptions, although not written by the Mandaeans themselves, are absolutely dependent on the script and language known to us as Mandaic and not the other way around, even if the most ancient document of the Mandaic script and language can only be dated a century later.⁶⁹

⁶⁵ *SEK*, p. xviii.

⁶⁶ See *OMTS*, pp. 174ff. Cf. M Lidzbarski, 'Die Münzen der Characene mit mandäischen Legenden', *Zeitschrift für Numismatik*, vol. 33, 1922, pp. 83-96; E. Drouin, 'Monnaies araméennes de la Characène,' *Revue numismatique*, 3me sér., t.vol. 7 (1889), pp. 211-254; J. Naveh, 'The Origin of the Mandaic Script', *BASOR*, vol. 198, 1970, pp. 32-37; P. W. Coxon, 'Script Analysis and Mandaean Origins', *JSS*, vol. 15, 1970, pp. 16-30.

⁶⁷ See *OMTS*, pp. 174ff.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 175.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 176.

Another area that might eventually provide clues for dating Mandaean works is the study of Mandaic magical bowl texts and lead amulets/rolls. The incantation bowls are generally dated by scholars like H. Pognon, M. Lidzbarski, J. A. Montgomery, W.S. McCullough, C. H. Gordon, E.M. Yamauchi, R. Macuch,⁷⁰ and by R. Venco-Ricciardi and E. Hunter to the seventh century CE, the pre-Islamic period.⁷¹ As for the magical lead amulets/rolls, E. Yamauchi and M. Lidzbarski have dated them to about 400 CE, based on orthographic considerations.⁷² Macuch, however, in response to Lidzbarski, stated that the year 400 was too late.⁷³ He dated one of the Mandaic lead amulets to the first half of the third century CE because of paleographical considerations.⁷⁴

Although there is, to date, little archaeological evidence to support these dating hypotheses, the dates thus far ascribed to the amulets and incantation bowls offer a time

⁷⁰ See *KL*, p. 60 n. 39.

⁷¹ For a brief overview of the magical Mandaic incantation bowls, their texts and dating, consult, J. A. Montgomery, *Aramaic Incantation Texts from Nippur*, (University of Pennsylvania, the Museum, Publications of the Babylonian Section, vol. III), Philadelphia, 1913, p. 39; E. M. Yamauchi, *Mandaic Incantation Texts*; W. S. McCullough, *Jewish and Mandaean Incantation Bowls in the Royal Ontario Museum*, Near and Middle East Series 5, Toronto, 1967, pp. xif.; F. Franco, 'Five Aramaic incantation bowls from Tell Barude (Choche)', *Mesopotamia*, XIII-XIV, 1978/9; E. Hunter, 'Who are the Demons? The Iconography of Incantation Bowls', *Studi Epigrafici e Linguistici*, vol. 15, 1998, 95-115; idem, 'Two Mandaic Incantation Bowls from Nippu', *Baghdader Mitteilungen*, 25, Spring-1994, pp. 605-618. Also see *KL*, pp. 60-66, and n. 39; K. Rudolph, 'Der Mandäismus in der neueren Gnosisforschung', in *Gnosis. Festschrift für Hans Jonas*, ed. B. Aland, Gottingen, 1978, pp. 253-55.

⁷² E.M. Yamauchi, *Mandaic Incantation Texts*, American Oriental Society, vol. 49, New Haven, Connecticut, 1967, pp. 2, 6f. Also see M. Lidzbarski, 'Ein mandäisches Amulett', *Florilegium ou recueil de travaux d'érudition dédiés à M. Melchior de Vogüé*, Paris, 1909, pp. 349-73.

⁷³ M. Lidzbarski, 'Alter und Heimat der mandäischen Religion', *Zeitschrift für die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der Älteren Kirche*, 27, 1928, pp. 321-327; R. Macuch, 'Anfänge der Mandäer', *Die Araber in der Alten Welt*, eds. F. Altheim and R. Stiehl, 2, Berlin, 1965, p. 139. Also see *KL*, p. 60.

⁷⁴ R. Macuch, 'Anfänge der Mandäer', *Die Araber in der Alten Welt*, eds. F. Altheim and R. Stiehl, vol. II, Berlin, 1965, pp. 96f., p. 139, 189. For more details on these led rolls see M. Lidzbarski, 'Alter und Heimat der mandäischen Religion', *ZNW*, vol. 27, 1928, p. 325; Macuch, 'Altmandäische Bleirollen', in *Die Araber in der Alten Welt*, eds. F. Altheim and R. Stiehl, Berlin, vol. IV, 1967, pp. 96-97, 189; *OMTS*, pp. 176f., 185; Also see J. Naveh, 'Another Mandaic Lead Roll', *Israel Oriental Studies*, vol. 5, 1975, pp. 47-53; 'The Origin of the Mandaic Script', *BASOR*, 198, 1970, pp. 33f.

frame potentially spanning over 400 years, from the third century CE to the seventh century CE. Once they have been scientifically dated, they may offer more concrete evidence and point to links all the way back to the first century CE to the early migration of the Mandaeans to Mesopotamia, as I have conjectured⁷⁵. In any case, according to Dr. E. Hunter, the amulets and incantation bowls do seem to point to a continuity from much earlier traditions that were in usage in the second and third centuries CE, but may have been written in different material format or possibly transmitted orally.

What further can be said about dating of individual texts within this span? Conclusive dating hitherto has not appeared possible for many texts. Inscriptions and texts dated in the year of a particular event seldom refer to any circumstances clearly recognizable in history, but most scholars have agreed that the language of the pre-Islamic magical Mandaic texts, including the texts of both the lead amulet scrolls and the incantation bowls, corresponds with, and is identical to, that of the liturgical texts of *GR* and *Q*.⁷⁶ Scholars, without doubt, have also agreed to consider that *GR*, particularly *GS*, and *Q*, contain the oldest texts of classical Mandaic literature.⁷⁷

Säve-Söderbergh has revealed, with much evidence, the adaptations, almost direct translations, of early Mandaic hymns found in *GL* constituted the important well known comparative study of the Coptic Manichaean Psalm-Book of Thomas.⁷⁸ Thomas was one of the first disciples of Mani, who founded the Manichaean religion in the first half of the

⁷⁵ In support of Macuch's later belief that the dating of some Mandaean lead amulets should be moved back (see n. 74), my ongoing, decade long research and translation of many similar rolls found in Iraq suggests, on the basis of linguistic evidence that these rolls may go back to the late first or second centuries CE.

⁷⁶ See, for instance, Macuch, 'Altmandaische Bleirollen,' pp. 96-97, 189; Montgomery, *Aramaic Incantation Texts*, p. 39; *KL*, p. 61.

⁷⁷ See *HCMM*, p. LXV; Rudolph, *Gnosis*, p. 346; *KL*, pp. 61; *M*, pp. 11, 12f., 157, 173 n. 33.

⁷⁸ T. Säve-Söderbergh, *Studies in the Coptic Manichaean Psalm-Book*, pp. 160ff.

third Century, CE⁷⁹ and died about 276 CE.⁸⁰ It is believed that ‘the original version of the Psalms of Thomas was composed by Mani’s disciple and should be dated to the last quarter of the 3rd century’.⁸¹ Furthermore, T. Säve-Söderbergh’s study shows the connection between the (pre-Manichaean) Mandaean liturgical texts and these Psalms.

He states:

It is interesting to note that this comparative analysis not only demonstrates the pre-Manichaean date of nearly all the motifs connected with the *masiqtā*, especially in the form in which we find them in the Left Ginza II and III-books which have already been supposed to belong to the older strata of Mandaean literature—but also of many other passages, as e.g. the parables used in a **parenese** [paranesis] which would otherwise be very difficult to date from their contents only.⁸²

By using this external evidence from the Manichaean religion, we know that Mani and at least one of his important first disciples, i.e. Thomas, were, at some stage of their life, in close contact with, and strongly influenced by, the Mandaeans and their well formed liturgical texts in Mesopotamia during the third century CE.⁸³ Regarding the Mandaean influence upon Manichaeism, the study of Şinasi Gündüz, makes several points very clear:

(1) Mandaism certainly antedates Manichaeism, (2) certain Mandaean liturgical texts were already redacted in the third century A.D., which confirms the Mandaean tradition about redaction of some of their liturgical texts, and (3) the Manichaean writers, such as Thomas, one of Mani’s first disciples, were in contact with the Mandaeans in Babylonia during the third century A.D.⁸⁴

⁷⁹ Ibid., pp. 155f.; G. Widengreen, *Mani and Manichaeism*, trs. C. Kessler, London, 1965, pp. 25f.

⁸⁰ Ibid. p. 156.

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² Ibid. p. 163.

⁸³ See G. Widengreen, *Mani and Manichaeism*, pp. 25f.; *OMTS*, p. 189. Also see *KL*, p. 122-123. For new approach to the connection between Mandaeans and Manichaeans, Mani and others, see D. Shapira, ‘Manichaeans (*Marmanaiia*), Zoroastrians (*Iazuqaiia*), Jews, Christians and other Heretics: A Study in the Redaction of Mandaic Texts’, *Le Muséon*, vol. 117, Fasc. 3-4, 2004, pp. 243 – 280.

⁸⁴ *KL*, p. 123.

As a result, Gündüz concludes, ‘these Mandaean liturgical texts must have been redacted before the third century AD’.⁸⁵

Gündüz’s conclusion supports the evidence provided by the Mandaic inscriptions on coins, but brings us no closer to establishing more precise dating of texts (eg. *GR*, *Q*, *ATŠ*). There have been several instances in which, through the reconstruction of Mandaean genealogies, texts can be shown to belong to the same or different generations. Works published by Drower, Macuch, Rudolph and Buckley, for example, have shown that the majority of the most important scrolls contain references to Zazai d-Gauazta⁸⁶ as their earliest copyist/editor, thus putting their ‘origins’ in the second half of the third century (around 270/272)⁸⁷ when most of the scholars suggest that Zazai lived. Buckley has been able to count close to fifty ‘generations’ of copyists in the first colophon of *CP*, from Adam Yuhana, who completed copying DC 53 in 1802, back to that of *Riš Ama*, i.e. Zazai.⁸⁸ So few such reconstructions from the colophons have been made, however, that we still do not have a sure framework for tracing the development of the Mandaic texts and the scripts that are used by their authors.

The style of the language of the texts as well as its relations with the Characenean coins script and the Eylamaean inscriptions and the coin script sometimes offer additional clues for the relative dating of texts. Thus we know that some ancient parts of *GR*, especially *GS*, are older than the *Q*; *Q* itself is older than *Draša d-Yahia*; many parts of *ATŠ* are older than some parts of *Draša d-Yahia* and certainly many passages of *AM*;

⁸⁵ *KL*, p. 61.

⁸⁶ See for example *ATS*, p. 159; *PNC*, p. 90; *HGBHZ*, p. 84. Also see *ML*, 231: 8; *CP*, 9: 15; J. de Morgan, *Études Linguistiques*, II^e partie: Textes mandaites, Paris, 1904 (Mission scientifique en Perse, V), 250/87: 14f.

⁸⁷ This date is the date of copying/composition of *Q* by Zazai, according to the statement of Ramuia in the colophon. See, *CP*, p. 71. The date seems to have been accepted in recent research. See for example, *M*, p. 4; *KL*, pp. 59f.;

some parts of *AM* itself are ancient and certainly antedate *Drašad-Yahia*, etc. Despite these relative ages being established, one cannot say with certainty how much older one text is than another.

There are also some clues to dating a text that can be found in the differences between simple and complex, primitive style and complex style, primary and secondary, the repetition of passages, phrases, formulas, sentences, terms and words used in a certain way which help to identify the dating. For example, using these features, we can tell that most of the scrolls of the liturgical, esoteric commentaries, like *ATŠ*, *DM'L*, *ARR*, *ARZ*, *CCŠ*, *DRA*, do not antedate *CP*, which may be dated to the third century CE, as many scholars assume.⁸⁹ However, the specific time frames cannot be specified, only the relative periods. The stylistic evidence so far, however, does not seem to warrant firm conclusions that one style may be called much older than another.

Some of the details that are in the Mandaean literature, writings and works are also very difficult to date, rendering the identification of the difference of style even more difficult. However, we can confidently confirm that most of the works, including the art, that were copied or edited by Zazai, including *DQRDK*, have their own ancient priestly esoteric style. These works are filled with mystical passages and this strongly connects all the texts and reveals their dependence on each other. Each work completes the other. This esoteric mosaic cannot be recreated to form the whole picture of Mandaean esoteric teaching unless all the scrolls mentioned above, and many others, are put in order and together.⁹⁰

⁸⁸ *CCPM*, pp. 36f. Also see *CP*, p. 74.

⁸⁹ See for example, *SEK*, p. xviii.

⁹⁰ See, *SEK*, p. xviii. Also to give an example, we may look at Buckley's statement regarding the strong affinities between *DM'L* and other Mandaean writings. She says:

If we consider the dating of Mandaean scrolls done by Drower, Rudolph and Buckley,⁹¹ we will find that the approximate dating of the majority is the fifth, sixth and seventh centuries CE.⁹² However, that dating seems to be based too strongly on general assumptions about the text without critical analyses of the language and the theology. Studying these scrolls on the basis of analyses of the language and theology may lead to the discovery that the linguistic elements and theological remarks are very close to each other. This may suggest that they belong to the same period of time, or that, although there may be a slight difficulty in which to put this or that scroll according to evidence, the existing inherited secret writings, i.e. the scrolls, may have been edited in the same general period. A great linguistic expert and religious leader like Zazai could quite possibly have done major editing work, with the help of his colleagues, to recopy, compose and edit the holy writings which the Mandaeans brought with them during their immigration from the north-west to their final settlement in the east, especially as we know that the number of Mandaeans increased sharply in Mesopotamia, and they lived in prosperity during the period of the first three centuries CE (with the assistance of the

DM'L is a secret, priestly document; its presence is mandatory in the priest initiation hut, the *škinta*. The text shows strong affinities with: 1. The Coronation of the Great Šišlam (=CGŠ), but *DM'L* is much larger and more detailed; 2. The Thousand and Twelve Questions (Alf Trisar Šuialia) (=ATŠ, of which one section, Book II, vii, is almost identical to *DM'L*'s II. 979-1042); and 3. The Canonical Prayerbook of the Mandaeans (=CP), which *DM'L* presupposes and to which it constantly refers. One of the most important features of *DM'L* is that it demonstrates how a ritual, in this case the priest initiation, works in relation to the liturgical poems in CP. The priest initiation ritual itself contains clusters of rituals, such as baptism, several meals, and a masiqta ('death-mass'). *SEK*, p. xv.

For that reason Buckley continued to write about how she produced her translation and commentary: This translation and commentary has necessitated an arrangement in which four other Mandaean texts (CGŠ, ATŠ ARR and CP) have continually lain open before me on the desk, so that I could compare the ritual steps in *DM'L* with those in these other documents. It has been especially important to align *DM'L*'s sequence of the ritual with the CP hymns (ibid., p. xvii).

⁹¹ For these scrolls see the Bibliography.

⁹² *SEK*, p. xvii. For an overview of Mandaean literature, including the published scrolls, see for example, *M*, pp. 10 ff.; *KL*, pp. 55 ff.

Parthian kings until the end of their kingdom).⁹³ This prosperity suggests that essential scribing and educational works must have been done at that time to band the Mandaeans together and show solidarity in the face of the neighbouring religious groups.⁹⁴

There is another, possibly fruitful, approach to dating some other Mandaean literature depending on the result of dating the work of *DQRDK*. This study has found that *DQRDK* was done immediately after *DTP*, and probably by the same author or by the same earliest editor/copyist of these two works. This result is based on an extensive comparative study between *DQRDK* and other Mandaean literature, in particular, some similar passages found in *DTP*, as will be seen.⁹⁵

On analysing *DTP* and *DQRDK*, I have found that the style of both is similar, as are the quotations, sentences, phrases, and ideas. Sometimes, however, details in *DTP* are omitted in *DQRDK* or vice versa. This difference in detail may be based on the Naṣoraean habit of referring readers, by the use of Naṣoraean codes or indications, to consult or complete these ideas with reference to the other partner, i.e. *DTP* for *DQRDK* and *DQRDK* for *DTP*.⁹⁶ This is very common in Mandaean-Naṣoraean writings, for it is a tradition that the mysteries are never put with only one 'King' but rather with 'Kings'.⁹⁷ This practice is part of the Mandaean-Naṣoraean thinking, which believes that the Mysteries and 'Kings' hold fast and work together to build/construct the 'House', i.e. the Universe as it is depicted in *DQRDK* and also in *DTP*, especially regarding the role of the

⁹³ See for instance, *M*, pp. 3ff.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

⁹⁵ See Chapter 6. It should be noted that Drower in her publication of *ATŠ* (1960) included *DTP* as the second part of the first book of the work. See *ATŠ*, pp. 44-60/161-95 (I: 212-298). However, there is some doubt about this composition based on the mystical arrangement of the seven parts of *ATŠ* and also the composition of the sections of each individual part, especially *DTP*.

⁹⁶ For many examples of the connection between *DQRDK* and *DTP*, consult many notes and in Chapter 6.

⁹⁷ For example consult, *ARZ* (esp. lines 85ff., 185ff.).

Alphabet.⁹⁸ As a result of my analysis, I believe that the editing and copying of these two works was done by Zazai d-Gauazta himself, and in the last period of his life's scribal activities, *DQRDK* probably was edited some time shortly after the completion of *ATŠ*, particularly the second part, *DTP*.

Using the Colophons and their Genelogies to Establish Time Frames

In 2002, Buckley made some significant comments regarding the age of the Mandaean esoteric exegetical literature that has yet to be translated and studied by scholars. She seems to disagree with the scholarly skepticism.⁹⁹ She now considers most of the ritual commentaries¹⁰⁰ as ancient texts, exactly as their colophons demonstrate. This is arguably one of the most significant outcomes of her core research on the Mandaean colophons, which will come to light in the future. Buckley has stated the following:

Despite the scholarly skepticism, most of these ritual commentaries are ancient, as their colophons demonstrate. Further investigations of the age of these texts belong to my seemingly endless historical research on Mandaean colophons.¹⁰¹

In support of Buckley's conclusions, we can use some facts unearthed by scholars like Macuch, Gündüz and Lupieri to give an approximate time frame for *DQRDK* and may, consequently, be able to do the same thing for other Mandaean writings, like *ATŠ* and parts of *Q*.

⁹⁸ Consult *DQRDK*, folio 1, I, folios. 7-9; *ATŠ*, Book I Part II.

⁹⁹ That includes herself, particularly in her previous dating of *DM'L*. See *SEK*, pp. i ff., xv ff.

¹⁰⁰ Such as *ATŠ*, *TTSR*, *ARR*, *ARZ*, *DM'L*. It is important to mention here that not all the seven parts of *ATŠ* are ritual commentaries. For instance in *DTP*, the second part of *ATŠ*, no ritual steps are mentioned. It generally concerns the creation of the universe, including the cosmic and earthly creation of the body. And as we will see, *DTP* is very similar in nature to *DQRDK*. See Chapter 5. 2, Chapter 6.

¹⁰¹ *M*, p. 15.

By examining the colophon of *DQRDK*, we find that the lineage of its copyists¹⁰² suggests that *DQRDK* may go back approximately sixteen to seventeen centuries.¹⁰³ Working backwards from the latest copyist, Yahia Ram Zihrun of Qurna in Basrah-Iraq in 1818, *DQRDK* refers back as far as Zazai d-Gauazta of Țib. This period of time could probably span the same period as that of the colophons of most Mandaean manuscripts.¹⁰⁴ The names, similarities in style and the language of the colophons confirm close links between the colophon of *DQRDK* and the colophons of many scrolls like *ATŠ*, *DM'L*, *ARZ* and *DMHZ*, and, to a certain degree, with the traditional old colophons that usually appear in *Q* and *GR*. This is true especially for those colophons which include the name of Zazai.¹⁰⁵ This may lead us to additional evidence to put *DQRDK* closer to, or in the same circle as, the above writings, which are more likely to be connected to Zazai's scribal activities.

When we closely examine the Mandaic *Zharas*, i.e. 'colophons', we find that they do shed light on the manuscripts. They not only reveal facts on the originality of the books or the scrolls, but also provide codicological, historical, and literary information.

Firstly, it seems that the development of the *Zhara* passed through several stages before evolving into its final form.

Secondly, there seem to be two main kinds of *Zharas*. One is the usual colophon which is normally written after the finishing of copying. It appears as a small writing at

¹⁰² After filling in some gaps within this lineage, which is caused by unrecorded or missing generations of copyist's names.

¹⁰³ Consult *DQRDK*, folio 11.

¹⁰⁴ For instance see, Buckley, 'The Colophons in H. Petermann's *Sidra Rabba*', p. 21; *CCPM*, p. 33.

¹⁰⁵ While generally true of these Mandaean documents, one of the exceptions is *DQRDK*'s colophon. In line 149, it mentions that Ramuia Br 'Qaimit has copied the scroll from Zazai. It did not include the name of the Riš Ama 'Šganda Br Yasmin', from whom Ramuia copied the majority of the Mandaean writings, as it is usually stated in many of the Mandaean colophons. We do not know whether this omission is original or it

the end of a book or scroll,¹⁰⁶ contains historical information, the names and lineage of most of the copyists, the date of copying, the place, etc. The second kind may, in fact, contain similar information to the first type, though abbreviated, but it also mainly contains some titles, notes, commentaries, explanations, instructions, and so on, which usually follow the Mandaean *Butas* (prayers or hymns), both individual *Butas* and sections of *Butas*, which are usually easy to recognize in the documents. They are mostly limited/enclosed between two lines or two long *s-a*. However, I believe that the primary original colophon of this type was perhaps written at the beginning of the document and not at the end or otherwise. It mostly appears as a title accompanied with very short introductory commentary or abstract, describing the nature and the general topic and the contents of that document. It may also be accompanied with: (i) exhortations/warnings of the misuse of, or revealing the document to, foreigners or unreliable Mandaean people, and/or (ii) with a request for forgiveness of sins of the named person(s).¹⁰⁷ Evidence of this appears in most of the Mandaean documents to the present day, which explains why these documents contain this kind of titling and introductory formula in that way of early Mandaean colophons. This second type of colophon is older than the former.

Thirdly, the second older type of colophon may have been the primary source from which the ideas of the secret Mandaean Commentaries and Explanations were formed, since most of them depend on the oldest Mandaean prayers and passages in many sections of *Q* and *GR* and are also an extension to and explanation of them. (For

happened because of late miscopying. This may be clarified when more similar manuscripts become available in the future.

¹⁰⁶ Some Mandaean documents have more than one *Zhara* located in various places, especially at the end of an important part or chapter, or even at the beginning of certain scrolls. However, the main colophon of the majority of these documents written at the end, or very close to it. See for example *DA*; *DRA*; *AT*⁵; *DMHZ*; *Q*.

¹⁰⁷ Buckley, 'The Colophons in H. Petermann's *Sidra Rbba*', p. 21; *UC*, p. 282.

this reason, the dating of *DQRDK* and many other scrolls should be placed after the oldest parts of those of *Q* and *GR*¹⁰⁸). Fourthly, we can assume that, in the first century, CE, the forms of the *Zharas* (colophons) of the first category were short and may have been very primitive.¹⁰⁹ That seems to be true at the time of *Zazai*. The colophons were probably developed in later stages after him, by his colleagues and students and this practice has continued for many generations.¹¹⁰

Based on these observations, I suggest that the colophons usually found in documents available today were developed before the Islamic period mainly by *Riš Ama Šganda* br *Yasmin*, and then they took their semi-final shape shortly before or close to the early Islamic period, and that probably between the early sixth and early eighth centuries CE.¹¹¹ This latter development may be attributable mostly to *Riš Ama Ramuia* br 'Qaimit who was the Naṣoraean head of the nation when the Islamic armies conquered Mesopotamia in the year 639 CE.¹¹² The final (classic) shape may have been gradually formed and kept within bounds mainly by the far reaching authority of the following six *Riš Amas*, who came in various stages after *Ramuia* and are also remembered by the prayer of *Abahatan Qadmaia*. They are: *Haiuna Pt Tihuia*, *Bainia Br Haiuna*, *Bihdad Br*

¹⁰⁸ For example see the comment of Macuch and Buckley in *SEK*, pp. iii ff., xv ff.

¹⁰⁹ The idea of adding colophon to the text seems to be very ancient in the history of writing. It is found in Mesopotamia. Colophons usually appear at the end of clay tablets, but also many times appears at the beginning. Interestingly, in the Jewish tradition, we know that the Genizah manuscripts and many other Hebrew writing of that time have colophons, while the Qumran scrolls have no colophons. Norman Golb, remarking on that, said: 'The Qumran scrolls are only *undated* scribal copies of literary writings. They do not have colophons, and originated a full millennium earlier than the Genizah manuscripts'. See Norman Golb, *Who Wrote the Dead Sea Scrolls: The Search for the Secret of Qumran*, Scribner, New York, 1995.

¹¹⁰ As well as in the colophons, many names of important priests and copyists are recorded later in the prayer of remembering the 'First Fathers' *Abahatan Qadmaia* (*CP*, no. 170), which is recited in rituals and ceremonies.

¹¹¹ See for example *CP*, p. 71, 150, 171; *CCPM*, p. 50. Also see Macuch, 'Anfänge der Mandäer', pp. 158ff.; Rudolph, K., *Quellenprobleme Zum Ursprung Und alter der Mandäer*, pp. 125f.

¹¹² For this *Riš-Ama* see *CP*, pp. 32 n. 2, 71, 150, 171. Also see R. Macuch, 'Gnostische Ethik und die Anfänge der Mandäer', in *Christentum am Roten Meer*, vol. II, ed. F. Altheim and R. Steihl, Berlin, 1973, pp. 260f.

Šadia Šarat, Yahia Adam Br Zadia Anus Hawa, Anuš Muḡailia Br Hawa Zadia, Adam Bulpariz Br Haua Mamania.¹¹³ The last one probably lived until the end of the tenth century CE.¹¹⁴

Supporting the above assertion is the fact that in about 639/640 CE *Riš-Ama* Ramuia did more editing and interpolating work on these texts, particularly extending and adding more *Zharas* (colophons), to make the texts more suitable for the priestly and Naṣoraeen students, especially with the beginning of the new era with Islam. In fact, he recorded whatever information he received from the previous generations.¹¹⁵

According to the colophon of *Sidra d-Nismata*, ‘The Book of Souls’, which is considered the first main part of ‘the liturgical collection’, i.e. *Q*, Zazai had completed it 368 years before the time it was copied by Ramuia, son of ‘Qaimat, who states:

From the day on which it fell from (or: was written by) Zazai-d-Gawazt a son of Hawa till now, the year in which I recopied it, is (a space of) 368 years in the ages.¹¹⁶

Ramuia gives more details confirming his statement. He says:

I wrote this Diwan in the town of Tib in the years when Anuš son of Danqa departed with the heads of the people (ethnarchs), in the years when the Arabs advanced.¹¹⁷

According to Ramuia’s statement, Zazai completed his recopying of some parts of *Q* in about 270-272 CE.¹¹⁸ However, this date has been recently rejected by E. Lupieri,

¹¹³ See *ibid.*; also *UC*, p. 284; *CCPM*, pp. 35, 42, nn. 26-8; *CP*, p. 153.

¹¹⁴ This dating is according to the inherited traditional Mandaean sources.

¹¹⁵ As mentioned above. Also consult the 8th colophon in *CP*, and other Mandaean colophons; *CCPM*, pp. 32-50.

¹¹⁶ Cf. *CP*, p. 71 in which Drower translated it, slightly differently. Also see *CP*, pp. 32, 150, 171. Also see R. Macuch, ‘Anfänge der Mandäer’, pp. 158ff.; *CCPM*, pp. 32 ff.; Buckley, ‘Spirit Ruha in Mandaean Religion’, PhD, University of Chicago (1978); K. Rudolph, *Quellenprobleme Zum Ursprung Und alter der Mandäer*, pp. 125 f.; *KL*, p. 57.

¹¹⁷ *CP*, p. 71.

¹¹⁸ See also *KL*, p. 58; *M*, pp. 4f., 14, 157.

who confirms in his important research that ‘the information of Ramuia, on the 368 years, is somewhat lacking’.¹¹⁹

The importance of using colophons as rich sources of historical information has certainly been well-established recently by Buckley, who seems quite amazed that scholars before her have neglected and ignored them altogether. For example, in her ARAM Conference paper of 2000, she highlights this point in various places saying:

Clearly, if they are studied in a systematic way, Mandaean colophons can be a rich historical source. But no scholars had scrutinized colophons, comparing and aligning the lineages in them, before I began doing so in the late 1980s.¹²⁰

Again, not only have the Mandaean colophons routinely been neglected – and badly understood when considered at all – but they have also been ignored as evidence for the very character of early Mandaeism and as indicators of a text’s genre and age. I consider the priestly traditions to be early and absolutely vital for the life of the religion. Scholarly attempts to prove that the priesthood in Mandaeism is a late accretion are unconvincing. ...

But the colophons force us to make a revision of the configuration of early Mandaeism. The scribes are, by definition, also priests, and I have not yet found a scribe who is not identified as priest. ...¹²¹

Buckley herself, however, has, perhaps, relied too heavily on Ramuia and thus not used the colophons to their fullest potential. She correctly identifies Zazai and the Mandaean religion and esoteric commentaries as being earlier than thought by other scholars, but by depending on Ramuia, who Lupieri shows as lacking, she has dated Zazai at a later period than emerging evidence suggests.

Historical Evidence Based on the Dates of Migration from Palestine to Mesopotamia and the Identity of Zazai

Migration from Palestine to Mesopotamia

¹¹⁹ *MLG*, p. 172 n. 73.

¹²⁰ *UC*, p. 281.

¹²¹ *Ibid.* pp. 285-86.

The majority of scholarly studies have agreed on the early age of Mandaeism and the pre-Christian origin of the Mandaeans.¹²² Many scholars, like Drower, N. C. Debevoise, and Macuch, support firmly the theory that the Mandaeans migrated from their western habitat to north Mesopotamia in the first half of the first century CE¹²³ under the protection of the Parthian Arsacid King Artabanus III (c. 12-38 CE).¹²⁴ The Mandaeans subsequently continued their migration to southern Mesopotamia, also in the first century CE.¹²⁵ This seems to fit in with the Mandaean migration stories, especially of *HG*.¹²⁶ In spite of this theory, there is some confusion among scholars regarding identifying the right King Artabanus among five Kings of Parthia between (c. 211BCE – 224 CE).¹²⁷ In 1993, Gündüz in his detailed overview and discussion regarding the origin and history of the Mandaeans, using their own traditions, not only preferred to identify the King as Artabanus III, but also proved his assertion by providing new evidence.¹²⁸

In my research study of 1994, 'The Origin of the Mandaeans', which contains a new theory on the Mandaean origins and their history in Mesopotamia, and in my 1995 and 1996 follow-up two seminars, I suggested that the Mandaeans possibly inhabited Mesopotamia, certain parts of Persia, Syria and the Jordan Valley several centuries before the time of John the Baptist. Based on linguistic, historical and Mandaean cultural

¹²² See 1.2. 2 (Gnosticism), above. Also see, *KL*, p. 233; E. Yamauchi, 'Jewish Gnosticism', p. 472.

¹²³ See Macuch, 'Gnostische Ethik und die Anfänge der Mandaer', in *Christentum am Roten Meer*, vol. II, eds. F. Altheim and R. Steihl, Berlin, 1973, p. 258. Also see *M*, p. 3.

¹²⁴ See for example, Drower, *SA*, p. xi; *MII*, p. 6ff., 20f., 29 n. 2; R. Macuch, 'Anfänge der Mandaer', in *Die Araber in der Alten Welt*, ed. F. Altheim and R. Steihl, vol. II, Berlin, 1965, p. 121; R. Macuch, 'Alter und Heimat des Mandäismus nach neuerschlossenen Quellen', *ThlZ*, vol. 82, 1957, p. 406; N. C. Debevoise, *A Political History of Parthia*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1938, p. 157.

¹²⁵ Consult Macuch, 'Anfänge der Mandaer', pp. 76-139; also, *OMTS*, pp. 175 and n.2.

¹²⁶ The Mandaeans believe that the most important historical emigration of their nation happened after the death of John the Baptist, when they were persecuted in Jerusalem and the Jordan Valley. *HG* recorded that, thus providing some important information that may complete the missing links in Mandaean history and in dating their literature. See for example some passages in: *HG*, p. 5. Also see *KL*, pp. 62ff., 120ff.

¹²⁷ See n. 119, above.

¹²⁸ See *KL*, pp. 62ff., 120ff.

evidence, I strongly emphasized and also concluded that after the death of John, during the first half of the first century CE a large number of his Mandaean and Naṣōraean followers were forced to migrate towards Syria along the Euphrates River and to Harran and then down to many parts of Mesopotamia (especially in the middle and the south). This happened with a great assistance from and under the protection of Artabanus III. The new migrants, in fact, have joined their old Mandaean brothers in Harran, Mesopotamia and parts of Parsia.¹²⁹

In the conclusion of his 1998 thesis, Issam Al-Zuhairy suggests that the emigration happened even much earlier, under the protection of the Parthian Arsacid King Artabanus I (c. 211-191 BCE).¹³⁰ He also says that:

This king appears as Ardban in the Mandaean book *HG*, which suggests that the *GS*, *DMHZ*, and the first book of *AM* were written at his time, i.e. in the 3rd century BC. To support this view we have the names of six copyists of these books who preceded Zazai, [who himself has been dated by some scholars to the 3rd century AD]¹³¹

In addition, Al-Zuhairy suggests that some of the people who believed in John the Baptist migrated to southern Mesopotamia between the 1st and 3rd centuries CE, joining the Mandaean baptismal sect and adopting their religion.¹³² Al-Zuhairy continues as follows:

¹²⁹ My research entitled, 'The Origins of the Mandaeans', of October, 1994, presented to the Department of Semitic Studies, College of Languages, Baghdad University. This research contains a new theory on the Mandaeans' origins and their history in Mesopotamia. The first seminar was titled, 'The History of the Mandaeans', and was sponsored by the Sabeian Mandaean Spiritual Supreme Council in the World, and held in the Great Hall of the Bith-Manda, in Baghdad, October 1995; the second seminar was titled, 'The Mandaeans', and was sponsored by the Mandaean Research Centre and held in Ashfield (Sydney) in June 1996. Also see my, 'Al-mandaeyah Ual-tabshir', in *Deerasat Mandaeah – Tareekh w-Mu'taqadat*, ed. Majid Fandi Al-Mubarak, Sydney: 2000, pp. 143-171.

¹³⁰ *SAMRMR*, pp. 234f.

¹³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 235.

¹³² *Ibid.*, pp. 234f.

Nowadays, however, and for the last two thousand years, it has become impossible to tell the difference between the two groups, since both groups have become fused and joined together from very ancient times. In the 1st-3rd centuries AD, when all the new Mandaean gathered and fused, it probably became necessary to collect and write down all inherited forms and ceremonies, myths and legends, in books, particularly also because of the appearance of Mani and his new religion.¹³³

Most scholars agree on the existence of a fully developed Mandaean religion at the time of Zazai.¹³⁴ Scholars who have studied the Mandaean religion, especially the rituals, know that this religion depends mostly on the rituals and cultic ceremonies of various kinds, especially those of Baptism, the mass of the soul (*masiqta*), the coronation of priests, consecration of the temple and ritual meals, etc.¹³⁵ Having such a central position in the Mandaean religion, these rituals and ceremonies most certainly presuppose an inherited tradition and follow specific cultic and ritual texts,¹³⁶ which have already been collected from separate scrolls and treatises into books before the Arab Muslims conquered Mesopotamia.¹³⁷ Furthermore, in her introduction to the *MII*, E. Drower says:

This evidence, we submit, is useful, not only to the student of anthropology, folk-lore, and ethnology, but to students of the history of religion, for the Madaeans are what the doctor calls a case of arrested development. Their cults, which are regarded by them as more sacred than their books, and older, have been tenaciously retained; their ritual, in all its detail, most carefully preserved by a priesthood who regard a slip in procedure as a deadly sin. Segregated since the coming of Islam from those amongst whom they dwell by peculiarities of cult, custom, language, and religion, they have kept intact and inviolate the heritage which they had from their fathers.¹³⁸

¹³³ Ibid., p. 235.

¹³⁴ For instance see, *CCPM*, p. 35; *UC*, p. 282.

¹³⁵ See, Buckley, 'The Mandaean Ṭabahata Masiqta', *Numen*, vol. 28, 1981, p. 138; *UC*, p. 286. As an example of one of the rituals, see Buckley's overview of the sequence of rituals for the initiation of the Tarmida: 'The Making of a Mandaean Priest: The Tarmida Initiation', *Numen*, vol. 32, 1985, pp. 194-217.

¹³⁶ See *WW*, p. 3.

¹³⁷ See K. Rudolph, *Mandaeism*, p. 2 f.

¹³⁸ *MII*, p. xv.

These rituals and ceremonies, with their immutable and sacrosanct elements, are considered the most ancient and important part in the Mandaean religion. In Mandaism they have been practised in the same manner, without any significant changes from their earliest time (in Mesopotamia).¹³⁹ This means that the traditional system of these rituals may already have existed in conjunction with the liturgical texts and many priestly esoteric commentaries some few centuries before that time.¹⁴⁰

Khazaal Al-Majidi has proved that ‘the roots of the ancient Sabeanism [Mandaism] lie concealed in the Sumerian religion, but its beginning started with the inner development/growth of the Sumerians under the umbrella of the new doctrines of the Akkadians and Babylonians’.¹⁴¹ In addition, he emphasises the rituals and ceremonies to give a clear picture of the connection between the Sumerian religion and the Mandaean religion, more than on the theology, beliefs and mythologies.¹⁴²

Complementing Al-Majidi’s research, Issam Al-Zuhairy has built most of his thesis on comparisons and parallels between the ancient Mesopotamian beliefs and rituals and those of the Mandaean religion.¹⁴³ The core of his conclusion emphasises these matters further:

The conclusion we have thus arrived at is that the roots of the Mandaean religion lie in Mesopotamia and that their religious concepts and rituals have survived from very ancient times, also that much was actually inherited from the Sumerians. Particularly the idea of the separation of

¹³⁹ See J. J. Buckley, ‘Why once is not enough: Mandaean Baptism (*Maṣbuta*) as an Example of a Repeated Ritual’, *History of Religions*, vol. 29, 1989, pp. 23 ff.; Buckley, ‘The Mandaean Ṭabahata Masiqta’, p. 138. And, *HGBHZ*, p. XI.

¹⁴⁰ For some most recent arguments and details see *UC*, pp. 284ff.

¹⁴¹ Khazaal Al-Majidi, *Judoor Al-deianah Al-mandaeah*, Safaa Husain Al-naṣer Press, Baghdad, 1997, p. 4. Note that before he printed this book, Al-Majidi, at first in late 1996, presented his theory about the origins of the Mandaean religion in a two long and detailed seminars sponsored by the High Sabean-Mandaean Affairs Council, and held in the Mandaean Al-taḡaruf Clop, Al-zauraa Parks-Baghdad.

¹⁴² *Ibid.* p. 32.

¹⁴³ Despite the similarity between the two researches, Al-Zuhairy’s doctoral thesis neither mentions K. Al-Majidi’s theory nor his important study.

heaven from earth, with heaven as the Father and earth as the Mother. This idea actually became the core of the Mandaean religion. The Mandaean creation story is actually founded on this idea, as are all the instructions and rituals, i.e. baptism, marriage, the consecration of priests and the *masiqta*. There can be no doubt that the initial concept of the separation of heaven from earth was Sumerian in origin.

However, the Mandaean religion in its present form probably arose in Mesopotamia in the 3rd century BC.¹⁴⁴

It would be logical then to conclude that the Mandaean religion existed with most of its teachings and rituals for at least some time, maybe a few centuries, before the recorded historical emigration of the Mandaeans. In 2002, Buckley seems to support this argument, with the following statement: ‘If the emigration takes place in the first half of the first century, as Macuch holds, one must assume that Mandaeism already existed in some original form’.¹⁴⁵

The Identity of Zazai

Of central importance to this attempt to date *DQRDK* is the earliest listed copyist, Zazai. Why is Zazai such an important figure in the development of classic Mandaic literature? The answer is that he was ‘the key spiritual leader of the priestly arts of *Naširuta*’. He appointed himself as a chief collector, copyist and editor of the Mandaean documents during the early stages of the new era, which began after the migration of the Mandaeans to Mesopotamia.

HG records that Zazai was one of the most significant of the seven *Riš Amas*, after the migration of the Mandaeans towards Harran and Mesopotamia in the first century. Zazai was appointed by the angel Anuš ’Utra to rule in Baghdad, i.e. Babylon. In *HG*, we read, for example, the following:

¹⁴⁴ Al-Zuhairy, pp. 235-36.

¹⁴⁵ *M*, p. 3. Also see *UC* pp. 284f.

And one of them was Zazai son of Hibil-'Utra. Him Anuš-'Utra installed in the city of Baghdad. And Anuš-'Utra installed one whose name was Papa son of Guda upon the great Tigris and at the mouth of the 'Ulai (*Karun river*). And one, named Anuš son of Naṣar-Hiia, Anuš-'Utra installed at its source. Anuš-Šaiar son of Nṣab (*he installed*) on the Euphrates, and one whose name was Brik-Yawar son of Bihdad he placed at Pumbit (*Pumbedita*), a territory situated at the end of Sura. And one, whose name was Nṣab son of Bihram, he placed on the mountain(s) of Glazlak, and one whose name was Ska-Manda he set at the extremity of the mountain of the Water-springs situated at the tail-end of the Parwan range at the place from which those seven kings went forth and dispersed, (*namely, those seven guards*) who came with Anuš-'Utra to conquer Darkness and to bring the plot of Ruha to nought.¹⁴⁶

Using this important text, Lupieri comments on the role Zazai played in Mandaean history and religion. He also explains the connection between Zazai, who was mentioned by Ramuia in *Q*, and Zazai, who was mentioned also in *HG* and in the colophons of many other secret scrolls, Lupieri says:

Zazai himself, also 'king' of Baghdad, hero of the victory over Judaism, seems to enjoy a special revelation that he obtained by dwelling in the heavens for sixty-two days. This detail helps us to understand why Ramuia said that the *diuan* he copied had 'fallen' from Zazai. The 'fall' in this context would indicate its coming from the heavens, with a terminology that is adopted also in the Islamic world to indicate that a book is inspired. This is expressed in another way in all the other colophons that mention Zazai, in which it is always underlined that Zazai copied his text from the First Life or, at any rate, from a celestial figure. In certain colophons, finally, Zazai himself becomes a semi-celestial figure, himself an '*utra* or son of '*utria*.'¹⁴⁷

¹⁴⁶ *HG*, p. 10. Cf. *MLG*, p. 170, in which this passage is translated slightly different as follows:

And one of them was Zazai bar Hibil 'Utra, and Anuš 'Utra placed him in the city of Baghdad. And Anuš 'Utra placed one whose name was Papa bar Guda on the great Tigris and at the mouth of the 'Ulai. And one called Anus bar Natar Hiia, Anuš 'Utra placed at his spring. Anuš Saiar bar Nsab on the Euphrates, and one whose name was Brik Iauar bar Bihdad he placed in Pumbedita, a place situated at the end of Sura. And one whose name was Nsab bar Bihram he placed on Tura d-Glazlak. And one whose name was Ska Manda he placed at the extremity of the Mount of Springs, situated in the furthest end of Mount Paruan, the place from which these seven kings came and separated, (*namely, those seven guards*) who came with Anuš 'Utra to conquer the darkness and destroy the machinations of Ruha

¹⁴⁷ *MLG*, pp. 170-71. Lupieri in his note (n. 71) gives also another example from the colophon of *DMHZ*. He says:

Another colophon goes as follows: "And Ašganda copied from Anu son of Naṣar, and Anuš 'Utra copied from Hibil Ziua and Hibil Ziua copied from the diuan of the First Life". This

As we can see, by using material from *HG*, Lupieri has identified Zazai, the copyist, with the Zazai appointed by Anuš 'Utra. This identification could help solve many problems that have faced previous scholars, especially regarding dating the Mandaean literature and the historical origin of Mandaicism and answer part of one of Buckley's questions that have arisen from her colophon research regarding *HG* as a historical source and how reliable it is. She asks:

How reliable is *Haran Gawaita* as a historical source? This legend of Mandaean origins undoubtedly contains historically valuable materials, but it is difficult to evaluate it at present.¹⁴⁸

Lupieri has taken up the challenge and, as we have just seen, has used *HG* to answer controversial questions regarding Zazai and the historical and mythological references that surround his personality and works. Lupieri has asked: 'So who is Zazai d-Gauazta, son of Nitar and Haua?' and answered his own question as follows:

He is the oldest figure known in Mandaean history. From the evidence in our possession we can readily suppose that he was a religious reformer who, after inspiration, composed a sacred text, on the basis of which Mandaeanism was established as a historical religion. From the theological point of view, however, Mandaeanism is an eternal religion, which cannot have human founders, since it was already revealed to Adam. For this reason the Mandaeans cannot have preserved the historical memory of a founder, nor did they construct one (as they might well have done, for example, using John the Baptist). Their true founder they have demoted to the role of inspired scribe, and a tentative attempt to make him divine has not stopped him from virtually disappearing from the traditions and legends of the religion he began. If this is true, Zazai must still have been active under the Arsacids, to whose epoch we have been led by the various data we have collected on the historical origin of Mandaeanism, prior to the fall of Artabanus V (AD 224) – and with

should mean that Zazai son of Naṣar was transformed into an Anuš who is actually Anuš 'Utra. Anuš the son of Naṣar, however, really existed, the third of the magic archers of Haran Gauaita, and thus it is also possible that for reasons that escape us there was the desire to substitute another figure of the same legend for Zazai.

¹⁴⁸ *UC*, p. 287.

greater reason, to the origin of Manichaeism. Distant in time and initiator of an 'eternal' religion, Zazai is condemned to oblivion.¹⁴⁹

It is worth noting that Lupieri put the emigration as being prior to the fall of Artabanus V (224 CE).

If we accept the 'prior to the fall of Artabanus V (224 CE)' statement and consider that the bulk of scholarship puts the migration as being in the first half of the first century CE, then we can conclude that the last important immigration of the Mandaeans into Mesopotamia happened in the first half of the first century, under the protection of the Parthian Arsacid King Artabanus III. Furthermore, if we agree with Lupieri that (i) both Zazais mentioned above are in fact the same person and one of the seven *Riš Amas* mentioned in *HG* and that (ii) 'the information of Ramuia, on the 368 years, is somewhat lacking'¹⁵⁰, then it is reasonable to push the date of the old long colophons and the time of Zazai's life and his various work activities on Mandaean literature, including *DQRDK*, back approximately 200 years. This regression, we believe, is essential for successfully reconstructing and dating both the Mandaean literature and the historical origin of the religion.

The linguistic and semantic elements of the scrolls support Lupieri's assertions. It is important to note that all Mandaean writings, including *Q*, *DQRDK*, and other priestly-Naṣōraean esoteric scrolls that are said to have been copied/edited by Zazai or during his time, do not bear any Islamic elements. Rather they indicate:

- (i) A fully developed and organized religion with rituals and texts.
- (ii) Written and oral material that clearly points to an early time, many centuries before Islam in subjects, traditions and language.

¹⁴⁹ *MLG*, pp. 171-72.

(iii) Mystical Naṣōraean gnostic ideas.

(iv) Major technical cultic terms from both early western and eastern elements and influences.¹⁵¹

In addition to the above, we know that there were even many Mandaean copyists before Zazai. This is indicated by the references to a few earlier scribes that are recorded in the colophons of *GS*, which contain many of the oldest Mandaean texts. We read, for example from *GR* colophon I, MS A (Petermann, pp. 290-1), the following:

... [F]rom a scroll (*šapta*) of Miriai, daughter of Simat,¹⁵² and Miriai wrote it
 (from) Sam, son of Sakara, son of Zakia,
 from his own scroll that he copied from a scroll of Ruzba, son of Hawa,
 that was among the books of Sam, son of Zakia, and Ruzba [who] copied it
 (from) Ram, son of Bihram,
 from the scroll of Brikh Manda Šitil, son of Sku Hiia, and Brik Manda Copied
 from a scroll of Anuš Šabur, son of Šiglai,
 from the scroll of Nṣab, son of Mškna, son of BrHiia,
 from the scroll of Ṭabia, son of Zazai,
 (from) an old book (*ktaba*) that was in the *naṣiruta* of Nṣab, son of Maškna,
 from Yuzaṭaq, son of Sasa; again,
 from the scroll of the father (of) Šalma, daughter of Qidra,¹⁵³

As we can see, here Zazai is not recorded as the earliest copyist/editor of *GS* but rather as one of the copyists, and as father/Rabbi of a female copyist/editor priest, that is

¹⁵⁰ *MLG*, p. 172 n. 73.

¹⁵¹ See *M*, p. 4; *CCPM*, p. 40f.; *KL*, pp. 59ff. Also consult Macuch, 'Gnostische Ethik und die Anfänge der Mandaean', pp. 272ff.; *SEK*, pp. iv f.; K. Al-Majidi, *Judoor Al-deianah Al-mandaeah*, pp. 32ff.; *SAMRMR*, (many places).

¹⁵² As far as we can tell, this is the only time that this name appears in the Mandaean colophons. I wonder if there is any identification or connection between this Miriai and the well known Jewish Miriai, who became Mandaean before the migration of the Mandaeans from Palestine and the Jordan Valley to Mesopotamia in the first century, both of whom, according to our redating, are considered very close to each other's time. In addition the latter Miriai is also described as the daughter of Simat (Hiia). This may suggest further investigation for the future. For information regarding Miriai, see, Buckley, 'The Mandaean Appropriation of Jesus's Mother Miriai', *Novum Testamentum*, vol. 35, 1993, pp. 181-96.

¹⁵³ Buckley, 'The Colophons in H. Petermann's Sidra Rabba,' pp. 37-38. Also see *M*, p. 159.

Ṭabia!¹⁵⁴ This colophon may reveal a question about the role of Zazai and the age of the priestly-Naṣoraeen school that he belongs to. In addition, Šalma, daughter of Qidra is considered the earliest copyist of *GS*. Buckley places her in the second century, CE.¹⁵⁵ However, in the light of the information and discussion mentioned above, the earliest scribes who preceded Zazai for a few generations and are recorded in the colophon of *GS*, i.e. Šalma,¹⁵⁶ should also be dated earlier than other scholars, like Buckley, have dated her,¹⁵⁷ that is, by at least a hundred years, in the first century BC.¹⁵⁸

Indeed, Lupieri's conclusions, the linguistic and semantic evidence just cited and the existence of earlier copyists all support my own intuitive hypothesis (based on the Naṣoraeen traditional teachings that I studied for more than twenty eight years and the initiation process that I undertook) for an earlier dating for Zazai. Several other scholars have made similar assumptions of an older Mandaean religion, which are well supported by Buckley's lengthy and close study of the colophons, especially as reported in her most recently published conference paper.¹⁵⁹

Based on her long and careful investigation of the Mandaean colophons and literature, Buckley's conference paper has not only provided more evidence to support the view that the Mandaean colophons are true and reliable sources of historical information, recorded by honest scribes, that can be used for reconstructing Mandaean history, but also the fact that there is a need to redate the materials in many Mandaean

¹⁵⁴ See also *CCPM*, p. 41; Buckley, 'The Colophons in H. Petermann's *Sidra Rabba*', pp. 28, 38; *M*, p. 4.

¹⁵⁵ See *M*, pp. 4, 159.

¹⁵⁶ According to other documents, i.e. *DMHZ*, Al-zuhairy argued that there are names of six copyists who preceded Zazai. See, *SAMRMR*, pp. 7 ff., 235.

¹⁵⁷ According to the previous dating of Zazai's time, which put him in the second half of the third century CE, Buckley has dated the first earliest scribe who was recorded in *GS* colophons around the year of 200 CE. See 'The Colophons in H. Petermann's *Sidra Rabba*', p. 28.

¹⁵⁸ This may explain why the lineage of the copyists of the ancient texts contains several additional names and why the style is varied in several of the Mandaean colophons.

texts, especially those that are copied/edited by Zazai, and also such literature as *JB*, which has ‘material that might be much older than it seems’.¹⁶⁰ In general Buckley emphasizes that Mandaeans do not have recorded evidence of the scribal activity in the earliest centuries.¹⁶¹

Buckley’s view is also supported by evidence from the colophon of *DQRDK*, for it did not mention the famous Riš Ama copyist between Ramuia and Zazai, that is, Šganda Br Yasmin. This could be considered as additional proof confirming the acceptable degree of honesty and the genuine nature of the Mandaean colophons, for it would be easy for the copyists to lengthen the colophons and claim additional, respectable, famous, ancient names. Ramuia may not have used a copy from Šganda Br Yasmin but rather copied directly from an old original copy from Zazai or from a few generation of unknown students of Zazai’s scribal school, which (according to the oral Mandaean-Našoraean sources) continue for many centuries after Zazai. It is most unlikely that the omission of Šganda was done intentionally by the latest copyists.

Another important contribution from Buckley’s lengthy and in-depth research on Mandaean colophons is her recognition of the esoteric nature of the texts, particularly

¹⁵⁹ *UC*.

¹⁶⁰ See, *UC*, p. 287, and p. 283. Other Mandaean literature like *AM*, also contains material that is much older than has been assumed. Consult, Francesca Rochberg, ‘The Babylonian Origins of the Mandaean Book of the Zodiac’, pp. 237-247; *M*, pp. 13 ff.

¹⁶¹ Buckley writes:

It would have been very easy for a Mandaean scribe to ‘invent’ a colophon, to lengthen it, to make it look more ancient by supplying early scribes. But this does not happen. None of the six Right *Ginza* colophons extend back to the time of Zazai. ... One may conclude that this poetic section of the *Ginza* constitutes some of the oldest Mandaean literature. In addition, only half of the liturgies have colophons extending to Zazai, and The Book of John, ..., does not seem to go back further than early Islamic time. However, one cannot summarily conclude that the materials in these texts altogether belong to a later stage of Mandaean history. It is just that we do not have evidence for scribal activity in the earliest centuries (*UC*, p. 283).

those copied/edited by Zazai, among which she lately included *DQRDK*,¹⁶² and consequently her strong support for the notion of an ‘early Mandaism’.¹⁶³ According to Buckley, there is a need to revise the scholarly picture of the earliest Mandaean literature, the ideas of the age of literary genres and the type of scribal tradition.

Most recently, I have used the results of colophon research to engage conflicting scholarly theories regarding Mandaean literature and history in the religion’s earliest times. We may assume a general picture regarding a Mandaean migration from the West to the East, probably in the first or, at the latest, second, century. However, it is now necessary to revise our picture of the earliest Mandaean literature, our ideas of the age of literary genres, and of the type of scribal traditions dating to ca. 200 and to the third century. **For what no one has considered so far is that the so-called priestly esoteric commentary literature to an overwhelming degree has early colophons. My conclusion is that this literature must be ancient.**¹⁶⁴ From the religion’s early period, when at least half of the liturgies, including the baptism and *masiqta* hymns and other parts of the liturgies and *GL* are all in place, there is a development of commentary literature. All of the major rituals and mythological structures seem to give rise to a scribal tradition wrought by the community leaders, i.e. priests. This tradition is acutely focused on speculative, kabbalistic-style esoterica concerned with ritual minutiae. And this tradition presupposes the major myths, with their geography, arrangements, events and populations of the Lightworld.¹⁶⁵

Having brought attention to the deficiencies in previous Mandaean scholarship regarding the importance of the ‘priestly esoteric commentary literature’ and its ‘early colophons’, Buckley further explains that the Mandaean esoteric tradition does not resemble the genre of Jewish literature.¹⁶⁶ She is also critical of the lack of scholarly respect for Mandaean commentary literature.¹⁶⁷

¹⁶² See, *UC*, pp. 284f, 287f.

¹⁶³ *UC*, pp. 185, 286.

¹⁶⁴ My emphasis.

¹⁶⁵ *UC*, pp. 284-85

¹⁶⁶ Buckley writes:

The Mandaean esoteric tradition, however, does not at all resemble the genre of Jewish literature of the type, ‘Rabbi X. says Y with respect to legal problem/scriptural passage Z, in contrast to another school, headed by Rabbi A, etc.’ Instead, we find sequences such as,

Buckley's views and the criticisms of other scholars' therefore, provide additional supporting evidence for our theory regarding the age of the Mandaean literature (including *DQRDK* and *DTP*), redating Drower's and other scholars' dating of the vast majority of the Mandaean writings, especially the priestly-Naṣōraean esoteric literature (including all parts of *ATŠ*); regarding the time of the early known copying/editing of the early scribal activities; and regarding the true nature of the Mandaean colophons.

Conclusion

To conclude this discussion, there now seems to be ample evidence to support the assertion that Zazai lived in the first century CE, not in the second or the third century CE. In addition, the esoteric nature of the texts (including *DQRDK*) affixed with colophons associated with Zazai, who has now been situated in the first half of the first century CE, also points to the existence of a fully developed Mandaean religion, at least in some more ancient inherited form, by early in the first century CE. These indications of the existence of a completely formed Mandaean religion with most of its liturgical and esoteric tradition and literature already developed in the pre Christian era is also

'When you say word A in ritual segment B and perform gesture C, the effect in the Lightworld/on the soul/the performer is D, with respect to E' (*UC*, p. 285).

¹⁶⁷ I strongly support Buckley's argument in this regard especially the following explanation:

No one is surprised to find rabbinical Jewish and early Christian elaborations on esoteric topic[s] such as heavenly secrets or powers inherent in rituals, gestures, and ceremonial implements. Such theological-metaphysical traditions in Scripture-based Judaism and Christianity are commonly accepted and supply the life-blood to ongoing religions. Specialists in esoterica have confidence in their spiritual-intellectual acumen and in the tools needed to handle—or intuit—the most elevated 'divine secrets'.

Why, then, has the Mandaean commentary literature summarily been derided as late, degenerate, as priestly speculations of dubious value? Why may scholars accept, even admire, internal, theological-speculative traditions in Judaism and Christianity but not in Mandaism? Perhaps part of the answer is the prevalence of a scholarly, romantic idea of non-hierarchical egalitarian, democratic Gnosticism – in which all believers are on the same level. Scholars attached to such notions conveniently forget that Gnostics, such as the hierarchy-ruled Manichaeans, were successful for so long and over such a large geographic area (*UC*, p. 285).

supported by the timing of the emigration (or: migration?) of the Mandaeans and the appearance of Zazai in the first century CE.

Based on the growing body of evidence that dates Zazai in the first century and the other evidence presented above, I also believe that most of the dating of Mandaean literature needs to be revised and probably dated back at least two hundred years. Indeed, dating *DQRDK* in the first century CE would solve many linguistic, esoteric and theological problems. It would certainly improve our translation of, and commentaries on *DQRDK*, and provide us with better understanding of the strong esoteric nature of *DQRDK* as well as many of its difficult and complex mystical Naṣoraeen passages.

Finally, situating *DQRDK* in the first century and looking closely at *DQRDK* in relation to *Q* and *ATŠ* (especially *DTP*) will allow for a better interpretation of the material and provide a more logical, if not more ancient, framework of understanding, as will be seen in chapter 5 and 6. Such a comparative study, using certain supporting views from other esoteric, illustrated scrolls, will definitely provide a very effective method to understand the value of the mystical artistic material,¹⁶⁸ as well as to decode the esoteric Naṣoraeen visual symbols. All of that would also allow scholars a clearer view of the process by which this classical literature has been transmitted from the ancient world to the present day.

4. 4 Contemporary History and Local Events revealed in *DQRDK*

¹⁶⁸ See 5. 3 and 5. 4, below.

In *DQRDK*, the *zhara* (colophon) is found at the end of the scroll, as is usual in most Mandaean manuscripts.¹⁶⁹ Like the majority of Mandaean colophons, the *zhara* of *DQRDK* is not framed or decorated, except for borderlines on the two sides. In addition, it has no illustrations. It is written in small and fine Mandaic script.

The *zhara* of *DQRDK* contains two main colophons. In the first colophon (*DQRDK*, 126-50), the latest scribe of our copy of *DQRDK* MS, Rabbi Yahia Ram Zihrun, used the formal style of the Mandaic *zhara*. He followed the usual protocol and introduced the scroll by describing the good prestige of this scroll and mentioning the shortened name of the scroll, i.e. *dmuṭ kušṭa*.¹⁷⁰ He then gave information about himself and his long family and priestly lineage.¹⁷¹ This is followed by similar information about the (Naṣōraean) master Ḥaziz son of master Dizpulia,¹⁷² for whom the scroll was copied.¹⁷³

Rabbi Yahia Ram Zihrun also supplied information about the two manuscripts on which his work was based. He provided a glimpse of these manuscripts from one generation to another, ending with *Riš-Ama Zazai* of the Gauazta, as the earliest known copyist/scribe of this document.¹⁷⁴ This effectively includes the work of *DQRDK* with Zazai's other works,¹⁷⁵ in full compliance with the formal Mandaean way for a scribe to trace the origin of the majority of the secret scrolls to this earliest, most famous scribe.

¹⁶⁹ As part of the Naṣōraean mystical symbols, purposely, the *zhara* of a few Mandaean writings, such as *DA*, *DM'L*, the first part of the *zhara* of *DMHZ*, etc., is located, not at the end of the scroll, but rather in various places in the last part of the scroll, shortly before the end. This perhaps happened because of the (symbolic) illustration at the end, which may indicate the unification with the Great Life and the endless Knowledge (of Life) that connected with the World of Light.

¹⁷⁰ See *DQRDK* 127. Also consult section 2.2, above.

¹⁷¹ See *DQRDK*, 127ff.

¹⁷² Persian name pronounced Dizfooley.

¹⁷³ See *DQRDK*, 132ff.

¹⁷⁴ See *DQRDK*, 134. Also consult 4. 2, above.

¹⁷⁵ As it is explained earlier in this chapter.

Thus, the latest scribe, Rabbi Yahia, recorded reasonable information about the origin of the *DQRDK* scroll in the first colophon, following the formula of most of the other esoteric scrolls.

The second colophon (*DQRDK*, 151-67) contains two major parts. The first one (*DQRDK*, 151-54) again contains the official name of *DQRDK*, but this time in full, as a successful completion, a divine work, whose message ascends to the exalted kingdom, the place of Perfection, glory of the First Great Living One(s)/First Great Life, carrying the Sign of Knowledge of Life, *Mand d-Hiia* and the names of *Hibil*, *Šitil* and *Anuš*.¹⁷⁶ It also provides details about the date of compilation of the copying of the scroll in both the Mandaic and Islamic calendars, and other information including the place of copying and the names of the local Ottoman and principal governors. The copyist wrote: 'I copied it in the town [154] of Qurna by the waters of the Tigris and under the ruler of Babylon (Iraq) Dauud Baša¹⁷⁷ and the governor of Basrah, Bakir Aga, and the governor of Qurna Eabas Aga'.¹⁷⁸

The second part of the second colophon (*DQRDK*, 154-67) contains important information about the situation and difficulties that faced the priesthood and Mandaeans in general in Iraq and Iran shortly before the time of the spread of cholera in southern Mesopotamia in 1831. It also contains information about two interesting incidents that happened in 1818. The first one occurred in the town of Qurna, in Basrah in Iraq between

¹⁷⁶ See *DQRDK*, 151-152.

¹⁷⁷ Dauud Baša rule in Iraq in 1817. See Stephen H. Longrigg, *Four Centuries of Modern Iraq*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1925, p. 250. See also Buckley, 'Glimpses of a Life', p. 35 and n. 6. For some details about Dauud Baša and Iraq

¹⁷⁸ *DQRDK*, 153-154.

the Ottoman authority and several Arab tribes. The second event took place between several Arab tribes in Iran and the Iranian authority earlier in the same year (1818).¹⁷⁹

Referring to the first incident, the colophon says a great fright ‘battered down’, when both Bir Himaid and Bnia Mansur, two small Arab tribes which are part of Al-Sağad larger tribe, killed three (Ottoman) soldiers and burnt down the check point¹⁸⁰ at Qurna, as *DQRDK* reports:

Both Bir Himaid and Bnia Mansur, killed three men at the *Gumrug* (check point), and burnt down the *Gumrug*.¹⁸¹

This seems to have made the Ottoman governor of Basra, Bakir Aga, agree to lead an army to fight Mizğil, son of Sağad, who, according to our investigation, was the general leader of Al Sağad tribe(s) as well as the above two tribes, and may have been the one who provoked the Arab tribes to go against the Ottoman authority. The result seems to have been a serious conflict, which caused great fear and worry among the Mandaeans, who were caught in the middle and did not yet know what would be the outcome of this conflict.

This story ends at this point. The copyist did not complete the story or give more details, probably, because:

- (i) The event had not ended at the time of (finishing) writing this colophon.

¹⁷⁹ The same year of the completion of copying *DQRDK*.

¹⁸⁰ This checkpoint was not on the border between Iran and Iraq as some scholars may believe. Rather, like others along the river, this checkpoint is for the collection of taxes from the locals who were traveling along the river to sell their goods. The Ottoman government collected a portion of their goods to pay the owed tax if the traveler did not have the money to pay. Most sellers were very poor and so resented the collection of the taxes.

¹⁸¹ *DQRDK*, 155.

- (ii) Or they (i.e. the copyist and the other Mandaeans who lived in that city) were very frightened at that time and they did not know what was going to happen.
- (iii) Or when everything settled down and the danger had passed, the copyist did not add any thing related to that matter or what happened after that in the colophon.

In addition, it seems that the main incident happened when some people of these two tribes were confronted by some troubles from the inspectors/officers of that check point. Maybe they were preventing them from shipping their goods freely along the river without paying tax to the government. Thus the two tribes of those people took revenge by killing the inspectors/officers and burning the check point. During the attack they shouted and all together harangued the enemy, which is a well known habit in the Iraqi tribal tradition.

From the same information which I received from some old people in Qurna, it seems that Mizxil Bin Saḡad fled with some people from his tribes for a while till the Sheiks of these two tribes, with the assistance of some other Sheiks around that area and some other notable people, met with *Bakir Aga*, maybe to apologize for what had happened to and satisfy him with a promise that such an incident would not happen again. It seems that the copyist is covering a (very) local event. That is why he did not mention lots of details, or even identify the people to the reader, or explain the relationship between these two tribes and Mizxil Bin Saḡad.

Referring to the second incident, the colophon informs us that there was a conflict that happened earlier in the year in Iran between the Iranian authority and several tribes

in the Arab region. The conflict seems not to have been solved until the Iranian Šah, Zada, and his army, decided to fight and discipline many tribes in that area. Šah-Zada confronted Šaḡab (Chaḡab) and Bauia (both Arab tribes) and ʿlikhan, the son of Jandil. The conflict seems to have ended with the capture by Šah-Zada of ʿlikhan, the son of Jandil, the Sheikh (leader) of the Beduin tribe in the south of Mesopotamia, called *Bnia Lam*, ‘Sons of Lam’,¹⁸² that seems to have controlled the two smaller tribes mentioned in the Colophon. The Mandaeans and their priest (especially in Iran) seem to have been troubled by these difficulties and dangerous events in the area where they were living;¹⁸³ however, they survived them.

One important fact in the modern history of the Mandaeans that we know from this colophon of *DQRDK* is that, exactly in 1818, the whole Mandaean community, in both Iraq and Iran, had only one head priest, or *Ganzibra*, called Sam Bihram, son of Simat. He is the son of a great and important *Ganzibra*, Rabbi Yahia Yuhana, son of the respected *Tarmida*, Rabbi Zihrun Adam. The *Ganzibra* Sam Bihram is the uncle of Rabbi Yahia Ram Zihrun, the copyist of *DQRDK* who wrote in a tone of sadness his prayer for the protection of the last Mandaean *Ganzibra* for the sake of the survival of the Mandaean religion, which depended heavily on the priesthood, especially the head priests (i.e. *Ganzibra*) who must participate in most of the rituals.¹⁸⁴

We also know that many *Tarmidas* existed at the same time as that *Ganzibra*. Despite their presence, the faith of the people and their knowledge of their religion had

¹⁸² The copyist did not mention who is ʿlikhan, the son of Jandil. In addition, he did not mention who is the Sheikh of *Bnia Lam*. However, from our investigation we know that this man is he himself the Sheikh of *Bnia Lam*, the hard Beduin big tribe.

¹⁸³ That probably because the Mandaeans are very peaceful, and the fight and killing are prohibited and considered as great sins in their religion.

¹⁸⁴ See *DQRDK*, 157 ff.

become weak, perhaps because of the great illiteracy and poverty of the majority of people of Mesopotamia. The priests of the time lacked sufficient faith in, and knowledge of, the secret meanings and the classic Mandaic of their scriptures. They performed the rituals, like Baptism and *Masiqta*, but they did not know their deep secret meanings. Consequently, the secret knowledge, particularly the Naṣōraean teachings, became weaker and weaker until the year 1831, when all the priests died and the Naṣōraean knowledge became almost completely extinct.

The above reading of the colophon shows one of Buckley's misinterpretations of *DQRDK*'s colophon, particularly when she stated in one of her recent articles that in 1818 on Persian territory "all Mandaean high priests are thrown into exile".¹⁸⁵ My interpretation of this colophon proves, without any doubt, that in 1818 (i) no exile happened and, thus, neither any Mandaean high priest nor any other priest, on Persian territory or in Iraq, were thrown into exile; (ii) out of all Mandaean high priests, in both Iraq and Iran (Persia), only one high priest remained alive, that is *Ganzibra* Sam Bihram, son of Simat; and (iii) the Mandaean in Iran were affected by two separate incidents, one that happened in Iran and one that happened in Iraq.

These misinterpretations by a leading Mandaean scholar like Buckley in her recent publications on the colophons add further evidence for the necessity to re-examine the previous scholarly translations, interpretations and studies on the Mandaean documents.¹⁸⁶

¹⁸⁵ Buckley, 'Glimpses of a Life', p. 35.

¹⁸⁶ I wonder what other mistakes will be discovered in the future because current studies are using previous translations and studies done on the Mandaean documents that may be inaccurate. I should mention here, as an example, the magnificent, ongoing work on the Mandaean colophons to reconstruct the Mandaean history by Buckley. Perhaps, she and others will need to compare this new translation and reading of the Mandaean colophons before proceeding, so that better and more accurate results may come to light in the

Finally, the analysis of *DQRDK*'s colophon reveals details that have not been mentioned before in any official record. It clearly shows that the Mandaeans were very vulnerable among the Muslims and their authorities in both Iraq and Iran at the time this scroll was last copied.

Conclusion

This chapter has delved deeply into the issue of authorship revealed in the colophon of *DQRDK*. The information presented here could change the way scholars view Mandaean history and date Mandaean texts. For example, I have found significant evidence to place Zazai, the scroll's first copyist, and thus the scroll's origins, in the first century AD or earlier and not in the third century CE as scholars have heretofore believed. This has been further supported by historical evidence, especially the large migration of Mandaeans from Palestine to Mesopotamia in the first half of the first century CE. This research also confirms part of Lupieri's theory about Zazai and suggests the need for scholars to change the dating of all Mandaean literature back at least two hundred years. In addition, the evidence suggests that the Mandaean religion was a well formed and flourishing religion in the pre-Christian era. The fact that the scroll probably first existed in the context of the pre-Christian traditions of the Middle East also solves many linguistic, esoteric, theological and historical problems, making possible a fuller and deeper interpretation of the scroll and its esoteric meaning, especially when *DQRDK* is compared with other contemporary texts like *Q*, *GR* and *ATS* (especially *DTP*). Finally, the close examination of the local historical events, revealed in the colophon of *DQRDK* and presented in this chapter, situates the specific copy of the scroll being studied here in

future. For some other examples of these errors see 4. 2, (The Most Recent Copyist/Scribe of the Work of

1818 CE. and the listing of the lineage of the scribes in the colophon connects the past to the present, which is very important for Mandaean.

CHAPTER 5

The Place of *DQRDK* in the Mandaean Literary Tradition and its Overall Theological Value

5. 1 Introduction

This chapter will deal with the place of *DQRDK* in the Mandaean literary tradition and its overall theological value. It will contain some important remarks as follows:

Section two will discuss briefly the sources of *DQRDK* and the Mandaean scriptures, oral tradition and *DQRDK*.

Section three expands on the significance of the contents of *DQRDK* in Mandaean literature. It will emphasize *DQRDK*'s significance and place in Mandaean literature, the value of the theology of *DQRDK*, the value of *DQRDK* as commentary, the value of *DQRDK*'s doctrinal (and esoteric) dimension, the value of *DQRDK*'s author as earthly teacher of Divine Wisdom, the value of the literary style of *DQRDK* and the value of the prose of *DQRDK*. Further, a conclusion to this main section will follow.

Section three will also give some preliminary remarks on the artistic value of *DQRDK*.

5. 2 Sources of *DQRDK*

Relative to the size of their population, Mandaean have a vast and extensive inherited literature.¹ Kurt Rudolph has written of its importance as follows:

For about a hundred years, European orientalist and historians have been studying this written Mandaean tradition. Their researches have shown that, in Mandaean literature, we possess important early evidence of what is usually called "gnosticism" or "gnosis."²

¹ See D. Shapira, 'Manichaeans (*Marmanaiia*), Zoroastrians (*Iazuqaiia*), Jews, Christians and other Heretics', p. 243.

² Rudolph, *Mandaeism*, p.1.

Like the origin of the Mandaeans, the origin of the Mandaic script and the origin and sources of the Mandaean literature are not precisely known. This uncertainty has caused tremendous controversy among scholars, particularly in the twentieth century. To this day, scholars remain divided about the origins, date and significance of the Mandaeans and Mandaism.³

Despite the continuing controversy, we can offer hypotheses about the sources of *DQRDK* in the light of other Mandaean literature, especially the part of *ATŠ* known as *DTP*, in which are found corresponding passages, sentences, and Naṣōraean terms. In addition, there are thoughts similar to those expressed in *DQRDK* in *DTP* and other Mandaean literature. There is also evidence provided by passages which were deliberately added to *DQRDK* by a scribe/editor who derived them from miscellaneous Naṣōraean sources. The work of *DQRDK* itself also provides strong evidence for the development of Naṣōraean Mandaean spiritual and intellectual thought because the ideas of *DTP* are shortened and included in *DQRDK* vividly and coherently as an expression of the Naṣōraean understanding of many aspects of the Mandaean story of creation.

Many parts of the material used in *DQRDK* were clearly derived (mostly) from Mandaean-Naṣōraean Gnostic sources. For instance, the text of *DQRDK*, like that of *DTP* and some other parts of *ATŠ*, seems to reflect early Mandaean liturgical texts, especially some parts of *Q* and *GR*.⁴ Many parts were considered authoritative in the centuries prior to the time of *Zazai d-Gawazta*, i.e. the first century CE,⁵ even though both of them differ significantly from the later small historical parts of *GR* and

³ See Chapter 4, for scholarly discussion on these matters, see for example *KL*; *SAMRMR*.

⁴ For an example of the connection between *DQRDK* and these documents see *DQRDK*, 104-113. See also the notes and commentaries on this part in the translation, chapter 6.

⁵ Or, the second half of the third century CE, according to previous scholars. See 4. 3, above.

JB which were finalized by Mandaean Naṣōraean editors during the time between the first and the seventh centuries CE.

According to Mandaean tradition, the main source of all Mandaean literature is considered to be *Ginza* (or *Sidra*) *Rba*, to which the Mandaean cult *Bit-Manda* has customarily applied the name *Ginza* or (*Sidra*) *d-Hiia* ‘The Treasure or (Book) of Life’ or *Ginza* (or *Sidra*) *Rba*, ‘the Greater Treasure or (Book)’. The *Ginza Rba* is considered to be the main source of *Naṣiruta*, ‘(Divine) Wisdom’, or ‘(Divine) Knowledge’. For this reason, the Mandaeans (especially the Naṣōraeans) called it *Sidra d-Naṣiruta* or ‘The Book of Wisdom’ in conjunction with *Simat Hiia*, ‘Treasure of Life’, which is, in fact, the secret name of the ‘*Ginza Rba* that was adopted by the Naṣōraeans in their secret circles many centuries ago.

The Naṣōraeans drew from this spring of Wisdom in their writings. However, this wisdom was not freely accessible to everyone in the Naṣōraean hierarchy, and was confined to the Chosen One in each generation through the ages. The person who is so blessed is called *Brikha*, ‘the Blessed One’. It is the title for the ‘Great Master’ or *Mar Rubania*, ‘Lord of the Masters’. Through the (Divine) Knowledge of Life, *Manda d-Hiia*, the chosen ones have received and inserted the *Naṣiruta* (‘Wisdom’) in the *Ginza Rba*. These masters varied widely in their use of the esoteric teachings.

This esoteric knowledge is spread through Mandaean literature across the whole of Mandaean Life. The concept of a literature of wisdom, in the ancient ritualist texts of *Q* was recorded in the ancient oral traditions from the pre-Christian era, which seem strongly connected with the oldest texts in *GR* and to the have been applied broadly to various Mandaean works. On the whole, Mandaeans seem to have imitated Jordan Valley, Mesopotamia and Egypt in cultivating their sense of wisdom.

As one reads the Mandaean Literature, one becomes aware of a number of repetitions concerning this idea in the writing of the sacred texts. Examples can be drawn from *Q* and *GR*, which reflect the fundamental tenets of these teachings and ritual prayers. The reason for these repetitions is perhaps that the Mandaeans are always concerned about the ritual as an effective method for advanced intellectual development.

One may begin to see a common aim arising out of these different writings. One may, for example, read repeatedly about the *Naširuta* (Knowledge/Wisdom), which reveals that Mandaism teaches that no one else can be enlightened by Našoraean teachings before their faith and intelligence have been evaluated by the Divine forces as suitable for receiving these teachings. The process of enlightenment is referred to as the *nhur mana* by the Enlightened Man or Enlightened Mind.

Another example is that the writings present Divine Truth, *Kušša*, as the main source of creation, of the enlightened path and of the Mandaean way of life. This source *Kušša* may be considered the most brilliant crystallization of the whole body of philosophical thought found in the Mandaean religion.

By studying Knowledge, Wisdom and Inside Faith through prayer, meditation, and reading, Mandaeans believe that the creation of the Universe has emanated from the realisation of *Qala* (Divine Cry) and *Malala* (Divine Word/Speech) of God (*Hiia/Mara*)⁶ and from the Divine Word(s) of the Divine Truth, *Malalia d-Kušša*. This means that the Mandaean doctrine of creation is based on Divine Revelation and Mandaeans come to understand this both from the initial standpoint of enlightened knowledge and through direct experience.

⁶ See for example *CP*, no. 1; DC 37, 584; *GY* 292: 16 . Also see *MD*, pp. 243b-244a, 400b. *GY* 26: 20 reads: *malala qadmaia* (the First Divine Word).

5. 3 The Significance of the Contents of *DQRDK* in Mandaean Literature

5. 3. 1 The Value of the Theology in *DQRDK*

DQRDK contains rich theological remarks. Most of these remarks point to the esoteric and mystical aspects of the Mandaean and Naṣoraean religious teachings. The thoughts are inserted in a remarkable way in the scroll. Symbols are invested everywhere in *DQRDK* with meaning that decodes and/or connects with most of other Mandaean literature. Thus, it covers important areas of Mandaean mysticism, mixed with creation stories, rituals and central beliefs. Two brief discussions are provided below to illustrate the theological value of *DQRDK*.

(i) Theological Beliefs: At the core of the Mandaean religion are essential beliefs about the way in which the world is created and ordered, and the entity who controls the universe. Madaeans are not content with explaining merely the cosmology; they are also interested in explaining what kind of function these extant beings perform in this universe.

The *Qadaha* (creation/universal manifestation) as explained briefly in contemporary Mandaean culture seems to be less concerned with the social, political and literary perspective than with cosmology. Mandaean—traditional—beliefs are not content only with answering the essential questions, but seek also to search the various cosmologies and to explore the various kinds of nature and the functions that the existing beings (including the human beings) have in this universe.

(ii) Specific Theological Content of *DQRDK*: *DQRDK* is one of the few important Mandaean scrolls which it is not concerned with cultural rituals (like DC 34, 35, 42 etc.), religious laws (like DC 8), purity regulations (like DC 6, 36),

geographical locations (like DC 7), historical and prophetic events (like DC 9), or the upper and lower worlds (like DC 41, 48).

It covers the following topics: (a) esoteric knowledge; (b) the creation of the world and early Mandaean Naṣoraean mysticism included in the creation of the Universal Man and his teachings, the Earthly Man and the Earthly world; (c) the creation and birth of Adam and Eve in this world; (d) a brief Gnostic thought about the origin of the world as Gnostics perceive it and their dualistic idea;⁷ (e) some general ritual symbols such as *Masiqta* (Rising up), *Dukrana* (Commemoration of the Souls or Beings that are not in the physical body), *Maṣbuta* (Baptism) concerning sacraments and Baptism; and (f) the Gnostic beliefs of Mandaeans.

The Naṣoraean beliefs are reflected in preserved symbols, such as mystical writing, illustrations, traditional rituals, secret ritual elements, and even symbolic implements and objects like the *Drabša* which is a unique symbol and holy bearer of all the cultural values shared by the Mandaean society. The use of these symbols reinforces the Mandaean social order and religious traditions. The secret religious symbols are used in a great number employed in a great many different styles.

We can also see revealed in the scroll a hidden message intended for enlightened Mandaeans within their early Western and Eastern Gnostic environment, in which they lived for three and a half centuries until their historical journey from Palestine, Jordan and Syria towards Harran and Mesopotamia, before the destruction of the Jewish temple. The ability to discern this message differentiates between the non-enlightened and the enlightened Mandaeans, who are also considered to be “Aliens” in this world (including Lightworld Beings or perfect Gnostic Men or Men

⁷ Without any direct reference to the Demiurge Ptahil, the scroll does mention in a few sentences the journey of *Hibil Ziwa* (his father) to the Underworld (World of Darkness) and his role in the creation story.

of Divine Mysticism or Men of Truth,)⁸ These “Alien Beings” are considered to be representatives of the century of Mandaean Gnosticism and Mysticism, particularly in relation to the Creation of the World and their connection with the universal idea of the ‘Perfect Mind’.⁹ This includes some formulae and histories and narratives based on the Mandaean local and traditional history. The work includes a few brief, different and corresponding, passages, chronicles and verses from *DTP* in a new form and perspective. There are, then, both differences and similarities. *DQRDK* concentrates on ideas, like *Dmut Kušta*; Universal Perfect Being; Lord of Greatness; Divine Emanations and Lightworld Beings; *Mana*; Wellspring; Datepalm; *Naširuta*; the Mandaic Alphabet; *Ruha* and *Nišimta*; Adam and Eve; the earthly primordial creatures and many other things, some of which we have already discussed.¹⁰

5. 3. 2 The Value of *DQRDK* as Commentary

DQRDK is perhaps of great interest to specialists, especially those interested in *DQRDK*'s context and significance. It can be regarded as a commentary on various Mandaean books, especially *GR* and *Q*, as well as on other Mandaic works of the scrolls, especially *ATŠ*, *ARR*, *DM'L*. In addition, *DQRDK* contains material of special relevance to many aspects of Mandaean life and traditions which not only proves illuminating but also promotes a better understanding of the ancient Mandaean Našoraean mystical thinking, and its associated way of life. The religious and

⁸ This idea could be compared with the Alien Man that appears in the Gnostic Gospel of Truth, one of the ancient texts discovered along with the Gospel of Thomas at Naj' Hammadi. This is also subject worth studying and comparing with the Kabbalistic teachings. For these subjects consult, for example, Willis Barnastone's *The Other Bible*, Harper & Row, San Francisco, 1984.

⁹ This idea appears also in some places in other Gnostic works, for example, ‘Thunder: Perfect Mind’, which is part of the *Nag Hammadi Library*, a collection of mostly Gnostic writings from the third century CE, discovered in Egypt in 1945. Its narrator is apparently a female deity, possibly called Thunder. Also see n. 8, above.

¹⁰ For more explanations on these ideas and terms consult chapter 6.

symbolic contents are important for illuminating both historical conditions and cosmic truths.

The general character of the *DQRDK* text is that it is full of inter-textual references. It is a carefully drafted document, and repetitiously phrased in sections dealing variously with the creation of the universe and this world, the Divine Body and its organs and elements. Some other sections only reveal details in the course of stating how the rituals are to be performed in connection with the Lightworld Beings and the Divine Body of the Universal Man. Other sections, however, refer to four kinds of elements, and perhaps to more in the other related passages and prayers of the Mandaean documents, particularly *DTP*, *Q* and *GR*. There is certainly a written and oral tradition behind these texts, including *DTP*, which suggests that they borrowed from each other. The tradition behind these texts may, however, be much older. *DQRDK*, 53ff., for example, have striking parallels in an old text of *GR* and *Q*.

The similarities between scrolls are more significant when Naṣōraean or Mandaean texts are compared. Mandaean priests have confirmed these similarities in their rituals. The illustrations in these texts play a central role in forming the important ideas. They are not different from those in *DQRDK*, except in a symbolic manner and certain aspects. That is also shown in the Mandaean art with similar Naṣōraean style in general.

5. 3. 3 The Value of the Literary Style of *DQRDK*

Although most of the significant linguistic features of middle classic Mandaic were present and fixed in the language between the first century BCE and the third century CE, we can not possibly conclude that the writing forms from that period display a style and set of language habits which significantly differ from the average

usage represented in the very late forms of classic Mandaic that fall under the influence of early Islamic period and the Arabic language. In fact, the limited change in language invites consideration of the stability of Mandaic and its grammatical features as well as the flexibility of its rhetoric.

Despite the complexity, abstruseness, symbolism and depth of its topic, the text of *DQRDK* is remarkably well written. The writer has succeeded in presenting the main ideas in a clear, fluid and interesting way. *DQRDK* does not distract readers by offering details about the creation story from the main Mandaean literary sources, such as *GR* and *Q*, but rather mentions these details only briefly.

As it does this, however, the text also expands, adopts and highlights other stories. The roots of these ideas are also found in the other central Mandaean literature, especially *GR*, *Q*, *JB*, *ATŠ* (including *DTP*).

In spite of the rich literary heritage that Mandaeans have bequeathed to us in their extant literature, scholarly studies of Mandaean literature have to this day remained a scarce and under-developed field.¹¹ It is disappointing to reflect that, in the last two decades, no groundbreaking study of the importance of Mandaic literature has been initiated, let alone carried out.

In 1989, Jonas C. Greenfield wrote:

One aspect of Mandaic literature that has been neglected on the whole is the literary aspect, and especially the discussion of the rhetorical and prosodic elements in Mandaic literature.¹²

The best literary examples are usually found in the vast and important codices like *GR*, *Q*, *JB*. However, even the small number of scholars in this important field have limited their studies to the poetic aspects of these texts, and neglected the other

¹¹ See, for example, *ML*, pp. viii-xv; *JB*; *Ginza*; T. Säve-Söderbergh, *Studies in the Cryptic Manichean Psalm-Book*; Jonas C. Greenfield, 'On Mandaic Poetic Technique', in *Studia Semitica Necon Iranica*, Otto Harrassowitz, Wiesbaden, 1989, pp. 101-108; Von Stanislav Segert, 'Parallelism in the *Qolasta*', pp. 283-301.

literary considerations, not only in these collections but also regarding the whole of Mandaean literature.¹³

Accordingly, today there is no important study of the literary patterns of the Mandaic scrolls and other literature. Even on the poetic side, most scholars have depended on Lidzbarski's works and expanded them, especially his introductory pages, and followed the structure of his translations for the texts of the three collections.¹⁴ That has given birth mainly to three considerable but limited studies.

The first one was done by T. Säve-Söderbergh through his important book *Studies in the Coptic Manichaean Psalm-Book*, in which he compares the Coptic Manichean Psalms of Thomas with Mandaic hymns and announces his discovery that these Psalms are adaptations and almost translations of early Mandaic hymns.¹⁵ Most importantly, he includes the subtitle 'Prosody and Mandaean Parallels', on which Jonas C. Greenfield commented as follows:

Säve-Söderbergh compares the form of quite a few hymns and psalms in the Coptic Psalms of Thomas with parallel Mandaic texts and attributes great antiquity to the Mandaic texts, or at least to the poetic forms which he found in the various poems. He claimed "priority for the Mandaean version in practically all the cases adduced above in which there was a close resemblance between a Mandaean text and a passage in the Psalms of Thomas."¹⁶

The other two studies were made in 1987 by Jonas C. Greenfield and Von Stanislav Segert.¹⁷

We can categorize the writing of *DQRDK* as being predominantly prose punctuated by short poetic fragments. *DQRDK* follows in the tradition of other

¹² Greenfield, 'On Mandaic Poetic Technique', p. 101.

¹³ See *ibid.*

¹⁴ *Ginza, ML, JB*,

¹⁵ See Säve-Söderbergh, *Studies in the Coptic Manichaean Psalm-Book*, pp. 160ff.

¹⁶ Greenfield, 'On Mandaic Poetic Technique', p. 101.

¹⁷ Jonas C. Greenfield, 'On Mandaic Poetic Technique'; Von Stanislav Segert, 'Parallelism in the *Qolasta*'. The only other study mentioned is my forthcoming book, entitled *The Main Literary Patterns in Ginza Rba*, which is expected to be published in 2006.

Mandaean scrolls that are all similarly categorized, such as *HG*, *DMHZ*, *DA*, *ARR*, *ARZ*, *Diuan Nahrauata*,¹⁸ etc. However, *DQRDK* is different in some respects from the literary art of the codices.

It is rare to find poetry in the literature of Mandaean scrolls. However, even the prose in these scrolls is different from the prose in the codices, like *GR*, *Q*, *DY*. This may be due to the writer, the nature of the text work, and/or its purpose. The style of *DQRDK* consists of short and precise sentences that serve the educational purpose of imparting knowledge and wisdom to the readers. This prose not only serves an educational purpose but also serves the purpose of modernizing the Naṣoraean way of thinking and transmitting visions in that period, which we can consider as a 'modernization period', after the settlement of all the Mandaean groups in Mesopotamia, especially in the Middle and Southern regions, particularly in the city of Tib.

The prose of *DQRDK* is crisp, simple, effective and consistent. It enlightens the spirit and elevates the mind. It succinctly covers the most important subjects in Mandaean theology. However, the subject of *DQRDK* is also thematically interconnected with other Mandaean literary works. This is why one cannot fully understand the contents of *DQRDK* if one lacks sufficient understanding of other Mandaean literature.

The textual fragments beside the illustrations serve an explanatory function in a short, direct and metaphorical manner. The textual fragments within the illustrations can be considered as explanatory notes which are mostly direct and/or metaphorical, short comments on and explanations of the illustrations and symbols.

¹⁸ Translated by Kurt Rudolph as, *Der mandaische "Diwan der Flüsse" / herausgegeben und übersetzt*, Akademie-Verlag, Berlin, 1982.

To know and learn about the Mandaean author's style is to learn to read that author's words in the order in which they were written. The reader must avoid any impulse to rearrange the words; rather, the reader should attempt to hear what the ancient Mandaeans might have heard themselves.

It is an important feature of the style of *DQRDK* that the sentences and their linguistic components capture the Naṣōraean mysticism through patterns that are used by the author of *DQRDK*. This mysticism has much influence on the structure and relationship of the sentences and we need to use it as our guide in assessing the author's style.

We can look at folio 2 of *DQRDK* as an example. Here, a survey of the *DQRDK* Mandaic text clarifies the exciting feeling and inner enlightenment that the illustrations of the subject of creation (including items, characters and heroes) can arouse in the readers. Also, we can call this a unique Naṣōraean style. The rhythm, structure and style of the author's thoughts all contribute to this effect.

In most of *DQRDKs'* passages, we can see that many symbolic terms, idioms, sentences, verses, and literary patterns were inserted to achieve the scrolls' purposes.

For instance passages like *DQRDK*, 1-3, 34-53, 55-60 can present examples on the style of *DQRDK's* language, the syntax, structure, etc.¹⁹

In these passages, we can see that the syntax is almost wholly given over to conjunction and to the relative clause and its transformational derivatives (including participle phrases and appositives). This may be considered as a stylistic feature in itself, one that may easily be amplified by setting it next to a fact of content. The introduction and the real detailed story of creation compiled as well as the ritualistic details are revealed here.

¹⁹ For more details on these passages see chapter 6.

These syntactic features we can call a ‘common Naṣōraean denominator’. They serve to itemize, label, describe and accumulate religious information without sorting it, or analysing it, or even reasoning about it. The neutrality of these forms lies strangely alongside the more unusual content, which demands syntactic acknowledgement. In speaking of the syntax of *DQRDK*, one might also remark on the conspicuousness of the parallelism and dualism of structure, which reveals a decorum and orderliness in existing things, mythological emanations, supernatural powers, and divine beings, sharply emphasized by the content.

It might also be noted that the repeated semantic style reflects the message of mystical transcendence. We are given many names to identify with *Mara d-Rabuta*—eg. *Dmuta* (Divine Image), *Kuṣṭa* (Divine Truth), *Mana* (Divine Mind), *Aaina* (Divine Source), etc.²⁰ Even the name of the work of *DQRDK* is identified with many Lightworld Beings and Cosmic Powers, or given many mystical and divine attributes. These are described variously and repeatedly in lines 4, 5, 11, 12, 15 and among the whole passages of the words *tum apriš* up to line 33 at the end of the section. This trait suggests a marked awareness of the efficiency and passivity of the text. It also deepens the alternation of the sequences, conveying a feeling of a compulsive desire to bring every description to both its mystical and logical completion.

5. 3. 4 The Value of the Prose of *DQRDK*

The prose of *DQRDK* closely resembles a secret Naṣōraean poetic coded language and is structured in a well measured fashion. It is often adorned by rhythmic prose and repetition. On some occasions, traces of homogeneous sentences and punning phrases can be found.

²⁰ For explanation on these four terms, see pp. 72 ff., above. Also consult chapter 6 for more detail on these and many other Mandaic terms.

The language of this work is full of classical Mandaean terms, expressions, idioms, metaphors and mannerisms of speech. It provides an ancient secret text used by Mandaean-Naṣoraeans.

Generally speaking, the kinds of prose used in *DQRDK* give an account of the process of creation—starting from divine animations and ending with the creation of earth and man. The plot of *DQRDK* describes the divine world, Lightworld Beings and their involvement in the process of creation.²¹ It also describes the appearance of human beings and the relationship between the soul and spirit.

These accounts are rich in the use of descriptive language and imagery. The imagery combines Lightworld vision with the strictly factual world view of the priests. The style of *DQRDK* prose has no excess or pretence and is succinct with details. The full details can be found in Mandaic sources elsewhere.

The educational value of this prose is predominant, and for this reason, the scroll contains several sagacious directions and moral teachings. We may say that the didactic quality of the work generally overrides its literary merit. Good examples of this tendency are the passages that explain the illustrations in the scroll. Nevertheless, there are a number of passages that contain evidence of the writer's vividness of imagination.

Other passages contain sophisticated anatomical and biological descriptions of animal and human reproductive systems, especially the conception and development of the embryos.

²¹ With some references to the World of Darkness and some of its creations, followed by the references to the earthly world and its creation.

5. 4 The Artistic Value of *DQRDK*.

One of the greatest values of *DQRDK* is its unravelling of the process of the 'Great Creation', *Qadaha Rba*, through symbolic, illustrated and artistic forms. The artwork is drawn in a handsome style in geometric shapes based on symbolic, natural and mythological forms of creation characters as they encounter the limitless elements. *DQRDK*'s artwork generally follows the artistic tradition of other illustrated Mandaean scrolls in artistic effect and religious spiritual and educational purpose.

DQRDK represents the Mandaean religious and symbolic artistic style very well and it can be considered as the best example of the Mandaean-Naṣoraean esoteric art in which graceful, beautiful forms of many illustrated objects are combined. Most importantly, the illustrated symbols can be used by the initiated as a secret Naṣoraean language hidden within the whole large picture of the scroll. This illustrated symbolic language illuminates the whole creation story so that the subject matter becomes realistic and the narrative becomes clearer. It was based on deep spiritual experience, events of history, mythology, luminosity, everyday life, etc.

DQRDK contains a number of wonderful drawings which are even more beautiful than those found in other Mandaean scrolls. The drawings are rich illustrations and convey a wide variety of ideas. No other illustrations have so far been analysed and *DQRDK* rightly holds a unique position in comparison with other Mandaean scrolls

The technical complexity of these drawings is more advanced and developed than that of other Mandaean scrolls. They contain a large amount of information and detail, showing a high level of control and a minute attention to the details of the Naṣoraean symbols. For example, I came across an illustration of symbolic baptismal actions. That is, the participants in these actions, who are *Nišimta* (the soul) as the

Baptizer, and *Ruha* (spirit) as the Baptized, appear for the first time here in a Mandaean illustrated scroll. Some of the baptismal implements, in symbolic characters, also appear in that illustration, corresponding to, and seemingly similar to, those illustrated in other scrolls (eg. DC, *Mašbuta d-Hibil Ziwa*, etc). The general Baptismal picture certainly corresponds to the rite of Mandaean Baptism, which is recorded in many other Mandaean texts.

Evidence of this complexity is the extensive use of geometric illustrations, especially cubic, which are rarely found in this kind of scroll. Throughout *DQRDK* shapes, such as polygons, pyramids and rhomboids, are found extensively and are used together in great harmony, beauty and balance.

A good illustration of the above can be seen in folio 3. These drawings represent their own subject matter more clearly than drawings found in other scrolls. Here, we find a symbolic depiction of the Earthly world in the midst of a struggle between the World of Light and World of Darkness, the Eternal and the Material, the Good and Evil, the Right and Left, the Soul and the Spirit, Light and Darkness, Adam and Eve, Water and Blood, Ethereal Lightworld Creations and Earthly Creations.

The shapes illustrate the different dualities of the middle world of existence within the Mandaean religious system. The shapes also interact in a symbolic expressive and precise form. Through studying these shapes, the viewer is able to comprehend and appreciate the fundamental beliefs about the dynamics of these relationships in Mandaean mysticism. However, the use of Mandaean esoteric terms, expressions, and symbols in this scroll is so extensive that readers are expected to have the special knowledge and insight at the high level of a Naṣōraean in order to understand it. This is because these drawings deal with the most complex and esoteric level of Naṣōraean mysticism.

While the number of Lightworld Beings illustrated in *DQRDK* is low compared to the number in other fully-illustrated scrolls, *DQRDK* contains a large number of drawings exclusive to itself. These drawings can be categorised into the following groups: lightworld beings, soul and spirit, wellsprings, letters from the Mandaic alphabet, primitive human being(s), animals, plants, insects, minerals and tools.

Even though there is so much extensive detail and so many symbols in *DQRDK*, the main idea is never lost or clouded. This is because all large and small details are tied to the central idea of the scroll. The scroll, in other words, is like a mosaic piece made up of many small parts that collectively and individually define the big picture—in this case, the big picture is the creation map. In summary, this scroll is an artistically and religiously integrated piece, which, from beginning to end, beautifully and effectively, addresses and illustrates the central theme summarized in its title.

The style of the artwork in *DQRDK* is different from that of most other scrolls. The artwork visually presents the secret dialogue teachings of the Divine Rabbi to his (Naṣōraean) novice who is seeking instruction in *Naṣiruta*. The illustrations show and explain how each power or Being has its place and effect in the Heavenly and Earthly worlds.

A variety of ideas relating to the Mandaean religion and the philosophy of existence is also captured through *DQRDK*'s detailed art. In fact, there is an intense commitment to detail, no matter how small, or whether it be the representation of a Honey Bee, a Silkworm or a Raspberry tree. This very detailed style of the drawing is uniform and consistent throughout the scroll. The observer of these drawings in *DQRDK* cannot avoid sensing the spiritual power and creative brilliance of the artist

as he conveys the spiritual power of the *Našuraia* in a truthful effective manner and offers the best intellectual interpretation possible. A powerful sense of connection and stability of purpose is gained from the drawings, the texts, and the illustrated symbols.

An important stylistic innovation in *DQRDK* is the representation of human figures. One example may be cited. The human figure in *DQRDK*, folio 10 is probably the image of the primitive earthly human being. The small hands towards the sides are touching, and may be a reference to his disability as a complete being. This depiction may confirm the Mandaean oral story of the primitive human being which tells that, before the completion of the formation of the human being, that is before the entering of *Nišimta* (the soul), he was walking on four legs, his language was like an animal's language and he acted like an animal.²²

Before the Christian era, very little was known about the use of human figures in Mandaean art. Possibly a few early Mandaean works used human figures to illustrate examples of the Gnostic philosophy and imagination. After their large historical emigration from Jordan Valley to Mesopotamia in the first century CE, Mandaeans created representations of themselves or representations of other Enlightened (Lightworld) beings in human form. Mandaeans then seem to have continued this practice as a mark of prestige or a symbol of enlightened knowledge, and those who possessed this mark were treated as valuable.

Conclusion

From an esoteric and mystical point of view, chapter five is the most important chapter of this thesis as it explains the main reason for undertaking the study of this

²² See H. Saed, 'Khalq Al-ensan- Adam Uhawaa', in *Studies in Mandaeanism: History and Beliefs*, ed. Majid Fandi Al-Mubaraki, Al-Mubaraki, Sydney, 2000, pp. 129ff., 140; and 'The Creation of Human between the Reality and Imagination in the Mandaean Religion', lecture given in Ashfield Community Hall, arranged by Mandaean Research Centre, June, 1996.

particular scroll. The discussion in this chapter establishes the value and significance of *DQRDK* from a theological, esoteric, linguistic, historical and artistic perspective and argues that *DQRDK*'s value in revealing Mandaean mystical thinking and theological beliefs and its value as a written and artistic text should no longer be underestimated by scholars of Mandaism. Indeed, *DQRDK* holds a very special place in Mandaean literature, a fact which readers might well like to keep in mind when considering the translation and notes in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 6

Translation of the Text of *DQRDK*

Introduction

This chapter is the largest and most important chapter in this study and forms the second part of this thesis. It provides an extensively annotated translation of the whole text of *DQRDK*, including a translation of the main written text of the scroll as well as a translation of the explanatory comments within the illustrations. It also provides critical commentary on the linguistic, religious and mystical elements of the texts.

This chapter is presented folio by folio, covering the eleven folios of the scroll in order and dealing with each of the many sections of each folio. First, a copy of each original folio is presented and then follows the translation and notes and commentaries on both the text and the illustrations, which, it is hoped, will give deeper understanding not only of *DQRDK* but also of the Mandaean religion, mystical Nasoraean thinking and other Mandaean literature.

The following provides a “map” of this chapter.

A reduced reproduction of the entire scroll.

Folio 1 (Illustration)

(i) Translation of the Text (above the three lines).

(ii) Translation of the Text Attached to the Illustrations (below the three lines).

Folio 2 (Written text)

Translation of the Text (an Explanation of the Illustrations)

Folio 3 (Illustration)

Translation of the Text Attached to the Illustrations

Folio 4 (Illustration)

Translation of the Text Attached to the Illustrations

Folio 5 (Illustration)

Translation of the Text Attached to the Illustrations

Folio 6 (Illustration)

Translation of the Text Attached to the Illustrations

Folio 7 (Written Text)

Translation of the Text (an Explanation of the Illustrations)

Folio 8 (Written Text)

Translation of the Text (an Explanation of the Illustrations)

Folio 9 (Illustration)

Translation of the Text Attached to the Illustrations

Folio 10 (Illustration)

Translation of the Text Attached to the Illustrations

Folio 11 (Colophon)

Translation of the Text

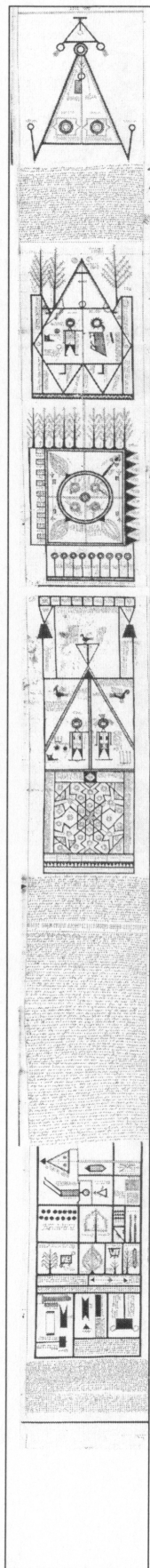


Figure 1 - All Folios

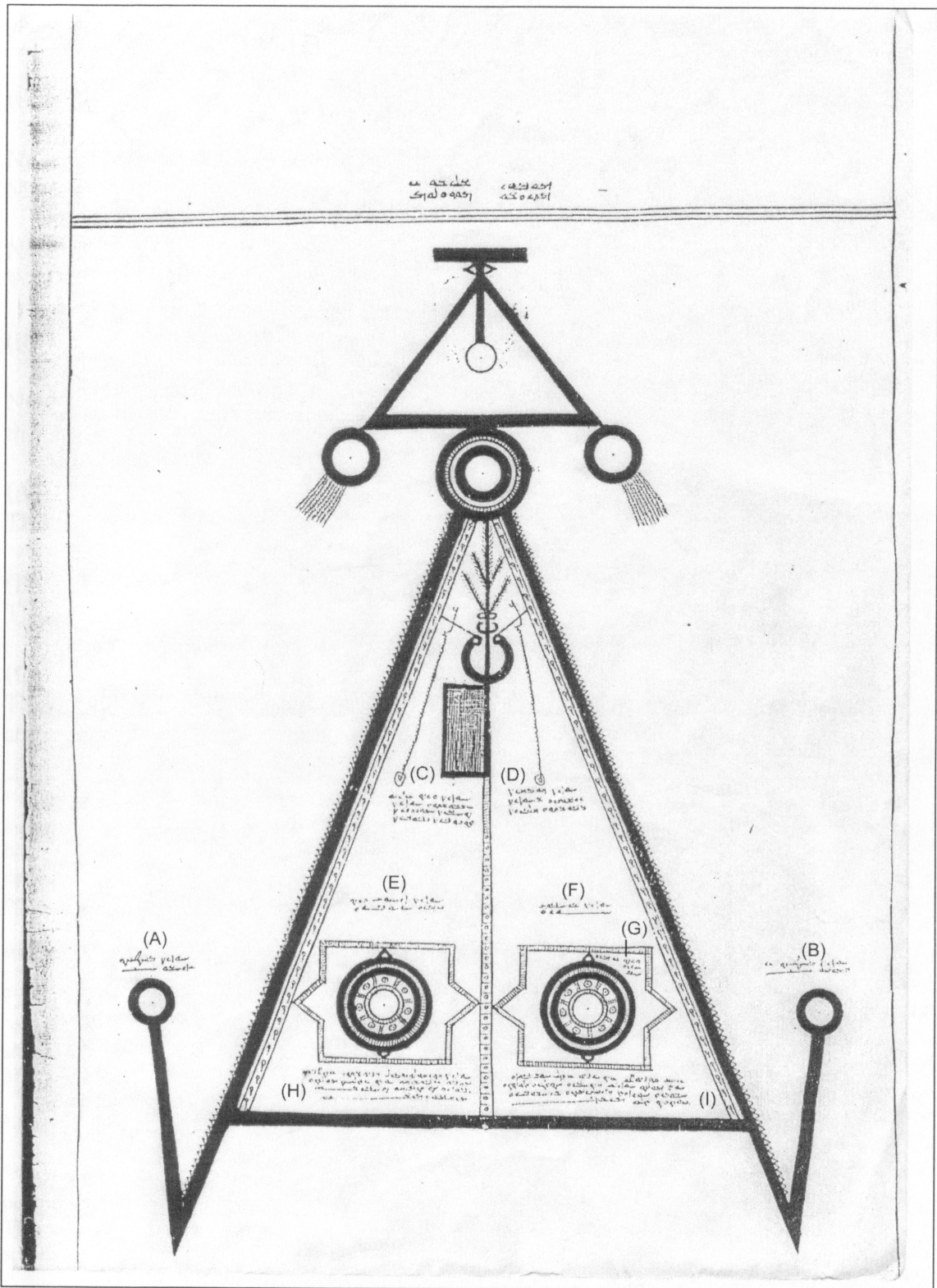


Figure 2 - Folio 1

[For an enlarged and clearer reproduction of this folio, see Appendix A.]

Folio 1

(i) Translation of the Text (above the three lines).

Note: The column on the right is read from bottom to top (that is from *mšaba*):
My Lord be praised.¹

Note: The column on the left is read conventionally from top to bottom:
With a peaceful² heart (mind).³

(ii) Translation of the Text Attached to the Illustrations (below the three lines).

Note: For simplicity, letter references (A, B, C etc.) have been used to indicate the location on the illustration of the text being translated).

(A)⁴

This is a Pillar of gold.

(B)

This is a Pillar of diamond(s).

(C)

This⁵ is the Wellspring of Radiance of the *Drabša*⁶ ((holy) Banner).⁷ This [Wellspring(s)] shines and floods,⁸ divides (separates) and moves.⁹

¹ Another translation could be, 'Be praised, my Lord'. It is written and recited in the opposite order, i.e. written *marai mšaba* yet recited *mšaba marai*. This represents the first column on the right, and should be read from the bottom to the top always. This fact was not realized previously by scholars. Some of them mistakenly read it the opposite way (i.e. from the top to the bottom). The Mandaean manuscripts generally begin with this sentence, because there is nothing before or above the 'Lord God'.

The next (left) column should be read from the top to the bottom, as is usual for the Mandaean writings.

² *mšalam*: pa. pass. pt. of ŠLM, 'to be completed, finished, or perfect'. Contextually, this means 'perfect' or 'obedient' but also carries the sense of 'peaceful'. That is, the heart or the whole being that approaches the Lord should be at peace, free of guilt and disharmony. Cf. Syr. 'complete, perfect' (*SD*, p. 371a; *LS*, p. 783). See also *MD*, 468a-468b.

³ *liba*: in this context, 'mind' is considered to be a preferable translation.

⁴ To the right of the bottom triangle above the circle. Note that all right and left indications are from the perspective of the illustration. That is, the right of the drawing is actually the left side of the page and vice versa. This scroll, in fact, is considered the only Mandaean scroll that deals with the right and the left in this way; other scrolls flow normally. No previous scholars have pointed out this exceptional case, as far as I can tell.

⁵ **This**: In material terms 'this' may refer to the space created by the weaving between the weft and the warp. In spiritual terms, the Naṣoraeans believe this space is a 'Wellspring' which represents 'Cosmic Uterus', 'Source of life and creation' and 'Universal female fertilized aspect'. The Wellspring gives not just the Water of Life but also a divine Radiance that is more powerful than the suns. See line 24 and no. 141 below (the *aina*).

⁶ *Drabša* (*drapša*) means banner, or rays. In Mandaism, *drabša* is the (sacred or holy) banner used in many rituals. See Saed's article 'Drabša: The Mandaean Holy Banner', *The Truth*, 3, Basra, 1982, pp. 9-14. For more details see *MD*, p. 114a; *MII*, pp. 108-109 K. Rudolph, *Die Mändäer*, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, Göttingen, 1960, p. 130 n. 1. *JB*, p. 185, n. 4; Eric Segelberg, *Maṣbūtā*, Almqvist & Wiksells, Uppsala, 1958, p. 32, n. 1.

(D)

These are¹⁰ two Rubies hung¹¹ with this Banner.

(E)

This is *Zihuat* the Wellspring (Source) of 'White Water(s)'.¹²

(F)

This is *Bihrat Hiia*.

(G) It is the Wellspring of 'Living Water'.¹³

(H)

This is the Banner, *Šišlam'il* (or: *Šišlam'il* the Banner) which is unfurled by *Mara d Rabuta* (The Lord of Greatness) through whom all the Kings,¹⁴ Mysteries¹⁵ and *Naširoism* (Našoraism)¹⁶ shall shine and be established.

⁷ Another translation is 'this is the wellspring of Drabša radiance'.

⁸ *Maiiain** is of the nominal noun root *mai* meaning 'water'. The full form *Mai* is regularly used with a suffix and always comes as a noun. See *MD*, p. 242a, *MG*, 184, *HCMM* pp. 170, 227, 229, 386. But *maiiain* here is used as a verb with (fem. pl.) suff. (*iin*). This may be where it is used as a verb in all the Mandaean literature and in the other Semitic languages (esp. Aramaic(s), Heb., Ar. and AKK). See Edward Robinson, *Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament*, Crocker & Brewster, Boston, 1836, p. 567; Samuel Prideaux Tregelles, *Gesenius: Hebrew and Chaldee Lexicon to the Old Testament Scriptures*, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1952, p. 458; Francis Brown, et. al. (eds.), *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1959), 565ff.

⁹ *nahrin*, *maiiain*, *Pašrin* and *radin*: all these verbs are in plural forms of act. pt., which are anteceded by the singular masculine demonstrative (i.e. the second *hazin*). Also, the whole phrase before that is in singular. The change from singular to plural happens because these verbs refer not just to the wellspring as a symbol but also to the other unlimited wellsprings, which are derived and flourish in the *Drabša* when it is unfurled.

¹⁰ *hazin*: singular demonstrative (s. dem. adj.) 'this'. This use is uncommon because the subject is in the plural, and the expected form of the demonstrative adjective would be *halin*. This use of *hazin* is uncommon and has not been mentioned before. See *MG*, pp. 43: middle, 90: 9, 22 (n. 3), 54; *HCMM* (for *hazin* e.g. pp. 67, 165, 408, 444, n. 93) and (for *halin* e.g. pp. 49, 51, 408, 409); *MD*, pp. 118a, 121b,

¹¹ *tl'ian*: pf. PE with suffix of TLA 'to hang, lift, draw'. See *MD*, 487a.

¹² *mia hiuaria*: an expression used to refer to the holy water of the Worlds of Light (e.g. see *GY* 32:13). This water is known sometimes as similar to, or another designation of, *mia hiia*. The opposite expression of *mia hiuaria* is *mia 'kumia* ('black waters'), a kind of *mia siawia*. See n. 15 below (*mia hiia*).

¹³ (i) *mia hiia*: *hiia* is used with *mia* adjectivally for 'life'. Both words form an important expression of the Divine Water of Life which springs forth in the World(s) of Light. It represents an active (female) source used to create and nourish life in many respects for the living beings. Thus, it forms different kinds of Divine waters or liquids to fulfill these aspects. These waters are opposite to the underworld waters (i.e. *mia siauia*). *MD*, p. 265a, 143a; see also n. 13 (*mia hiuaria*).

(ii) This (*aina d-mia hiia*) may be related to or even be a continuation of *Bihrat Hiia*, (see n. 14) like the text on the right side. This explains why the right wellspring does not have similar writing in it. In this case, the translation could be 'This is *Bihrat Hiia*, she is the wellspring or source of living water'!

¹⁴ *malkia* Here it means 'the Kings of Light'. These kings play a major role in every aspect of the (spiritual entity of the) Mandaean religion (esp. in the story of creation). They are also called 'the Angelic Beings' or, in other words, 'Lightworld (Enlightened) Beings' who are understood as an enthronement of spirits crowned through 'Divine Radiance' and 'Enlightened Knowledge'. They are known as 'Sons of the (Great) Life and Light' who

(I)

This is 'the Luminous Lamp', which is every Mystery that is overseen by a King. They¹⁷ [i.e. the Kings] are shining and fastened¹⁸ to each other and by this they support each other and build¹⁹ the whole Creation²⁰ (Universe).²¹

dwell in their (Exalted) Kingdoms (i.e. the Worlds of Light). Thus, the Mandaean (crowned) people are known by the same name and they are considered as their sons and representative kings in this world. See *MD*, p. 244b, 243b, consult: M. Lidzbarski, 'Uthra and malakha,' in *Orientalische Studien, Theodor Nöldeke zum siebzigsten Geburtstag gewidmet*, Gissen, 1906, 537-45; *MII*, 94 n. 2; E. D. Drower, *Coronation of Šišlam Rba: Being a Description of the Rite of the Coronation of a Mandaean Priest*, E.J. Brill, Leiden, 1962, pp. VIII. ff.; *GY*, 194:19, 372:2, 23.

¹⁵ *razia*: This has a wide range of meanings and uses (see *MD*, p. 420a). Here it refers to a multiple meaning of both 'Divine Fundamental Elements' and 'symbolic secret organs of the Divine Cosmic Body' of the Universal Being/Man. When both terms—*malkia* and *razia*—combine (esp. in the secret scrolls) they usually refer a metaphorically to the parallels of the creation and building of the universe (worlds) (i.e. Cosmic (Universal) and Earthly Man; Cosmic and Earthly Embryo; Worlds of Light and Darkness).

¹⁶ *naširuta*, This term is usually used for: 'Divine Wisdom and Knowledge'; 'Našoraean Wisdom'; 'Redeeming Knowledge'; 'Esoteric (Našoraean and Mandaean) Knowledge'; 'Divine Teachings'; 'priestly teachings'; 'secret teaching'; 'secret knowledge'; 'priestly wisdom'; 'priestly arts'; 'secret doctrine'. Sometimes it is personified and used metaphorically as a female spirit as well as many adjectives in Mandaeanism. Also see *MD*, p. 286a, 285b; *MR*, p. 140: bottom; *MII*, p. 4; *DM'L*, p. 7 n. 54; *SA*, p. xiv (n.4), I, xv etc.

¹⁷ 'They' probably refers to both the kings and the mysteries.

¹⁸ *Šapṭia*:* As a noun (lit.) 'caskets, chests; chains' (as : St. emphatic, masc. Pl. of *šapṭa* = *sapṭa*) cf. ? Persian 'casket, chest for valuables'. However, here it has the sense of act. pt. masc. pl. of SPT 'to fasten'. However, all the other sources did not mention this word as a variable in any of the forms that they discussed. E.g. consult *MG*, p. 42f.; *HCMM*, pp. 66:4, 207:16; *MD*, pp. 388a, 314a, 396b and 334b. In *CP* 364:11, it is a 'strong-box', but in *ML*, p. 273:9, it is translated as 'Ketten Von Edelsteinen'. See *CP*, p. 239 n. 3.

¹⁹ *mibn*:* inf. PE. of BNA. Here the letter '-' is a graphical description of *i* and in fact replaces o<- (-ia) as sometimes happens in Mandaic probably because they sound similar (i.e. -i). See *MG*, p. 5:11; *HCMM*, pp. 121 ff; *MD*, 183a-b, 339a.

²⁰ *biniana*: lit. 'construction, building, edifice'.

²¹ *biniana kulH mibn* : lit. 'build the whole building'. The writer has used this sentence metaphorically to confirm that there is a builder (i.e. creator) and there are workers and elements (i.e. Kings and Mysteries). The result is a great building (i.e. creation(s), universe(s)). He likens the creation to a building to give a clear image of the concept.



Figure 3 - Folio 2
 [For an enlarged and clearer reproduction of this folio, see Appendix A.]

Folio 2

Translation of the Text (An Explanation of the Illustrations)

[1] In the name(s)²² of the Great [First]²³ Sublime Living One(s)²⁴ from the Ineffable²⁵ (Surpassing) Worlds of Light that are above all²⁶ creations,²⁷ may there be healing (or health),

²² *Bšumaihun* (šum[a] with 3rd pl. suff.): lit. ‘their names’. This word is used very often in the formula of the *bašmaha* or *bašmala* = Ar. *basmala* and is usually understood in the singular as an invocation. Similar forms of the *bašmaha* also often use the singular. Different forms of what exist (e.g. *bšum hiia*, *bšuma d-hiia*, *bšuma d-hiia rbia*, *bšumH d-hiia (rbia)*, *bšum d-hiia ubšum d-manda d-hiia madkar ‘lak*’ (Mandaeans of Iran pronounce: *bšmi-ṭ-heyyi u-bišmi-ṭ-manda-ṭ-heyyi madkher elakh*, etc.). See *MG*, p. 314:10f, *MD*, p. 4454b, 455, *HCMM*, p. 11.

²³ The word ‘First’ = *qadmaia* is inserted here because the common form of this verse contains it. This (form without *Qadmaia*) may be considered as another form of the *bašmaha* (e.g. *GY* 133:24-134:1) which frequently begins every chapter. However, both forms refer to the same meaning. This shows one form of wordplay, which is very common in Mandaean writings. Consult *MD*, p. 293b (Note that Drower and Macuch mistakenly write *basmamala* for *basmala*). However, both cases should be read as above [i.e. *bašmaha*]. See also *HCMM*, pp. 400:32ff., 11; *CP*, p. 1).

²⁴ *Hiia*: is usually translated ‘Life’, i.e. the ‘Great Life’. However, in this prayer, and even in similar opening prayers, it means not the (creative) Life but rather the Living (One(s)), the Creator of the (creative) Life, or God. The relationship between the Life and the Living (One(s)) raises deep philosophical questions in Mandaeism. This causes much argument among scholars and the issue is not yet resolved. See *ATŠ*, p. 168 (I, 229). In addition, this word *Hiia* should be recited in every form of the Mandaean *bašmaha* (e.g. *bšuma d-Hiia*). Every action begins and ends with the invocation of the name *Hiia* (God), so that the action is blessed and is part of the World of Life and Light, and is thus holy and suitable for the children (sons) of Life and Light.

victory (or purity), strength [2] and firmness, speech and hearing, joy of heart, and a forgiver of sins for me, *Baian* son of *Haua*,²⁸ and for my offspring *Adam Yuhana* and *Adam* [3] *Zihrun* and *Bihram*²⁹ sons³⁰ of *Haua Simat*³¹ [through the strength of *Yauar Ziua* and *Simat Hiia*].³²

[4] The Being,³³ whose name (*šumH*) was formed in this, sacred mystery,³⁴ and Explanation,³⁵ whose name is *Dmut Kušša*³⁶ (the Likeness of Truth) who is *Aba Rba*

²⁵ *iatiria*: has various vague meanings that could refer either to 'Hiia' (the preferred meaning) or to 'Worlds'. See *MD*, p. 187b, 188a; *CP*, p. 1 n. 1; *HCMM*, p. 400:32ff.

²⁶ *kulhun*: More often, in similar prayers, it appears with '>' u (i.e. *ukulhun*). E.g. see *CP*, pp. 1:3, 143:2.

²⁷ *'ubadia*: lit. 'works', but in this prayer carries the sense of all Divine creations. This includes all the works and actions relevant to 'the creation' ('Life'), spiritual and material beings, and worlds.

²⁸ *baian br haua*: this is the *Malwaša* (astrological/religious name) linked with that of the mother and used for religious and magical purposes (see *MII*, p. 81f; *MD*, p. 244a) of the person for whom the copyist wrote this scroll. The *Malwaša* name of this copyist is *Rabbi Yahia Ram Zihrun br Mhatam* (See *DQRDK* line 128ff). To copy a religious book or scroll is a common tradition for the religious Mandeans to bring good(ness), health, protection and forgiveness for themselves and the members of their families, (including relatives and close friends). For that reason, the copyist must write all of the *Malwaša* names in specific places (especially at the beginning of each chapter and in the colophon). Sometimes the copyist leaves an empty space to be filled in later when he finishes the work or to additional names in the future (especially additional children and wife(or wives) or for any other change in circumstances of the life of that person). The Mandaean ask their priest or a famous copyist to do one or more scrolls for them. In return, Mandaean pay money or give a gift to the copyist. That seems to be developed later from the old tradition, which instructed people, who want to copy a religious writing, that they should copy it themselves. That is why they begin these writings with this prayer, which contains their own *Malwaša* names, so that they will live in purity and are recorded in the records of the Great Life, and these are connected always with the World of Light and its blessings.

²⁹ Up to this word, copied and written by the copyist, but after the word *ulšitlai* (which was perhaps written later by the copyist) and until the end of this line and the next line (i.e. line 3). The copyist appears to have left a space to fill in later with the *Malwaša* names of the children (sons) of *Baian*, and probably other names. This is suggested by the script which changes twice to other handwriting. Further it seems to be written by two other reed pens and probably ink(s) at two different time(s) and without attention to the beauty of the script (especially the words: *zihrun ubaian*). Moreover, most of these (added) words are squeezed in close to each other to fit the small space that was left to fill in the name of *Baian's* children. Note that the last three words in line 3 (i.e. *abnia haua simat*) are also written by a different reed pen, ink and at different time, but certainly before the time of writing the names of the children. This happens sometimes, not often, because the copyist leaves a space for the children, but he writes at the end of that space the word *bnia* (or *abnia*) followed by the name(s) of their mother.

This is what happened here. There were too many names to fit in the small space before the *Malwaša* name of the mother. That also explains why they did not write in the rest of line 3. From all this, we also know that nothing was added (even in the colophon) after finishing copying.

³⁰ *abnia*: (1) var. of =*bnia* (2), '*bnia* (pl. of *bra*, *br*). This (var.) form is usually used in Mod. Mand. prob. because the first syllable is written as it is pronounced. This corruption of the language happened very often in Modern Mandaic and changed the diction and the inflection, and affected the grammar of many classic Mandaic forms. This word *abnia* indicates that the copyist is depending here on his memory, not on researching and copying the classic word.

³¹ *simat*: used here as a *Malwaša* name as well as the previous names in line 2 and 3.

³² *bhailH* (or *bhailia*, *bhaila*) *d-Yauar ziua usimat hiia* : this verse should end this prayer which usually begins every book, scroll and probably every chapter. This verse is missing from *DQRDK* maybe because the copyist left a large space to fill it in later (with additional *Malwaša* names). Probably he forgot. See nn. 33 (*baian*), 34 (to her) above; also nn. 147 (*Yauar rba*), 153 (*simat hiia*).

³³ *gabra*: lit. 'man, person', but it is used here metaphorically and has the sense of the supernatural supreme Lightworld Being who carries a Divine cosmic figure, which is revealed in many mystical, cosmic and earthly

*Qadmaia*³⁷ (the First Great Father), [5] conceived mysteries³⁸ in/by the Living Seed,³⁹ and He said, revealed and explained to it (to the living seed) about anyone who does not guard this *Diuan* (scroll) and this *Tafsir*⁴⁰ (explanation) of *Dmut Kušša*, and (this) *Paršupa* [6] *d- Šbiha d-Nišmata*,⁴¹ in which contains⁴² the Light, and who does not guard it for himself [but

emanations (e.g. *Dmut Kušša*, *Dmuta*). These emanations are reflected esp. in the Universal Divine Man and his material reflection, the Earthly Man. This idea is found in many Gnostic sects and later in Qabbalistic Man (i.e. Adam Qadmon) and many other mystic traditions. See n. 41 (*dmut kušša*); *CP*, p. 1 (no.1: 11); *ATŠ*, p. 180 n. 5; *MST*, pp. 202-203; W. Brandt, *Die mandaische Religion, ihre Entwicklung und geschichtliche Bedeutung*, Leipzig, 1912, p. 199; D. Shapira, 'Manichaeans (Marmanaiia)', p. 248 n. 22.

³⁴ *raza* (*kasia*): this expression refers here to the Esoteric Knowledge that is kept in this (secret) scroll.

³⁵ *tapsir*: pronounced *tafsir*. Cf. Ar. تفسير; also consult *MD*, p. 480b.

³⁶ *dmut kušša*. An expression used as a short name for this scroll. Otherwise, it is personified as a Supreme (Divine) Being who emanated from *Hiia* (or *Mara d-Rabuta*) into two separable parts: the *Dmut(a)* 'Divine Likeness (of the Great Life)' and the *Kušša* ('the Divine Truth, the Divine Law'). This Divine Being is identified sometimes with *Gabra*, *Aba Rba* 'Qadmaia', *Paršufa* (*Šbiha*), *Mara d-Rabuta*, *Mana* (*Rba*) and *Kušša* (when they are personified – especially in this scroll). This meaning has seldom been mentioned before by scholars, especially in *MD*, pp. 111b, 209b ff. and in both detailed studies which were done (on *Kušša*) by W. Sundberg, *Kušša: A Monograph on a Principal Word in Mandaean Texts, I: The Descending Knowledge*, Lund, 1953.

³⁷ *aba rba qadmaia*. Personified as a Supreme Divine Being (see above n. 41, *dmut kušša*). Cf. *aba rba d-qara* ('the Great Father of Glory').

³⁸ *razia*: here means 'the mysteries of female fertility' and 'the mysteries of Life', 'the elements (seeds) of creation' (i.e. 'the Cosmic Uterus').

³⁹ *mazruta haita*: this rare expression refers to spermatic fluid and to the male seeds needed for reproduction. Metaphorically, it refers to the Mandaeans as the people who carry the Living Seed of Life and Light within them and so reproduce the Children (Sons) of Light. For that reason, Mandaeans believe that they are the direct descendents of Adam. As far as I know, this expression is not explained by Drower, e.g. in *MD*, pp. (241a, 120a) or by any other scholar.

In *ARZ*, the 'Living Seed' appears as semen and is attributed to *Hibil Ziwa* 'because though, *Hibil-Ziwa*, art the Living Seed: Thou rulest us and all worlds'.

As a result, *Mazruta Haita* is equivalent to the parallel expression *mia hiia* 'Living Water' which appears in both:

(i) *DQRDK*, 112-113, below *Hibil-Ziwa mia hiia hinun d-azgun lalmia d-hsuka ukulhun almia bgauaihun* 'stadar utQun....

(ii) And *ATŠ*, p. 184 (I:265) (*d-*) *hibil ziwa mia hiia hinun d-azgun lalmia d-hšuka ukulhun* (DC 6: *d-kulhun*) *almia bgauaihun* 'stadar u'tqun: 'Of Hibil-Ziwa are the waters of life which went to the world of darkness; and thereby all the world were set in order and established.

⁴⁰ *tapsir* means both explanation and '(part of the) title of this scroll (i.e. equivalent to the *Diwan*). We can call every *Diwan* a *Tafsir*, but we cannot call every *Tafsir* a *Diwan*. This is perhaps because the *Diwan* may contain many *Tafsirs* (explanatory scrolls or sections), and additional things, like illustrations. See *MD*, pp. 480b, 107a; and n. 35, above.

⁴¹ *šbiha d-nišmata*: it can be translated: the Praiseworthy Appearance (or Contenance) of the Souls. It is an expression that refers to the (Likeness of the) Divine Praise Appearance, which relates to the appearance of the souls in many aspects and may also refer to the nature of the mysteries of the soul, especially when personified as a counterpart of the Divine lauded Supreme Being. (i.e. *paršupa*). Thus, for the *Našoraean*s, this scroll gives some clues about the transformation of the Divine mysteries from the Lightworlds to the Earthly world.

⁴² *mitligiḥH*:* ETHPE. pt. With encl. Of LGṬ (*MD*, p. 231a). This pt. is reflexive, not passive in meaning and so 'contains' rather than 'is contained by' has been chosen here for the translation.

extends] it beyond the *Naširuta*,⁴³ all these Mysteries will curse him and will destroy [7] his vision and his understanding over all his *Ginzas*⁴⁴ (Treasures). [But] everyone that keeps (or guards) and conceals it, and ponders it within himself, and is instructed by it, will be called a king [8] of Našoraean.⁴⁵ Moreover, all of⁴⁶ the Našoraean, *Tarmidas*⁴⁷ (priests) and Mandaean⁴⁸ (laymen) will be humble (lowly) before him, just as all the 'Worlds and Generations' [9] will gather around *Mara d Rabuta* (to seek Him); to come to His Gate and ask Him question[s]⁴⁹ and whoever is a sinner is unable to ask Him because He is the '*Riša d-Ama*⁵⁰ (the Head of the Nation) of *Kušṭa*'⁵¹ (Truth), and '*Riša d-Dara*'⁵² (the Head of the Generation), [10] whose name is remembered/recalled by *Hiia*.⁵³ And *Hiia* is [eternally] Victorious. S---A [i.e. Amen / The End].

⁴³ *naširuta*: here it refers to the Našoraean circles of the secret teachings and the esoteric knowledge. See also n. 16.

⁴⁴ *ginzia* (pl. of *ginza*): lit. treasure, although it has a wide range of connotations, including priestly wisdom, or religious wisdom. It can also mean anything of value to the individual. 'Divine gifts, Heavenly treasures' has been chosen for translation purposes as it seems the most appropriate here. The same segment occurs in *ATŠ*, p. 167 n. 6 (I: no. 227): '... exclude them from all wisdom (or priestly teachings)'.

⁴⁵ a) *Našuraiia* (rt. NŠR II). 'the guardians, the enlightened people who received the knowledge and wisdom of Life', usually used in reference to those adept in the faith and *Naširuta*, those who guard the Treasures of Life, those who are skilled in esoteric knowledge (see nn. 43, 16, above). It refers to the highest (religious) class in the Mandaean nation. See *MII*, p. 4; *SA*, (many places); Brandt, *die mandaische religion*, pp. 14, n. 1, 140; *MD*, pp. 285b, 306a.

b) *Malka d-Našuraiia*: a high rank in the levels of the *Našoraean*s, but not the highest rank. Note that these ranks are not mentioned before this thesis.

⁴⁶ *ukulhun*: lit. 'and all of (them)' (i.e. the *Našoraean*s).

⁴⁷ *Tarmidia*: lit. 'students', 'disciples', but usually used religiously to mean 'priests' who represent the first rank (level) of the three main priesthood ranks. The plural form here is used not just as a title of priests from the first rank but also for all priests who are consecrated to the other ranks of Mandaean priests. This use often occurs in Mandaean classic texts. Cf. *MD*, pp. 481b-482a.

⁴⁸ *Mandaiia*: the lay Mandaean people represent the first level in the community.

⁴⁹ Another translation could be 'and they make a request of him'.

⁵⁰ *Riša d-Ama*: a title for the priest who ascends to the third rank of the Mandaean priesthood. Here it is the title of honour of *Mara d-Rabuta*. Every person in the Mandaean nation expects these orders not to inappropriately reveal the scroll's teaching. In fact, the order in the speech seems to be directed to the Našoraean, including the priests, simply because they are the people who have these secret scrolls and the esoteric knowledge. See the Introduction, *MD*, p. 434a-b.

⁵¹ *Ama d-Kušṭa* 'the nation of the (Divine) Truth'. This is an expression used very rarely. It refers to both the Lightworld Beings and the whole Mandaean nation. *Kušṭa* (the Divine Truth) plays a central role in all aspects of Mandaean life, for it has significant symbolic meanings which can guide the Mandaean towards the Worlds of Light, to be in covenant with the Divine Truth by giving and receiving the Sincere (or True) right hand-clasp to each other, corresponding to that the Lightworld Beings do when they exchange the *Kušṭa* to stay fast with (and in) the Divine Covenant, so that they may hold the whole Universe. See above *DQRDK*, I; *MD*, pp. 209b ff., 21a.

⁵² *Riša d-Dara* A title for the priest who reached the fourth rank in the Mandaean priesthood. Sometimes it is equal to or confused with the *Riš Ama*. Here it is used as a title of honour of *Mara d-Rabuta*. See *MD*, p. 434a-b and *Ginza*, p. 371 n. 5. Also see n. 50, above.

⁵³ Probably means in this context both 'the Living one(s) and (the Great) Life'. See n. 24, above.

[11] This *Diwan*'s name is *Qadaha Rba*⁵⁴ (the Great Creation or Emanation) in which *Mara d Rabuta* and *Dmut Kušša*⁵⁵ (the Likeness of Truth) were formed, and they divided all the Mysteries⁵⁶ [12] and He [i.e. *Mara d-Rabuta*] explained about them, and He raised this *Diwan* (of) *Dmut Kušša* and *Paršupa šbiha*⁵⁷ (the praiseworthy appearance) and He said, "No one in the generation/age has dominion over this 'Secret [13] Mystery',⁵⁸ because everyone⁵⁹ who depicts this "Secret" will become the 'Head'⁶⁰ and the *Riš d-Dara* (the head of the generation) whose name is remembered by *Hiia*.⁶¹ [14] He is called *Bhir Zidqa* (the Elected, Righteous [one])⁶², because he is the chosen one⁶³ and there is none like him among the *Bhiria Zidqa* (the Elect of Righteous[ness] Ones), his brothers, who dwell with him in *Tibil*⁶⁴ (on the earth). And then herein⁶⁵ [15] the *Tafsir* of all *tafsir[s]*⁶⁶ taught and said and gave explanation⁶⁷ about all mighty/grand *Qadahs*⁶⁸ (creations) and the *Dirdqas*⁶⁹ and the *Dirdqunas*,⁷⁰ and about the

⁵⁴ *Qadaha* (rt. QDH I = QDA I), lit. shoot, burgeoning, sprout, blossom. Here combined with 'rba' it is the title of this scroll, used metaphorically to refer to the Creations/emanations of Life. For details see Chapter 2.4.

⁵⁵ *Dmut Kušša*, here is personified as a Divine and High Lightworld Being. See Chapter 2.4. Also consult SA, p. 81ff.

⁵⁶ *Razia* here means the 'Cosmic Mysteries', 'World life Beings/Elements', 'Cosmic Organs'. See also n. 38, above.

⁵⁷ *Praršupa Šbiha*: here another form is used for this adjective, *Paršupa*. Cf. nn. 36, 41, 55, above.

⁵⁸ *raza* (*kasia*) refers to *DQRDK* and its contents as a fully 'Sacred and Secret Scroll'.

⁵⁹ Literally, 'he who'.

⁶⁰ *riš*: chief or superior in relation to the hierarchy of the Mandaean society; leader of the epoch.

⁶¹ Probably refers to the (Great) Life, and the sense here is that person will 'remain alive' in the records of Life because of his special qualities. See also n. 24, above.

⁶² *bhir* (*zidqa*): (pass. pt. of BHR I MD, p. 53a-b). It is a title of the Chosen (Naṣōraean) person from a certain Naṣōraean group called *Bhiria Zidqa*, 'the Elect of Righteous(ness)', which corresponds to *Bhiria Kušša*, 'the Elect of Truth'. This group is very respectable among the other Naṣōraean groups. This Chosen One usually becomes the leader of his group. See n. 45.

⁶³ *bhir*: literally 'he who is preferred or preferable'.

⁶⁴ *tibil* lit.: 'earth, earthly world': It is a Mandaean term, referring in general to the material world and the body. Cf. MD, p. 485a.

⁶⁵ *haka* refers to the following illustrations and the explanations which are written in this scroll.

⁶⁶ 'The Explanation of all explanations', written 'the explanation of all explanation', which seems to be a grammatical mistake for the second *tapsir* incurred by the copyist, possibly because *tapsire* is originally an Arabic word. See nn. 35, 40, above.

⁶⁷ *Apriš*: here it carries the meaning of 'educated', 'enlightened'. The purpose of writing the scroll seems to be educational, to teach the Naṣōraeans more about the mysteries and secrets of the creation through educational aids and instructional materials (e.g. the illustrations, symbols, signs, emblems, figures, codes etc.).

⁶⁸ *Qadahia*: 'burgeoning(s)'.

⁶⁹ *Dirqdia*: 'the small things' (or the little children).

⁷⁰ *Dirdqunia*: 'the little children'. But *dirdqia udirdqunia* is used here as an expression metaphorically meaning.

A, B, G, D⁷¹ all of them, and about *Man* (What), [16] *Man* (What), *Man* (What) and *Man* (What)⁷² which are the *Maṣbuta* (Baptism)⁷³, the *Masiqta*⁷⁴ (the Raising up), the '*Ngirta* (the Letter)⁷⁵ and the *Rahmas* (the Devotions).⁷⁶
After that⁷⁷ He explained about *DH* (This) and *DH* (That),⁷⁸ who are *Ruha* (the vital spirit)⁷⁹ and *Nišimta* (the soul).⁸⁰

⁷¹ *a b g d*: these are the first four letters in the Mandaic alphabet. They are used in this separate form always as an idiom to mean the 'Mandaic alphabet'. However, this form is pronounced *ābāgādā*. The Mandaic letters are named *ā, bā, gā* etc. and a religious, magical and mystical reason stands behind that. It is according to the idea of the divine creation, continuation and unification the number of these letters became twenty four, begins, is connected to and ends with the same letter *a*. The letter *a* represents all of them and vice versa. It is the first emanation in the divine creation. In this case, the mother is the Wellspring, and they represent *Naṣiruta*. See *DQRDK*, folios 6, 7 and 8.

⁷² *Man*: lit. 'who'. Also used for other interrogative forms (e.g. 'what', 'whose', 'whom', 'whoever' etc.). See *MD*, p. 246a, *MG*, pp. 4:2, 94:2, *HCMM*, pp. 15, 167, 168, 385, 402, 409). The word *man* when repeated four times, resembles the English 'This, that and the other' and refers to the four main aspects of life in the life or duty of the Naṣoraeans and the Mandaeans.

⁷³ *Maṣbuta* is a ritual term for the Mandaean (full) baptism while the Mandaic term for the Christian baptism in Mandaic is *Mamiduta*. See *MD*, p. 245b. The *Maṣbuta* must be performed by a Mandaean priest in *Yardna*, the fresh running water that is religiously prepared. The baptized person should fully submerge three times in *Yardna* to gain rebirth, enter and unite with the World of Light. Then he/she will be able to receive the sacramental benedictions, be crowned with a myrtle wreath, be blessed on his/her throne, and become a (messiah) king like the Father, Lightworld Beings and Adam who is considered to be the First Baptized Earthly Beings. Consult Saed, 'Christian and Mandaean Perspectives on Baptism' (Conference paper in 8th Symposium Syriacum, Sydney University, 2000); *CP*, pp. 1-32, e.g. no.1-32; *DC*, 34, 35, 50; Segelberg E. *Maṣbuta*; *MR*, p. 98f., 104; *MII*, pp. 16 n. 1, 101-23; *MD*, pp. 250b-251a. See also illustrated references for *Maṣbuta* in *DQRDK*, folios 3, 5.

⁷⁴ *Masiqta*: 'the Raising Up, Ascension, Sacramental Meal, or Mass', a ceremonial term referring to the spiritual resurrection through the redemptive reunification with the Cosmic Man *Adam Kasia* (Secret Adam) and through the rebirth, raising up and entry of the soul in the World of Light with the aid of the Lightworld Beings. Consult *CP*, pp. 32 n. 4-61 (no.32-73); *MD*, p. 249a.

⁷⁵ '*ngirta*: 'Letter' is a term which refers to the ritual ceremony which is performed for the dying person to make him/her act as a messenger carrying the Letter message to the World of Light, that is World of Light. This spiritual message contains the details of the transformation of the *Tarmida* or priest to reach the next rank in the priesthood (that is, *Ganzibra*). See *MII*, p. 171 and Ind.; *MD*, p. 353a and 77a; n. 183.

⁷⁶ *rahmia*: 'Devotions or devotional prayers'.

⁷⁷ *tum* means 'after that or then'. This is very commonly used in the passage of this Folio. It appears especially at the beginning of paragraphs which describe the creation in this passage which may indicate repetition, some steps of emanations and creations, or lessons of the secret teachings. This may explain why the double circle '@' comes before it, especially in these circumstances as a wellspring or full stop. It may represent another step, idea, or unwritten secret that is behind the literal meanings.

⁷⁸ *DH*: lit. 'this', see *MD*, p. 106a; *HCMM*, pp. 165, 408, 419. However, in this text the meaning is 'this and that.' In a similar phrase in *ATS* (I: no.227), Drower explains *dH udH* as 'the womb and the male organ;' but she translates it as 'the former (i.e. *Ruha*) and latter (i.e. *Nišimta*)' *ATS*, p. 167-n.5. This seems to be incorrect. According to the Mandaean teachings (especially in the secret scrolls), *Nišimta* is the former, the senior or the older, who formed and took shape in the Body before *Ruha*: 'For when the Body was formed, a Soul (*nišimta*) was formed, and when the Soul took shape in the Body, the Body formed the Vital Spirit (*ruha*). When both had taken shape, the Womb was formed, *ATS*, p. 164 (I: no.218). See also *DQRDK*, line 30 and n. 178 (*man*). However, according to some passages in *GR* (especially in the story of creation, the Man *Adam* by *Ptahil*, the demiurge, e.g. *GR* III, X), *Ptahil* and his evil helpers (the Planets) cast *ruha* into Adam and Eve and later *Ptahil* and/or other Lightworld Beings invited, brought and cast *nišimta*, i.e. *Mana*, into the Body. In the following two

After that [17] He explained about *Adam* and *Haua* (Eve)⁸¹ who are Sky and Earth.⁸² After that He explained about *Mana Rba Kabira* (*Mana* the Great Almighty)⁸³, who is *Aiar Šania*⁸⁴ (the Sublime *Aiar* or Ether). All Kings⁸⁵ rule [18] and are supported by him,⁸⁶ whose name is the *Nišma Qanaia*⁸⁷ (Soul Smith) who forges the Words, and weighs, ascends, and

similar *GR* passages, from Werner Foerster's *Gnosis*, trans. R. McL. Wilson, Clarendon Press, Wxford, 1974, the same thing is described:

i)

The Planets... spoke to Ptahil:

'Grant us, that we may cast into him (Adam) some of the spirit (*ruha*) which you brought with you from the father's house'.

It is argued here that the 'him' referred to is *Adam*. After the *ruha* entered the Body successfully, Adam's creation seems to be still unsuccessful, so *Ptahil* went to *Abatur* (the father of '*Uthras* and asked him for assistance.

...The 'father of thras' raised himself up, went forth, and hastened to the secret place.

He fetched the great Mana,

That he might illuminate all corruptible things;

That he might illuminate the coat of the body. (ibid, p. 188).

ii) Ptahil cast into him a kind of spirit (*ruha*) from his own spirit, and all the planets cast into him (some) of their own mysteries. However, Ptahil and the planets which accompanied him were unable to raise up Adam and his wife Eve. Thereupon Ptahil went to his father *Abatur*, obtained a hidden mana, which was given him from the House of Life, brought it, and cast it into Adam and Eve his wife.' *GY* 241: 10ff. (ibid. p. 198).

For a similar translation to these texts, see Robert Haardt, *Gnosis*, trans. J. F. Hendry, E. J. Brill, Leiden, 1971), pp. 371-372. These two passages confirm that *Nišimta* is there, in the World of Light, and so she is senior to and older than *Ruha*. See also line 30 and n. 174 (*man d-mn...*) below; *SA*, p. xv, 37, n. 2; K. Rudolph, *Mandaeanism*, p. 14. See also *CP*, no. 353 and pp. 29 n. 1, 246f., 246 n. 4, and many other places.

⁷⁹ For the illustration of *Ruha* see *DQRDK*, D1 (folio 3).

⁸⁰ For the illustration of *Nišimta* see *DQRDK*, Y (folio 3).

⁸¹ *adam uhaua*: the first pair of complete human beings who are considered according to the Mandaean teachings as a prototype of *Adam Kasian* and *Hawa Anana* respectively. The first cosmic pair who are living in the world of *Mšunia Kušpa*. The Earthly Pair symbolize the beginning of the True human social life which is established in this world by the blessing of the Worlds of Light. For the reference illustrations of *adam uhaua* see *DQRDK*, F1, J1 (folio 3).

⁸² *'šumia uarqa*: it is used here as an expression for Adam and Eve. '*šumia* is a plural of '*šuma*, 'sky, heaven', Thus, another translation for this expression is quite possible, that is 'Heavens and Earth'. This parallelism between *Adam u-haua* and '*šumia u-arqa*, respectively, is an important part in the Madaean-Nayoraean *doelestic* (Earthly) system.

⁸³ For the reference illustration of *Mana Rba Kabira*, see *DQRDK*, U4, V4 (folio 5).

⁸⁴ *Aiar (šania)*: an angelic Lightworld Being. See *MD*, p. 14a; *CP*, p. 86 n. 2; *MII*, p. 58 n.

⁸⁵ Refers not just to the Kings of Light, but probably includes the Mandaean priests.

⁸⁶ (i) *milgiḡibH*:* read *malgiḡibH*; *AF. act. pt.* with encl. of *LGT* (*MD*, pp. 230a ff.).

(ii) Another translation for the whole sentence could be '...the Sublime Ether, in which all kings rule and are supported'. Compare the translation of a similar sentence in *ATŠ*, p. 173 (I: no. 243) 'It is the sublime ether-atmosphere in which kings hold council; and they hold to it'.

⁸⁷ *nišma qanaia*: this expression has been translated repeatedly as 'the soul fashioner or the fashioner of the soul' in *MD*, pp. 401b, 411b. Cf. *DQRDK*, 85 and folio 10 (especially Y6). A parallel paragraph in *ATŠ*, p. 173 (I: 243), which contains a few words similar to that in *DQRDK* (lines 17-18), has '*...d-hu qina qruH*.' Drower translates this: '...for they call it *qina* ('nest', 'housing')', (see also *ATŠ* 173 n. 9). It is suggested that '*qina*' in

brings them [i.e. the Words] out from the (brain or grey) matter⁸⁸ that is situated below the brain-pan in the Head.⁸⁹

[19] After that He explained about *Šišlam* the Great⁹⁰ whose name is ‘the Vision’ and (who) is called ‘the White Sesame which is in the (brain or grey) matter’.⁹¹ For he is ‘the Pure Sesame’, ‘the Messenger/Redeemer’ [20] who shows the Path.⁹²

After that, He explained about his wife⁹³ [i.e. the wife of *Šišlam*] ‘*Zlat* the Great; for she is ‘the great Mantle’, a ‘Vision’ that dazzles⁹⁴ the eyes,⁹⁵ for she is a ‘pure Canopy’ and her name is [21] ‘Palm tree of the Wellsprings.’ She treads a Path to the Glory and Light,⁹⁶ and

ATŠ (I: nos 243-244) can be translated not as ‘nest’ (rt. QNA III=QNN III, *MD*, p. 414a), but as ‘smith’ (rt. QNA II, *MD*, p. 414a, ‘to forge’) according to the word *qanaia* in *DQRDK*. Also cf. ‘Cain’ of the Bible: ‘I have gotten (*qaniti*) a man’. See Gn. 4:25

⁸⁸ *muqra* is also used as ‘sperm, marrow, plasma, gelatinous matter, living substance and brain or brain tissue/matter’. Cf. *MD*, p. 262b; *ATŠ*, pp. 164 n. 4, 174 n. 1.

⁸⁹ Similar to this phrase, *ATŠ* (I: 244) has *mn muqra d-atutia muha d-brisa sriia*. Drower translates it as ‘from the (grey) matter that is situated below the brainpan in the head’ (*ATŠ*, p. 174). The same phrase is translated slightly differently in *MD*, p. 260b (*muha*): ‘from the matter that is beneath the brain-pan that is situated in the head’. Part of this phrase is repeated in *MD*, p. 262b (*muqra*): ‘from the (brain-) matter that is beneath the brainpan’.

⁹⁰ *Šišlam Rba* is a name of a Lightworld Being. See *MD*, pp. 464a, 7a; *SA*, pp. 10, 18, 20, 59-60, 62.

⁹¹ *Muqra*: see n. 88, above.

⁹² ‘*Uhra d-: Nhura, Hiia, Kušfa*, i.e. the Path or Way of Light, Life, Truth and Redemption. It refers here to the Path of Enlightenment and Redeeming Knowledge of the eternal Life.

⁹³ *zauH* (‘*zlat*’): *ATŠ* (I: 244) has *ziua* (‘*zlat*’) in a similar phrase. It seems to be an error in the copying of the scroll, probably from an earlier version, which may, in fact, have had *zauH* ‘*zlat*’ as in *DQRDK*.

Drower translated not only the first word *ziua* but she also translated the second word ‘*zlat*’ (which is a noun and somehow difficult to translate) as ‘glory she wove’. It is considered here that she went too far in her two notes (i.e. *ATŠ*, p. 174, n. 4, 5) to assist the translation in the whole paragraph. Maybe if she had given more attention to *DQRDK* which was available to her since 1950, or even to some other places in *ATŠ* and other Mandaean writings which have the same phrase (e.g. see *ATŠ* (II: 314) then she may have translated it otherwise. It is customary in Mandaean Literature that the wife of *Šišlam* is ‘*Zlat*’. See n. 116 below.

DQRDK plays an important role in:

- (i) finding the early stage(s) of how and when both *ATŠ* & *DQRDK* were written,
- (ii) correcting the mistakes or miswritten transcriptions through many generations,
- (iii) the development of the Mysticism of the Naṣoraeans,
- (iv) identifying the most important ideas of the Naṣoraeans, which were crystallized in *DQRDK* in a simple and symbolic way, and
- (v) seeing how *DQRDK* reproduces the complex and obscure passages and ideas in *ATŠ* (esp. *DTP*) in a new shape and form that make the symbolic language easier to understand.

⁹⁴ *Širin*:* p. pass. pt. pl. with suff. of ŠUR I= ŠRR I ‘to form, depict, trace’, a vision that dazzles. See *MD*, p. 391a; *ATŠ*, p. 174 n. 6. Here it is translated freely.

⁹⁵ *mahzita d-ainH bgaua širin* is translated freely as in *ATŠ*, p. 174 (I: 244). Another translation could be ‘in which “the Vision” of the eyes is realized, that is, “the vision of the eyes is formed”’.

Note that *-H* in *ainH* are used not as 3rd. p. sg., but as pl. pronoun instead of *-ia*. It is read as *ainia* as in *ATŠ*. This happens often in Mandaean probably because both have a similar sound in the last syllable of the word (i.e. *-i*). See *MD*, pp. 171a-b, 183b; *MG*, pp. 3: 14 f., § 62, 161, n. 1.

⁹⁶ ‘*Uhra d-hiia*: ‘the path of Life’; ‘the path of the soul’ which is the same path that the soul seeks to reach the Worlds of Light. See *DM’L*, p. 43 (lines: 751, 752 and 753); *GY*, 24: 12; *MD*, p. 343a.

she displays the gleaming Banners,⁹⁷ unfurled⁹⁸ in the presence of⁹⁹ the Mysteries so that they see one another and do not stray (or diverge) from one another.¹⁰⁰

[22] Then He explained about *Mana*¹⁰¹ (Mind or *Nous*) and *DmutH* (His Likeness or Counterpart),¹⁰² which they called¹⁰³ *Anin* (Us),¹⁰⁴ because the 'Worlds and Generations'

⁹⁷ *Drabšia taqnia*: literally gleaming banners; metaphor for rays. Cf. *ATŠ*, *loc. cit.*

⁹⁸ *Nigda*:* p. pf. with 3rd (fem.) suff. (i.e. *a*) of NGD, but it carries the meaning of the form 3rd pl. (i.e. 'ngadinun' 'she unfurled them'). This is used as a noun or adjective with various meanings in *MD*, p. (296b-297a) However, in this text, it is used as a verb, which does not occur in *MD*, pp. (288-289, 296b-297a). *Nigda* here is used with *drabša* that reminds us of the idiomatic technical meaning of unfurling the *Drabša* when it is consecrated by the priests with a special rite. This rite is called *ngada d-drabša* by the Naṣōraeans and *Trasa d-drabša* by the Mandaeans. Consult *CP*, nos: 330-336, 337-339, 340-347; *MII*, p. 108ff.; *MR*, p. 117f.

⁹⁹ *Lqudam*: 'in front of, before, in the presence of'; *ATŠ* (DC 36)-(I: 244). In this text, *ladam* is used. It is omitted in *ATŠ* (DC 6). *ladam* seems to be a miswriting of *lqudam*. This probably happened in the early stages of copying *ATŠ*. *lqudam* appears in *DQRDK* and seems to carry the sense of the whole passage, better than *Adam* which seems a strange word in the context. This is considered to be another important example in *DQRDK* of the correction and development of Mandaean Religious writings and ideas.

¹⁰⁰ The passage about 'Zlat also shows some differences from *ATŠ* (I: 244). The passage in *ATŠ* seems to have been corrupted in the early stages of copying *ATŠ*, which may explain the inaccuracy of Drower's reading and translation of this passage (see the notes above and *ATŠ*, p. 174). This corruption has been discovered as a result of the comparative study which has been done here.

¹⁰¹ *Mana* has two main groups of meanings depending on the language from which the meaning is derived: (i) vessel, garment, implement (Semitic-Aramaic meaning); (ii) mind, intelligence, soul, spirit (Iranian meaning, cf. *Mana(h)*). See *MD*, pp. 246b-247a, *ATŠ*, p. 13; Edward Robinson, *Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament*, p. 538.

¹⁰² (i) *dmutH* has various wide meanings: 'archetype, appearance, counterpart, likeness, shape, picture, Divine Counterpart, Divine image. See Chapter 2. 3.

(ii) *mana udmuH*: a High Lightworld Creative Being identified with the prime emanation of the Great Life, and considered as 'One, twin, divine, male and female universal power', parallel in many aspects to *Dmut-Hiia* (Counterpart of life). Both correspond with *Hiia* (or *Hiia Qadmaia*) and *Mara d-Rabuta*. They procreated Mysteries, Ideals, Wisdom of Life. (e.g. *GY*, 134:5, 7, 135: 8, 152: 9; *ATŠ*, p. 168 (I: 229).

¹⁰³ *Mitiqrin*: not found in *ATŠ* (I: 245).

¹⁰⁴ *Anin*: literally 'we' represents *Mana uDmutH*. Here for the first time *Anin* is used as both subject and object. This royal 'we'/'us' is used by the kings and queens and refers to *Mara d-Rabuta* (the Lord of Greatness), (see *ATŠ*, pp. 167-168, I:228-229; n. 41 (*dmut Kušja*) above), who is the 'speaker' in this passage and who appears here as *Mana* and his *DmutH*, 'the (Great) Mind and Its (or His) Vision, the Counterpart'. See also *SA*, p. 43ff.; M. N. Siouffi, *Études sur la religion des Scoubbas ou sabéene*, Paris, 1880, pp. 41, 63; *MD*, p. 247b. *Mara d-Rabuta* plays a central role in the Mandaean religion. He appears as One and Many. All the Worlds of Light and their Beings are represented in Him and He represents them. He also alternates with some of them. e.g. see *ATŠ*, pp. 110ff. (I:4ff), p. 116 n. 9, p. 116 (I:17ff). He is the highest Lightworld Being. In many cases His name is used to refer to the Great Creator, parallel with *Hiia* or *Hiia Rbia* (e.g. *GY*, 2:14, 29:17, 69:11; *ATŠ*, p. 168 and also chapters 1-3) and *Mana Rba*, First Great Radiance, *Ziwa rba Qadmaia*, Father of 'Uthras (see *ATŠ*, pp. 110-111) as well as Great Father, the First Great Naṣōraean, Great First Teacher and First Great Rabbi who initiates Worldlight Beings (e.g. *Šišlam Rba*, *Adam Kasia*), the Master of 'the Teacher of Rabbinical instructions'. See *ATŠ*, pp. 112ff (I:66ff); *brandt, die mandaische religion*, p. 8; Brandt W. MSchur, *Mandäische Schriften Göttingen* (1893), p. 74; Drower, *The Coronation of the Great Šišlam: Being a Description of the Rite of the Coronation of a Mandaean Priest According to the Ancient Canon*, Leiden, 1962, p. 1 n. 4, Kurt, *Mandaeism*, p. 13; *SA*, pp. 9, 12, 18, 26, 80 n. 1.

Here *anin* is not translated as a verb, a variation of 'niun', 'niunia' ('they answer' or 'they [cor]respond'), as Drower did. It makes more sense as the personal pronoun, 'we/us', for it fits the meaning of the whole passage. The similar passage in *ATŠ* is regarded by Drower to be obscure and her translation seems to

know them [i.e. *Mana* and *DmutH*] not, nor [do they know] our mysteries except for what 'We' [i.e. *anin*, 'the Great Lord'] reveal to him (any person of the 'World and Generations', that I am *Mara* [23] *d-Rabuta*. 'The Great Crown' is My Name,¹⁰⁵ and *Rabuta* 'Greatness or Majesty'¹⁰⁶ is the Head¹⁰⁷ in which the Signs, the Crowns and the Words are grasped.¹⁰⁸ Then He explained about *Abatur Rama* (*Abatur* the Lofty) whose name is [24] 'the Great *Yardna* of the White Waters'.¹⁰⁹ He [i.e. *Abatur Rama*] is called *Lišana* (the Tongue). Then He explained about the Great Mystic Primal Wellspring,¹¹⁰ that is 'the Great Womb of [25] all mysteries' and from which the Kings are formed.¹¹¹ Then He explained about the Great Primal Datepalm,¹¹² whose name is 'the Male Organ',¹¹³ and who is called *Abatur d-Muzania* (*Abatur* of the Scales).

be confused, but through careful consideration of the text in *DQRDK*, the precise meaning of this passage becomes clearer in both scrolls. Cf. *ATŠ*, p. 174 n. 7 (I: 245); consult *MD*, pp. 27a, 24a.

¹⁰⁵ i.e. *Mara*, 'Lord'.

¹⁰⁶ *Rabuta*, here it refers to the double meaning, of 'greatness' and the technical meaning of 'the Divine Office' of the First Divine *Rba* or *Rbai*, Rabbi, Master, Teacher, who is a Priest who initiates novice-priests. See *MD*, pp. 417b-418a; *SA*, pp. 64, 80 n. 1. (*MD*, p. 417b refers mistakenly to this note as n. 5).

¹⁰⁷ *Riša* here refers to 'the Cosmic Head' of 'the Universal Man' or the Divine *Rba* (*Rbia*). The relationship between the *Rabuta* and the 'Head' is clear, for both of them unify, receive and hold the high Divine secrets (i.e. all *Rušumas*, *Klilas* and *Malalas*) which they technically used in rituals (especially the *traša d-taga*).

¹⁰⁸ *mara d-rabuta d-taga rba šumia urabuta riša hu d-rušumia uklilia umalalia bgauH lgiṭ*: *DQRDK* translates the expression as 'Sign, Word and Wreath' in plural form, probably to indicate a universal meaning. A phrase similar to this phrase but in singular form is found in *ATŠ*, p. 174 (I: 245) which reads: '*mara d-rabuta taga d-razia hu urabuta d-riša hu d-rušuma umamla uklila bgauH lgiṭia* (*Mara-d-Rabutha* is the Crown of mysteries and teaching. He is Majesty; he is the Head to which the Sign, Word and Wreath [crown] pertain. Drower seems to be confused in her translation and has difficulty in clarifying what is here argued to be the accurate meaning. The major difficulty is to discern who is/are the speaker(s), not just in this phrase but in the whole passage. See n. 130 (*Anin*). An examination of another example, also from *ATŠ*, pp. 232-233 (II: 114): (DC.36), clarifies this matter further. *umara d-rabuta asiq lnapših d-hu riša* (DC.6 has: *riš*) *urušuma utaga uklila umamla bgauH škin umahzita riha basima u'udna d-šama kul* (DC.6 has: *ukul*) *mindam* ('And *Mara d-Rabutha* set Himself above all, for He is the Head, the Sign, the Crown and the Wreath. The Word dwelleth in Him and Vision, fragrant perfume and the Ear which heareth all things') (*ATŠ*, p. 233 and *SA*, p. 80). This example reveals the important role of *Mara d-Rabuta* as a Divine Teacher and Initiator, whose name 'is given to *Adam Kasia* in his aspect of Arch-priest and Initiator into the higher rites. A priest who initiates a novice is a *rba* (vulgar *rbai*) and the office of teacher to intending priests is called *rabutha*, see *SA*, p. 80 n. 1, pp. xvi, 26 n. 3, 27; *ATŠ*, pp. 118ff. Also n. 130 (*Anin*), 132 (*Taga rba*), n. 165 ('*Ekilta*).

¹⁰⁹ *DQRDK* has *mia hiuaria*, but *ATŠ* (I: 245) has *mia hiuara*.

¹¹⁰ The *aina* is, here, the symbol of female fertility, the female principle in creation; the Mother and the Cosmic Womb, and the Mother of the twenty-four letters of the alphabet (see n. 142 (*Marba Rba*), below and n. 119 [*Aina*], above; *ATŠ*, p. 110 n. 9). *aina rabtia kasita qadmaita*: This sentence appears also in a similar passage in *ATŠ*, p. 174 (I: 245), but Drower omitted translating the word *qadmaita*. Consequently, the current translation is considered to be more accurate.

¹¹¹ *Mišfararia*: ETHPA. Pt. pl. of ṢRR (I) = ṢUR (I), 'to form, shape, create, model, depict'. Drower gave an unusual meaning to this root, i.e. 'to cleave a way, make a way, rend, pass through violently' (*ATŠ*, p. 174 n. 10). For the similar passage in *ATŠ*, p. 174 (I: 245), which has the verb *šfararia*, she translated it as 'have passed', i.e. have passed violently through the gate of the Womb. See *ATŠ*, p. 174 n. 10. Disagreement with this translation is based on there being no verification for such a root. It may have been confused with the meanings of the root $\text{SRA II} = \text{SRH I}$ 'to hurl down, fling down; to cut, tear' (*MD*, p., 336B). See *MD*, p. 388a, 397b, 391a.

[26] Then He explained about *Yawar Rba* (the Great *Yawar*) who is ‘the Spine of Upstanding’¹¹⁴ (or ‘the Reed of the Universe’) for he is ‘the Sublime Unifying [cosmic] Force’¹¹⁵ in which the whole Universe¹¹⁶ is held together.¹¹⁷ Then He explained about *Simat Hiia*;¹¹⁸ she is the source [of vision] [27] surrounded by *Muqra* (living matter)¹¹⁹ and she

¹¹² *Sindirka*: this is regarded as a symbol of male fertility, of the male principle in creation, the Father and the Cosmic Male Organ. It is usually used together with *aina* as a pair of equal half required for the Cosmic Fertilization and Creation. See *ATŠ* 175 n. 1 (I: 245), 110 n. 9; *DA*, 19 n. 8; *MD*, p. 328b; Siouffi 26.

¹¹³ The *Gabaruta* is, in this text, a term for the Mystical Cosmic Male Organ of the Universal Man, and refers to the Male principle, virility and mystical sexual significance of the *Sindirka*. Furthermore, *Gabarutha* symbolizes the mystical Kingly power in the Womb of Mysteries. In this case *Gabaruta* are metaphorically called *Ginzia*. ‘Treasures’, i.e. Kingly treasures, Mystical, Hidden treasures. See *ATŠ*, p. 152 n. 8 (I: 175), (I: 217), DC 34 (203); *MD*, p. 72b.

¹¹⁴ *Qaina d-Qumta*: this expression is used figuratively. It can mean ‘uprightness of the body’; ‘length of the human body’; ‘rod or reed of the figure (stature)’; ‘rod of the physique’. Drower was uncertain about the exact meaning of this expression (see *ATŠ* 175 n. 3 (I: 245), *MD*, pp. 400a, 408b). However, according to the passage in *DQRDK*, it is argued here that it is used symbolically to refer to the power of the spine as the prop of the Cosmos, the body of ‘the Universal Divine Man’. For all the Lightworld Beings have their representative role in ‘the Universal Man’. This suggests indirectly the organic, orderly structure of the whole universe.

It is very common in Mandaean theology to depict Lightworld beings as having many attributes and peculiarities, which are connected in many aspects to the cosmic spiritual figure of *Adam Kasia* ‘secret Adam and to the material world(s) (cf. *Adam Gabra Qadmaia* ‘the Primal Man). When this is compared with the Qabalistic Adam (‘Adam Qadmon’. ‘cosmic Adam’), similarities are found. However, this attribute of *qaina d-qumta* fits also with *Aiar*, as well as with *Yawar*, for both *aiar* and *qaina* from the tangible aspect, refer to the ‘air’. Moreover, *qaina* is also a Mandaic name of the seventh sign of the zodiac ‘Libra’ which is considered an aerial sign. See above n. 147 (*Yawar Rba*) above, *MD*, pp. 14a and 400a.

d-hu qaina d-qumta appears in *DQRDK*, while a similar sentence in *ATŠ* (I: 245) has *d-hu qaina d-qumta hu*. *Hu* is omitted in *DQRDK* probably because that does not affect the meaning. It is argued that this is just another way of expressing this idea. This happens often in the literature of the scrolls. It also provides an example of how the writer of *DQRDK* rewrites some sentences to shorten and clarify them.

¹¹⁵ *Tapala*: lit. ‘adhesive; slime, mud, saliva,’ but here it is used with *rama* as an expression to refer to *Yawar Rba* (or *Aiar Rba*) as the gravitational force of the whole universe. In this case, *tapala rama* indicates ‘Divine Cosmic Muscle’ in the form of ‘the Divine Universal Man’. See *MD*, pp. 480b, 421a. Cf. *ATŠ*, p. 175 (I:245).

¹¹⁶ *Baita*: lit. ‘house, home, edifice’. It also denotes the earthly world, or even the whole material universe (see *MD*, p. 47b). Here it is used to convey both meanings, even extending beyond to the whole universe. According to the Mandaean theology, the central focus is on the interrelationship between the material universe, especially the earthly world and human beings, and the spiritual universe which represents the World of Light and the World of Darkness.

¹¹⁷ ... *d-baita kulH bgauH Igit*: repeated in *DQRDK*, 27 below, and it is found also in *ATŠ* (I:245).

¹¹⁸ *simat hiia*: ‘Divine Treasure of Life’. When personified, as a pair of female Lightworld Beings, she is often connected to *Yawar Ziwa* and they form a male and female pair, generating forces of life and strength. In this passage, they symbolize the ‘Divine Union’ of the male and female principles of Light. They also symbolize ‘the fertilizing Radiance’ that is reached and hold the whole Universe together. *MD*, p. 327b; *CP*, p. 279 n. 1; *AM*, p. 1 n. 2; *MSchr*, p. 55 n. 4. In some passages, *Simat Hiia* performs the role of the bride of *Yawar* in a way parallel to *Zahriel*’s role as the bride of *Hibil Ziwa*. See *CP* (no. 377) and p. 279 n. 1 and n. 2. In a few cases, she is also identified with *Libat* and *Ruha*. See *MD*, pp. 327b, 235b-236a, 428b.

¹¹⁹ *muqra* should be read as in *ATŠ* (I: 246), instead of *muqrH*. Here *muqra* could refer to ‘the living or gray matter;’ or less frequently to ‘marrow, sperm, and plasma.’ (See nn. 107, 111, *mu Qra* above).

For this passage, *DQRDK* has *d-h aina d-hdira bmuqrH*, while *ATŠ* (*ibid.*) has *d-h’ aina d-bmuqra hdira*. Drower translated it as ‘she is a fount surrounded by plasma (living matter)’ (*ATŠ*, p. 175, and n. 5). But later in *MD*, p. 132a, Drower and Macuch translated it slightly differently as, ‘an enclosed well of living matter’.

provides¹²⁰ the Word (or Speech).¹²¹ For her name is *Lulita* (the Embryo),¹²² and she is called *Naširuta* (Divine Knowledge) by which the whole Universe is held together.

Then He explained about *Yukabar* [28] *Rba* (*Yukabar* the Great)¹²³ from whom¹²⁴ the Wellspring¹²⁵ of the Crown¹²⁶ emanated. He is 'the fresh (or pure) myrtle wreath', [wherefrom]¹²⁷ that '*kilta* (the Sacred Meal) came forth. (And)¹²⁸ its [i.e. '*kilta*'s] name¹²⁹ was formed into '*Kinta*' (receptacle)¹³⁰ and *Gnana* (canopy).¹³¹

Furthermore, in another place of *MD*, p. 233a, they combined both texts (i.e. *ATŠ* & *DQRDK*), and they translated *muqra* with uncertainty as 'the marrow (or 'sperm?')'. Their translations of this phrase do not appear to be accurate. However, it seems more likely that the word *bmuqra* has been transcribed incorrectly, that is without *b*, as *muqra* (see also 132a). Also, the translators may not have considered the metaphorical meaning. The metaphor refers here to 'the Divine Cosmic Eye, i.e. Source of Enlightenment of the Universal Man.

¹²⁰ *MtaqnalH*: PA. Part. Pres. With encl. Of TQN (*MD*, p. 489a), lit. 'I (shall) set in order the word' or 'I shall arrange the word'. This sentence uses the verb form of PA. Pt. (Act.) with encl. and implies a 3rd *pf.* feminine pronoun rather than 1st masculine pronoun.

¹²¹ *mamla* may refer to the Divine Word or Speech.

¹²² *Lulita*: 'spear or sting'. These meanings are not appropriate here. The word seems to mean 'embryo.' This also occurs in *ATŠ* on numerous occasions and Drower also chooses the word embryo. It may, however, just be another name of *Simat Hiia* when she is personified as a female Lightworld Being.

This name appears to be used metaphorically to indicate that *Simat Hiia* is not just a Divine Fertile Mother in the World of Light, but also as an Earthly Mother producing the Earthly or Material Embryo. See *ATŠ* (I: 246-247). In this case, *Lulita* may be a parallel to *Ruha* or, in some way, to *Libat*, the daughter of *Ruha*. See *MD*, pp. 233a, 327b, 228a, 234a.

¹²³ *iukabar rba*: an angelic Lightworld being. See *MD*, p. 190b.

¹²⁴ *Uhu*: read as *hu*. When the letter (*h*) comes at the beginning of the word there is always the possibility of confusing the reading of it as (*uh*) and vice versa, because most copyists write the letter (*u*) in a very similar shape to the first part of the letter (*h*) and vice versa. The confusion occurs especially when the meaning of the sentence does not remove that possibility.

¹²⁵ *aina* may mean source or even 'eye' in the sense of eye that sees and knows. However, *aina* here is clearly connected to the first mystery (*aina* and *sindirka*) of the four mysteries of the Crown. *Aina* in that case carries a female aspect of the crown while the male aspect is carried by *sindirka*. See *ATŠ*, p. 117 (I.19);

¹²⁶ *aina d- taga*: an expression probably used for the first time in the Mandaean literature. It refers to the source (or eye) of the: Divine wisdom, knowledge, enlightenment, divine kingly wisdom of the universal man; the 'Third Eye'.

¹²⁷ The passage is somewhat obscure and prob. corrupted. Presumably there is a missing word which could have been *minH*, ('from whom or from where'), located in this phrase before the verb *praš* ('came forth'). This would then complete the first phrase in this line.

¹²⁸ '*d-*': a relative pronoun or particle which, in fact, is a relative of *d*. It is used after *status emphaticus* to articulate a genitive relation, or sometimes (especially in its original form *d*) it is used after the proclitics, *b*, *l*, *u* (or even without them), and it may also indicate the causality. But in many cases, it connects and begins (many) Mandaic sentences. See *MG*, pp. 92: 10 (§ 84), 430, 448f; J. A. Montgomery, *Aramaic Incantation Texts from Nippur* (Philadelphia, 1913), p. 38; *MD*, p. 97a-b, 491a-b; *HCMM*, pp. (10 §5), 166 (§113), 452ff., 457f. (§319), etc.

d- has largely disappeared from practical use in modern Mandaic. R. Macuch in *HCMM*, p. 11, states that the only use of the relative *d-* in modern Mandaic is in the formula of *bašmaha* = *bašmala* (see n. 27 (*bšumaihun*)). However, we discover in at least two other cases:

(i) *dehva ediamana*, referring to *dihba* (*rba*) *d-daima*(*na*) or *dihba d-iamana*, 'the feast of Daima'. See *MII*, 91-94; *CP*, pp. 240 n. 2, 364:19f., 365:14f.; *ATŠ*, p. 125 (I:50), also (I:60); *MD*, pp. 99b, 107a.

Then He explained [29] about the creeping and crawling creatures;¹³² the sprouts/shoots,¹³³ leaves and trees; the animals, [including] the livestock, the wild (animals) and the domestic animals; the birds; the fish;¹³⁴ the eggs and embryos;¹³⁵ the ‘Casting(s) off’ and ‘Putting(s) on’ [30] of *Ruha* (the spirit) and *Nišimta* (the soul) (that) formed (alight at/in) in the body; and who (*Ruha* or *Nišimta*) is senior to the other.¹³⁶

Then He explained about the *Kuštās* (Covenants)¹³⁷ and *Qabins* (Marriage(s) (or marriage contracts))¹³⁸ in which a wife¹³⁹ is taken.

(ii) *dehva ed šišlam* (pronounced mistakenly), referring to *dihba d-šušian* or *dihbad nauruz zuta*, ‘the Lesser (or Little) New Year’s Feast’. See *MII*, pp. 85ff.; *MD*, p. 457b; *ATŠ*, p. 200 n. 5 (II:15); *CP*, p. 15 n. 3. The lay Mandaean mistakenly change *šušian* to *šišlam* and take it to mean ‘the Feast of *šišlam*’ or ‘the Feast of Peace’. However, in many cases like the one above, *šišlam* carries the meaning of an habitual linguistic utterance used to begin speech or as a ‘filler.’ For simplicity, the word will be translated as ‘and’ or ‘in addition’ or be omitted altogether.

¹²⁹ It is argued here that the third masculine form *šumH* be read as the third feminine form *šuma*. The meaning in this passage is unclear and vacillates between masculinity and femininity, and is probably disordered. This kind of difficulty occurs often in the Mandaean writings probably because the writings are old and the copyists seem to change the words. Copyists may even sometimes unintentionally substitute words and forms they know rather than accurately copy the original. This makes the task of rendering a literal translation difficult and the meaning of the passage is often unclear.

¹³⁰ *Kinta*: ‘receptacle, gathering place, recipient, container’. See *MD*, p. 21b, *ATŠ*, p. 180 n. 4.

¹³¹ *Gnana*: ‘canopy, baldachin, bridechamber’. See *MD*, p. 95b.

¹³² *rihšia* and *rahušia* (rt. RHŠ): these indicate similar meanings. Probably they refer to different kinds of reptiles, but they can also indicate ‘vermin and other small living things’ Consult *MD*, p. 427b, 433a, 419a. Also cf. (Ar.: ‘الرئيس’: the small things’). See Ibn Manžūr, *Lisan Al ‘Arab*, Dar Sader Publishers, Beirut – Lebanon, vol. 6, p. 307.

Instead of repeating ‘and’ many times in this passage, this translation uses a semi-colon to separate the following groups listed in the scroll.

¹³³ *Qadahia*.

¹³⁴ *uhiuaniata ubira ukaka uhiua bira uSipria ununia*. They are in one group.

¹³⁵ *b’iia uiadalia...* ‘both of them from the same group’, probably they refer to the *proliferate* (breed, multiply).

¹³⁶ *man d-mn man qašiš*: literally ‘who is older (or before) than the other?’ This question forms as an expression and seems to ask about who is the senior spirit or soul. The known answer is the soul. See n. 93, (*dH*) above, (Line 16 *dH uDH*).

Curiously, similar sentences, in different passages, also appear in *GR*. For instance, we read:

man mn man qašiš (*GY*, 358: 20f. Cf. *MD*, p. 246a which has no incomplete number): ‘who is the elder of the two?’ (See *MD*, p. 246a).

man mn man qadmaia umraurab (*GY*, 193:5): ‘who is prior and ?to the other?’ (See also *MD*, p. 246b and *MG*, pp. 437f.)

’laia man utitaia man (*GY*, 201: 11): ‘who is the higher and who is the lower?’ (See *MD*, p. 246a and *MG*, pp. 407f.)

¹³⁷ *Kušfia*: here refers to the marriage covenants, which are given via a ritual hand-clasp by the bridegroom to the bride's father or the bride's representative after the bride has accepted the groom in a short ceremony before the actual wedding celebration begins.

¹³⁸ *Qabnan*: In *ATŠ* (II: 441) this word appears, but Drower does not acknowledge it, and the meaning she gives is uncertain (see *ATŠ* 291 n. 1). Also she and Macuch considered it as ‘a poor modern Mandaic pl.(?)’ which

And [He explained] about [31] the *Mašbutas*.¹⁴⁰ And about *Masiqtas*. And about all the 'Ngirtas which were written¹⁴¹ in the presence of *Abatur*.

Then he explained about the 'Coronations (or consecrations) of the Crown'¹⁴² of each of the 'Utra.¹⁴³ And [he explained] about the *Tabutas*¹⁴⁴ [32] and *Dukranas*¹⁴⁵ (Remembrances)- all of them. He recited this (the creation and recitation of these rites and its Divine items) for each *Malka* (Angelic King),¹⁴⁶ and for ourselves, we [also] recited this.

And [He explained] about *Drašas* and 'Nianas and *Yardnas* and *škintas*¹⁴⁷ and *Zuharas* and *dukas*¹⁴⁸ and *Tnupas*.¹⁴⁹

they stated later in *MD*, p. 398b. However, in this thesis it is argued that it is a late classical irregular plural. It is used in this form in some other classical passages (esp. *ATŠ*) as well as *DQRDK*.

¹³⁹ *nišubta* has a complex meaning, literally 'planting, fertilization, reproduction, young growth etc.' but it is used here figuratively as a 'wife' and is combined with the verb *mitnišba* (ETHPE. Pt. fem. of NŠB) to form an idiom which refers to 'have a wife or to marry a woman as a wife'. See *MD*, pp. 299a and 305a-306a; *ATŠ*, p. 18 n. 11, and (II: 312, 395); *CP*, p. 135 n. 2.

¹⁴⁰ *mašbutata*: pl. of *Mašbuta*. It is a term which refers to the various kinds of full Baptism in fresh running water, prepared according to religious practice with the assistance of one or more priests. See DC 50; *DMHZ*; *MD*, pp. 250b f.

¹⁴¹ *Mitkitba*: ETHPE. pt. fem. of KTB (*MD*, p. 225a and [KDB II] 204a). It is used with 'nirta or 'ngiriata metaphorically as a spiritual Writing(s) of (a) Letter(s) that is/are done through the 'ngirta 'ceremony', which refer(s) to the Divine message(s) that transfer to the Worlds of Light, including 'the World of the Third Life': *Abatur*.

¹⁴² *Trašia*: *Traša* is a technical ritual term of ritual significance, here used with *taga* as an expression which refers to the Coronations of the Lightworld Beings, including the Mandaean priests. Consult *Diwan traša d-taga d-Šislam rba*.

¹⁴³ 'Utras are some kind of Lightworld Beings who are always described as good, useful guardians of life. Many Malkas are also considered as an 'Utras, while the opposite does not apply to the 'Utras. The original Mandaean rituals (for example, the *Traša d-Taga*) are formed in the Worlds of Light, and they are performed by the 'Utras, while the Mandaeas who participate and perform these prototype rituals in the Earthly world impersonate 'Utras. Consult *MD*, p. 347a-b; Lidzbarski, *Uthra u. Malakha*, Ost 537-545; *MII*, p. 94 n. 2; *DM'L*. (lines 21-23) pp. 2-3 n. 19.

¹⁴⁴ *Ṭabauata* is a ritual term which means 'holy foods' and is referred to as a singular, *Ṭabuta*. More specifically this term is used for ritually prepared sacramental food (which usually includes salt, a loaf of bread with different kinds of natural ritual fruits and vegetables and water). Here, it is also being used as a reference to the prepared tables of the ritual food which is served in both worlds (i.e. the Lightworld and Earthly World) to the Lightworld Beings, including the Mandaeans especially the poor. This nourishment and revival (*ruaha*) of life in *Laufa* ('communion') with the Great Life is thus shared. This symbolizes the 'Universal Family Union' ('kana') which applies to its members in different rituals, ceremonies, celebrations and occasions. See *MD*, pp. 172b-173b; *MII* (passion, e.g. pp. 59-72); *AK VIII*; *ML*, p. 110 n. 1.

¹⁴⁵ *Dukrania* is used here as a term for the rituals that are performed during the *Paruanaiia* or *Panga*, the five intercalary days, for the commemoration and remembrance of the souls of the dead. See *MD*, p. 104a; *AK*, pp. 51, 109-110. Also consult Sarih d-Paruanaiia.

¹⁴⁶ All of the words, *Kuštas*, *Qabins*, *Mašbutas*, *Masiqtas*, 'Ngirtas, *Trašas*, *Ṭabutas* and *Dukranas* are ritual terms. They represent the significant main rituals in Mandaeism. This Diwan mentions them briefly without clarifying the way of these rites because they have already been explained with all relevant details especially in the ritual scrolls and the *CP*.

¹⁴⁷ *Škinatia*: var. of *škinata*. This appears to be the first time, that this word is used in a written Mandaean script. Usually the plural is *škinata*, but from the context it cannot be the third person singular (-ia). It seems to be a spelling or copying error probably to align it with the rhyme of the other plural words, which end with -ia. Mandaeans, including some priests, usually make the same mistake when they recite this word with this error,

[33] And [He explained] about everything that his eye saw and his ear heard and knew¹⁵⁰ by heart¹⁵¹ and [even] that which (his) eyes did not see (or had not seen). And *Hii* is [eternally] Victorious.

especially when it accompanies other plurals ending with *-ia*. An example is the last part of the prayer of *Asut Malkia CP*, p. 106.

¹⁴⁸ *dukia*, rt. DKA: purity or ritual cleanliness.

¹⁴⁹ *Ṭnupia*: unclean pollutions and always used as plural.

¹⁵⁰ *dakirH*: PE. pt. with encl. of DKR (*MD*, p. 110a). This verb is used here metaphorically to refer to that which is learned and felt by the heart and recalled by the mind.

¹⁵¹ *Liba* is more than heart or mind. It includes the senses of that Being/ person, i.e. any way we gain knowledge. Another possible translation could be ‘ he instinctively knew’ (i.e. from his heart, mind and recollections).

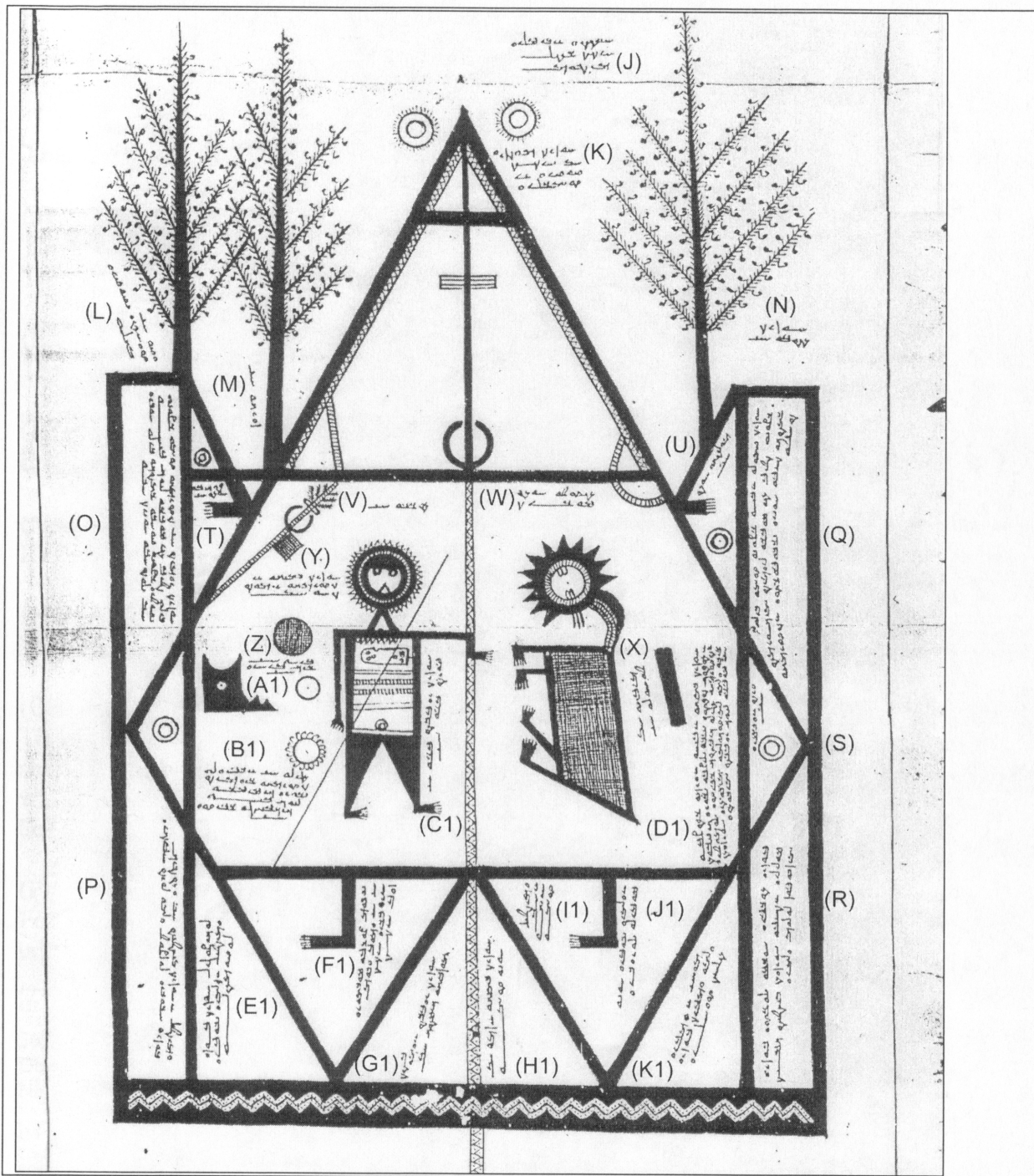


Figure 4 - Folio 3
[For an enlarged and clearer reproduction of this folio, see Appendix A.]

Folio 3

Translation of the Text Attached to the Illustrations

(J)

The fronds of the date palms.
They are in every place.¹⁵²

(K)

This is hair and they [i.e. the hairs] are [around] the *Sasia* (stalk)¹⁵³ of ear of corn.¹⁵⁴

(L)

It is a myrtle [tree]. Its foliage and *Sasia* (branches) come upwards from it.¹⁵⁵

(M)

It is an olive [tree].

(N)

This is a lotus-tree.

(O)

This is the Right, whose name is *Nišimta* (the soul). She/he is kept in it [i.e. the Right]. When she/he [i.e. *Nišimta*] approaches *Ruha* (the spirit/the Left) and she/he [i.e. *Nišimta*] is witnessed (being) seduced by (or drawn to) her [i.e. *Ruha/theLeft*], she [i.e. *Ruha*] rejoices on her part, but neither of them [i.e. *Nišimta* and *Ruha*] will shine.

(P)

For this is the '*Uššana* (Body), which does not yet hold fast the Mysteries with each other until [it has recourse]¹⁵⁶ to another Source (or Wellspring).¹⁵⁷

¹⁵² *bkul mindam*: literally could mean 'in every things. This form (of idiomatic use) is not mentioned in *MD*, pp. 267b f. Cf. *MG*, pp. 50, 186, 454 n. 2. However, herein it describes the plentifulness of the fronds in that place. Despite that, there is no physical illustration showing these fronds of the date palms. Mystical traditional Naṣoraean reasons stand behind this omission.

¹⁵³ *Sasia*: (pl. of *sasa*, lit. 'moth, maggot'). However, the meaning here should be singular, for it refers to a very specific plant/botanical term, which signifies the small stalk of the corn-ear. No previous Mandaean scholar has identified this meaning. In addition, I could not find the term in any other Mandaean document. Cf. *MD*, p. 313b.

¹⁵⁴ *šumbliā*: (pl. of *šumbulta*, lit. 'ear of corn, Virgo'). However, the term is used as a singular. Cf. *MD*, p. 455a-b.

¹⁵⁵ *ʾtH*: pe. with encl. of ATA I='TA I 'to come, arrive'. This word is not included in the *MD*. Cf. *MD*, pp. 41b f. 358b. The whole picture is not drawn by the illustrative figure of the myrtle tree only but also by the rare use of the explanatory text, which describes how such a tree is shown to be flourishing by the blossoming and spreading of its foliage and branches.

¹⁵⁶ It seems that there is a verb missing from this (last) sentence of the phrase. One may assume that from the syntax.

¹⁵⁷ That is recourse to or moving from the Source/Wellspring of Earth/the material World, which is part of the (Worlds of) Darkness, to the Source/Wellspring of Light. In other words, the Mysteries cannot work together by

(Q)

This is the Left, which is named *Ruha*. There inside of it [i.e. the Left] she [i.e. *Ruha*] is kept. When she [i.e. *Ruha*] approaches the Right and believes (or finds faith) she will be on the side of the Light and will shine in (or with) 'the *Drabša* (Light) of *Nišimta*'.

(R)

She (*Ruha*) embraces the Heavy Mysteries [of Darkness] and puts on the Swift Mystery of Light. Therefore her '*Ušfuna* ((spiritual/ethereal) Body) shines and is equipped (or armed)¹⁵⁸ forever.

(S)

It is the Wellspring¹⁵⁹ of the Earth.

(T)

It is a *Patura* (platter)¹⁶⁰ here.

(U)

It is a *Malkuta* (Kingdom).¹⁶¹

(V)

It is a Liver.¹⁶²

(W)

Here is the *Kušta* (pact) of *Qabin* (marriage).

(X)

It is a Gall (or bile).

It is a Spleen.

themselves or by using the '*Ušfuna* only or by the '*Ušfuna* and its adherence to its spiritual companion, i.e. *Ruha*, unless they move towards the union with, purification by and enlightenment from the Source/Wellspring of Light, which is represented by *Nišimta/Mana*. Therefore, I believe that the Wellspring of Light is illustrated symbolically on the right side but without any textual explanation: it is understood by decoding its parallel Wellspring on the left side illustrated with textual explanation in *DQRDK*, s, which could clarify this obscure part of the text, as we will explain later on.

¹⁵⁸ *Mizdaraz*: ETHPA. pt. sg. of ZRZ, 'to: equip, gird, be armed'. This form is not mentioned in the *MD*. However, it is mentioned in the plural form. See *MD*, p. 170b.

¹⁵⁹ Or Source, which may refer to the source of (earthly) material things, or source of the earthly world, which is one of the Worlds of Darkness. For that reason, the illustration of this Wellspring/Source is located in the Left, which is obviously the location of the Dark side of the Universe.

¹⁶⁰ *patura* refers to the ritual and Heavenly platter that is used by the Lightworld Beings. It also refers to the Kingdom of Light that is offered to these Pure Enlightened Beings. Thus, it is illustrated on the Right side.

¹⁶¹ *Malkuta* here is a reference to the earthly Kingdom(s), which is/are ephemeral (or evanescent) and thus, it is illustrated as food on the left (side)/Darkness. It may refer to the food that is collected and eaten in the 'Earthly Kingdom' by the earthly beings. For these reasons the '(Earthly) Kingdom' is considered the opposite to *Patura* (the Heavenly Platter) of the Right/Light.

¹⁶² *kabda* has a deep mystical meaning not only in this scroll but also in most of the other secret Mandaean sources. We suggest that the meaning of *kabda* here has a great similarity with the mystical meaning of the cabbalistic *kabda*.

(Y)

This is *Dmuta* (the likeness/image) of the *Nišimta*. It [i.e. *Dmuta*] is of *Mana Niha* (the Gentle *Mana*).¹⁶³

(Z)

It is incense.

(A1)

It is a 'fire saucer'.¹⁶⁴

(B1)

It is a *Klila* ([Myrtle] Wreath), which *Nišimta* carries¹⁶⁵ in his/her right [hand] and seeks¹⁶⁶ to approach¹⁶⁷ *Ruha* [and] sets it [i.e. the Wreath] on her [i.e. *Ruha*'s] head.¹⁶⁸

(C1)

This is the Great *Yardna* (the Divine River (of Baptism)). It is a Great *Qaina* (Reed).¹⁶⁹

(D1)

This is *Dmuta* (the likeness/image) of *Ruha* that has been brought in¹⁷⁰ to *Pagra* (the Body) and she has curved around¹⁷¹ herself, her hand[s] and her leg[s], seeking¹⁷² to hold fast.¹⁷³

¹⁶³ Another possible translation could be, 'This is *Dmuta* (the Likeness/Image) of the *Nišimta* of *Mana Niha* (the Gentle *Mana*)'.

¹⁶⁴ *bit rihia*: lit. 'the house of incenses'. But here it refers to an important ritual object made from clay in a triangular shape. The head of the triangle must always point outwards to the north to make the connection with the Worlds of Light, for it directs the holy prayers and incense to these Divine Worlds.

¹⁶⁵ *DrialH*: PE. pt. (probably with act. meaning) with encl. of *DRA* I, 'to carry, take, wear, sustain'. It is not mentioned in *MD*. Cf. *MD*, p. 113a.

¹⁶⁶ *baia*: PE. pt. of *BAA*, 'to ask, seek, want, pray, wish'. It is not mentioned in *MD*. This form of the verb may be confused with the noun of similar form, i.e. *baia* pronounced *bayya*, which means 'egg(s)'. Cf. *MD*, pp. 44b f., 47a. The same form of verb appears also in *DQRDK*, D1.

¹⁶⁷ *Tiqirba*: impf. sg. 3 fem. of *QRB* 'to approach, draw near, make war, (approach to) attack'. This form is not mentioned in *MD*. Cf. *MD*, p. 415b.

¹⁶⁸ This explanation and the illustration describe in a way similar to the actual baptismal ritual picture especially the step of how the Baptizer crowns the baptized person in the water with the myrtle wreath.

¹⁶⁹ That is, the Universal Divine Reed, or in other words, the Path of the Great Father/Life/Water/Light/Enlightenment.

¹⁷⁰ *Aita*: AF. pf. sg. fm. of *ATA* (, 'TA I) 'to come, arrive; bring'. It is not mentioned in *MD*. Cf. *MD*, pp. 41b f.

¹⁷¹ *kapat*: PA. pf. sg. fem. of *KUP* (*KPA*, *KPP* I) 'to curve, bow; force to bend'. It is not mentioned in *MD*. This form might also be used to carry the meaning of the form pe. pf. of *KUP*. Cf. *MD*, p. 208b.

¹⁷² *baia*: pe. pt. of *BAA* 'to ask, seek, want, pray, wish'. It is not mentioned in *MD*. This form of the verb may also be confused with the noun of similar form, i.e. *baia* pronounced *baiya*, which means 'egg(s)'. Cf. *MD*, pp. 44b f., 47a.

¹⁷³ *israk*: impf. with encl. sg. fem. of *SRK* 'to: be a partner, adhere, hold fast, form a partnership'. *DM* does not include this form. Cf. *MD*, p. 337b.

He [i.e. *Nišimta*] has consecrated¹⁷⁴ a myrtle wreath on her [i.e. *Ruha*'s] head. Nevertheless, his/her [i.e. *Nišimta*'s] hand can not reach her [i.e. *Ruha*] until she [i.e. *Ruha*] is perfected (or completed)¹⁷⁵ and purified. Therefore, she [i.e. *Ruha*] approaches (or draws near)¹⁷⁶ the *Yardna* and is purified.¹⁷⁷

(E1)

Do not reveal¹⁷⁸ this Mystery [of Adam (and Eve!)] for the 'Worlds/Ages and Generations'¹⁷⁹ can not sustain it.¹⁸⁰

(F1)

And He is *Adam Gabra Qadmaia* (Adam the First (Earthly) Man).¹⁸¹ He [i.e. *Mara d-Rabuta?*] said:¹⁸² Adam is¹⁸³ a Great Life, He [i.e. Adam] is¹⁸⁴ *Zar*.¹⁸⁵

¹⁷⁴ *Tirṣat*:* pe. pf. 3p. sg. fem. of TRṢ 'to set up, establish, strait; consecrate'. *MD* does not mention this form. Cf. *MD*, pp. 490b f.

¹⁷⁵ *mištalma*: ETHPA. pt. sg. fem. of ŠLM, 'to be perfected, completed, to (come to an) end; perfect, recompense'. It is not in *MD*. Cf. *MD*, pp. 468a f.

¹⁷⁶ *qarba*: which is pe. act. pt. sg. fem. of QRB 'to approach, draw near, make war, (approach to) attack'. This form is not mentioned in *MD*. Cf. *MD*, p. 415b.

¹⁷⁷ The purification of *Ruha* must be completed in *Iardna* (Water of Holy Baptism), and thus it is the last stage before the blessing of the full Baptism. However, there is an important step before the step of the purification, that is the perfection/wholeness of *Ruha* through the complete faith and enlightenment, that is *Manda*. This explanatory passage could be considered as good proof that *Ruha* is the one who should approach both the *Iardna* and *Nišimta*, that is, *Mana*/the Right/Light/Life/Father, to purify herself and be baptized (by *Nišimta/Mana*, the Baptizer). The purification and the Baptism certainly is the only way to help *Ruha* to rise, unify by *Laupa* and enter the Worlds of Light.

¹⁷⁸ *Tigalil*: pa. Imp. 2sg. of GLL II, 'to reveal, clarify, uncover'. *MD* does not mention this form. Cf. *MD*, p. 94a.

¹⁷⁹ *almia udaria* an expression that refers to 'Worlds/Ages and Generations' of the non-Enlightened Beings of both the Earthly and Darkness Worlds.

¹⁸⁰ *samkilH*: pe. act. pt. with encl. Of SMK 'to support, sustain, rely on, bear up'. *MD* does not mention this form. Cf. *MD*, p. 333a.

¹⁸¹ *DQRDK*'s illustration of the *Dmuta* of *Adam Gabra Qadmaia* does not appear as illustrated in other scrolls as a complete figure/image, very close to the image of the Lightworld Beings, particularly in *DA*; rather, it is represented symbolically by a (leg and) foot as a code for the existence of the First Mandaean Enlightened Adam born in the Earthly World.

¹⁸² *hu amar*: 'he said/revealed'. The first impression of the sentence suggests that the pronoun 'he' is referring to Adam, who is mentioned earlier in the first sentence of this passage. However, that seems to make it meaningless. Thus, we assume that the speaker here is *Mara d-Rabuta* himself, the original speaker and the source of this secret knowledge in the whole scroll.

¹⁸³ *Hinun*: pers. pronoun of 3rd p. masc. pl. It is also used as a demonstrative masc. pl. Despite that, *hinun* is used in a plural form, but this may be only as a form for honour, especially to *Hiia Rbia*, who is in most cases referred to in plural form. Cf. *MD*, pp. 143a (*hiia*), 146b (*hinun*), 422b (*rba*).

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid*, loc. cit.

¹⁸⁵ *zar* is not mentioned in *MD*. In addition, I could not find any explanation for this word in any Mandaean scholarly research. *zar* could be an orthographic variant of *z'r* 'lessen, diminish, i.e. low, humble'. Alaph 'a' and Ayin '' often interchange in Mandaic. However, I believe that the word is a noun and may be another name for Adam, which could mean 'Alien Visitor, Guest, Visitor, and Stranger'. This means Adam is only a temporary

(G1)

This is *Yardna*¹⁸⁶ of whom we said: 'It¹⁸⁷ is the Perfected *Mazruta* (Seed).¹⁸⁸

(H1)

This is *Dmuta* (the likeness/image) of the Blood; her name is *Haua* (Eve).

(I1)

For her name is *Hiuta* (quadrupled).

(J1)

The 'Ages and Generations' called her *Haua* (Eve) but they do not know (or recognize) [(her) Mystery/Secret].

(K1)

What will they say? They will say, until all the mysteries may slip away.¹⁸⁹

Visitor, a Mystery of the Great Life and the Messenger of the Great Life. This Alien Visitor Messenger came from a mysterious secret World, as the First Being/*Nišimta/Mana*, and will leave after he completes his mission in the Earthly World. Mandaean theology pays great attention to the creation of Adam and his mission in the World of Darkness, for He is a descendant of *Adam Kasia* (Secret Adam) and *Mara d-Rabuta* (Lord of Greatness). In *GR* and *Q* many passages and hymns describe the suffering of this Being and His generations, during the limited time of living in the Earthly World and after leaving the material World. In addition, this illustration and its explanatory text is already mentioned earlier with clarifications decoding to this place in the textual folio 2, particularly *DQRDK*, 22 f.

¹⁸⁶ One of the important codes for *Iardna* is already mentioned in *DQRDK*, 23 f.

¹⁸⁷ *h*: usually used to refer to the singular feminine words. *Iardna* is usually referred to as a masculine word, and thus I suggest that *h* refers to *Mazrota*, for it is a feminine word.

¹⁸⁸ Another translation could be '[It/She] is *Mazruta* that perfects [all living things].' The meaning is obscure, maybe because of the use of the short separate sentences. However *Mazruta* is in fact *Mazruta Haita* (the Living Seed/the Seed of Life) which is identical with *Mia Hiia* (the Living Water/Water of Life) as well as with *Hibil Ziua* (who is a descendant of *Mara d-Rabuta*) and with *Iardna*. See, for example, *DQRDK*, 5, 112 ff. In addition, both *Iardna* and *Mazruta* refer to Adam and his seed, for he is the male, who has *Mazruta* (*Haita*).

¹⁸⁹ Another translation could be: 'until all the mysteries may be unveiled to them, ' that is, until all the mysteries slip away [i.e. leave the world].

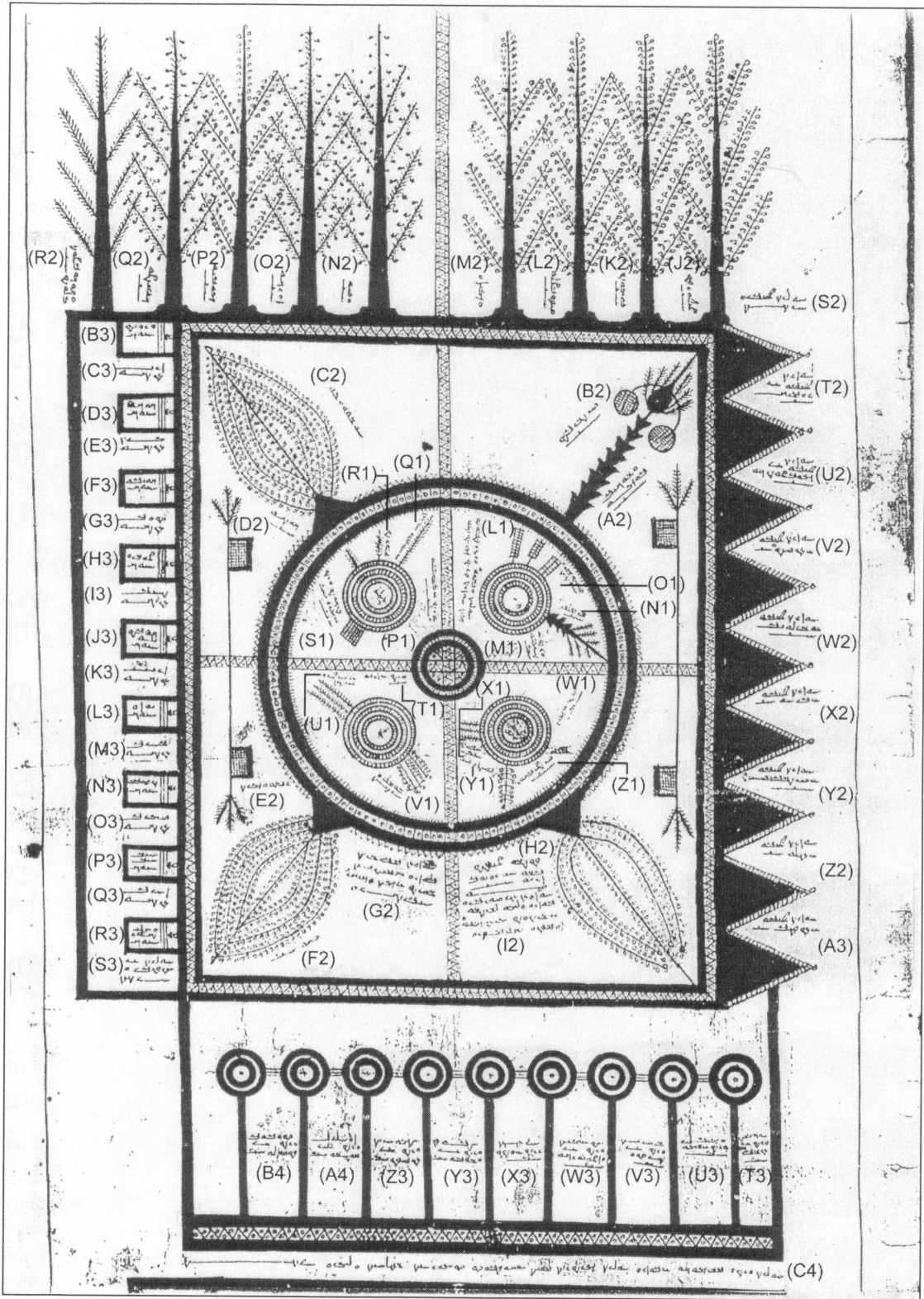


Figure 5 - Folio 4
[For an enlarged and clearer reproduction of this folio, see Appendix A.]

Folio 4¹⁹⁰**Translation of the Text Attached to the Illustrations****(L1)**

These are four Wellsprings, which emanated from this central (or middle) Wellspring.

(M1)

It is a Wellspring of *Nhura* (Light).

(N1)

It is a *Diqla* ((male) date palm).¹⁹¹

(O1)

These are sesame [plants].

(P1)

It is a Wellspring of '*Qara* (Glory).

(Q1)

They are the barley.

(R1)

[It is a] *Qaina* (reed, cane) [plant].

(S1)

It is¹⁹² the flax of the Wellspring of Water.

(T1)

It is a Wellspring of *Ziua* (Radiance).

(U1)

They are the wheat [plants].

¹⁹⁰ The reading of this folio should start from the centre. That is the central Wellspring/a mystical Primary (Divine) Source of creation.

¹⁹¹ *Diqla*: MD, 109a, defines this word as 'palm-tree, female date-palm'. However, I believe that *diqla* means the male date palm tree and not the female date palm tree. In support of this suggestion, the local Iraqi people (including the Mandaeans of Iraq) until now call the male date-palm *diql*, *diglah*, *diqla*. This male date palm usually grows fast and becomes taller than the female date palm, if they are planted at the same time, and maybe for that reason the classic Arabic word *daq* means also 'mast (of a ship)'. Furthermore, we can identify at least one sentence in one of the Mandaean documents (DC 46), as evidence for our argument which describes what kind of date-palm *diqla* is as follows: *diqla d-lahamlat* 'a date-palm that has not born (fruit)'. Cf. MD, 109a. This is because *diqla* is a male and thus cannot bear fruit. However, in the modern Iranian Mandaic the word *diqla* is used instead of *sinderka* to refer to both the male and female date palm tree, without any distinction between the gender,

¹⁹² *h'* is repeated in this part. I am not sure if this repetition was made one of the scribes intentionally or if it serves to give more emphasis. However, this repetition seems to be unnecessary, and removing one of them will affect neither the meaning nor the syntax of the sentence. This kind of repetition of *h'* (and also of *hu*) could be found often in the text of the Mandaean scrolls, especially the illustrated ones.

(V1)

They are *Baqlia* (broad bean(s) [plants]/legumes).¹⁹³

(W1)

It is a Wellspring of *Mia* (Water).

(X1)

It is frankincense [tree]

(Y1)

It is rice [plant].

(Z1)

It is a *Singirtai*.¹⁹⁴

(A2)

He is *Abatur Rama*.

(B2)

It is a *Sindirka* ((date)- palm).

(C2)

Habšaba.¹⁹⁵

(D2)

It is a Figure [tree].

(E2)

Yušamin

(F2)

It is a mulberry [tree]

¹⁹³ *Baqlia*: plural of *baqla* = *buqla* ‘broad bean; legume(s), pulse’ (rt. B Q L, ‘to grow greens [esp. legumes], germinate’). I could not find this word or its root or any other linguistic indication to it in *MD* or in any other linguistic sources on Mandaic, such as *MG* or *HCOMM*. In Syriac, according to R. Payne-Smith, *A Compendious Syriac Dictionary* (hereafter *CSD*), ed. J. Payne Smith (Mrs. Margoliouth), Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1957, p. 38, *buqla* means ‘lotus-tree’. However, I prefer the translation ‘broad bean’ for *baqlia*, as it seems to be closer to the Arabic word *baqelaa* (‘broad bean’) and to *baql* or *baqla* or *baqlat*, which means ‘legume(s); herb(s), greens, herbaceous plant(s); vegetable(s)’. They are derived from the Arabic verb *baqala*, which means ‘to grow, sprout, and germinate’. See Munir Al-Baalabaki, *Qamus Al-Mawrid*, Beirut, 2000 (*baql*, *buql*, *baql*, *baqlat*). The word is also mentioned later in the text in the singular form (i.e. *buqla*), but carrying the meaning of ‘germinator’. Cf. *DQRDK*, 72.

¹⁹⁴ *Singirtai* or *singirta*: singular noun. Maybe a kind of plant, which might be used in some rituals. It is not mentioned in the *MD* or in any other scholarly studies. Also, I could not find it in other Mandaean documents.

¹⁹⁵ *Habšaba* is a Lightworld Being who plays an important role in the World of Light as well as in the Earthly World. He is a Saviour Force/spirit, and also the main Lightworld Guardian of the first day of the week, which is also called by His name. *Habšaba* may be a composite noun perhaps derived originally from two words, that is *had* (one)+ *šuba* (seven). The combined meaning could be ‘the first of the seven’, that is Sunday. *Habšaba* is used with other meanings, such as Sunday, week. Cf. *MD*, p. 115b,

(G2)

Then the Mysteries approach, and they are confirmed¹⁹⁶ in the Wellspring which is [comes] from another beneath.

(H2)

It is a great cotton-plant creeper. It/He is *Yauar Ziua*. *S___a*

(I2)

Then when the Mysteries go astray until [they reach] the end, thus, *Biniana* (the Building/Universe/Creation) will be returned,¹⁹⁷ rise up and be strong.¹⁹⁸

(J2)

It is a vine.

(K2)

It is a pomegranate [tree].

(L2)

It is a quince [tree].

(M2)

It is a walnut [tree].

(N2)

It is a myrtle [tree].

(O2)

It is an olive [tree].

(P2)

It is a marjoram [plant].

(Q2)

It is a citrus [tree].

(R2)

¹⁹⁶ *Tquniun*: pe. impt. pl. of *TQN* 'to be steady, (con)firm, orderly'. It is not mentioned in *MD*. Cf. *MD*, p. 489a.

¹⁹⁷ *mikamria** *ETHPA*. Pt. pl. of *KMR* 'to return, turn'. It is not mentioned in *MD*. Cf. *MD*, p. 218b.

¹⁹⁸ *taqpia** *PE*. Act. Pt. pl. of *TQP* 'to: be strong, prevail'. It is not mentioned in *MD*. Cf. *MD*, p. 490a.

The last part of this phrase contains three successive verbs, that is *mikamria zaqpia utaqpia*, which have a strong effect and harmonious rhythm for the listener/recipient. The last two verbs have completely the same rhythm, tone and grammatical form. The 'end' here is the end of straying of the Mysteries, and thus by reaching that end they will realise that there is only one choice for them: to build or establish the Building/Universe (i.e. *Biniana*). It is 'the returning to the beginning' in which they will be united and come together again. It is a constant circle and cycle because the Mysteries are created to be the elements or the material that is used to form the *Biniana*. Consequentially, through that realisation, their *Biniana* (i.e. the Building/Creation of the Universe) will be (re-)established and be greater and stronger. The story of the straying of the Mysteries and their returning together is depicted in some details in many places in *DQRDK* as well as *ATŠ*. For example, see *DQRDK*, I, 60 ff., 86 ff., 95 ff.; *ATŠ*, I no. 259 ff.

It is a fennel plant.

(S2)

They are mountains.

(T2)

This is a mountain of ruby.

(U2)

This is a mountain of pearl.

(V2)

This is a mountain of *Kisnia* (endives).¹⁹⁹

(W2)

This is a mountain of crystal.

(X2)

This is a mountain of incense.

(Y2)

This is a mountain of sandalwood.

(Z2)

This is a mountain of *Kula* (mountain trees or pine).

(A3)

This is a mountain of camphor.

(B3)²⁰⁰

The dove²⁰¹ came into being.

¹⁹⁹ *Kisnia*: 'endive, chicory, sun-flower'. In their *MD*, p. 215a, Drower and Macuch quoted two words from this *DQRDK*, V2, without referring to their place in the scroll and offered no translation of them. Also mistakenly, they quoted the words as follows: 'ṭuria *d-kisnia* Bodl. xii' instead of *ṭura d-kisnia*.

²⁰⁰ From here begin illustrations of the nine boxes. Each box is divided into two boxes/parts. The first one is small and contains what may be called Naṣōraean symbols/code(s), that is <◻, which in fact represent the two Mandaic letters <O A I. According to the mystical Naṣōraean ancient secret teachings these two symbols/letters represent the following:

- (i) The first two letters of the Mandaic word *aina* 'Wellspring/Source/Universal Womb'. The writer did not write the whole word, maybe to hide it and its sacred meanings from Mandaeans, priests and lay Naṣōraeans.
- (ii) The two symbols in the small box are decoding the union of the male force (i.e. o) and the female force (i.e. <, which is in fact part of the o [see *DQRDK*, 63] in the womb (i.e. *aina*). The result of this union manifests itself in the second box. It appears as various kinds of creations. Samples of these creations are mentioned in these nine boxes, such as the dove, the lamb, etc. as we will see.
- (iii) *Aina*, which is in this interpretation playing continuously a tripartite role, that is the role of the male, the role of the female and the role of the womb. This is to make life continue through its vertical and horizontal connections.

²⁰¹ The dove should be spelt in Mandaic as *Yauna/iauna*. However, here it is written as *aiaina*. Two possible explanations could be provided here, as follows:

(C3)

*Ziu*²⁰² *Kinta*²⁰³/The *kinta* of Radiance.

(D3)

The *Tata* (lamb or sheep) came into being.

(E3)

'*In* (Fountain)²⁰⁴ *Kinta*/The *Kinta* of the Fountain.

(F3)

The bull (or ox) came into being.

(G3)

*Šar*²⁰⁵ *Kinta*/The *Kinta* of *Šar*.

(H3)

The *Gadia* ((young) goat) came into being.

(I3)

*Nhur*²⁰⁶ *Kinta* / The *Kinta* of Light.

(J3)

The cock came into being.

(K3)

*Ziu*²⁰⁷ *Kinta*/The *Kinta* of Radiance.

- (i) The copyist mistakenly started the word with the letter *a* instead of the letter *i* because the second letter of the first syllable of the word *Yauna* is the letter *a*. This kind of mistake appears also sometimes with the word *Yauar*. However, after writing the letter *a*, the copyist soon realised that he had made a mistake. Thus he left a very little space to start writing the word in the correct way. Seemingly, he forgot to delete that letter, causing this confusion, which may only be recognized by expert Mandaean scholars.
- (ii) The first letter *a* is not part of the word *Yauna*. It may refer to the beginning of the creations in that part. It is the *a*/the Wellspring/the Womb/the Alphabet, etc.

²⁰² *ziu* is a st. abs. & cstr. of *ziua* 'radiance, light, brightness'. However, it may be used here as a name of a *kinta*. Cf. *MD*, p. 166a f.

²⁰³ *Kinta* refers to a vessel or container. Here it is used as a term whose sense is an encompassing and/or protecting 'womb', in which creation can occur. Mandaean sources refer to various kinds of *Kintas* in every part of the Universes/Worlds. Each one has its own nature and is active for a different, secret reason to carry or produce the enormous variety of the universal basic elements, materials, things, beings, worlds, etc. Good examples may be found here in this *DQRDK* folio. Cf. *DQRDK*, C3, E3, G3, I3, K3, M3, O3, Q3; *MD*, pp. 214b f.

²⁰⁴ '*in* is a st. abs. and cstr. of *aina* 'source, fount, fountain'. However, here it is used as name of a *kinta*. Cf. *MD*, p. 348b.

²⁰⁵ *šar* is name of a Lightworld Being. However, here it is used as a name of a *kinta*, which relates in particular to that Lightworld Being. Cf. *MD*, p. 445a.

²⁰⁶ *nhur* is a st. abs. and cstr. of *nhura*, 'light'. However, here it is used as a name of a *kinta*. Cf. *MD*, p. 291a.

(L3)

The goose came into being.

(M3)

*Bhir*²⁰⁸ *Kinta*. / The *Kinta* of *Bhir*.

(N3)

The eagle (or falcon) came into being.

(O3)

*Smir*²⁰⁹ *Kinta* / The *Kinta* of *Smir*.

(P3)

The hoopoe came into being.

(Q3)

*Zhir*²¹⁰ *Kinta*/The *Kinta* of *Zhir*.

(R3)

The owl came into being.

(S3)

These are the birds.²¹¹

(T3)²¹²

This is the sealed Wellspring (Source) of sulphur (sulfur).

²⁰⁷ This may be another type of radiance, or it may be a repetition of *ziu* in C3. The word might not be *ziu* but rather *zih*, which could mean 'shaking, shocking'. However, I do not support this latter reading.

²⁰⁸ *bhir*: originally means 'the chosen one, the tested one, the proven one, the elect', for it is grammatically a form of pass. pt. of *BHR* I 'to test, search, examine, choose (out), try out'. However, here it is used as name of a kind of *kinta*. This name is also a name of Lightworld Being. Cf. *MD*, 53a f.

²⁰⁹ *smir*: originally means, 'the conserved one, the safeguarded one, the (well) preserved one'. Grammatically, it is used as a form of pe. pass. pt. sg. of *SMR*, 'to watch over, heed, secure, be careful of, observe, preserve'. However, here it is used as name of a kind of *kinta*. This name is also a name of a higher Lightworld Being. Cf. *MD*, 333a f.

²¹⁰ *zhir*: originally means, 'if it is derived from *ZHR* II, the brilliant one, the illumined one'; or, if it is derived from *ZHR* I, the secure one'. Grammatically, it is used as a form of pe. pass. pt. sg. of *ZHR*. However, here it is used as name of a kind of *kinta*. This name is also a name of a higher Lightworld Being. Cf. *MD*, 163a f.

²¹¹ *şipiria*: var. of *şipria*. Thus, it should be read as *şipria*. It is pl. of *şipra* 'bird'. This pl. var. is not mentioned in the *MD*. Here it is used to refer to the group of birds mentioned above. However, this group contains various kinds of birds, which may represent all the family of birds.

²¹² Note that:

- (i) The following Wellsprings/sources, (of metals and other similar things), like all the other creations, *kintas*, trees and mountains, in this folio, are in a group of nine. Nine is a spiritual number, as it connects to the nine months of gestation (pregnancy), etc.
- (ii) Most of the verbs and adjectives that appear in the explanatory text of these Wellsprings (Sources) are used in rare and unusual forms, which makes the literal translation very difficult.

(U3)

This is the brilliant (compressed)²¹³ Wellspring (Source) of diamond.

(V3)

This is the bursting Wellspring (Source) of copper.

(W3)

This is the shining Wellspring (Source) of glass.

(X3)

This is the irritating Wellspring (Source) of tin.

(Y3)

This is the melting Wellspring (Source) of lead.

(Z3)

This is the gleaming Wellspring (Source) of silver.

(A4)

This is the flaming Wellspring (Source) of gold.

(B4)

This is the sparking Wellspring (Source) of iron.

(C4)

These are the Primeval Sources (Wellsprings) of the Mysteries. From these [i.e. Sources] they [i.e. the Mysteries] sprang forth and their name went forth to (or was defined by or understood by) all the Worlds.²¹⁴

²¹³ *Amur*: it is not clear whether it is used here as an adjective (which I prefer) or a verb or even as a noun. It is also unclear from which root it is derived, maybe from MRA or MRR or AMR II='MR.

²¹⁴ These Primeval Sources or Wellsprings of Mysteries are 'Nine'. On the one hand, as we have mentioned earlier, they possibly refer symbolically to the 'Nine' months/periods of the (Cosmic) Embryo in the (Cosmic) Womb (i.e. the main original Source) before the Great Creation. On the other hand, they also refer to the variety of primordial mysterious elements, which include the metallic and nonmetallic, as representative or symbolic of the cosmic Elementary Units. For that reason, the last sentence in the above text refers to the universal basic mysteries, which in turn refer to the connection with life and its biologic(al) vital/ biotic cosmic Elementary Units.

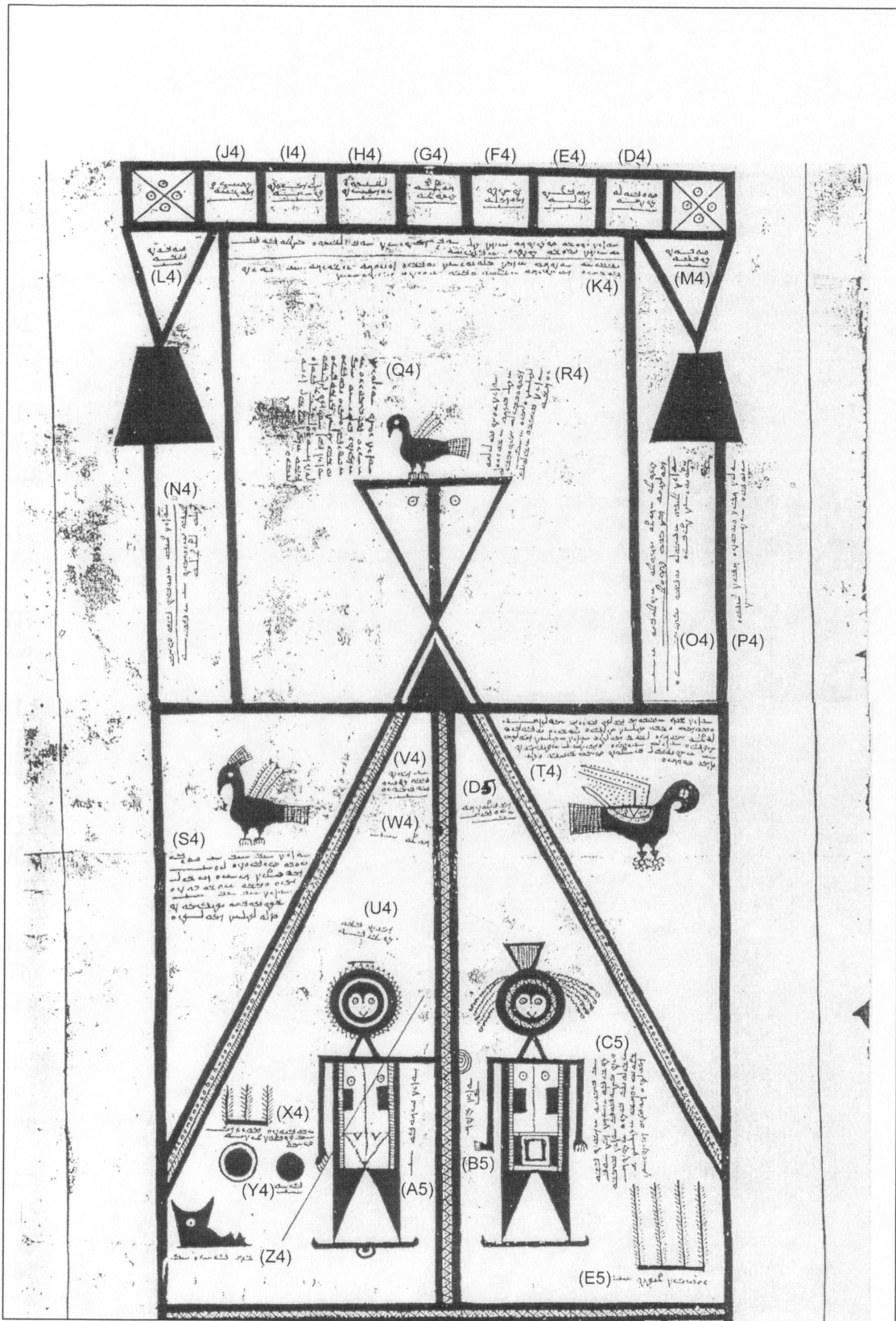


Figure 6 - Folio 5
[For an enlarged and clearer reproduction of this folio, see Appendix A.]

Folio 5

Translation of the Text Attached to the Illustrations

(D4)

Šaruāla (the [sacred] Legging, Trouser). It is *Kinta*.²¹⁵ /the Trouser. It is the (ritual) Container.

(E4)

Margna (the [sacred] Staff). It is *Klila* (the (myrtle) Wreath). /the Staff. It is the (myrtle) Wreath.

(F4)

Našifa (the [sacred] Stole). It is *Mamla* (the Word or Speech). /the Stole. It is the Word (of Speech).

(G4)

Taga (the [sacred] Crown), it is *Kušta*. /the Crown. It is the Truth.

(H4)

Lbuša (the [sacred] Garment or Dress). It is *Yamina* (the Right). /the Garment. It is the Right.

(I4)

Himiana (the [sacred] Girdle). It is *Pihta* (the [sacramental] Bread). /the Girdle. It is the (sacramental) Bread.

(J4)

Ksuia (the [sacred] covering Robe, Tunic). It is *Manbuga* (the [sacramental] Water).²¹⁶ /The covering Robe. It is the (sacramental) Water.

K4

These are Seven *Škintas*²¹⁷ (Sites/Sources). Each one of them formed one *Lbuša* ((sacred) Garment), and they are ‘the Seven Sides of the Firmament’.

In addition, that Firmament is above them [i.e. the Seven *Škintas*].²¹⁸ And it [the Firmament] is ‘the Four Corners of *Baita* (the House/World/),’²¹⁹ and ‘the Great Central Wellspring’,²²⁰ in (or from) which ‘the Four Wellsprings’²²¹ were established (or manifest).²²²

²¹⁵ *Kinta* here refers to an important and central priestly ritual object. It takes the shape of a clay box, always with a clay cover on which other objects stay. See *MII*, pp. 106 f.; *MD*, p. 214a f. The Naṣoraean secret teachings interpret the relationship between *Šaruāla* and *Kinta* to be considered as the container of both the sexual male and female organs, which are always connected with the sacred womb that contains the fertilized egg. Thus, any successful Mandaean-Naṣoraean ritual contains some kind of creation, pregnancy and rebirth to connect with, transfer to and live with the Worlds of Light, the eternal Life, with the Great Life.

²¹⁶ These are seven boxes. Each one contains two twin parts. The first is for part of the Lightworld/priestly ritual clothes and objects. The second part is for the parallel sacred mystery that is attached to the former one.

²¹⁷ *škinta* has various meanings, including ‘dwelling, habitation, celestial dwelling; the name of the holy religious hut; site, source, position, situation’. Cf. *MD*, p. 465b f.

L4

It is the great *Sadana* ((Cosmic) Anvil, Gravity).²²³

M4

It is [the] heavy (or strong) *Sadana*.

N4

The name of this Mountain is the great *Sadana*. It is the Mountain of the Right, which holds up the entire Firmament.

O4

The *Kušta* of *Taga* (the Crown) and the *Kušta* of *Nařarta* (the (Divine) Safeguard), which is *Malkuta* (the [Exalted] Kingship/Kingdom), stretched forth from his hand.

This is the Mountain of the Left and the Earth and the Heavens are unfurled (or placed/situated) inside of it.²²⁴

P4

These are the two *Sadanas*. They are two White Mountains.

²¹⁸ The firmament above these seven *řkintas* is illustrated as a square/box/*řkinta* (site) to invest the idea of the four corners and the four directions, that is, of the firmament which surrounds every thing from every direction. In order to put more emphasis on the idea of the firmament that surrounded every thing from every direction the author has illustrated two of these squares. One can be seen at the beginning and the second at the end. This firmament is depicted in this way to indicate that the Firmament surrounds the World.

²¹⁹ *arbia zauiata d-baita*: this explanation refers to the whole construction of the World, that is *Baita*, which is surrounded from every direction by the firmament. It is represented by the four corners of the squares at both ends. Here it is also decoding the same explanation in the important prayer known as *nhur nhura*. Cf. *CP*, p. 3. Also see the image of the World in *DQRDK*, folio 4.

²²⁰ *aina rabtia miřaita*: parallel to *miřaita* the *aina miřaita* in *DQRDK*, folio 4 (L1). In the illustration, this Great Central Wellspring is represented by the central point in the middle of the crossing lines in the squares.

²²¹ *arba ainia*: these 'Four Wellsprings' can be seen illustrated, one in each of the four parts of the square. Also, Cf. *DQRDK*, folio 4 (L1).

²²² *minaihun*: literally means 'from them'. However, this literal reading offers no suitable meaning for the whole passage. Therefore, two other readings are suggested to solve this problem, as follows:

- (i) It might be read not with the pl. pronoun but with the singular pronoun as *min(i)H* or *mina*.
However, the sentence still needs a verb. Thus, this is not the preferable choice.
- (ii) I think it should be read as two separate words, that is *mina* (or *minH*)+ *hun*.

Commentary:

This may refer to the two similar squares/*řkintas* (sites) that surround the Seven *řkintas* at the beginning and the end. Each one of these boxes/ *řkintas* contains two lines that divide it into four parts, which refers to the four corners of *Baita* (the House/World). The central point in the crossing lines refer to the Great Central Wellspring. Each one of the four formed parts contains *Aina* (a Wellspring/Source).

²²³ *sadana*: literally means 'anvil, jeweller's block'. However, here it refers to the Cosmic Anvil, that is the cosmic forge in which the universe was created. Cf. *MD*, pp. 309b-10a.

²²⁴ *bgauihun*: literally means 'inside (of) them'. However, according to the syntax of the sentence, it should be read as *bgau(i)H*.

Q4

This is the Dove. Her strength is of the First Life. From me [i.e. the First Life/*Mara d-Rabuta*] she came into being,²²⁵ she [i.e. the Dove] travels through all the 'Worlds and Ages' doing all [the required] Works.

This is a Mystery (secret), the Darkness can not become stronger (or more potent) than the Light.

She [i.e. the Dove] is a great Mystery, who is a companion of²²⁶ *Hibil Ziua*.

R4

This is a swift Dove, that will seek any place that He [i.e. the First Life/*Mara d-Rabuta*] sends her to, and He sends her to all the Worlds from where she is sitting on this Vault of crystal.

(S4)

This is a Hoopoe. He travels about and knows the channels, for whither he goes it becomes *Tibil* (earth/land).²²⁷ The water comes out of *Abadania* (the wasteland/primordial ooze).²²⁸ This is a Hoopoe. He goes to all of the kings with the order and the decree (or mandate).

(T4)

This is the Falcon that stands before the King and he [i.e. the falcon] raises the kingdom up. And he [i.e. the falcon] will take all of the (little) birds, gazelles and the wild asses (will be taken) and bring them to the door of kings.

These are all (little) birds who [when they] see him (i.e. the falcon) become frightened. For he [i.e. the falcon] is *Purmana* (the [death] decree (or mandate))²²⁹ whose name is *Şaur'il*²³⁰ *Dihgana* (*Şaur'il* the Peasant), consuming (devouring) flesh and drinking blood.

(U4)

Mana Rba Kabira (the Great Mighty (or Magnificent) *Mana*).

(V4)

He is *Mana Rba Kasia Qadmaia* (the First Great Secret *Mana*).

²²⁵ The dove here is identified with or parallel to the Messenger of Light, that is *Hibil Ziua* (the Angel Gabriel), who does all the works, that is the First Life's orders.

²²⁶ *lu'ia*: from LWA, 'go with, accompany; send with, join'. Cf. *MD*, p. 232a.

²²⁷ *Tibil*: here it is used in a rare way, which strengthens the moving picture.

²²⁸ *Abadania*: var. pl. of *abdana*. Generally, it has two meanings: 1. 'perdition, loss'. 2. lost wasteland, ends of the earth, land of the lost'. However, the meaning of this word is obscure in some places in the Mandaean literature. Here it seems to match closely with the second meaning. Cf. *MD*, p. 3b.

²²⁹ *Purmana* might be read as *Pumana*: the Gluttonous One, (adjective derived from *puma*, 'mouth'). It means the gluttonous, corrosive, gourmand, rapacious, gluttonous mouth. Here it is used metaphorically, referring to the opening Gluttonous Mouth of death, which is identical with *Şaur'il* ('the angel of death'). Thus, another translation could be 'for he is the decree of death'. However, this reading is not preferable.

²³⁰ *şaur'il*: Cf. *MD*, p. 386a.

(W4)

He is *Taga* (the Crown).

(X4)

The *Daruanas*²³¹ (branches?) are rising.
Its name is *Paruan Ginta* (the Garden of *Paruan*).

(Y4)

It is incense.

(Z4)

It is *Bit Rihia* (the fire-saucer [of the incenses]).

(A5)

This is *Sitara* (the [ethereal] Veil)

(B5)

This is *Kanat*.²³²

(C5)

She is the *Dmuta* (Companion)²³³ of *Mana Rba Kabira*. They were formed from one *Aina* (Source/Wellspring).

This is a Vault of pure crystal that *Kanat* is situated on (and) which gives stability to all the kings.

(D5)

She [i.e. *Kanat*] is pearl of ruby.

(E5)

It is a Jasmine *Gupna* (Vine/Garden).²³⁴

²³¹ *daruania*: pl. of *daruana*, probably '(lofty blooming) branches'. May be derived from DRA, 'to carry, bear, sustain; sprinkle, disperse'. Cf. *MD*, pp. 113a f.

²³² Shortening of *Kanat Niṣupta/Kanat Raptia*, a female Lightworld Being. See *MD*, p. 198a; *MII*, p. 246.

²³³ *Dmuta* is used here as the female partner or companion.

²³⁴ *Gupna*: literally means 'vain, climbing plant'. However, it may also be used here as 'garden, orchard, paradise', parallel to *Ginta* in *DQRDK*, X4, above. Cf. *MD*, pp. 84b f.

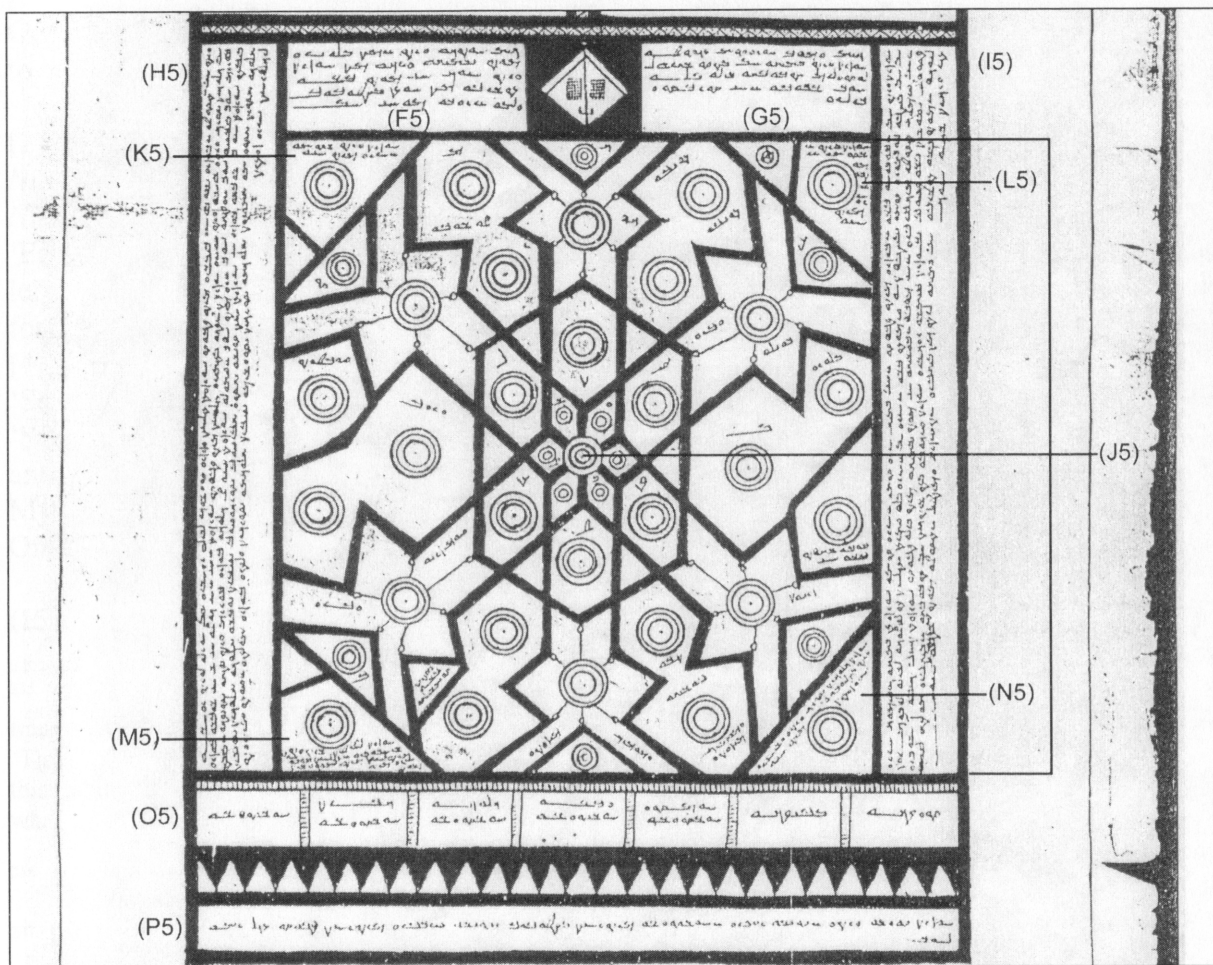


Figure 7 - Folio 6
[For an enlarged and clearer reproduction of this folio, see Appendix A.]

Folio 6

Translation of the Text Attached to the Illustrations

(F5)

Then that *Aina* (Wellspring/Source), which is from above *Mana* and His *Dmuta* (Companion), brought from this formed *Aina* (Wellspring/Source). He is *Mana Raba Kabira* from that [*Aina*] [which] formed until He knows what It [i.e. the Wellspring/Source] is.²³⁵

(G5)

Then *Haiāšum Kušta*²³⁶ said, 'This *Aina* (Wellspring/Source) is *Dmuta*. Nobody on earth could complete Her/Its image. [Only] one in the generation [could] who is of my Root.

(H5)

[1] It is *Aina* [i.e. the central Wellspring/Source] from which *Kušta* of the Mysteries and the Great *Qadahs* emanated. Then after that [or And thereupon], all-powerful praises are given to it/her, that gives *Aina* its strength.

[2] It [i.e. *Aina*] is 'Thirty Six' Wellsprings manifest in 'One' Wellspring. This is the Black *Nitupta* (Drop) from which all of them [i.e. the other Wellsprings] emanated. And thus it [i.e. *Nitupta*] is [the A], it is²³⁷ *Taga* (the Crown), it is the 'B'. It [i.e. *Nitupta*] is raised with/by 'Four' Mysteries: [3] One is the back, and one is the face²³⁸ and one is the right and one the left. And after that *G* came into being, [and] it was raised [by] 'Three' Mysteries: the eye, the forehead,²³⁹ and the smoothness, with which they are placed perfectly there.²⁴⁰

[4] And then *D* came into being. He was [raised] by four mysteries. Then came into being the 'Seven', the 'Nine', the 'Twelve', the 'Sixteen', the 'Twenty-Four', the 'Thirty-Three', the 'Seventy-Three' [5], the 'Ninety-Nine', the 'One hundred and Eighty', the 'Three hundred and Sixty', the 'Seven hundred and Twenty', and the 'Three hundred and Sixty thousand' Mysteries and Kings which are without number or limit. [6] And [thus,] *Hiiā* (the Living One(s)/Life) is [eternally] Victorious.

(I5)

²³⁵ This paragraph is obscure. Several translations could fit with the contents. However, a suitable alternative translation might be as follows:

'Then that *Aina* (Wellspring/Source), which is from above *Mana*, and he brought His *Dmuta* (Companion) from this formed *Aina* (Wellspring/Source). He is *Mana Raba Kabira* from that [*Aina*] [which] formed until He knows what It [i.e. the Wellspring/Source] is.'

²³⁶ *Haiāšum Kušta* is a high ranking Lightworld Being who is also associated with *Kušta*.

²³⁷ *d- hu d-hu* should be read as *d-hu*. This repetition of *d-hu* seems to have been done intentionally by one of the copyists of *DQRDK*. However, the general meaning of this passage suggest(s) that this part should be read as *d-hu a d-hu taga*. This means that there is *A* missing intentionally from the sentence.

²³⁸ *aputa/puta* means 'face, forehead, countenance'. See *MD*, p. 30b. The content suggests that it means 'face'.

²³⁹ *puta* here means 'forehead'.

²⁴⁰ For this part, *DQRDK*, H5 (line 3 f.) has: *tlata razia qaiim aina uputa ušupta d-'urka 'urka*. However, Drower and Macuch have quoted, as an example, from the above *DQRDK*, H5 (line 3) with some errors and changes, as follows:

tlata razia aina uputa ušupta d-'urkh Oxf. xii three mysteries: the eye, the forehead, and the smoothness which is therewith (?). *MD*, p. 456a.

As we can see, the word *qaiim* is missing while the word '*urka* is (read as '*urkH*) it is mentioned only once instead of reading it twice. We do not think that the copyist repeated '*urka* by mistake. It is meant to be part of the text. We believe that '*urka* '*urka* used as an expression signifies to everything placed there perfectly in its place. *MD*, gives meaning to '*urk* as 'with' and '*urka* as 'length'. (See *MD*, p. 346b). However, it did not mention the meaning of '*urka* as it is mentioned above.

[1] This is *Aina* [i.e. the central Wellspring/Source] from which *Qadaha Rba* (the Great Creation) of the Mysteries emanated [and] whose name is *Dmut Hiia* (the Image/Likeness of Life), and thus It/She [i.e. *Aina*] is *Dmuta* (the Image/Likeness) of *Simat Hiia*. [2] *'Ušra Qadmaia* (the First Mind) is Its/Her name and It/She is *'Ušra Niha* (the Mild Mind), *Simaka Rba d-Hiia* (the Great Support of Life), for whom *Hiia* (Life/the Living One) is Support and all the parts (or divisions) do not resemble It/Her. [3] It/She is called *Simat Kušša*.²⁴¹ He is *Mara d-Rabuta* who is *Mana*, and His *Dmuta* (Counterpart) emanated from It/Her [i.e. *Aina*]. And therein *Nhur Nhura* (the Light shone)²⁴² [4] and they stretched out [their hands] to one another and performed the great *Qabin* (wedding) and they sit/are situated on this Vault²⁴³ and this *Sitara* ([ethereal] Veil)²⁴⁴ is between them. She [i.e. *Aina/Dmuta*] is *Šararta* (the Formation) of the *'Utras* and *Malkas* [5], consorts of *Mana Rba Kabira* (the Great Mighty Mana). She is *Dmuta* (the Counterpart) [and] there are none of the *'Utras* who [could] see Her, for the *Kušša* happened [6] when *Mana* came into *Kula* (the canopy/canopied bed [of the bride]).²⁴⁵

(J5)²⁴⁶

A, B, G, D,

N, Ta, T,

I, *Gabra* (Being), M,

L, Š,

Aiar (air/ether/*Aiar* (male Lightworld Being)), *Saršana* (Cancer (zodiacal sign)),

K, Sam-Ziua, Aria (Lion [zodiacal sign]), *R,*

Daniš Rba Šumbulta [Virgo(zodiacal sign)],

Ṭ, Muzania (?[zodiacal sign]), *Amamit* (female Darkworld Being),

²⁴¹ As far as I am aware, this is the first time this expression appears in Mandaean literature.

²⁴² *nhur nhura* is the title of an opening prayer in *Q*.

²⁴³ *qumba* (vault) here refers to the illustration in folio 5 (C5). It is similar to the bride chamber that is prepared in the Marriage ceremony.

²⁴⁴ *sitara* here refers to the illustration in folio 5 (A5).

²⁴⁵ *kula* should be read as *kilta*. Cf. *MD*, p. 213.

²⁴⁶ The following mysterious mixture of letters and words combines the illustrations of the 36 Wellsprings only. We will put them all under this section (J5). These letters and words can be read in many various ways, depending on who the reader is. The meanings can be interpreted according to the level that has been achieved in the secret teaching of *Naširuta*. Here we are reading in a simple way from the centre outwards. However, some combinations of codes and symbols are omitted from this reading. Another simple Mandaean reading could be as follows:

a							
b	g	d					
l	k	ṭ	p	s	n		
t	ta	m		š	r	˘	d-

gabra / sam ziua / rabuta / ziuan / ˘laia / aiar / nura / saršana / aria / daniš rba / šumbulta / amamit / muzania / amamit / muzania / qarabtana²⁴⁶ rba hu / aria / daula / kaura / kaura

In addition, there are illustrations of another Nine Wellsprings. Five of them are illustrated without any writing or explanations. Their interpretations may be revealed only to the Našoraean from the highest ranks. The other four Wellsprings are combined with important writings and codes. Each one of these four is situated at one of the corners of the illustrated square. The translations of these will be treated with separate numbers, after section (J5).

Nura (fire), *Rabuta* (Greatness), *Amamit*²⁴⁷ *Muzania*,²⁴⁸
P, *Ziuan* (),
 ', *Laia* (),
 It is *Qarabtana Rba* ([Darkworld Being?]),
S, *Aria* ([zodiacal sign]),²⁴⁹ *Daula* ([zodiacal sign]), *d-*,
Kaura (), *Kaura*,²⁵⁰

(K5)

This is the Wellspring from which emanated *Bšuma d-Hiia* (the prayer invocation 'In the name of the Living One[s] [or Life]').²⁵¹

(L5)

This is the Wellspring from which emanated *Bšuma d-Manda d-Hiia* (the prayer invocation 'In the name of the Knowledge of Life').²⁵²

(M5)

This [Wellspring] [and the Mysteries] grasp together *Biniana* (the Universe) [and] from this [union] all *Qadahas* (Creations) came. From this [Wellspring] *u-Mšabin Hiia*' (the prayer ending. 'And the Living One[s] [or Life] be praised') came.

(N5)

These are 'the thirty-six Wellsprings' formed from the Wellspring from which *u-Hiia Zakin* (the prayer ending: 'And the Living One(s) (or Life) is/are [eternally] Victorious') came into being.

(O5)

Sunday Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday Saturday.

(P5)

These are seven Wellsprings, from which the seven days of the week were formed. And from them [i.e. the seven Wellsprings], the seven *Sidras* (Systems/Rows)²⁵³ emanated, each day for one [*sidra*].

²⁴⁷ This is the second appearance of this word in this part.

²⁴⁸ This is the second appearance of this word in this part.

²⁴⁹ This is the second appearance of this word in this part.

²⁵⁰ This is the second appearance of this word in this part.

²⁵¹ *Bšuma d-Hiia* are the first two words in the first prayer of *Q* (*CP*, no. 1). They represent the first part of the Great Mystery of *Qadaha Rba* (the Great Creation). In the Mandaean religion this part is considered as the Beginning of everything. It is the Beginning before the beginning.

²⁵² In the name of *manda d Hiia* (knowledge of Life).

²⁵³ The seven *Sidras* may refer here to the seven Systems/Orders of the seven days, or in other words the weekly system in time. In the illustration these seven *Sidras* are depicted as seven boxes. In each box there is the time system of a certain day.

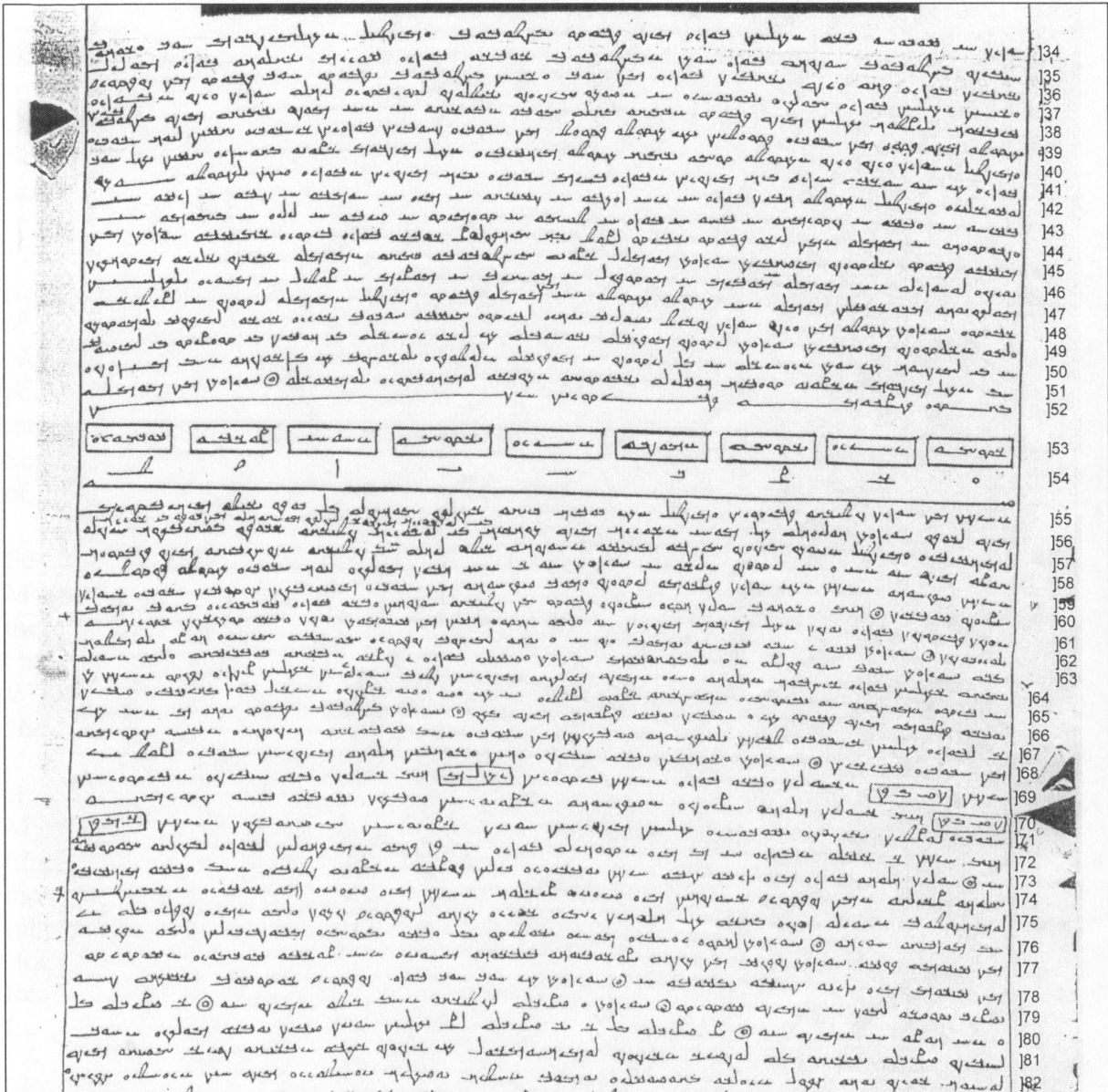


Figure 8 - Folio 7
 [For an enlarged and clearer reproduction of this folio, see Appendix A.]

Folio 7

Translation of the Text (An Explanation of the Illustrations)

[34] This is the Great *Qadaha* (Creation)²⁵⁴ from which all Mysteries emanated and were formed; for everything was formed one after [35] the other. That Mystery²⁵⁵ which formed,

²⁵⁴ This Great *Qadaha* (Creation/Emanation) is of *Dmut Kušta* (the Image/Likeness of Truth). As we explained earlier in Chapter 7, *Dmut Kušta* is identical with The Universal Perfect Being, that is, *Mara d-Rabuta/Adam Kasia/Mana u-DmutH*/etc.

²⁵⁵ That is, the *Qadaha Rba* of the *Dmut Kušta* and His identical images.

was raised (founded) in Four Mysteries²⁵⁶ and spoke in Three Mysteries,²⁵⁷ [36] and opened His *Aina* (Eye(s)/Source) in Two Mysteries.²⁵⁸ And He [i.e. The Mystery] was formed and emanated from Two Mysteries²⁵⁹ who were [originally] from the One, their Father.²⁶⁰ The One emanated from Himself. [37] He is the Father of all Mysteries, Kings [i.e. Lightworld Beings] and *Qadahas* (Creatures). He is the Origin (Source) without limit, number or nullity (uselessness).

This *Aina* (Source)²⁶¹ of Mysteries [38] drew together and held and all emanated from Him [i.e. the One]. So that *Dmuta* (a Counterpart or a Likeness) came (or appeared) to Him, who is *Mara d-Rabuta* from whom came forth *Mana* and His *Dmuta* (Counterpart) and they [i.e. *Mana* and His *Dmuta*] performed [39] the *Kušṭa*²⁶² with one another, and when they performed the *Kušṭa* with one another, they enlightened one another with their mysteries and they confirmed one another, [40] so the name of this source (wellspring) is *Aina* (the Source/Wellspring) of *Kušṭa*, and it is called *Dmut Kušṭa* (the Image / Likeness/Counterpart of Truth).

For everything [41] in it appeared (or became manifest, seen) and became firm and each Mystery saw His Companion. There are some of those Mysteries who loved one another, and there are some of the/those Mysteries who hated [one another] and they did not accept (or receive) that *Kušṭa*. [42] For the *Kušṭa* is Two Mysteries. It is Male and it is Female. It is Water and it is Wine. It is Fire and it is Wind. It is [43] Sky and it is Earth. It is *Nišimta* (Soul) and it is *Ruha* (Spirit). It is the Mystery (or source) and it is Origin (or lineage). It is Sun and it is Moon. It is Night and it is Day. It is [44] Thought and it is *Mamla* (the Word) that emanated from *Liba* (the Mind/Heart) and is held in the Head and it is divided into Four Mysteries of the Head in *Muqra* (the brain matter). [And thus] It emanates from [45] *Muqra* (the brain matter) and it is held fast in the Tongue. Then after that it makes speech with it, and the *Dmuta* (Image, shape, form, likeness) of the Word is formed in the Ear and it is housed (placed) in *Liba* (the Mind/Heart) [46] and His Eyes do not see it, for it is *Mamla*. It is 'Raised up' and it is 'Cast down' (degraded). It is Joy and it is Worry. It is Killing and it is Reviving. And [47] *Mamla* governs all the Kingdoms, for it is *Kušṭa* and *Kušṭa* emanated from *Mamla*. For (because) *Mamla* is the Tongue which is held in [48] the Head.

²⁵⁶ These Four Mysteries may refer to the Two Mysteries of the Father and the Two Mysteries of The Mother. However, another possibility is that these Four could be a reference to the Four (Divine) Limbs of the Universal Perfect Being.

²⁵⁷ Another trans: 'In His Three Mysteries'. The Three Mysteries here may refer to the (Divine) Tongue and the (Two) Lips of the Universal Perfect Being.

²⁵⁸ The Two Mysteries here may refer to the (Two) (Divine) Eyes of the Universal Perfect Being.

²⁵⁹ The Two Mysteries here may refer to the (Divine) Father and Mother of the Universal Perfect Being.

²⁶⁰ Another translation might be 'and Two Mysteries were formed and emanated from the One, their Father.' However, it should be noted here that the 'One/Father' is a reference to the Ultimate Divine Power that is/are beyond any understanding or description. The use of the 'Father' is only to describe that the One is/are the Creator, the Source of every thing, the Controlling Power of all creations who takes care of everything, the Knowledgeable One.

²⁶¹ This 'Source' could also carry the meanings of the (Divine) Wellspring or even the (Divine) Eye. This is because all of these meanings are metaphorical meanings.

²⁶² *kušṭa* here means 'the Divine Pact of Truth, the Divine Pact of Union or Companionship'.

And then *Kušta*²⁶³ from this *Aina* (Source/Wellspring) springs upwards, rises and comes to the Head and *Muqra* (brain matter), and [the *Kušta*] roams and seeks the Gate to go out (leave) but it can not find it [49] until it [i.e. *Kušta/Mamla*] is held fast in the Tongue, and after that the Tongue brings it out and chooses it. Just as *Liba* (the Mind/Heart) informs it [i.e. *Kušta/Mamla*] to it (the tongue), [*Liba*] either ‘puts it in order’ or ‘disturbs it’, either ‘it is to ascend’ [50] or ‘it is to descend’. When that [i.e. *Liba*] gives it to the Tongue; it [i.e. the Tongue] is bringing it [i.e. *Kušta/Mamla*] out that which is not increasing and (not) diminishing like a pair of balances, that is the scales [51] [on] which everything that begins is weighed (or counter poised) and [which?] with the bribe of a lie is not corrupted and not accepted.

@ And there upon from *Mamla* [52] Nine *Pugdams* (Words, Precepts) emanated. They are:

[LINES 53 & 54]

<i>bšuma</i>	<i>d-hiia</i>	<i>ubšumH</i>	<i>d-manda</i>	<i>d-hiia</i>	<i>ubšuma</i>	<i>d-hahu</i>	<i>gabra</i>	<i>qadmaia</i>
<i>a</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>g</i>	<i>d</i>	<i>h</i>	<i>u</i>	<i>z</i>	<i>H</i>	<i>ṭ</i>

A- In the name

B- of *Hiia*

G- and in the name

D- of *Manda*

H- *d-Hiia*

U- and in the name

Z- of the (this)

H- *Gabra*

ṭ²⁶⁴- *Qadmaia*

In the name of *Hiia* (Life/Living One(s)) and in the name of *Manda d-Hiia* (Knowledge of Life) and in the name of this (or the) *Gabra Qadmaia* (First Being).²⁶⁵

S-----A

[55] Where upon they emanated from this *Niṭubta*.²⁶⁶ For when you have taken (or dipped) Ink²⁶⁷ by the reed-pen²⁶⁸ and transferred²⁶⁹ it to *Dapa* (the papyrus/paper),²⁷⁰ and have drawn

²⁶³ *kušta* here is identical with *Mamla* (the World).

²⁶⁴ These are the first 9 letters of the Mandaic alphabet and each one represents one box containing one word from the first prayer of *CP* (no. I), that talks about creation.

²⁶⁵ This is only rewriting the translation of the words that are inside the boxes. Cf. *CP*, p. 1 (no. 1).

²⁶⁶ *Niṭubta*: originally ‘drop or sperm’ but also used as an honorable term for women, especially heavenly consorts. However, in this case *Niṭubta* is reference to the first being. The connection could be from sperm or the first created being.

²⁶⁷ Here it may also be used in reference to the ink pot and this makes a further reference to the female or feminine aspect.

²⁶⁸ *Šilpa*: reed-pen fig writing. Also see *MD*, p. 393. The Mandaean writing is traditionally done with a reed-pen, as the reed is a plant and can be baptized and considered (religiously) pure. *Šilpa* is also in reference to Male aspect of the creator, as well as a Male Organ. This dipping or taking of ink (from the ink pot) is in reference to the creation process.

²⁶⁹ *u-matnalH* (rt. TNA): to do for a second time, to repeat, reiterate. See *MD*, p. 488b.

a *Buṣa*²⁷¹ (Uterus) [56] onto *Dapa* and then (when) [you] have lifted (suspended) it [i.e. the reed pen] everything that you wanted from it you are able to write. If you do not want²⁷² to write with the reed-pen either, remove it from *Dapa* [resulting in] no creation. However, if you want to [write], *Niṣubta* will adhere on *Dapa*, for it is [57] without limit, number, and boundary for the depth of that *Buṣa*.²⁷³ For She [i.e. *Buṣa*] is *Niṣubta* from which *Naṣiruta* emanated, [58] and *Taga* (the Crown) came into being from Her, which is A. He [i.e. A] is *Lišana* (the (Divine) Tongue), which is *Liba* (the (Divine) Mind/Heart).

There after *B* came into being. He [i.e. *B*] is the Two *Malkas* (Kings) who together perform *Kuṣṭa* (the Divine Pact of Truth). [59] Further, they [i.e. the Two *Malkas*] are the (Divine) Lips.

For when the Tongue said this *Pagdama* (the (Divine) Word), they the Lips, adhere together and they make contact (or kiss) with one another. Through this [60] *Hugiana* (Syllable or Letter) they approach [each other].

@ Then after these Nine *Hugianas* (Letters) emanated and from that *Niṣubta* those ‘First Four’ Mysteries²⁷⁴ went off and said:

[61] We are those [or/the ones?] who understood the Mysteries and from Us everything came into being,²⁷⁵ until the Ninth are completed before You,²⁷⁶ and We are the Four who laid down in sleep [62] and did not realize it.

@ And after that *I* ‘<’ shouted in one shout²⁷⁷ and said: I am A ‘o’, but he came to the limit²⁷⁸ of himself, and turned back²⁷⁹ and his crown fell²⁸⁰ and it was impossible for him²⁸¹ (to keep

²⁷⁰ *dapa*: this word is mentioned inaccurately in the *MD* as *dap*; it may be in the form of *st abs* or *st castr*/? . Thus according to Drower and Macuch, *dap* means (a) ‘tambour’, (b) ‘skin, parchment’. *MD*, p. 100b. However, here it possibly means ‘the papyrus or paper or a material that is used for writing’. Despite some small texts of late Mandaean magical charms instructed to be written on some kinds of skins to do its magical purpose, the Mandaean-Naṣoraean writing or scribing tradition for the holy Scriptures never used any kind of the (leather) skin or parchment as a material to write on. However, apart from all of that, these meanings, the several (metaphorical) uses of *dapa* here, may raise an open question for future research about the writing material throughout the history of the Mandaeans, especially the use of the skin and parchment.

²⁷¹ *buṣa* means ‘bottom, anus’. See *MD*, p. 54. I opt for ‘uterus’, as this fits the context better.

²⁷² ‘*u la baiit* written above the line (*DQRDK*, 56) along with some other word that may have been forgotten by the latest copyist and inserted by him after he discovered that. However, these two words seem to be already written in the original main line (*DQRDK*, 56) with a very slight change as ‘*u labaiit*. Thus, for the correct and meaningful reading, the second one should be omitted.

²⁷³ This segment seems confused, but it seems to indicate that the *buTa* is the creative or creating power. This segment also seems to indicate that writing can be without limit. This is very confused and the copyist has omitted a section and then later on realized and attempted to fix his work, the result being confusion.

²⁷⁴ As we will see in this passage, the ‘First Four’ are the IKLM. They are the first four letters that come immediately after the first nine letters in the Mandaean alphabet. See, *DQRDK*, 62 ff., 69 ff., 53.

²⁷⁵ See the explanation below in the rest of this passage.

²⁷⁶ May refer to the Divine Author/Writer, that is *Mara d-Rabuta*.

his crown). [63] And then he (i.e. *I* ‘<’) repeated (to himself) and became the half of *A* (o),²⁸² but (he) could not stand straight. And then the mysteries raised²⁸³ him up. *I* ‘<’ emerged²⁸⁴ from being an arrogant child,²⁸⁵ until his power [64] and his *Dmuta* (image/counterpart)²⁸⁶ diminished²⁸⁷ among all the [other] mysteries. [And] Through the three brothers²⁸⁸ who are from him, *I* ‘<’, the kingdom²⁸⁹ is preserved. And their power in all the *Ginzas* (Treasures) is

²⁷⁷ *qidihta* (n.) from *QDH* II, ‘to cry, shout’. See *MD*, p. 405a. Cf. the classical Arabic *qadhat* which means ‘slandrous, libellous, defamatory, calumnious, vituperative’; and *qadh* which means ‘slander, libel, defamation, vituperation, invective, calumny, aspersion, traducement’. *qidh* means ‘arrow shaft; arrow’ and *qadah* means ‘cup; (drinking) glass, tumbler; goblet’. The Arabic verb *qadaha* 1 (fi) means ‘to slander, libel, defame, malign, vilify, vituperate, calumniate, asperse, traduce, speak evil of’; *qadaha* 2 means ‘to pierce, perforate, bore’; *qadaha alnar* 3 means ‘to strike fire (with a flint)’. See Al-mawred. Thus some of these Arabic meanings might match closely with the Mandaic ones.

²⁷⁸ *mišar* also means ‘boundary, demarcation’; rt. *MSR*, ‘to torment, torture’. See *MD*, pp. 227a, 142a.

²⁷⁹ *mahdrH*: AF impf. with encl. of *HDR* I (to turn, turn about, surround, do again). See *MD*, p. 131b.

²⁸⁰ *umhauia taga*: lit. ‘and the crown is fallen’. Thus, *taga* might be read (with the third person masculine pronoun (H)) *tagH*.

²⁸¹ *ulamjat dH*: lit. ‘his hand could not reach to keep it’ (the crown) because that was beyond his limit (or reach), but here it is metaphorical, referring to the loss of his kingdom (kingship). See *MD*, pp. 264a, b, 341a; *MG*, p. 366: 22.

²⁸² The letter *A* in Mandaic has two shapes. The separate one ‘o’ and the connected one ‘v’. The half of *A* ‘o’ is equal to *I* ‘<’. If the *A* ‘o’ is halved, it leaves one half looking like a *I* ‘<’, which also looks /similar to and connected to *A* ‘v’ but incomplete. Here, ‘the half of *A* ‘o’’ is a metaphor for *I* ‘<’. This is the only appearance of this explanation in the Mandaean literature, although for those adept in *Naširuta* it is common knowledge (i.e. secret knowledge). This unique play on words, points to a Mandaean Našorean nature, and thus to the authenticity of this manuscript. This can be used as an example for the esoteric writing and the nature.

²⁸³ *AsqulH*: af. pf. with pl. suff. and with encl. of *SLQ* AF: ‘to raise up, lift up, remove, dislodge’. See *MD*, p. 332a.

²⁸⁴ *nigba* rt. *NGB* (metathesis of *NBG*) ‘to sprout, sprout up, surge up, emerge’. But *NBG*, also means ‘to rise, spring up, sprout, break out’. See *MD*, pp. 287b, 288a. Another translation of the above would be ‘raised him *I* ‘<’ who emerged.’

²⁸⁵ *d-rbuta dardiqH*: lit. ‘his childish arrogance’. Frequently *rbuta2* (Targ. אָרְבוּרָה) (rt. *RBB*: to be great) comes with the verb *NSB* to give an idiomatic meaning ‘to be (come) proud, arrogant’. But here it carries in the same meaning as *dirdqta* (adj. fem. of *dirdqa* which always comes as a pl. (*dirdqia*, *dardqia*) ‘little, small, young (children), tender (shoots, fruits, etc.)’. See *MD*, pp. 109a, 422b, 423a.

²⁸⁶ Or: likeness.

²⁸⁷ *Bišrat*: pe. pf. fem. sg. of *BŠR*, ‘to: lack, lessen, (be) diminished, fail, be mean’, etc.. See *MD*, p. 68a.

²⁸⁸ The words *tlata ahia* (three brothers) appear suddenly and could be a metaphor for the three ‘parts’ of the letter *K* ‘**K**’. **K** = (V + > + <). On the one hand, this Mandaic letter is drawn with the three angles (v, <, >) in it. Each one of these angles represents the letter *I* ‘<’ = half of the letter *A* ‘o’. On the other hand, the secret Našorean teachings tell us that the Mandaic alphabetical letters are considered to be Elements participating in the ‘Great Creation’ precisely like the other Elements that are involved in it. All these Elements are called Mysteries and are considered to be, metaphorically, brothers because they all came into being and united (in unlimited forms) to create the Worlds. The Letters create or build the ‘Word’ and from the ‘Word (of God)’ everything was created or came into being. The idea appears also in the Biblical and Cabbalistic traditions.

²⁸⁹ *Malkuta*: ‘kingdom, sovereignty, reign, kingship, etc.’ See *MD*, p. 245a.

increased. For they are the *K*.²⁹⁰ [65] He (*K*) came to be the Head²⁹¹ of the *Mašbuta* (Baptism)²⁹² and the *Rušumas*²⁹³ (Signs) of the *Mašbuta*²⁹⁴ are guarded²⁹⁵ in him, and he is called:

*kt asa asa bgninia? d-hibil rauz.*²⁹⁶

When the myrtle, the myrtle, flourished

In the gardens of Hibil²⁹⁷

Twenty- [66] Four²⁹⁸ letters²⁹⁹ emanated from him. Just like³⁰⁰ the A 'o' from which the twenty-four letters came into existence.³⁰¹

²⁹⁰ Another translation for *uhailaihun bkulhun ginzia npis d-hinun k* could also be: 'and their power (or strength) is great in all the *Ginzas* (Treasures) which are the *K*'. The passage tries to tell us about the mystery of *K* and its parts that came together (V, <, >) to form one strong mystery. The second and the third parts of *K*, which are (V, >) can be seen to be also a half A 'o' but turned around. So we can say that every mystery came into being from and after A 'o' and when the parts of A 'o' - which are *II* '<<' -joined together (even if in different ways) they created a new (true) mystery (i.e. letter).

²⁹¹ *riša* could also mean 'beginning, opening'.

²⁹² Another translation could be: 'He (*K*) is the Head] of the *Mašbuta* (Baptism)'.

²⁹³ *ruš(u)ma* means 'sign, mark, name given to the daily ritual ablution'. Here *rušumia* is used as a sacramental and technical term for the 'Signing' actions in the baptism of which the baptised receives two sets, one by water and the other by the Sesame oil to make the baptised a Mandaean or Naṣoraean 'Messiah King'. The term in general refers to the holy (redeeming) signs on the forehead: one in the water before crowning; the other outside of the water, after the crowning to make him or her as one of the righteous chosen, like a king (or, angel), sitting on his/her throne, holding the signs of baptism, and accepting them to join the World(s) of Light and uniting with them in the 'Great Communion of Life', that is, *Lufa Rba d-Hiia*. See H. Saed, 'Perspectives on Christian and Mandaean Baptism', VIII Symposium Syriacum, The University of Sydney, June 2000, The University of Sydney, 2000, *The Journal of Eastern Christian Studies*, ed. Rifaat Ebied and Herrman Teule, 2004, 1-4, pp. 319-347. Also see *MD*, p. 227b, 228a; *GY*, 1: 14 f., 20: 4, 304: 5; *CP*, 125: 16 f.; *JB*, 270: 2.

²⁹⁴ *Rušumia d- Mašbuta* (the Signs of Baptism) in the secret Naṣoraean teachings refer to many sacred mysteries. For example, the most well known ones are (i) Three *Rušumas* of the water; (ii) Three *Rušumas* of (Sesame) oil; (iii) The Signs of water in the ablution ritual *Rušuma*. Many others concern the top secret meanings of references within most of the Mandaean rituals (texts and actions). Also see H. Saed, 'Perspectives on Christian and Mandaean Baptism'; H. Saed, 'Al-ehtefalat Al-mandaeah'.

²⁹⁵ *Lgiṭia*: pass. pt. pl. pe. (with act meaning) of *LGT* 'to hold, take guard, grasp'. See *MD*, pp. 230a, 230b.

²⁹⁶ Cf. *CP* 122: 14-15 (no. 79).

²⁹⁷ *CP*, p. 89.

By way of commentary, we can see that the letter (*K*) in the word *kt* begins this hymn (i.e. no. 79). The verse, in fact, practically begins the whole baptismal ritual when the baptiser first starts to recite this hymn and twist the two myrtle branches together to begin the creation/rebirth. For they are male and female. The one on the right represents the male, while the branch on the left represents female. The movement of the twisting must be started from the right and towards the left; the heads must also always rise up facing the North. These two twisted initiated branches are prepared to form the circle of the myrtle wreath for the baptizer's *Margna* 'staff'. The translation of the first word *kt* is 'when'; it refers to the beginning, to the new of 'creation' or of the 'rebirth' of that 'new being' because every Mandaean ritual represents some kind of creation or a new born or being reborn with a 'perfect form'. We can also add to the above that, according to the secret Naṣoraean teaching, the letter *K* and all its meanings, names, samples and mysteries (i.e. the twenty-four letters which they emanated from him) refer to the central point in the Mandaean religion, *kušṭa*, which is completely hidden and ordered by *Manda d-Hiia* (the Knowledge/Gnosis of Life).

²⁹⁸ The Mandaean alphabet is said here to consist of twenty-four letters. However, it can be broken up as twenty-one letters plus the 3rd sg. *H*, the *d-*, which is used as relative particles, and the repetition of the A 'o' to end the alphabet, to complete the (endless) circle of life and creation.

@ And after that the *M* formed, emanated and came (into being!),³⁰² and he (*M*) is like³⁰³ [67] the *B*, [and the *B*] pushes³⁰⁴ all the mysteries together, as the lips³⁰⁵ adhere together,³⁰⁶ [and] this is the second³⁰⁷ coming together of *Ruha* (the Spirit) and *Nišimta* (the Soul) [68] when they approach³⁰⁸ one another.³⁰⁹

²⁹⁹ *pugdamH*: the copyist used the *H* for the pl. instead of *ia* 'o<' and that happens very often in the Mandaean writings. The *H* and the *ia* 'o<' are interchangeable to a certain degree. For details about the plural nouns and the role of *H* see *HCMM*; *MG*.

³⁰⁰ See p. n., *MD*, p. 225b.

³⁰¹ 'ka: 'There is, where?', but it is used here as a verb. Cf. *MD*, pp. 348b, 15b. The whole passage, *DQRDK*, 62-66, is very obscure and has complex and extended esoteric meanings. Thus, the literal translation becomes meaningless. The metaphorical meaning will be revealed or understood in the next section. The letters *A* and *K* represent the first half of the Alphabet while we will see that the letter *M* and the last letter *A* represent the second half of the Alphabet. The letter *L* has been omitted only in this verse purposely to make these two equal divisions possible, one on the right (of *L*) and one on the left (of *L*) as we will see.

³⁰² *Ata*: pe. pf. of *ATA* 'to come, arrive' but here, this verb carries the meaning of the verb *HUA* (come into being). Drower does not mention this meaning in her dictionary. Cf. *MD*, pp. 41b, 133a.

³⁰³ This passage seems to continue from the formation of the *K* from and after the *I* '<' to complete the first half of the Alphabet, that is, the first eleven letters/kings. However, in this passage (i.e. *DQRDK*, 62-66) for the time being, the *L* is omitted as it is dealt with as the middle of the alphabet.

³⁰⁴ *trinun*: p. pf. with pl. suff. of *TRA* 'to push, hit, cast, set, etc.'. Cf. *MD*, p. 182a.

³⁰⁵ He means the two lips of the mouth of each mystery. The Mandaeans love personification of things, adjectives, mysteries, etc.

³⁰⁶ This sentence is similar to the one in *DQRDK*, 59. It refers to the beginning (first) moment of new 'creation' or the 'rebirth' of that new being because most of the Mandaean rituals represent some kind of creation of a newborn with a perfect form.

³⁰⁷ *Qarabta*:* fem. of *qaba* (2): 'approach, offering, oblation'. The root is *QRB*, 'to approach, come together, draw near, approach with an offering = offer (approach to) attack, make way, associate with'. Cf. *MD*, pp. 415a, 415b. The 'First' *qarabta* (approach/coming together) is mentioned previously, and applies to the letter *B* (see *DQRDK*, 58-60), but without any mention of *Ruha* and *Nišimta*. However, here it is considered the 'Second' *qarabta*, which applies to the letter *M*. The latter one is similar to the former. The 'Second' *qarabta* is manifest not only because of the adherence of the (Divine) Lips (i.e. the Two *Malkas*) but also because *Ruha* and *Nišimta* approach one another.

³⁰⁸ *qribiun*:* pf. with pl. suff. of *QRB*. This form is not recognized by Noldeke in *MG* or by Drower and Macuch in their *MD*. Its form is identical with the imp. pl. of *QRB*, which appears in *DC* 34, (*DM'L*, 1037), in which it reads also as *qribiun* and carrying the same meaning of. See *SEK*, p. 55. Also see *MD*, p. 415b. Cf. *MG*, p. 219: 12.

³⁰⁹ The idea of this paragraph is similar to and a repetition of the one in *DQRDK*, 58-60. The first one was also for the *Ruha* and *Nišimta*, but *DQRDK* did not mention that because the author does not want to go further into the detail at this point or offer to explain it here. This provides a clear example of the Naṣōraean writing style and the way in which Naṣōraean ideas are developed. So the major point in both passages is not just the creation of the Alphabet but it leads also to the real major point in this creation which is the situation and the mystical relationship between *Ruha* and *Nišimta*.

@ And then, after them³¹⁰ [i.e. the letters I K L M], another³¹¹ four [letters]³¹² came [into being] [i.e. N S ' P].³¹³ After them³¹⁴ [i.e. after N S ' P], three of them [i.e. 3 letters from both sides of the Alphabet, which are B M P]³¹⁵ held each other. They [69] [i.e. the second set of four letters] are³¹⁶ N S ' P, and within them, are the four mysteries that are preceded by³¹⁷ I K L M. Thus within N S ' P are those other four [letters], which are their head [letters].³¹⁸ [70] Then from the³¹⁹ three letters [i.e. B M P], which are of the lips that adhere, *Ruha* and *Nišimta* approach³²⁰ [71] and hold one another. And from them [i.e. the three letters B M P], all Buildings (or, constructions)³²¹ and *Qadahs* (creatures, creations) come into being³²² and are

³¹⁰ *abatrūn* (the prep. *abatar* + with pl. suff. *un*) 'after (or behind) them'. For this meaning (or prep.) the Mandaean manuscripts usually used *abatrū*. *Abatrūn* here refers to the previous letters I K L M, which are not named yet but explained by the following sentences of this complex passage.

³¹¹ *Hurinia*: pl. masc. of *hurina* 'other, another'.

³¹² That is, N S ' P even though these four letters are not named yet, but from the explanation of the following sentences we know that they are N S ' P.

³¹³ *atun* (pe. pf. of *ATA*): probably it follows the same meaning that is carried by the verb *ata* in *DQRDK*, 66.

³¹⁴ *abatrūn*: it is important to note that this word is repeated in this passage twice. It is unlikely that this repetition is meant to be just to emphasize that the new four letters N S ' P came after I K L M. That is because of the sequence of this sentence and the general meaning. Thus, this second *abatrūn* here suggests the beginning of the following sentence instead of the ending of the preceding sentence.

³¹⁵ *Minaihun*: apparently means 'from them'. The whole sentence is obscure. Grammatically, this preposition/word particle should refer to the four letters N S ' P that emerge or came after the four previous letters I K L M). However, from the whole passage we know that *minaihun* refers to the three letters B M P.

³¹⁶ *d-hinun*: literally 'which they are'. Grammatically, one may suspect that *hinun* refers directly to the previous sentence (which mentioned three letters), that is: *abatrūn tlata minaihun hɔadia lgaʔ*. However, instead, we find that *hinun* in fact refers to the sentence before (which mentioned the four letters), that is: *uhaizak abatrūn arba hugiania atun*.

³¹⁷ *Rišaiun*: literally 'their head'. It means that the I K L M come before or proceed the N S ' P.

³¹⁸ (i) 'Their head' came in twice, but in various possessive suffs of the 3rd p. pl. masc. *rišaiun*, *rišaihun*. The letter *h* of the suff. is almost always dropped after a consonant and very often after a vowel'. See *MD*, p. 136a, *MG*, pp. 88: 9, 18 f.

(ii) This paragraph (lines 68-70) is very obscure and has complex syntax and monotonous repetition (of some words and sentences (i.e. *abatrūn*, 'after them')).

(iii) To follow the story of the creation of the Mandaic alphabet we should always go over its order.

³¹⁹ *bhalin*: originally 'those', but 'the' makes more sense to the modern reader, as this paragraph is a new idea and follows only partly from the previous paragraph.

³²⁰ Commentary: *B M P* are the letters which require the lips to adhere in order to pronounce them. *Ruha* and *Nišimta* are assimilated in each lip. See *DQRDK*, 58ff., 67f. (and their commentary).

³²¹ *Biniania*: in this plural form it is unclear whether this term refers to the many cosmic constructions that formed because of the main 'Great Creation', which I prefer, or refers to the constructions that lead to the formation of the Earthly world before the creation of the life on earth. Cf. *DQRDK*, H, in which the use of the term *Biniania* in its singular form clearly refers to the 'Universe' that is constructed because of the 'Great Creation'.

³²² *Haiun*: grammatically, it should be translated 'came in being'. However, the intended meaning refers to the present, not the past. This may be an example of the past that is intended to be present.

held together. They are the [letters] B M P. [72] They are [as follows]: *B*, He is the germinator³²³ (or the food) of the Mysteries³²⁴; *M*, He is the Water³²⁵ which the Mysteries drink; (and) *P*, He is the Mouth³²⁶ which the Mysteries open for [eating] food³²⁷ and drink(ing).

[73] @ These are the Three Mysteries, 'Water', 'Wind', and 'Fire'. And the Fourth³²⁸ [Mystery] is their³²⁹ Pagra (Body)³³⁰ in which they [i.e. the Three Mysteries] were preserved (and)³³¹ it [i.e. Pagra] is called 'the Earth', [74] and an 'Embryo Formation'³³² took shape in those 'Black Waters' by Itself.³³³ For they, 'the Black Waters,' are the 'External Blood' which is not returned to 'Ušfuna (the body/trunk). [75] [And in it] every thirty days there is a 'Sexual Urge (or force)',³³⁴ that attempts (or seeks) to remain or enclose itself in a *Kinta*

³²³ *Buqla* (rt. B Q L) begins with the letter *B*. Here it may mean 'germinator', as far as I can tell. I could not find this word or its root or any other linguistic indication to it in *MD* or in any other linguistic source on Mandaic, such as *MG* or *HCMM*. I think it lit. means: 'broad bean, pulse, legumes'. Thus, it is similar to the Arabic words *baqelaa* 'bean(s), broad bean(s)' or '*baql* or *baqlat* 'legume(s); herb(s), greens, herbaceous plant(s); vegetable(s)'. These are from the Arabic verb *baqala* 'to grow, sprout, and germinate'. See Munir Al-Baalabaki, *Qamus Al-Mawred*, Dar Alaelem Lelmalyeen, Beirut, 2000, (*baqelaa*, *baql*, *buqul*, *baql*, *baqlat*).

³²⁴ *razia*: it refers here to the parts and the organs of the Universal Embryo and Body.

³²⁵ *mia* begins with the letter *M*. The word means 'water(s), juice, fluid, sap'. See *MD*, p. 265a, *MG*, 97:17.

³²⁶ *puma* begins with the letter *p*. The word means 'mouth, orifice, opening'. See *MD*, p. 368a.

³²⁷ *l'kilta* (the Procl. Prep. (*l*) + *kilta*, 'food, meal'): lit. means 'for food', but I think the meaning here is eating food, because the mouth is used for eating 'food' and drinking. See *MD*, p. 349b, *MG*, p. 28 n. 3, 117: bottom.

³²⁸ When Drower encounters the same word, with the variation of Uariaia being Rabaiia in *ATŠ* 1 no. 257, she translates it as 'nurturers'. In her dictionary, she translates it as 'foster-parents'. These translations stem from *RBA*. However, from the context of the sentence she should have simply recognized the word to be 'fourth.'

³²⁹ *dilun*, similar to *dilhun*, both of which literally mean 'them'. See *MD*, p. 107a f.

³³⁰ *pagra* means 'body'. Here it is used in the singular form metaphorically to refer to the Fourth Element, that is Earth. Cf. *MD*, pp. 359a f.; *ATŠ*, p. 180 n. 3.

³³¹ *d*: translated here as 'and'.

³³² *tulita gbilta*: A typical Mandaean expression usually incorporated with the Mandaean creation and reformation story.

³³³ *d-mn napših*: despite that, *ATŠ*. p. 52 (no. 257) has these same words (with very slight differences, as DC 6 has *d- mn napšH* and DC 36 has *mn napših*). Drower, mistakenly, ignored these words and excluded/omitted them from her translation. Cf. *ATŠ*, p. 180.

³³⁴ *haila zania*: a very rare Mandaean expression.

(Womb)³³⁵ [but is unable] until ‘the Water [of Life]/[Living] Water’,³³⁶ which is [called]³³⁷ ‘Living Semen’,³³⁸ reaches it.

@ [76] And then after Nine months It strikes out, kicks and disturbs the earth and the heavens until It leaves [77] from the Exit and so It emerges from Its *Kinta* (enveloping receptacle) and It shows forth mighty deeds [in the ‘Worlds and Generations’],³³⁹ and It is³⁴⁰ *Gabra Qadmaia* (the Primal Being) who has precedence over (or is older than) [78] Water, Radiance, Light and Glory.³⁴¹

@ Thus as one Mystery [i.e. (Divine Alphabetical) Letter]³⁴² after another, understood (or discovered) itself and descended to its place (or took its place), [79] It worshipped and praised Him [the Mystery/Letter] who preceded it.³⁴³

³³⁵ Drower explains *Kinta* in her note as follows: ‘*Kinta* is a word of wide meaning. (Lidzbarski :-’ein Wort kosmischer Bedeutung’). In general, it means an enclosing or concealing veil or vessel, a receptacle, a wrapping, something which envelopes in a manner which hides and contains.’ *ATS*, p. 180 n. 4. In this passage, the word refers to the womb.

³³⁶ The similar passage of *ATS*, no 257 explained this kind of ‘Water’, for it has: *mia hiia*. Also another Mandaic manuscript, *Zarista d-Zarziel*, contains the same sentence with the addition of *Hiia*.

³³⁷ *DQRDK*, 76 has *d-h’ amzruta haita*, while *ATS*, no 257, has *d-hinun mazruta haita mitiqria*. This could be considered as a good example for how *DQRDK*’s writer shortened the sentences that he used from *ATS*. This also helps us to understand that many extra words could be deleted or replaced from the original text without changing the meaning. It is very rare to find such very precise communication between two different Mandaean scrolls.

³³⁸ *mazruta haita*: this expression appears again with a slightly different meaning. Cf. *DQRDK*, 5.

³³⁹ *balmia udaria*: found included in the similar passage of *ATS*, p. 64 (no. 257), while omitted from *DQRDK*, 77.

³⁴⁰ *DQRDK*, 77 has *aminful d-hu ... hu*. But in the similar passage, *ATS*, p. 53 (no. 257) has only one *hu* which is located at the end of the sentence, i.e. *aminful d- ... hu*. This could be considered as an example of the additional words that are inserted and used by the writer of *DQRDK* without affecting the original meaning of *ATS*. This indicates also another kind of variety that is used by *DQRDK*’s writer.

³⁴¹ *gabra qadmaia d-qašiš mn qudam mia uziua unhura u’qara*: this is the same verse in the first prayer in the *Q*. Cf. *CP*, p. 1 (no. 1). Also see *DQRDK*, 53&54. In *ATS*, p. 180 n. 5 Drower explains further about the meaning of *Gabra Qadmaia*:

Gabra does not only mean anthropos, but is used in the sense in which we say ‘a Being’, namely an Entity, a superhuman Being in the shape of Man. The *Gabra Qadmaia* is a cosmic figure, resembling the Qabbalistic Adam Qadmon, (the archetype Man, the form in which *Em Sof* – the Infinite – is revealed to the material consciousness).

³⁴² *raza* is omitted in *ATS*, p. 53 (no. 258). Drower speculated that the meaning of the sentence refers to ‘creation’. However, she could not identify the creation of what. *DQRDK*, 78 provides the precise answer and the original meaning that is referred to here by the writer of both documents. It should be noted here that *raza* as a Mystery is a metaphor used to refer to the Letter. Because *raza* is used frequently in this passage and in many others that concern the creation of the Letters, this is again an example of the effort that is made by *DQRDK*’s writer to understand and verify the correct and original meaning. This example is proof of the consistency between the two documents, which may lead us to suggest that the writer of both is one. If not, then the writer of *DQRDK* lived in the same time as or shortly after the completion of the writing of *ATS*, in particular *DTP*.

³⁴³ ‘Him’ here clearly refers to *raza* (Mystery/Letter). However, Drower, suggests that ‘Him’ shall be read as Man? (*ATS*, p. 180 n. 7). Drower seems very confused and uncertain about the translation of the whole passage, including the following few lines. This may be because of the omission of the word *raza* from the beginning of this passage. In addition, ‘Him’ also refers to the first letter *A* and the whole passage devoted to depict the emanation of this letter and its relation with *Niḡubta* or *Niḡupta*. After that point *DQRDK*, 79 has omitted a few

@ And then the A worshipped *Niṭubta* for She is *Buṭa* ((the Divine) Uterus/Source) from which it derived [its] existence.³⁴⁴

sentences and directly/immediately starts with the appearance of the letter A, as we will see in the next paragraph. However, in *ATŠ*, no. 258, the letter A is not mentioned in the text, but it is very clear that the text at that place makes many indirect and metaphorical references to this letter and its emanation. All of this could be easily clarified when we put together and compare the two passages in both *DQRDK* and *ATŠ*, (see the next note). Thus, it is important to revise the reading of this passage in *ATŠ* according to the reading of *DQRDK*. Consequently, a revision of Drower's translation is required here.

³⁴⁴ *DQRDK*, 79 has:

@ *uhaizak a sgidlH lniṭubta d-h' buṭa d- mina hua.*

But *ATŠ* has:

**haizak kt niṭufta huat u'ṣṭararat minh dilh praš unfaq * hauzak sgidlh (sagadulh) ušabh 'l aminṭul d minh (mia) dilh praš unfaq.*

ATŠ, p. 53 (no. 258) has the following:

so, when Woman came into being and took shape she proceeded and emanated from Him.
Thus they worshipped and praised Him because they emanated from Him.

ATŠ, p. 180.

...	180
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Figure 9 - Folio 8
 [For an enlarged and clearer reproduction of this folio, see Appendix A.]

Folio 8

Translation of the Text (An Explanation of the Illustrations)

@ The B worshipped [80] the A for He [i.e. the A] is the Crown from which He [i.e. the B] derived existence.³⁴⁵

³⁴⁵ DQRDK, 79-80 has:
 @ b sgidH 'l a d-hu taga hu d-minH hua
 ATŠ, p. 53 (no. 258) has:

@ In addition, the *G* worshipped the *B*, and the *D* worshipped the *G* and all of them, Twenty-Four Kings,³⁴⁶ each one [81] worshipped another and did not become swollen with pride,³⁴⁷ so that *Biniana* (the Edifice)³⁴⁸ might not be destroyed.³⁴⁹

When *Biniana Bukra* (the Earliest Edifice)³⁵⁰ became swollen with pride and no *Msuta* (consolidation)³⁵¹ [82] took place within *Aina* (the Wellspring (of Earth)),³⁵² it [i.e. *Biniana Bukra*] became depraved³⁵³ and fell, which grieved *Yalda* (the Newborn/Baby) and (it) said: ‘I have sinned and I have been foolish’, [for] sins had originated from it/him, also abortions and

*tum kt hua Ba (huibh) sgad (sagid) ušabh lhahu d minh hua d hu taga d kulhun malkia taršilh umšabilh uminh lnhura salqia.

This is translated as: hence, when the Ba (B) came into being, it worshipped and praised Him from whom it derived existence, for He is the Crown which all kings set on (their heads), and laud It, and raise up with It to the Light (ATŠ, p. 180).

³⁴⁶ Regarding the Mandaean alphabet and the emanation of the letter *A* and the other letters in the similar passage see ATŠ, p. 180 nn. 8 and 9.

³⁴⁷ *rbuta MD* (p. 423): pride, arrogance although the word more often is used to express ‘greatness, magnificence majesty, rank’. In ATŠ p. 181 n. 1 Rabuta has this meaning.

³⁴⁸ *Biniana*: building, construction, composition, something put together. See *DQRDK*, I (folio 1- chapter 6 nn. 20, 21), above.

³⁴⁹ *DQRDK*, 80-1 has:

ug sgidlH ‘l b ud sgidlH lg ukulhun hauin srin uarba malkia d-had lhurina sgidH urbuta ‘lH lansib d-biniana lamithambal

ATŠ, p. 53 (no. 258) has:

uhu G šabh[typing mistak: h=h] lDa (lD) ušabh lGa (lG)uhua šabh lDa (lD) uhad had malka šabh usgadlh lman d hu minh qašiš alma d kulh biniana (kiniana) ‘stadar bsrin uarba malkia ulgaṭ nafšaihun d binianun lamithambal.

And the *G* praised the *B* and the *D* praised the *G*: each king (*malka*) praised and worshipped him who was anterior to himself, until a structure was built up composed of twenty-four kings, who held themselves (together) so that their edifice might not be destroyed (ATŠ, p. 180).

³⁵⁰ *Biniana Bukra*: a rare Mandaean expression. I have found it used in the Mandaean creation story only in ATŠ, I no. 258 and *DQRDK*, 81, as far as I can tell. The meaning in both passages refers to the First Stage in the creation, which is the earliest effort(s) to make the (Earthly creation). It is parallel to *Yalda* (the Newborn Baby). The meaning corresponds to the Newborn Baby, as we will see in the next sentence. This expression might also be a reference to the earliest and premature effort(s) of *Ptahil* to consolidate the Earth. As this passage goes on, a feeling builds up that *Biniana Bukra* is also a hidden Naṣōraean reference to *Ptahil* Himself, as He may be considered as the First Heavenly Force/Being that was born as a result of the Cosmic marriage between *Hibil Ziua* and *Zahr’ il*, who represent the two Forces/Beings from the World of Light and the World of Darkness, respectively. It is the First clearly distinguished bridging or cooperation between these Worlds.

³⁵¹ *msuta*: a special Mandaean term usually used in the Mandaean creation story.

³⁵² ATŠ, p. 53 (I no. 258) has ‘bhanath aina’, means ‘within that Wellspring’ ATŠ, p. 181. However, *DQRDK*, 82 has only *aina*. Here *aina* may be used metaphorically. In this case the term *Aina* in this passage may refer either to (i) the Wellspring of creation process, that is the early stages in the creation process, including the earthly creation; or (ii) Earth, or in other words, that is to say *Aina d-Arḡia* (the Wellspring of Earth’, which is an expression found only in *DQRDK*). Another possibility (which I do not support), however, might indicate that *aina* is used to mean ‘Eye’. In this case it might be the Eye of the Earthly creator, that is *Ptahil*, according to the general Mandaean story of creation, as depicted in *GR*, III ff.

³⁵³ *ata*: literally ‘he came, he arrived’. However, the meaning here follows the ideations of the general meaning of the passage. Cf. *MD*, p. 41bf.

miscarriages.³⁵⁴ [83] They [i.e. The Letters/Kings] brought grief upon themselves and secluded themselves, for they were cut off [from the Light]³⁵⁵ and outcast from the 'Rightful Mysteries'³⁵⁶ in which there is *Kušṭa* (Truth).³⁵⁷

[84] For this reason, [in] every *Mazruta* (Seed) that does not have *Kušṭa* (Truth) in its Beginning³⁵⁸ [i.e. at the beginning of of its *Biniana* (Structure)] and [is] without *Naṣra d-Kušṭa* (Safeguard of Truth) set in order in its End³⁵⁹ (in its Final Stage), 'the Mystery of Gold and Silver' [85] does not speak therein [and] it [i.e. the Seed/Structure] does not rise to the House of Life.³⁶⁰

³⁵⁴ *DQRDK*, 82 has *uiahuṭaiia minH hun d-iaḥṭia unipṣia*; while *ATŠ*, p. 53 (I no. 258), has *d iahaṭaiia minh hun (huṣ) uyaḥṭia (d yaḥṭia) unipṣia*: 'For sins had originated from it, and abortions and miscarriages' (*ATŠ*, p. 181). A similar sentence appears also in *GY*, 231: 5 *iahuṭaiia iaḥṭia unipṣia* 'Jews-abortion and excrements'. This sentence appears as an example in *MG*, p. 320: 11. This is also included in the *MD*, p. 184b in two places (*iahuṭaiia* and *iaḥṭia*). However, *MD* (*iaḥṭia*) includes a reference to a part of the above *ATŠ* sentence without further explanation.

³⁵⁵ Cf. *ATŠ*, p. 181 (I no. 258).

³⁵⁶ *razia taqnia*: a Mandaean expression which has many meanings. Here it refers to 'the Divine Mysteries of *Kušṭa*'.

³⁵⁷ *DQRDK* has:

Inapṣaihun asiq unapṣaihun gzariun aminṭul d-'tagzar utbarun mn razia taqniaq d-kuṣṭa 'tbun.
ATŠ, p. 53 (I no. 258) has:

Inafṣaihun asiq unafṣaihun gzariun aminṭul d mn nhura 'tagzar 'lawaihun utbarun (u'tbarun) mn razia taqniaq d kuṣṭa 'tbun.*

³⁵⁸ *Riṣa*: this is also a reference to the beginning of the consecration of the crown on the head of the priest at the beginning of any Mandaean ritual, which must start with the verse of *Kušṭa*. Another possible translation for this part could be: 'every *Mazruta* (Seed) without *Kušṭa* in its Beginning' or 'which does not begin with *Kušṭa*'.

³⁵⁹ *Dinba*: it refers here also to the end or the final stage of any Mandaean ritual. It must seal its end with the prayer of *Naṣra d-Kušṭa*.

³⁶⁰ This passage contains a very typical Mandaean-Naṣoraean secret interpretation. The passage in *ATŠ* is shortened and changed in *DQRDK*. For *DQRDK*, 84-5 has:

aminṭul d-kul mazruta d-kuṣṭa bgauH lahauia briṣa unaṣra d-kuṣṭa ubdinba lasadarlh uraz dahba ukaspa [85] bgauH lamamlil lbithiia lasalqa @

ATŠ, p. 53 (I no. 259) has:

*tum aminṭul kul mazruta d kuṣṭa bgauh lahawia briṣa riṣ (briṣ riṣ) biniana lataqun * tum kt naṣra d kuṣṭa d bdinba d biniana lahawia ubdinbh sahduta naṣra d kuṣṭa lanishad bbiniana hanath mithasar unithambal kt lahua uṣitla umazruta hanath qaima bsadia balhudh aminṭul d kuṣṭa riṣa d biniana hu unaṣra d kuṣṭa uhatma d biniana hu kt ṣabahata d masiqta d hu msadarlh (msadralh) 'u kuṣṭa tiniana usahduta tiniantia upihata umambuha hurina bmasiqta umaṣbuta lahawia ulamitqaimia ulbit hiia lasalqan * uraza d zahba ukasfa bgauh lamamlil lbit hiia lasalqia**

And this is the reason: that without *kuṣṭa* (truth) as its first principle Seed is structurally and fundamentally unsound: further, if the safeguard of truth which ratifieth its construction is missing, and at the conclusion testimony protected by truth is not given, then such a structure is deficient, and in such a ruinous state that it is as if it had never existed, and that Planting and Sowing cometh up in desert-lands, alone (untended?). For *kuṣṭa* is the foundation-stone of a building, and the safeguard of *kuṣṭa* is the (final) seal of construction, just as the (prayer) 'Of our Forefathers' (is the seal) of the *masiqta*, for it confirmeth it. If in a *masiqta* or baptism the second *kuṣṭa*, the 'second testimony' and the latter *pihta* and *mambuha* are omitted, then (these rites) are invalid and do not arise to the House of Life. If the mystery of Gold and Silver doth not speak therein, they do not arise to the House of Life (*ATŠ*, p. 181).

This translation needs to be understood more according to the Inner Mandaean-Naṣoraean teaching and thus the retranslation is preferable here.

@ And so when they [i.e. the Mysteries/Letters] understood the [secret] Mysteries of their Nest (or Crowns)³⁶¹ each of them took itself in hand³⁶² until [86] they were set in order and knew where they were attending. The Mysteries of the Right knew themselves, and the Mysteries of the Left had [just] expressed (or separated) themselves,³⁶³ and so at this point there was a *plugta* ('Division') [87] that came into being, which is from the *L* and down to the *A*,³⁶⁴ they were 'Twelve [letters]',³⁶⁵ and from 'the halfway' [after] the *L* unto the end, which is *II* [i.e. *A*] 'and Life', they were also 'Twelve [letters]',³⁶⁶ because [88] they divided that

³⁶¹ *qinaiun* also means 'origin, family descent, and lineage'. See *ATŠ*, p. 181. However it may mean 'their Crowns'. Thus, a different (Naṣoraean) reading could translate the sentence as 'the Mysteries of their Crowns'. This is because *Qinta* is also used as a metaphor for the Crown.

³⁶² 'LGṬ with *naṣṣa* = 'to regulate one's conduct, grasp or take hold of oneself, take oneself in hand'. *ATŠ*, p. 81 n. 4.

³⁶³ See *ATŠ*, p. 181 n. 5.

³⁶⁴ *DQRDK*, 85 has: *d-mn l ualma 'l a*. *ATŠ*, p. 53 (I no. 260) has: *L alma La*.

³⁶⁵ 'The twelfth letter in the Mandaic alphabet leaves twelve other letters to come, including the *edda* (*d*) and the final *A*' (*ATŠ*, p. 181 no. 6).

³⁶⁶ *DQRDK*, 85 has:

@ *uhaizak kt praš razia qinaiun had lhudH napših lgaṣ alma d-[86]' tquniun u'dun 'lia hu mizlun razia d-iamina napšaihun 'da urazia d-smala napšaihun praš uhaizak plugta [87] hatam huat d-mn l ualma 'l a trisar hun umnpalga d- l ldinba d-hu ii uhiia trisar hun.*

ATŠ, p. 53 (I no. 260) has:

**haizak kt hzun razia qinaiun prašaiun had lhudh (lhurina) napših lgaṣ alma d tquniun u'dun 'lia (lyahu) mizlun urazia d yamina napšaihun (npišium) lgaṣ u'da d (not in DC 36) raziahun d smala napšaihun praš * uhaizak kt hzun plugta hatam huat L alma La trisar hun mn plaga La ldinba d hiia trisar hu.*

And so, when they beheld the mysteries of their Nest (origin, family descent), they understood, and each of them individually took itself in hand until they were in order and knew whither they were tending. And the mysteries of the Right governed themselves and knew that the mysteries of the Left had expressed themselves. And so, as they perceived, at this point there was a division. The 'L' came into being, and up to the 'La' they were twelve. And from the halfway 'La' unto the end of the living (mysteries ?) it was (also) twelve (*ATŠ*, p. 181).

According to our comparative study of these passages and Drower's translation and notes we find the following:

- (i) Despite the many small linguistic differences between *DQRDK* and *ATŠ*, and also between both copies of *ATŠ*, that is DC 36 & 6, there are many words that should be read according to our reading of *DQRDK*. Our reading offers a solution to many difficulties of understanding and a new method of correction of Drower's translation and mistakes.
- (ii) *DQRDK*, 85 has '*lia hu* which suggests that DC 6 has the right version, that is *lyahu* (in which both words are connected, as part of the Mandaean scribe's habit) while DC 36 has only one word, that is '*lia*. This is provided here as an example of the need for more old copies for any study of the Mandaean documents, which still needs the Mandaean scholars.
- (iii) Both copies of DC 36 & 6, which are used by *ATŠ*, has: *uhaizak kt hzun plugta hatam huat*. However, when we consult the two *ATŠ* copies of the library of Ganzibra Dkhil, we find that these words in the copy B are similar to that of DC 36 & 6. But the interesting thing is found in copy A, which has: *uhaizak plugta hatam huat*. This version is very close to the words that are in *DQRDK*, 86-7, which are *uhaizak plugta [87] hatam hua*. Both copy A and *DQRDK* do not have the two words *kt hzun*. This is evidence that *ATŠ* and *DQRDK* are very close to each other and *ATŠ*'s passages should be studied again with the help of *DQRDK* and more *ATŠ* copies.
- (iv) *DQRDK*, 85 has: *d-mn l ualma 'l a*, while both copies of *ATŠ*, p. 53 (I no. 260) have: *L alma La*. It seems that the original version of *ATŠ* was similar to that of *DQRDK*. For the sentence of *ATŠ* makes no sense at all. I believe that the Mandaic preposition *l* (which is usually written in two ways: *l* and '*l*') in *ATŠ* is mistakenly joined, in the old copies, with

Aina (Wellspring) in which there are 'Four Corners'. And thus, it is a *Dmuta* (an image) which is named *L*, which is 'the middle-half' of the Alphabet. It is seen [89] by the Mysteries.³⁶⁷

-
- the letter *a*. And nobody has corrected it later, maybe because they believed that the *la* is the scribe's way of writing the letter *l*. For the separate Alphabetical Mandaic letters are traditionally pronounced as /lā/. Consequently, the reading should follow *DQRDK*.
- (v) The same thing could be said regarding the mistake that is repeated in the second following sentence of *ATŠ*, for it has *mn plaga La l dinba* while *DQRDK* still has the correct version that is *umnpalga d- l l dinba*.
- (vi) *DQRDK*, 86 has *razia d-smala*, while both copies of *ATŠ*, I 260 have *raziun d smala*. However, the two *ATŠ* copies of Ganzibra Dikhil have a similar version to *DQRDK*. This is also a sample confirming our statement above regarding consulting more copies and studying of the *ATŠ* material.
- (vii) *ldinba d-hu ii uhiia*: while *ATŠ* has *ldinba d hiia*, which makes no sense, for it makes the sentence and the whole passage unclear. This caused Drower to make a great mistake in her translation. As we can see she translated it 'unto the end of the living (mysteries ?)'. The above similar sentence of *DQRDK* contains the solution that may correct Drower's mistakes and clarify the meaning. However, if we look again at the rest of the sentence after *dinba* in *DQRDK*, we will find that the word *dinba* (end) is explained in *DQRDK* in a much more complex way, which is very confusing for those who have no deep Naṣōraean knowledge. By using *d-hu* (which is or that is), *dinba* is explained in the text by two secret Naṣōraean codes, that is *II* and *hiia*. The literal translation becomes meaningless and useless. Thus, a Naṣōraean interpretation(s) is needed to reveal the real meaning in both *DQRDK* and *ATŠ*. Here we may offer one mystical Naṣōraean interpretation as follows:
- (a) *dinba* refers to the end or the last letter in the Mandaean Alphabet, that is the letter *a*, which is also the first letter. According to the Mandaean theology, *Hiia* (Life) is eternal; it is the beginning and the end of every thing. Every thing is living and moving in circles towards and connected with its beginning, and so, too, with the Mandaean Alphabet.
- (b) The repeated letter *i*, that is '>>', is a secret code. They (i.e. *i i*) refer again to the letter *a*. This can be confirmed by consulting our translation, notes and comments on *DQRDK*, 62ff. For example the letter *i* is called in *DQRDK*, 63 by *palga d- a* (the half/part of A). By bringing the face and the back of the two illustrated shapes of the *ii*, the result of '<>' of course becomes the letter 'O'. This turning and bringing together the *ii* appears later in another secret, but clearer in shape, in *DQRDK*, 90 as '<>'.
- (c) The word *hiia* or *uhiia* refers to the Life who also identifies with the letter *a*. In addition, the letter *a* in this word comes after the *ii*, which fits perfectly with what I mentioned earlier. Furthermore, we may say that *hiia* or *uhiia* is usually included in the last verse that is used to end any Mandaean-Naṣōraean sacred and the majority of the prayers, like *uhiia zakin*, *umšabin hiia*, *uhiia zakin lkuhun 'badia*, etc.
- (d) Because there are many more secrets involved in these codes. However, the conclusion suggested is that the words *ldinba d hiia* should be read and retranslated according to *DQRDK* and its codes.

³⁶⁷ *DQRDK* has:

aminṭul [88] d-pilgu lhazin aina d-h' arbia zaiata 'tlh uhaizak dmuta h' d-hu l šumH d-hu palga d-hugiania 'tahzilH [89] brazia.

ATŠ, p. 53 (I no. 260) has:

aminṭul d palgu lhazin aina d hu arbia zaiata 'tlh haizak dmuth d h' dilh d hu L šumh palga d hugiania 'tahzia.

Thus its counterpart which pertaineth to it, which is named 'L' is seen to be the middle-half of the alphabet. (*ATŠ*, p. 181).

By consulting the copies of *ATŠ* A and B in the library of Ganzibra Dekhiel, we have found that the copy B is similar to DC 36 & 6. However, the copy A has:

aminṭul d-palgu lhazin aina d-hu arbia zaiata 'tlh uhaizak dmuta d-h' dilH d-hu L šumH uhu palga d-hugiana 'tahzia brazia.

Once again, these have similar words to *DQRDK*. In particular, both have the words *razia*, *hu*, which are omitted in the other copies of *ATŠ*. Thus, re reading and retranslation are needed for this passage in the light of *DQRDK*. Also see the previous note.

When they [the Mysteries/letters] saw the Mysteries of themselves in which there was imperfection/deficiency,³⁶⁸ they say: 'If we separate/divide ourselves, we move apart [90] from one another³⁶⁹ and *Biniana* (the Building/Construction/World/Universe) '◁',³⁷⁰ will not hold itself [together]. [But] if we approach one another and merge (or combine/united) together, *Biniana* (the Building) will be set in (or will stay in) order, and [it/He]³⁷¹ will assume (/receive/take up) their portion (/part/share).³⁷²

@ However, if [91] we do not stay (or join) together, the Right will be useless, the Left will be ruined, and the Mouth (or mouthing) of every one of the Mysteries will be ruined.³⁷³

Thus, when they who beheld themselves [92] took one another's hands at the 'Four Corners' and they moved close towards the 'A'. and He set them all with/in *Malkuta* (a Kingdom) and

³⁶⁸ 'Deficiency, error or fault'.

³⁶⁹ *ATŠ*, p. 181 (I no. 260) has a similar sentence, 'we place ourselves at a distance [90] from one another'.

³⁷⁰ '◁': it is a combination of two Mandaic letters, that is *I U*, respectively. Both of them reformed together to create a sacred Naṣoraean symbol. It could be read as a secret name of the First Emanation, i.e. the first letter 'A'. The two letters are in fact, the two parts of the letter *A*. In addition, both of these two letters are also a secret sign or signal of the repletion of the letter *I*. Parts of the letter *A* or *I* are used to form all other Mandaic letters, except the *A*. This is because the letter *I* is in fact an emanation from the *A*. *I* is the half of the *A*. This symbol (i.e. '◁') is depicted earlier in another two shapes in *DQRDK*, 87, that is '>>' and (*u*)*Hii*a. It is also explained in some detail in *DQRDK*, 58, 62 ff. This symbol (i.e. '◁') contains four angles forming a square – like shape. For this reason, the Naṣoraean read this symbol also from another aspect. They called it *Biniana*. The symbol '◁' is located exactly between *Biniana* and the reference of *Biniana*, i.e. *napšiH* (itself). Like this symbol, *Biniana* contains the four universal directions/angles.

³⁷¹ This may refer to *Mara d-Rabuta/Hii*a (Life), that is, 'the First Emanation, the Master-Builder'. See also *ATŠ*, p. 181 n. 10.

³⁷² *DQRDK*, 89-90 has:

kt hzun razia napšaihun bhasiruta amria 'u palginin napšaian mitrahqinīn [90] mn hɗadia ubiniana u i napšiH lalagīṭ 'u qarbinin uarbinin bihɗadia sadar biniana umnata nasib.

ATŠ, p. 53 (I no. 260) has:

kt hun H razia napšaihun bhasiruta amria u'thaial (not in DC. 6) amria 'u ('l) palginin napšaiun (napšaian) umn hɗadia mitrahqinīn biniana napšiH lalagīṭ 'u qarbinin uarbinin mn hɗadia msadrinalh (msadrinalh) lbiniana umsadrinalh anin mn ṭabuth aklīnīn ukt had had minaiun (minaiān) sadar biniana mnata rišaita nasib.

When they were 'H', the mysteries expressed themselves defectively, but encouraged themselves saying 'If we separate ourselves and place ourselves at a distance from one another, the Building will not hold together. (But) if we approach one another and merge together we shall construct the building soundly and will lay it in orderly fashion. We shall eat His bounty, and when each of us is set in order in the building, He will assume the principal part (*ATŠ*, p. 181).

³⁷³ *DQRDK*, 90-1 has:

@ 'u [91] larbinin mn hɗadia iamina baṭil usmala mithambal upumH had had raza mhambal@

ATŠ, p. 53 (I no. 260) has:

'u larbinin (larabinin) mn hɗadia iamina baṭil usmala mithambal upuma (upumh) had hudu (had) raza mhambal

But if we do not join with one another, the Right will be useless, the Left ruined and the mouth (mouthing ?) of every one of the mysteries will be spoilt (*ATŠ*, p. 181).

Qabin (a Partnership)³⁷⁴ and testified to them through a witness [93] and thus *Baita* (the House/World) was established perfectly/in harmony.³⁷⁵

And then He brought dust and water and straw,³⁷⁶ and mixed them together and brought *Amuma** (the mother's shape maker)³⁷⁷ which is *Qalib* (a [brick-maker's] mold), and placed it [94] amongst them. And it was created for *Baita* (the House/World),³⁷⁸ and its name is '*Libna*' (builder's clay/clay-brick/mud-brick).³⁷⁹ Then³⁸⁰ the 'Š' questioned³⁸¹ the 'L',³⁸² saying to it: 'This that **thou** makest, what is [95] its name?'

³⁷⁴ *qabin*: lit. 'marriage(-contract), dowry'. See *MD*, p. 398b. However, here it means a partnership or a contract of partnership. In similar passage, *ATŠ*, I no. 260 has *qarbinun luath*.

³⁷⁵ Another translation could be, 'and the house was raised up (or set up or organized or put together)'. For this part, *DQRDK*, 91-3 has:

@ *hazin hzun napšaihun* [92] *arbia zauia hdadia 'daihun lgaṭ uluath d-a mizlun uhu*³⁷⁵
*hdadia bmalkuta uqabin usahduta 'lawaihun sahdia*³⁷⁵ [93] *ubaita 'tasaqlia*

ATŠ, p. 53 (I no. 260) has:

kt hazin (haizin) hzun nafšaihun lhalin (lhan) zawiaṭ hdadia 'daihun lgaṭ uluath (luath)
mizlun hu hdar bmalkuth uqarbinun luath usahduta 'lawaihun shid ubaita 'tasaqlun

When they had thus regarded themselves, they took hold of one another's hands at those corners and set their course towards Him. And He turned about in His kingliness and caused them to approach Himself, and testified His witness and set them to work (on) the House (*ATŠ*, p. 182).

³⁷⁶ *tibna* 'straw'. However, *ATŠ*, p. 53 (I no. 261) has *mirta* (bile). Both the straw and the bile have a yellow colour. In addition, they have more similarities, according to the (Mesopotamian) traditional way of making *Libin* (the builder's clay), the straw ferments (or is caused) to undergo fermentation by mixing it with dust and water for several days. The straw then becomes very soft and secretes a yellow gummy liquid, which seems like bile in many aspects. For these reasons the author believes that the writer/editor of *DQRDK* used, directly and literally, the practical word *tibna* (straw) instead of using metaphorically the word *mirta* (bile), as *ATŠ* did. Consequently, *mirta* should be read *tibna* instead, as *DQRDK* stated.

³⁷⁷ *Amuma*: a noun for the mother's shape maker or the matrix. Literally it could be something within which something else originates or develops. Practically/technically, it is a tool (or implement) that is usually used by the builder. *Amuma* is an ancient word which may be equivalent to the Akkadian *amuma* and the Arabic loan word '*amoom*. *Amuma*. It appears here for the first time in a Mandaean document, as far as the author can tell. Also it is not mentioned in the *MD*. However, the text in the next sentence offers an equivalent word to *amuma*, that is *qalib*, a mold in which a mud brick is cast. In addition, however, by comparing it with the similar sentence in the passage of *ATŠ*, we have found that *ATŠ* contains the word *dmuta* instead of *amuma*. Thus, we strongly suggest that both of these words have equivalent meaning and identify with each other in these sentences. For this reason, the meaning of *dmuta* in *ATŠ* (which was translated by Drower mistakenly as 'His likeness [shape]' *ATŠ*, p. 182) must be understood in the context of *DQRDK*'s *amuma*. This once again highlights the benefit of *DQRDK*, for it provides new words that are used in similar ways in other texts and also it helps us to understand *ATŠ* in the right way.

³⁷⁸ *DQRDK*, 94 has *ulbaita 'tiqria*. However, another reading of this sentence could possibly emerge by comparing it with a sentence in the corresponding paragraph of *ATŠ*, I no. 26, that is *ulibna 'tiqria*, which may be translated either 'and *libna* (the first sale/unit of building) was created' or 'and a brick was created' or 'it was called a clay-brick' or 'and its name was *libna* (builder's clay)'. Cf. *MD*, 235a; *ATŠ*, p. 182 and n. 2.

³⁷⁹ *Libna*: st. abs. of *libta*. It is the builder's clay or building-clay. It is 'unbaked, and sun-dried. When shaped in a brickmaker's mold, bricks are turned out and left to dry. This unbaked sundried brick is the *libta* of the text' as we will see later in this passage. See *ATŠ*, p. 182 n. 2.

³⁸⁰ *Aminṭul*: lit. 'for', but here it fits better with 'then'.

³⁸¹ As the letter Š emerges and starts to talk, it uses its power, that is the 'questioning'. It starts with the verb *šailH* (questioned), which begins also with the letter š. As we can see the use of the letter is all combined with another mystical meaning which used to be taught only in a hidden Naṣoraean way.

And it [i.e. the 'L'] replied, 'This is *Libta* (the mud/clay-brick)'.³⁸³

And so they called it *Libta* from which all of *Biniana* (the Building) is constructed and formed. And [all] Kings [96] take a hand in the construction (building); otherwise [i.e. without all the Kings], every builder who builds a building with *Libna* (the builder's clay/mud-brick(s)) does not [properly] alternate it [i.e. the brick]³⁸⁴ in two ways,³⁸⁵ and he builds but the Right [97] and he does not fit the Left together [properly] and although he separates (or divides) the *Libna* [by half spaces], he does not turn the division (or separation) [in the proper way]³⁸⁶ which must apply] to all *Libna* (bricks) of the *Biniana* (building), and he [also] does not [correctly] do the spacing, the joining [98] and the separating [i.e. the joining and dividing at the four corners], [consequently,] *Biniana* (the building) will be unsound, will rock and will not be stable (or strong) but it will fall down back to the earth [from which it was made]³⁸⁷ and will be demolished. For they call it by two names: [99] it is *Libna* and [it is] *Libta*. And they said it '*Libna*, you were made so that He may build houses and *darizas*'.³⁸⁸

³⁸² Similar to the letter Š mentioned above, the letter *L* uses its power as a 'Living Being/King' and starts to listen to the question and then answers it, for it is the first letter of the word *libna* and *libta*.

³⁸³ *Libta*: mud brick or clay brick; metaphorically means the first or primary unit that may build or form anything, as we will see in this passage. On the physical or material level, *libta* is a sun-dried mud/clay brick, which is also known in the West as 'Adobe'. See *Heinemann Australian Dictionary*, Heinemann Educational Australia, Third edition (revised by Katherine Harber), 1990, p. 13. In the next sentence we see that *libta* is repeated to confirm the name of this created unit. However, the corresponding paragraph of *ATŠ* I, no. 261 has *libna* instead in both cases. This confusion of the exact meaning of *libna* and *libta* appears clearly in *ATŠ*. However, seemingly, *DQRDK* does not have that, which may indicate the critical use of these two words. In any case *libna* and *libta* seem to have few barriers among their meanings or usage.

³⁸⁴ (*ni*)*palig* is a technical term which seems to have been used in ancient times by builders.

³⁸⁵ This technique is still used by many Iraqi builders, especially those who build by using the clay and the *liben*.

³⁸⁶ This way is called *hal ushad*. (Brick Bond).

³⁸⁷ Cf. *ATŠ*, p. 182 (I no. 261).

³⁸⁸ *darizia*: 'extension(s) of several small rooms, small lobbies or halls within the house borders'. In the Mandaean context it comes with two main meanings: (i) small halls, usually attached to the houses and used for multiple purposes, especially as storage rooms etc. and (ii) wardrobe, cabinet, shelves attached within the walls. It is a plural of *dariza* (*DRZ*, *DRS*). Drower, in *ATŠ*, did not recognize the meaning of this word, thus she wrote without translation, and seemingly she did not recognize that it is a plural. In their *MD* however, Drower and Macuch realize that the word is plural. However, both of them seem to fail to identify the root or the origin of this word and they were not sure about its exact meaning. Thus the word *darizia* of *ATŠ*, I no. 261 sentence is not translated in both *ATŠ* and *MD*. They considered it as a corruption of the Persian word *dahliz*. Cf. *ATŠ*, p. 182 and *MD*, pp. 98b, 101a.

The whole passage in *DQRDK* seems to be very obscure. The scribe of *DQRDK* goes so far in using the metaphor in this passage that he seems to disrupt the whole passage by the references to physical details about the ancient way of building using sun-dried clay/mud bricks. This passage of *DQRDK* was edited with many differences from that of *ATŠ*. Drower seems to have had many difficulties and she was not able to translate many sentences in this part of the *ATŠ* passage. Thus retranslation of the *ATŠ* passage is required in the light of the *DQRDK* passage and our translation. In order to compare and know the differences between the two passages, I have reproduced both passages below as well as Drower's translation:

DQRDK, 93-99 has:

uhaizak ata aqapra umia utibna uarib bihdadia uata amuma d-hu qalib uiatib [94] bgauaihun ulbaita 'tiqria ulibna šumH aminful d-hu š šailH 'l l uamarlH hazin d-qabdit mahu [95] šumH uamarlH hazin libta h' uhaizak qrulH libta d-biniana kulhun minH mitbinia umišjararia umalkia [96] bgauH biniana lagfia hinila kul banaia d-biniana bania blibna d-libna btrn ginsia lanipalig unibnia uiamina [97] usmala bgauH lanišauia upalga d-libna u'l libna kulH

@ Thus all buildings comprise 'Four corners' and [100] consist of 'Four Mysteries', and [also] every Body, Building, *Mana* (vessel), Fire, Animal, Tree, Ship,³⁸⁹ Fish, Bird, *Zuza* ((small [silver]) coin), *Dinara* ([golden] Denarius/Dinar), *Lahma* (Bread), [101] *Masiqta*, Baptism, 'Ngirta ([spiritual] Letter), *Rahmas*, *Qabin* (Marriage service), and anything which is not constructed of Four Mysteries will not rise, but will be spoilt and unworthy.

For [102] in *Niḡupta* (the sperm/drop) [of the Father] were formed *Ruha* (vital spirit) and *Nišimta* (soul) [and] both of them combined in order³⁹⁰ in *Pagra* (the Body).³⁹¹ And in the *Niḡupta* (the egg/drop) [of the Mother]³⁹² in the womb³⁹³ of the Mother were

lanatna lpalga d-'l libna kulH lbiniana ulanipilgia unirbia [98] unipilgia biniana mithambal uniqar ulanišar natar 'l arqa unitmasar aminḡul d-trin šumH qarilH [99] libna ulibta h' uamarlh libna 'štawiat d-bania batia udarizia.

ATŠ, I no. 261 has:

(261) *haizak atia (aitia) uqafra umia umirta uarib bihdadia waitih dmuta d h' qalib uyatib bgauaihun ulibna 'tiqria ulibna šumh aminḡul d hu 'š' šailh 'L' uamarlh d hazin d mabdīt (qabdīt) mahu šumh uamarlh d hazin hu libna biniana hu haizak qralh libna d biniana kulh minh dilh mitibnia (S-----a) umišarar umalkia (d malkia) bgauh biniana laḡiḡia hin 'la ardiklia (. arqa) banaiia d kt biniana bania blibnia ulibna laḡisadrh btrīn ḡinsia lanipilga ulbiniana palga natna unitafkinin (unitafkinun) lbiniana unihuia libna 'l palga upalaga 'l libna uyaminh usmalh bgauh nišawia upalugta bgauh nihuia uhaizak nirab yamina mn smala usmala mn yamina ubḡina nirab uhda nihuia hin haizin lanihuia ubiniana niḡhambal unirqad unintar (unitar) u'l arqa nitmasar aminḡul d trin šumia qrulh ulibna šumh ulibta šumh uamarlh (uamarulh) libna 'štawiat d bania batia udarizia (ATŠ, p. 53).*

(261) Then He brought dust and water and bile and mixed them together and brought His likeness (shape) which is a (brick-maker's) mould, and placed it amongst them. And its name was *libna* (builder's clay), *libna* is its name. For the 'š' questioned the 'L' saying to it: 'This that thou makest, what is its name?'

And it (the 'L') replied: 'This is *libna*; it is building-(material).'

And so the called it *libna*; (that) from which every building is constructed and formed. And kings take hand in (?) building; if not, master-masons and builders. For when a builder (buildeth) a building, he doth not lay it in two kinds, he doth not divide it, but placeth a half upon his building, and turneth them round upon the building, (so that?) there will be a *libna* upon the half, and a half upon the *libna*. And he maketh a Right and a Left therein, and there will be division therein, but then he will mingle the Right with the Left and the Left with the Right and will mortise with clay: and it will become one. If it is not (constructed) thus, then the building will be unsound, will rock and will fall and be yielded back to the earth (from which it was made). For they call it by two names: its name is *libna* (building-clay) and *libta* (brick of sundried clay). And they said to it '*Libna*, thou wast made so that He may build houses and *darizia*.' ATŠ, p. 182.

³⁸⁹ Cf. *DQRDK*, E6.

³⁹⁰ '*sdiria*: pass. pt. pl. of *SDR* 'to organize, arrange, set in order, put into shape, fashion, compile'. This form of plural is not included in the *MD*, which only includes one form, which is without the letter ' ', that is *sdiria*. It is better here to translate '*sdiria* as 'combined, combined in order, fashioned'. However, these meanings are also not found in the *MD*. Cf. *MD*, pp. 318b-19a.

³⁹¹ Cf. ATŠ I no. 262.

³⁹² This repetition of the use of the term *Niḡupta*, 'sperm, drop, honourable term for woman, term for (some) female Lightworld Being', applies to both male and female in this passage, and it may imply the two chromosomes that come from each, as will be explained later. Cf. *MD*, p. 298a; ATŠ, p. 14; *CP*, trs. p. 37 n. 1; *Ginza*, pp. 149: 24, 155 n. 4; *MII*, pp. 95, 246.

also formed³⁹⁴ the two other mysteries, *Ruha* [103] and *Nišimta*.³⁹⁵ @ Therefore, (there are) *Ruha* and *Nišimta* of the Father, and *Ruha* and *Nišimta* [104] of the Mother, and thus, they are [called]³⁹⁶ ‘the Four Mysteries’.³⁹⁷

³⁹³ *Zma*: lit. means ‘blood’. However, in some cases (including this one), *zma* is also used as a term which means ‘womb’. The writer could have easily used the proper, well known word for the ‘womb’, that is *marba*, as the writer of *ATŠ* did in *ATŠ* I no. 262, but it seems that it is another way of playing on words, which the writer was very fond of, especially in mystical and complex passages such as this. In the Mandaean understanding, the similarity and connection between the blood and the womb, on the one hand, and between the blood and the female/women/Mother, on the other hand, is obvious to a degree that makes the writer of *DQRDK* use the interchangeability of these two terms to put more emphasis on this idea.

³⁹⁴ *MšararīH*: pa. pt. (*esem mafauul*) with suff. and with encl. of *ŠRR=ŠUR*, ‘to form, model limn portary’. This form is not mentioned in the *MD* or in *MG*. Cf. *MD*, pp. 391a, 397b.; *MG*, p. 82.

³⁹⁵ Another translation could be:

For [102] in *Niḡuḡta* (the sperm) [of the Father] were formed *Ruha* (spirit) and *Nišimta* (soul) [and] both of them combine in the body. Also two more mysteries of the mother [were formed] in *Ruha* (spirit) [103] and *Nišimta* (soul) - for they were formed in *Niḡuḡta* (the egg) [of the Mother] in the womb.

³⁹⁶ Cf. *ATŠ* I no. 262.

³⁹⁷ (i) The combination of the two mysteries of the father and the two mysteries of the mother form the four basic mysteries that are necessary for the human being’s reproduction. When they combine together for fertilization, the fertilized embryo will carry only two mysteries. That may refer to the human male chromosomes, i.e. XY, and human female chromosomes, i.e. XX. When the four are combined for fertilization, the result in the human embryo will be also two, one from the father and one from the mother.

(ii) Commentary: The above passage of *DQRDK*, 98-104, is similar to the passage of *ATŠ* I no. 262, but with extensions, more details, changes and some differences, as follows:

*haizak biniania kulhun arbia zauiata lgaḡ ubarba razia ’tqaiam ukul pagra ubiniana uniara uhalita u’lania usfinata ununa ušipra uzuza udinara ulahma (ulhamra) umasiqta umašbuta u’ngirta urahmia uqabin d mibinian ukul mindam d barba razia lamitibnia laniquḡ unithambal ulanišawia aminḡul d niḡuḡta d aba bruha unišimta bpagra sdiran hinun * uniḡuḡta btrin razia h’ uraza d aba u’ma hinun mafraš ’lawaihun * tum hun trin razia d ruha unišimta mšarara * aminḡul d ruha unišimta arab baba u’ma msararia [misspeeling, the original Mandaic scroll has: mšararia] (mšadadia) hinun (lhinun) arba razia ’tiḡrun uhaizak niḡuḡta uniḡuḡta razia hḡadia lgaḡiun ubiniana štadar (’štadar) umsuta (umsun) bmarba huat ukul ’uḡḡuna d btrin razia lanihuia barba razia lanibnia ukt arba šararuia (sararuīh) šuba qaimia u’ḡša parḡh) utrisar nharubh (nharbun). (*ATŠ*, pp. 53-4).*

Thus all buildings comprise four corners and consist of four mysteries, and (also) every body, building, bowl, precious stone, trees, ships, fish, bird, *zuza*, *dinar*), bread and (yea even) the *masiqta*, baptism, ‘Letter’, *Rahmia* and the marriage-service (all) that is put together (built up). And anything which is not constructed of four mysteries will not rise, but will be spoilt and unworthy.

For the Drop of the Father (and Drop of the Mother?) are ranged with spirit and soul in the body. For the *Niḡuḡta* (Drop) combineth two mysteries, and they are the Mystery of the Father and the Mother (as was) explained concerning them. Further, two mysteries, the *ruha* (vital spirit) and *nišimta* (soul) (thereby) came into being and were formed, for spirit and soul fused in the Father and Mother. (Thus) were they formed) and were called ‘the four mysteries’.

And so Drop and Drop grasped (absorbed?) one another’s mysteries, a structure began to take shape, and solidification took place in the Womb.

And no body (*’uḡḡuna*) can exist that is not born of two mysteries and built up of four mysteries. And when the four have given it shape, seven arise and sub-divide into nine, and then twelve) shine forth in it (*ATŠ*, pp. 182-3).

(iii) These two passages of *DQRDK*, (98-104) and *ATŠ* I no. 262 as well as other similar passages that are found in *DQRDK* and *ATŠ* (e.g. *ATŠ* I, no. 244-245= (*DQRDK*, 17-22, 26), *ATŠ* I no. 227- 230 (little)= *DQRDK*, 7-10?. *ATŠ* I no. 257-259, 260, 261, 262 (= *DQRDK*, 98-104), *ATŠ* I, no. 263 (= *DQRDK*, 104-?), 264, 265, 267, 268, 269) are good examples of :

(a) how the two depend on and explain each other.

³⁹⁸@ Then, from an Egg³⁹⁹ came into being the great serpent,⁴⁰⁰ the cruel⁴⁰¹ eagle, the swift dove, the toad, the turtle [105] and the fish.⁴⁰² It [i.e. the Egg] was composed⁴⁰³ of

- (b) the style of the writing
- (c) the different uses of some terms and expressions, e.g. *zma* (lit. blood) and *marba* (lit. womb)
- (d) the development in the sacred writings.

(iv) These and many corresponding passages in both scrolls show that *DQRDK*'s emphasis is mostly on the important ideas, which are polished into a short and small text, compared with the long text of *DTP* of the *ATS*. However, *DQRDK* makes up for that shortness and crystallisation by its style of writing which is also assisted by the extensive use of the sacred illustrations and symbols, and its textual explanations. That may provide a mostly complete (general but deep) idea not only about the contents of *DQRDK* but also about the contents of *DTP*. Thus, and most importantly, *DQRDK* could be also confidently considered as the conclusion of *DTP* and vice versa.

(v) Despite the various similarities, *DQRDK*, does not only have many changes but also has contributed many new religious passages and explanations which can not be found in any other Mandaeen documents. This adds also another value and credit to *DQRDK* over all other documents especially *ATS*.

³⁹⁸ After the previous paragraph, *DQRDK* omitted many phrases that are included in rest of *ATS* I, no. 262, and also most of no. 263. Thus the similarities start from the last phrase of *ATS* I, no. 263 ff. which may correspond to *DQRDK*, 104 ff.

³⁹⁹ *bita*: 'egg'. See *MD*, p. 64b, *MG*, p. 110. In some special circumstances it may mean a 'cosmic womb/source, embryo or (very rear) dwelling'.

⁴⁰⁰ *Hiuia*: 'serpent, snake'. See *MD*, p. 142a; *MG*, p. 102: 23. Here, it is not clear whether the expression of *hiuia rba* carries a general meaning, i.e. the great serpent, which is highly recommended, or refers to 'Ur (the newborn, King of Darkness, son of Ruha), as the expression appears in *GR* and *JB* with a clear reference to 'Ur (e.g. *GY*, p. 313: 16; *JB*, p. 196: 14, in which they have: *hiuia rba d-hu 'ur* 'the Great Serpent who is 'Ur'. Cf. *MD*, loc. cit. and p. 345b f.). That is also because in the rest of this passage -(especially, *DQRDK*, p. 107f. and in similar passage of *ATS* I no. 264)- the birth of 'Ur from the Egg will be described by the image of the cosmic Great Serpent or Dragon.

The following must also be cited as a good example of how *DQRDK* is an invaluable source for correcting other works, esp. *DTP*, and some versions of *ATS* (*DTP*) like, DC 6, which suffered from miscopying (e.g. *hiuia* has become *hiia*). Even DC 36 had additional words that were modified intentionally (e.g. *laba*). Apart from all of that, the same word *hiuia* appears also in a similar sentence (with some changes) in (DC 36) *ATS* I no. 263, carrying the same meaning of that of *DQRDK*, i.e. serpent. However, Drower seems very confused and unsuccessful in her reading and translation, probably because she found in the other copy of *ATS* she used (i.e. DC 6) the word *hiia* instead of *hiuia*, which is in DC 36, so she chose the incorrect (var.) of *hiia* ('Life') and because of that (wrong) choice, she forced the syntax of the whole sentence and was compelled to change the original meaning of *bita* (i.e. egg) and translated it also as 'House' and then she translated the whole sentence as an 'Egg of Life' or 'the House of Life'. Despite this, she tried to put a secondary translation, in her footnote (*ATS*, p. 183 n. 3) for the sentence of DC 36 (i.e. *hu bita hu d hiuia*) as 'it is an Egg of the serpent'. However, this translation does not fix Drower's misreading of the whole paragraph, as a result of which she failed to translate correctly many sentences in this passage. For example, she translated *bita hu d hiwia (hiia) laba rba minaihun unišra ...* (*ATS*, p. 54, I no. 263) as 'an Egg of Life (House of Life) for the Great Father. From them (the mysteries?) come the eagle, ...' (*ATS*, p. 183) or 'Egg of the serpent'. However, this example should conform to our reading based on *DQRDK*, 104-5, which I believe has the right original words, as follows:

bita d-hua mina hiuia rba unišra qašia ...

From an Egg came into being the great serpent; the cruel eagle ...

Thus, I disagree with both Drower's reading and translation, and I think if she had read carefully and taken into consideration this scroll, then perhaps she would not have read and translated it in the way she did, especially when we know that the next paragraph in *DQRDK*, 105, explains the correct meaning clearly in similar following sentences in both scrolls (*ATS*, *DQRDK*). Also, in the next paragraph she was unsuccessful as a result of the original error, as we will discuss. See *MD*, pp. 142a, 141b, *ATS*, pp. 52, 54, 179, 183 (I no. 256, 263).

⁴⁰¹ *qašia* 1 *occupied*: pt. of *QŠA*, 'hard, stern, cruel'. It is not mentioned in the similar sentence of *ATS* I, no. 264.

⁴⁰² *nuna* 'fish' is not in *ATS* I, no. 263.

four mysteries; these are the *Dinara* (the (egg) yolk),⁴⁰⁴ the *Hiura* (the white (of egg)),⁴⁰⁵ the *Lbuša* (the membranes (of the egg))⁴⁰⁶ and the *Qlapta* (the Shell),⁴⁰⁷ formed⁴⁰⁸ from the four mysteries⁴⁰⁹ [i.e. of the Father and the Mother], [106] and, thus, a second *Tulita*⁴¹⁰ (Embryo) took shape⁴¹¹ [and] arised⁴¹² itself⁴¹³ and lifted [itself] up,⁴¹⁴

⁴⁰³ *'šadrat*: lit. means 'set in order, arranged, put into shape, compiled'. It is ETHPA. pf. fem. of *SDR*. See *MD*, pp. 318b, 319a. It should be mentioned here that the similar sentence in passage no. 263 of *ATŠ* I has a different form of verb, that is *'šfarar*.

⁴⁰⁴ *dinara*: lit. means Dinar (see *MD*, p. 108b), '(usually a gold) *denarius*' (*ATŠ*, p. 182 n. 6). Cf. *DQRDK*, 100. However, this meaning does not fit with the general meaning of the whole phrase. Thus, on the one hand, probably this is a metaphor for the egg yolk which, like the ancient gold Dinar, is round and yellow. On the other hand, there is another word (for the yolk); that is *sumga* (*d-bitq*), which lit. means (the red (of the egg)). See, for example *ATŠ* I no. 271. That is because of the colour of the yolk, but, in general, it is between the red and the yellow. In fact, each yolk is different from the other and it depends on the kind of the animal(s). The Mandaeans locally call the yolk *dinara* as a shortened form. It is interesting to note that this meaning of *dinara d-baiia* ('the yolk of the egg'), is derived from *Dinar(a)* ('Yolk') possibly also because it is very rich with foodstuff. It is the 'heaviest and strongest part inside the egg!' Drower in *ATŠ*, p. 183 (I no. 264), mistakenly translated this word in a similar sentence as 'a bird of prey' and again she and Macuch put the same word as an example for (*dinara* 2) in *MD*, p. 108b. They did not rely on this scroll of *DQRDK* for this, even though they used it for many examples in their dictionary!

⁴⁰⁵ *hiura* (rt. *HWR*) 'white (of egg), albumen'. See *MD*, p. 142a. Two variants of *hiura* (*hiuia* and *hiia*) are found in *ATŠ* no. 263 in DC 36, and DC 6 respectively. Drower again mistakenly translated it as 'serpent'. See (*ATŠ*, trs. p. 183). Although Drower chose the word *hiuia* (that is from DC 36) and translated it lit. correctly as a 'serpent', again it is incorrect, and the sentence makes no sense. Thus, Drower left the sentence with a question mark, dots and open with some doubt, suspecting there is something missing or wrong. And because of that, even in her explanatory note, Drower did not solve the problem. Instead she went too far when she thought that the sentence referred to the (explaining and) counting of four unclean creatures, as she said: 'One would expect two other unclean creatures (unless the toad and tortoise are displaced)'. *ATŠ*, p. 183 n. 5.

⁴⁰⁶ *lbuša* (rt. *LBŠ*): lit. means: 'garment, covering, dress, skin'. See *MD*, p. 228b. But here it means 'the membrane(s) of the egg', which is (or are) a covering of its contents. The egg contains three membranes: (i) shell membrane = inner and outer shell membranes; and (ii) vitelline membrane. See *World Book Encyclopaedia* (E) vol. 6, pp. 100-101, World Books, Chicago, 1994. This word *lbuša* is not included in the corresponding sentence of the passage of *ATŠ* I, no. 264, probably because of the corrupted text. I think, for some reason, it was lost from the original text of *ATŠ*. Thus, it should be included in the reading of this sentence of *ATŠ*.

⁴⁰⁷ (a) *qlapta*: 'shell, carapace, hard casing, small hard skin'. It is derived from the rt. *QLP*, 'to remove (outer skin, casing), shell, strip'. See *MD*, p. 213a-b. Here it means specifically 'the shell(s) of the egg'. The corresponding paragraph in *ATŠ* I no. 264 explained about the two kinds of 'the shell(s) of the egg'. It has *uqalafā* (DC 36) (or: *uqlafā* DC 6) *gawaita uqalafā baraita qašita* (*ATŠ*, p. 54), which means 'an inner shell and an outer shell (*qalafā*), a hard (shell)' (*ATŠ*, p. 183).

⁴⁰⁸ *'šfarar*: rt. *ŠRR*. Because it refers to a feminine status, it should be read according to that of *ATŠ* I, no. 264, that is *'šfarart*. However, there is a second possibility of reading the whole phrase, which may consider the word part of the previous sentence. In that case the use of either one is acceptable!

⁴⁰⁹ *razia*: not in *ATŠ* I, no. 264.

⁴¹⁰ *tulita*: 'worm, embryo, birth'. Drower translated it as 'worm', but also queried whether it could be 'birth'. See *MD*, p. 483a, *MG* 16: 21, *ATŠ*, p. 183 n. 6 (I no. 264). Also cf. *ATŠ* I, no. 257 which carries the meaning of 'an embryo'.

⁴¹¹ *Giblat*: pe. pf. sg. fem. of *GBL*, 'to mould, form, fashion, to take shape, make up'. See *MD*, p. 79b, 80a; *MG*, p. 215.

⁴¹² *asqat*: af. pf. fem. sg. of *SLQ* I, 'rise, go up, raise up, lift up'. Cf. *MD*, p. 332a.

by itself.⁴¹⁵ The Unique One,⁴¹⁶ the Father of 'Uthras,⁴¹⁷ dislodged⁴¹⁸ it [i.e. the *Tulita*]. And a closed⁴¹⁹ cavity⁴²⁰ [formed],⁴²¹ and it [i.e. this swelling womb] is a world, [107]

⁴¹³ Inapša: mistakenly, Drower in her transliteration section, read this word in the corresponding passage of *ATS* as (Inafšh=InapšH). She did that despite the last letter being illustrated closely to the letter A rather to the letter the H. Also, the whole sentence in the phrase clearly refers to a female use of the relevant words. See *ATS*, p. 54 (I, no. 264); DC 36; DC. 6. However, the pronoun -H is also often used for or replaces -a (the 3rd fem. sg.), but mostly for the 3rd masc. sg. See Hathem Saed, *Introduction to the Mandaic Grammar*, p. 3ff. See also *MD*, pp. 1a, 171a-b; *MG*, pp. 3, 68 nn. 3-4, 88.

⁴¹⁴ *mašqlila*: af. pt. fem. sg. with encl. of ŠQL, 'to take away, remove, take up, put up, lift up, carry, raise, reject, repel'. See *MD*, p. 473a-b. Drower repeated the same mistake in reading this word, which appears in two forms as 'Mašqililh (Mašqililh)' See *ATS*, loc.cit. Also, see n. 79. (only one before).

⁴¹⁵ Up to this point, the passage of *DQRDK*, 104-106 is similar, with some variation, to that of *ATS* I, no. 263-4, as follows:

(263) ... hu bita hu d hiwia (hiia) laba rba minaihun unišra uyauna qalilta uriqa uqala barba arba razaihun 'štarar d hinun dinara uhiwia (DC 36) (or hiia DC 6) (264) uqalafta (DC 36) (or uqalafta DC 6) gawaita uqalafta baraita qašita d mn arba 'štararat ugiblat tulita tiniantia asqat Inafših umašqililh (or mašqililh DC 6) lhdai (*ATS*, p. 54).

(263) ... [I]t is an Egg of Life (House of Life) for the Great Father.

From them (the mysteries?) come the eagle, the swift dove, the toad and the turtle – and with these four (other creatures ?) develop their mysteries; these are the bird of prey, the serpent,)

(264) And an inner shell and an outer shell (*qalafta*), a hard (shell), formed and fashioned by the four, (took shape), and a second Worm [Birth ?] reared itself and lifted itself up, by itself (*ATS*, p. 183 and nn. 4, 5).

This translation is not correct and very far from the real meaning; therefore it must be revised in the light of this thesis's notes, reading and translation of the passage of *DQRDK*, 104-6, mentioned above. Accordingly, it must be noted here that Drower's numbering of *ATS* I, no. 264 is inaccurate. It is in the wrong place. Probably it is better for the reader to delete it. For as we can see from the above, this passage talks about the composition of the egg and not about some kinds of creatures. Thus, this passage shows clear evidence about the value of *DQRDK* and the research that has been done in this thesis. It also illustrates the multiple benefits of *DQRDK*; that is the correction or clarifying of many similar passages, ideas and interpretations that appear in other documents, especially *ATS*, for example when each copy has a different word and meaning, like in *ATS* I, no. 263 *hiuia* (of DC 36) and *hiia* (of DC 6). By using the similar passage from *DQRDK*, 104-6, we know that the right word is *hiuia*, as we explained in the previous notes and comments. It also shows the need for the further study of the development in the literature, especially of the Mandaean scrolls.

⁴¹⁶ *lihdaia* = *lh(u)daia*. *lihdaia* var. of *lh(u)daia*. This word has two main meanings, 'unique/single' and 'alone, by oneself'. In this form, it is a masc. sg. For that reason, I prefer to adopt the first meaning, because the second one is usually used as two parts (*lhud-* + suff.). I did not follow Drower's translation, which considered it as part of the previous (feminine) sentence. The usual feminine use of *lihdaia* is *lihdaia* = *lh(u)daia*. See *MD*, pp. 231b, 235b f.; *MG*, pp. 141: 12 f. However, the other meaning may still be possible, which could be, 'a second *Tulita* (Embryo) took shape (or reared) [and] raised itself and lifted [itself] up, by itself. The Father of *Uthras* dislodged, removed it ...'

⁴¹⁷ *aba d-'utria*: father of the 'Uthras, very often in Mandaean MSS, and comes as an adjective or epithet or a title, especially for *Abatur* (a Lightworld Being situated at 'the Great Gate of the Path to the Worlds of Light'. He is the head of the 'Third Life', thus, his World is between *Mašarata* 'the Purgatories' and the Worlds of Light. Also He is weighing the souls in his 'Divine Scales'). However, it is also used to refer to other Lightworld Beings, such as *Hibil-Ziua*, *Manda d-Hiia* or even *Yušamin* and *Mara d-Rabuta*. Here, perhaps it refers either to, *Hibil Ziua* or to *Abatur*. Cf. *MD*, p. 1a, 1b, 2a, 347a, 347b, *MG*, p. 182, n. 3, *MR*, p. 51.

⁴¹⁸ *AsiqLH*: af. pf. with encl. of *SLQ* 'rise, go up, rise up, lift up, remove, dislodge'. See *MD*, p. 332a, p. 8, no. 53. This word lit. means 'he raised him up' or 'dislodged/removed him'.

⁴¹⁹ *ṭmima*: 'closed-up, stopped-up, thick, obdurate, insensible'. See *MD*, p. 180b. It is derived as a pe. pass from *ṭMM* 'to fill up, complete, close up'. See *MD*, p. 180b. *DQRDK* and DC 6 have *ṭmima* but DC 36 has *ṭmira* (as an often var. of *ṭmura*), pe. pass. pt. of *ṭMR* 'to bury, cover, hide by covering'. See *MD*, p. 180b. As we can see,

without a portal,⁴²² in which 'Ur⁴²³ came into being [i.e. grew/formed], but found no door.⁴²⁴ In time he grew great⁴²⁵ and, powerful and burst asunder⁴²⁶ that Egg, and came forth [108] and saw⁴²⁷ all 'Worlds and Generations'. And [this] powerful [Being]⁴²⁸

there is a slight difference between them. See *MD*, p. 180b, *ATŠ*, p. 183 (I, no. 264). The similarity in some words between *DQRDK* and DC 6, *DQRDK* and DC 36 and *DQRDK* and both (DC 36, DC 6). Probably is because the origin of the ancient (primary) source of some passages or of all of them is one. So, if you miss (a) word(s) in one, you can find it (them) in the others. Some other examples apply like this one, for example *hiura*, *ATŠ* I no. 263: *hiuia* DC. 36, *hiia* DC. 6. For this reason, we can correct and rewrite the translation(s) of some of these passages by consulting (returning, referring) to this scroll. Note: many of these differences are because of the bad transcription in the late copies.

⁴²⁰ *Squbra*: of uncertain origin, probably from *SQB* or *SRQB* or *SQRB* 'to swell, make swollen, make a hole, be filled with nothing, inflate'. However, from the context it may mean 'cavity' (cf. *MD*, p. 335b). This refers to the swelling womb that contains the embryo, especially the last period before the parturition.

⁴²¹ *usqubra ṭmima h'*: literally, this sentence should be translated as 'and it is a closed cavity'. 'It' may be confused and taken to indicate a reference to *tolita* while, in fact, it refers to the 'Womb' that grows to take a new shape to be able to conceive the growing Embryo inside. Corroboratively, a similar sentence contains the verb *hua* 'came into being' found in *ATŠ* I, no. 264, but with some differences. DC 36, has: *usqubra ṭmira hua*; and DC 6 has: *usqubra ṭmima hua*. However, Drower and Macuch give many interpretations which still support our translation, as the following:

- (i) In *ATŠ*, p. 183 she used with in DC 36. 'And a hidden (DC.6 closed up) cavity came into being'.
- (ii) In *MD*, p. 335b she uses also DC 36 'and a hidden cavity came into being'.
- (iii) In *MD*, p. 180b (according to DC 36) she used 'and there came into being a covered-in cavity (?)'.

I strongly suggest that it is originally *ṭmima* as recorded in *DQRDK* and DC 6. That is because (i) it (*ṭmima*) occurs in more than three copies in addition to the one in *DQRDK*; and (ii) the context in *DQRDK* supports instead of *ṭmira*.

⁴²² *alma d-baba litlH*: this is an idiom, probably for the 'womb' which, because it is closed, is both small and powerful but contains all the universal elements. They are described as a 'World' which contains and resides in the (i.e. embryo, Birth[s], Being[s]). This refers also to the Mandaic coherent cosmic picture of the microcosm and macrocosm, just like two sides of a coin.

⁴²³ 'Ur is the King of Darkness and son of *Ruha*. See *MD*, pp. 345b f.; *MR*, p. 190 n. 4; *MII*, p. 253 n. 3.

⁴²⁴ Here *DQRDK* has: *d-hu 'ur bgauH hua ubaba laška*. When we compare this phrase with *ATŠ* I no. 264, we find that DC 36 has: *d-hu tanina 'ur bgauH 'šfarar* but, DC 6 has: *d-hu tanina 'ur bgauH ubaba laška*. This again supports my opinion earlier, for still there are more examples emerging to bring *DQRDK* closer to DC 6 rather than DC 36. This deserves further investigation of more old MSS of both *DQRDK* and *ATŠ*.

This phrase illustrates a picture of controlling the formation of 'Ur in the Womb/Egg of His mother *Ruha*, as if He is formed in a prison. Not only that but also it is like a prison inside a prison, because at that time (of His formation) His mother, *Ruha*, (who was conceiving or hatching the Egg), was also controlled and imprisoned far away in a special place. This reminds us of the plans and actions that have been taken by the Great Life and the Lightworld Beings, particularly, by *Hibil Ziua* (and *Manda d-Hiia*) against the growing power of Darkness and the formation of 'Ur, as the rest of the passage will describe.

⁴²⁵ *d-'rba*: pe. pf. of *RBA*, but *ATŠ* I, no. 264 has *d-rba*. Cf. *ATŠ*, p. 183.

⁴²⁶ *pqa piqa*: literally means, broke out, split opened. Both *pqa* and *piqa* are from the rt. *PQA* = 'to break asunder, break open, crack open, split, crackle'. See *MD*, pp. 371b, 376b; *MG*, p. 102: 12; *ATŠ*, p. 183 (I no. 264). The picture drawn by the action of these two words, (which end with the strong sound and of the syllable /qa/), is to show the great strength of 'Ur and how powerful his creation is.

⁴²⁷ *hza*: pe. pf. of *HZH* 'to see, behold, perceive'. The writer here again changes the verbs and makes the sentence short, simple and clear. In *ATŠ*, p. 54 (I no. 264), DC 36 has: *hizuiiH*, and DC 6 has *hizuiH*. Both of them lit. mean 'beheld him'. See *ATŠ*, p. 183, *MD*, p. 138b. However, here, it may be necessary also to read *hza*

[began] to slither along⁴²⁹ for he is without hands and feet.⁴³⁰ And she,⁴³¹ his mother, *Ruha*⁴³² by name, was the Egg⁴³³ which [109] *Hibil Ziua*⁴³⁴ took away⁴³⁵ from the place where the Great *Qin*,⁴³⁶ whose [name] is Gala⁴³⁷ (filth), laid it,⁴³⁸ and he placed it (i.e.

(of *DQRDK*) as *hiziuiH* (of *ATŠ*, DC 36). Thus the meaning of the whole sentence could be ‘and all worlds and generations saw’. Cf. *ATŠ*, p. 183.

Many references to the story of ‘Ur’s creation appear also in the other Mandaean documents, such as *GR*, *Q*, *JB*. These references support both cases, that is, when ‘Ur was born He saw all worlds and generations, and vice versa. That is because His size and power were overstated to a degree that disturbed or frightened not only all worlds and generations of the Worlds of Light, but also that of the Worlds of Darkness, and thus He became the King of Darkness, the cosmic gigantic Warrior.

⁴²⁸ *gabra* ‘Being’ is not in *DQRDK*’s text. The text contains only *gabara* from *GBR* ‘mighty, powerful, valiant, strong; hero’. Instead of this word I have found in *ATŠ* I no. 264 (both DC 36 and DC 6) *gabra* ‘man, being’; so I have made the translation clear and connected it with *ATŠ*. See *ATŠ*, pp. 54, 183, *MD*, pp. 72a-b, 73a.

⁴²⁹ *rhiš*: pe. pf. of *RHŠ* ‘to creep, move, crawl, bring about’. See *MD*, p. 427b.

⁴³⁰ *DQRDK*, 108 has: *urhiš gabara d-hu ‘dh uligrH litlH*, but *ATŠ*, p. 54 (I no. 264) is different. *DC.36* has: *urhiš gabra d-hu ‘dia uligria litlH ulitlH ganfia d-Sipra*, and *DC 6* has: *urhiš gabra h’ d-hu ‘dia uligria litlH ulitlH ganfia d-Sipra*. Drower translated it as follows: ‘And (this) being without hands or feet or bird’s wings began to move about’ *ATŠ*, p. 183 (I no. 264). As we can see, the writer of the *DQRDK* has changed some words and omitted the last sentence.

⁴³¹ *uh*. The letter ‘ ’ looks like the letter *r*. This seems to be attributable to carelessness by the copyist.

⁴³² *Ruha*: lit. ‘The Spirit’, here personified as *Ruha*, one of the Queens in the World of Darkness. She is the mother of many Dark Forces, such as ‘Ur, the Seven spirits of the Planets, the Twelve spirits of the Zodiacs. Sometimes *Ruha* is identified with *Libat* ‘the spirit of Venus’ and with *haua* ‘Eve’. Cf. *MD*, p. 428b; *CP*, p. 246; *Ginza*, p. 18, n. 2; *ATŠ*, p. 183.

⁴³³ *DQRDK* has: *uh’ ‘mH ruha šuma d-h’ bita h’*. Cf. *ATŠ*, I no. 264-265; *DC. 36* has: *d-h’ ‘mH d-ruha šumH uh’ bita h’*, *DC. 6* has: *d-h’ ‘mH d-ruha šumH šumH d-h’ bita h’*. As we can see there are a few differences among these MSS. As a result, we can infer some important points as follows:

- (i) *DQRDK* and *ATŠ* came from one source.
- (ii) There are some similarities between *DQRDK* and *ATŠ*. In many of these similarities *DQRDK* is closer to *DC 6* than *DC 36*. However, in other cases the similarities are reversed and *DQRDK* becomes closer to *DC. 36* rather than to *DC 6*. This would help us to identify the correct or the closer version to the early original passages.
- (iii) *DQRDK* has kept some sentences, words, etc. without changing them, especially the nouns and many grammar forms.
- (iv) In these similarities, *DQRDK* usually uses simple short sentences, clear meanings and short passages.

⁴³⁴ *Hibil Ziua* is named also as *Gabra’il* (*Šliha*) ‘Gabriel the messenger’ (*GY*, 11: 4, 13: 7, 87: 10, 93: 21), a Mandaean male Angelic/Lightworld Being, the Messenger of Life to the World of Darkness, and to Adam and his children (descendants, posterity). He is identified with Gabriel. He is the Lord of the Earth, and the Guardian, the Inspiring spirit and the Teacher of the Mandaeans; thus he is regarded as an important figure in the Mandaean theology and mythology. Also he is identified with the Saviour Spirit (his cosmic father) *Manda d-Hiia*. See also *MD*, pp. 73b, 141a.

⁴³⁵ *ginba*: pe. pf. with suff. of *GNB*, ‘to put aside, put behind, steal’. See *MD*, p. 95b.

⁴³⁶ *Qin*: a name of the Queen of Darkness and mother of devils (i.e. mother of *Ruha*, *Zahr’il*, etc.), grandmother of ‘Ur. See *MD*, p. 410a.

⁴³⁷ *gala*:

- (a) rubbish, filth, ordure, dung (heap)
- (b) tortoise, turtle.

the Egg) upon his head, brought it⁴³⁹ and buried it here;⁴⁴⁰ in the World (or Earth/Land)⁴⁴¹ of *Başra* (lacking /imperfection/deficiency).

[110] As a result, the power of Darkness became lacking from that day on which this Egg⁴⁴² came (out) from their midst.⁴⁴³ Its [(i.e. the Egg's) name]⁴⁴⁴ is the *Gimra* and *Mrara*,⁴⁴⁵ for within it [i.e. the Egg] was the seed [111] of the Dragon⁴⁴⁶ that was cast

See *MD*, 76a. Cf. also *ATŠ*, p. 183, n. 8, *ATŠ* I, no. 265. It should be noted here that *MD*, p. 76a quotes the same sentence from *ATŠ* but with the wrong preceding number (i.e. no. 263). It should be no.265.

⁴³⁸ *DQRDK* has: *d-hu hibil-ziua ginba mn dukta d-rmata gala d-h' qin rabtia*, but *ATŠ* p. 54 (I no. 265) is slightly different. DC 36 has: *hibil ziua ginbH mn duktH d=rmatH qin ratia d-h' gala šumH*. DC 6 has: *d-hu hibil ziua ginbH mn duktH d=rmatH qin ratia d-h' gala šumH*. We can see that *DQRDK*

(i) used the 3rd fem. sg. pronoun *a* in a proper grammatical way (that applies to most of its words (or: contains)) while *ATŠ* used instead of it *-H* the 3rd sg. which is used originally (and mostly) for masc., but it very often replaces the fem. suff. *a*.

(ii) is closer to DC 6 than to DC 36. See also p. 2, n. 3; *MD*, p. 1a, 171a, b; *MG*, p. 58 nos. 3-4, p. 88: 8.

⁴³⁹ *ata*: this verb is not pe. pf. (as *MD* refers to), but I think it is a pa. pf. with suff. (3rd fem. sg.) of *ATA* I, 'to come, arrive; to bring'; so it is a new use for *ata*. We can add it to the list of pa. and pf. and *ATA*. Meanwhile *DQRDK* and DC 6 have *ata*. DC 36 has *atiH*. *DQRDK* has used it mostly as the proper 3rd pronoun. See p. 13, n. 5, *ATŠ*, p. 183 (I no. 265); *MD* 41b, 42a, *MG*, p. 241 n. 1.

⁴⁴⁰ *haka* (here) is sometimes confused with *hak(2)*. It is not in *ATŠ* I no. 265, but we can see that *ATŠ* used it in the same paragraph both of *mn hak* and *haka*, while *DQRDK*, 109, 110 omit and play with some words in the paragraph (i.e. *hazin* instead of *mn haka* as we are probably going to see in the next sentences). Cf. *ATŠ* I, no. 265 also see *MD*, pp. 120a, 120b.

⁴⁴¹ *arqa*: 'earth, land, field, world'. See *MD*, p. 39a, *MG*, p. 73: 12.

⁴⁴² *hazin bita*, but *ATŠ* I no. 265 has *bita haka* (that Egg). See *ATŠ*, p. 183. See also p. 14, n. 2.

⁴⁴³ I.e. 'away from the World of Darkness. *mn luatun atat*, but DC 36 has *mn aluataihun nipqat*; DC 6 has *mn luataiun nipqat*. We can see that *DQRDK* used the verb *atat* (pe. pf. sg. fem. of *ATA* 'to come, arrive') instead of the verb in *ATŠ* *nipqat* (pe. pf. sg. fem. of *NPQ* 'to go out, come out, depart') because both of them give the same meaning, 'came (out), departed' when used with the expression of those two prepositions (*mn* + (*a*)*luat-*); the use of this expression is not mentioned in *MD*. On the other hand, the preposition (*a*)*luat-* with all these suff. (*-un*, *-aihun*, *-aiun*) means there 'their midst'. See *ATŠ* I no. 265, *ATŠ*, p. 183, *MD*, p. 41b, 232a, 232b, 273b, 274a, 304a, *MG*, p. 196.

⁴⁴⁴ *šumH* (or, it could be *šuma*: lit. her name. This word is not in *DQRDK*, but it is found in the sentence of the corresponding passage of *ATŠ* I, no. 265.

⁴⁴⁵ Lit. *gimra* (rt. *GMR*) means 'gem, jewel, pearl, without flaw (if associated with the idea of purity and perfection)'; and *mrara* (rt. *MRR*) lit. means 'bitterness, grief; bitter drug, venom; bitter herb'. These two words together (even if their order is reversed) are used idiomatically. Some scholars describe their meaning (esp. when they are connected) as 'doubtful, unknown and completely obscured'. They are 'mysteries, two things assuring the stability of the world of darkness' (*MD*, p. 90b). In this passage, I think the meaning of these two connected terms represent one thing, not two, for they are two adjectives for one thing, like two faces for one coin. This one thing is the 'primitive Egg', or in other words, the 'Heart (marrow) of Darkness'. It is the source or the main elements of the Seeds of (creatures of) Darkness. For the journey of *Hibil-ziwa* to the World of Darkness and how he took the *Gimra u-mrara*, see *GY* 172ff.; *JB*. See also *MD*, pp. 90a, 278a; *MSchr*, p. 154 n. 1; *HpGn*, p. 249 n. 2; *ML*, p. 23 n. 3; *Ginza*, pp. 158 n. 3, 271 n. 1; *GY* 145: 5, 145: 9; *ATŠ*, p. 183 n. 9 (I, no. 265).

⁴⁴⁶ *tanina*: here used as another name for 'Ur. See *MD*, p. 480a.

into, slithered along,⁴⁴⁷ and floundered about in⁴⁴⁸ the Well (-spring) of the Black Water(s).⁴⁴⁹ It [i.e. the Egg] was placed⁴⁵⁰ [i.e. in the Well of Black Water(s)].

Thus - [the Well (-spring) of⁴⁵¹] - lacking is the Well (-spring) of the *Mrara*⁴⁵² [112] of the Earth.⁴⁵³

And Hibil-Ziua, are the Waters of Life which went to the Worlds⁴⁵⁴ of Darkness; and by that all the Worlds (or beings⁴⁵⁵) in them are set in order and established.⁴⁵⁶

⁴⁴⁷ *rahiš*: pe. pt. of *RHŠ* 'to creep, crawl, move, stir'. It is not in *ATŠ* I no. 265.

⁴⁴⁸ *bgu*, but (or: while). *ATŠ* I no. 265 has *bhanatH* 'in that'. *DQRDK* plays with this passage to create its own text.

⁴⁴⁹ *aina d-mia 'kumia* is an expression used as the main Source/Womb of the cosmic Black Water(s), Darkness and its creatures. It is equivalent to the expression *aina d-mia siauia*, 'the Well (or Source) of Black Water' which is used especially for the water(s) of the underworld, or even in another way, for the water(s) of the World of Darkness.

Both of these expressions are opposite to the expression, *aina d-mia hiia*, 'the Well-spring of Living Water(s)' which is considered substantively as the main source of the Living Water(s), the World of Light and its inhabitants. See *MD*, pp. 15a, 143a, 265a, b, *GY*, 13: 5, 15, 14: 4, 145: 4, 149: 12; *RD*, 34, *Ginza*, 15 n. 5, *MII*, p. 101, 118 n. 2, 11, n. 4, *MR*, p. 43 n. 1, *MSt* 57 and nn. 6, 7, *HPG* n. 280 f.4.

⁴⁵⁰ *rmia* is a pe. pass. pt. of *RMA* 'to throw, cast, place, put'. See *MD*, p. 436a. *rmia h'*. This sentence is not in *ATŠ* I no. 265. It ends the whole paragraph of *DQRDK*, although the meaning suggests that it should come or be located at the beginning of the paragraph. It is like confirming the status and the location of that Egg. This brings out difficult syntax, which needs to be read carefully to know the exact meaning. However, this might reveal another possibility, which is unlikely to be accepted by the author of this thesis; that is, the sentence could be *rmia hu* 'He [i.e. the Dragon] lies (in the Well of Black Water)!'

⁴⁵¹ *aina d*: not in *DQRDK*, 111 but it is found in the similar passage of *ATŠ* I, no. 265.

⁴⁵² *mrara*: lit. 'bitterness'; but also it could be either *marba* (Womb), like *ATŠ* I, no. 265, or a term that means (i.e. *Gimra u Mrara*, the Womb, the Egg, the Well). All of them lead to the meaning 'womb, source'.

⁴⁵³ For this paragraph *DQRDK*, 112 has: *uhaizak bašra aina d-mrara d-arqa h'*, lit., 'as a result (or thus), the Well (spring) of the *Mrara* (Bitterness) of earth is lacking'; but *ATŠ* I, no. 265 has: *uhaizak aina d-bašra aina d-marba h' h' @ d-* 'Thus; the Well of Lacking is the Well of the Womb' (*ATŠ*, p. 183).

Drower found in this passage several double circles which indicate lacunae or obliterated words. I suggest rewriting it, to fill in some of the lacunae or obliterated words according to *DQRDK*, as follows: *uhaizak aina d-bašra aina d-marba h' d-mrara d-arqa h'*, which could be translated as: 'Thus, the Well of Lacking is the Well of the Womb; it is the *Mrara* (Bitterness) of the Earth'. The womb being associated with bitterness may relate to the idea that the Womb belongs to the World of Darkness and Lacking, which are perceived as 'bitter'.

⁴⁵⁴ *almia* (pl. of *alma*): here it is translated as 'world' even though the word is not sg.

⁴⁵⁵ *almia*, here the form of the pl. can often mean 'beings, persons, people'. See *MD*, p. 20a, *ML*, p. 5 n. 1, *Ginza*, p. 6, n. 1, *MSchr*, p. 3, n. 3) In the Našoraean secret teaching, each thing or world in this Universe formed from many worlds is considered to contain also many worlds, and each one of these contains many worlds which are identical worlds and each one of these worlds is considered as an independent universe, a unit of life, which contains and preserves its own mysteries and secrets which work and combine together cyclically and perpetually to keep organizing the living/live and to keep it in order. This concept is like the scientific notion that the whole organism contain systems and each system contains organisms and each organism contains tissues and each tissue is made of cells and each cell contains mysterious materials and DNA programs and all are in constant movement.

⁴⁵⁶ This may refer to the development of the creation or, in other words, 'the steps of the creation of the World (i.e. universe, material world, non-material world, human beings, the cells, the elements of cells, etc.). The story

[113] For [when]⁴⁵⁷ the Perfume of Water⁴⁵⁸ of Life fell, the *Mazruta* (Seed) and the mysteries breathed them in [and] stirred from their place⁴⁵⁹, and⁴⁶⁰ they fell upon one another and fought over the Perfume [114] of the Water of Life;⁴⁶¹ and they inhaled [the Perfume of Water⁴⁶² of Life] and said to one another: ‘Move from before me’ and each one said to its companion in arm(s):

‘You [115] move so that I (may) come’.⁴⁶³

And thus, they breathed it [i.e. the Perfume of Water of Life] in;⁴⁶⁴ they stirred [into life]⁴⁶⁵ the fish, mysteries, creeping things, trees and earth (or lands)⁴⁶⁶ and everything therein.⁴⁶⁷

of creation appears several times in many shapes in different manuscripts, esp. *GR, JB, CP, ATŠ, ARR, ARZ*, but all move around the Centre.

⁴⁵⁷ Not in *DQRDK*, but *ATŠ* I no. 265 has *kul kt*, lit. ‘each, when’. See also *ATŠ*, p. 183.

⁴⁵⁸ *mia*: It is not in *ATŠ* p. 54 (I no. 265); however, it appears in Drower’s translation. This omission of *mia* is repeated later in the next appearance of this perfume. See *ATŠ*, p. 184.

⁴⁵⁹ *DQRDK* has: *mazruta urazia arhuia rhiš mn duktaiun*, but *ATŠ* I, nos 265-266 has: *hin mazruta ** (266) *arhunun razia urhiš mn duktaiun*. From comparing these texts with each other, the conclusion is that the writer of *DQRDK* rewrote a few passages from *ATŠ* in a short, clever, professional and successful way and also corrected and fixed these passages, adding new thoughts, ideas and investing more effort to create a new text (scroll) used with the illustrations in it, which are for other purposes.

⁴⁶⁰ *u-* (>): although it is not in *ATŠ* I, no. 266, it is included in the translation (see *ATŠ*, p. 184). That may indicate the acuity of the writer of *DQRDK* for editing and correcting elements of the original scrolls and the following meaning that Drower gets from this passage.

⁴⁶¹ i.e. ‘when excited by the perfume’, (*ATŠ*, p. 184 n. 3). For a more accurate translation in the Mandaean literature, there is always the possibility of playing with the syntax. Here we can rewrite the last three sentences as follows: ‘... and, at the Perfume of the Water of Life, they fell upon and combated with one another’.

⁴⁶² *mia*: for the second time this word is not in *ATŠ* p. 54 (I no. 266). Despite this second omission of *mia* (‘water’) in *ATŠ*, Drower’s translation still has it but without any sign or reference to the word to indicate from where she inserted it. See *ATŠ*, p. 184. This may indicate that Drower assisted her translation either by comparison with other references to this perfume in *ATŠ*, which I think more likely, or by looking at this similar passage in *DQRDK*.

⁴⁶³ For this part, *DQRDK*, 112-15 has:

hibil ziua mia hiia hinun d-asgun lalmia d-hšuka ukulhun almia bgauaihun 'stader utqun [113] aminTul d-nfal riha d-mia hiia mazruta urazia arhuia rhiš mn duktaiun ulhdadia npalu migaTlia lriha [114] d-mia hiia uarhun uamarlun had lhurina dal mn qudamai ukul had amarlH lhabrh bzaina d-anat dal d-ana d-'tia

ATŠ, p. 54 (I no. 265-66) has:

*d) hibil ziua mia hiia hinun d asgun lalmia d hšuka ukulhun (d kulhun) almia bgauaihun 'stader u'tqun * aminTul d kt nfal riha d hiia * hin mazruta (*) (266) arhunun razia urhiš mn duktaiun 'l hdadia nfal umitgaTlia lriha d mia hiia * ukt arhunun lriha d hanatun riha d hiia amarilh had lhurina dal mn qudamai ukul had amar lhabrh bzaina d anat dal d ana 'tia **

Of Hibil-Ziua are the waters of Life which went to the world of darkness; and thereby all the worlds were set in order and established. Because each, when the perfume of Water of Life fell ... although the Seed ... (266) the mysteries breathed them in and stirred from their place, and, at the perfume of the Water of Life, they attacked one another and slew one another, saying to one another: ‘Move off out of my way!’ and each said to its companion in arms: ‘Move on that I may come!’ (*ATŠ*, p. 184).

⁴⁶⁴ *asqulH*: af. *SUQ* (=SAQ=SQQ, ‘to inhale, snuff up, breathe (in) (a pun)’. See *MD*, pp. 314a-b, 323b; *ATŠ*, p. 184, n. 4.

[116] And then the mysteries slept⁴⁶⁸ (or settled down) until four months⁴⁶⁹ [had elapsed] since they were awakened⁴⁷⁰ at the beginning/head of its [i.e. the embryo's]

⁴⁶⁵ *dala** = *dal* (pe. pf. of *DLL I* = *DLA*). Mandaeans (especially in their written literature) seem to use *dal* and *dala* without clear grammatical distinction. This appears clearly in the various MSS. For example, *ATŠ*, p. 54 (I no. 267) for DC 36 has:

haizak razia asqulh dal nunia d yamamia bgauh dailia

haizak razia asqulh dala nunia dala d nunia d yamamia bgauh dailia. Drower translated both versions as follows:

'Thus the mysteries breathed it in, they were set in commotion, so that the fish of the seas swarmed' (*ATŠ*, p. 184).

However, she seems to realize that there is a problem concerning the verb *dal* (in DC 36) or *dala* (in DC 6), and perhaps for this reason she inserted a note to explain the root of the verb(s), the meaning and her doubt (or suspicion) about the form of the verb(s). She stated:

DAL 2. 'to move about excitedly', 'be in commotion'. Here I think it should be '*ddal*, or '*ddalia*'. *ATŠ*, p. 184 n. 5.

However, I think she made some mistakes in this note, as follows:

- (i) She derived *dal* or *dala* from the root *DAL 2*. As far as I can tell, there is no Mandaic word that can be derived from *DAL 2* or even *DAL 1*. Both of the verbs (i.e. *dal* and *dala*), in fact, are derived from *DLA I* = *DLL I*. Cf. *MD*, pp. 110b, 111a.
- (ii) She put far meanings for *DAL 2*.
- (iii) When Drower said in her note that 'here I think it should be '*ddal*, or '*ddalia*', that's means she suggests to put the verb(s) in the form of *ETHPA*. pf. of *DLA*, while it is better to remain in the form of pa. pf. of *DLA*.

However, when we compare this part with the (nearly) similar one of *DQRDK*, 115, which has: *haizak asqulH dala d-dailia nunia urazia*, then we may identify the right form of the verb(s). Also we could correct both MSS of *ATA* as follows:

uhaizak razia asqulH dala d-nunia d-iamamia bgauH dailia

The meaning in this case could be, 'thus, the mysteries breathed it in, they arose so that the fish of the seas were excited'.

⁴⁶⁶ *arqihata*: pl. of *arqa* 'earth, field, land'. This word is not in *ATŠ* I no. 267. It is an old Aramaic form that comes from *Q* but the latest form in many Semitic languages is replaced by other letters such as (Akk. *a*), (Ar. ح), (H. ا etc.). Cf. *MD* 39a, *MG* 73:12, 100:10, 171:13, 183:15.

⁴⁶⁷ *bgauH*: it. 'in, inside him/it, therewith, within it/him, therein'. (-H) is used for 3rd sing. Here it is more appropriate if the writer used the word *bgauhih* to fit better with the meaning. Cf. *MD*, p. 74a. By comparing this passage of *DQRDK* with the similar one in *ATŠ*, I no. 267 we can see that all these sentences show clearly the fine ability of the writer of *DQRDK*, for he made a new text based on *ATŠ* but in many cases different in its form and style, to express the crystallization of the ideas of:

- (i) the Mandaean literature (esp. *ATŠ*, *GR*, *CP*).
- (ii) the Mandaean-Naṣoraean oral heritage.

⁴⁶⁸ *šakbia*, but *ATŠ* I, no. 267 has a similar verb, i.e. *nahin* 'settle down, calm'. The use of different verbs similar in meaning, gives us a good opportunity for understanding both *ATŠ* & *DQRDK* because from this example and many others we can know how the writer of *DQRDK* understood the same sentence or paragraph in *ATŠ* and how he wrote and treated it in a new form in *DQRDK*. This is true whether or not the writers of *DQRDK* & *ATŠ* were different people or the same person. In the latter case, we have another insight into how he interprets the idea in *ATŠ* and puts it in *DQRDK*.

⁴⁶⁹ This may refer to the first four months (i.e. the first main period) in the life of the embryo after the successful fertilizing of the (mysteries of the) egg by the Water of Life.

⁴⁷⁰ *mitiria*: the root of this verb seems to be confusing. I could not find it in any of these possible roots: *YTR*, *TIR*, *TRA*. However, I believe that it is Ethpe of *YTR* 'to gain (wealth), increase, bloom, arouse, multiply, exceed, be supreme'. Cf. *MD*, p. 194b. The verb appears also in the same form in the corresponding passage of *ATŠ* I no. 267. With no reference to the root, Drower commented on this verb as follows; 'Ethpe = 'to awake', 'to arouse from inertia, torpor lifelessness'' (*ATŠ*, p. 184. n. 6).

Womb (or Source/Wellspring) and [since] they had kicked out at one another and after they had been awakened in that Womb (or Source/Wellspring).⁴⁷¹

@ [117] Thus they [i.e. the people, worlds] call it [i.e. the embryo] *Tirba* (Flesh(ly));⁴⁷² that which (was) established/fashioned by (the) seven mysteries.

Thus everything was fleshed (out)⁴⁷³ so that they were *T I R B A* [118] *N A* [or *T I R B A N I A*] (flesh(ly)).⁴⁷⁴

@ Therefore, each individual mystery held (or grasped) its neighbour and was recognised⁴⁷⁵ separately.⁴⁷⁶

There are some of them that were formed⁴⁷⁷ from clay,⁴⁷⁸ water, dust,⁴⁷⁹ [119] straw,⁴⁸⁰ putrefaction; [thus,] tree(s), fishes and birds were salted⁴⁸¹ (or grew) and dust and

⁴⁷¹ This obscure passage seems to have more than one meaning, one of which could be explained as follows: the seven mysteries created the first being the embryo for four months. The mysteries slept while the embryo was growing. After four months, the mysteries woke up as they were called to the growing embryo which came to life. The embryo became fleshy (had substance/had life) and it was fashioned by the seven mysteries.

⁴⁷² For this sentence, *DQRDK*, 117 has *uhaizak qruH tirba d-bšuba razia taqnia*, which can also be translated 'Thus they (i.e. the people, worlds) call it Tirba 'Flesh(ly)'; that which is/was established by the seven mysteries'. We can find this sentence in different shape(s) in similar paragraphs in *ATŠ* I no. 268, *baina (baiina) d-almia tirbana qarilH d-bšuba razia taqnia*. This paragraph was translated in a different way in *ATŠ* trs. p. 184, as follows: 'In the Wellspring there hath awakened that which the worlds call fleshy; that which (was created ?) by seven established mysteries'; *MD* put the first part of this paragraph *baiina d-almia tirbana qarilH* and translated it differently: 'We seek (read baiinin) that which people call flesh(ly)'. See *MD*, p. 486b.

⁴⁷³ *mitlabaš*: *ETHPA*. pt. of *LBŠ*; (lit. 'clothed, dressed, covered, clad') so it means: covered (or: clothed) [with flesh] esp. the 'skeleton'; it is used here idiomatically. *ATŠ* I, no. 268 has *mitlabaš tirbana* clothed with (or: in) flesh. (*ATŠ*, p. 184). See also *MD*, p. 229a-b.

⁴⁷⁴ For this paragraph, *DQRDK*, 117-18 has: *uhaizak kul mindam mit labaš d-hinun T I R B A N A hinun @*, while *ATŠ* I, no. 268 has: *haizak kul mindam mitlabaš tirbana d-hinun T I R B A N I A @*. Lady Drower translated it: 'Everything became clothed in flesh, so that they were *T I R B A N I A* fleshly (*ATŠ*, p. 184). Later on, she, with Prof. Macuch, retranslated it slightly differently as: 'Everything was clothed with flesh, so that they were fleshy. *MD*, p. 486b.

Commentary: This paragraph (in *DQRDK*) offers us a good example of the play on words and meanings and how the writer composed the new text using the assistance of *ATŠ* (esp. *DTP*) and putting in the new figures to bring out new Naşuraean secrets and mysteries.

⁴⁷⁵ *Başqar*: refl. pf. of (the quadrilateral verb) *BŠQR* 'to search, discover, discern, recognise, ascertain, make inquiry, examine'. See *MD*, p. 71.

⁴⁷⁶ *DQRDK*, 118 has: *tum kulhad raza lgaš bhabrH unapšH bašqar*. *ATŠ* I, no. 268 is slightly different. It has: *tum kul had raza minaihun bhabrH lgaš (DC.6: lgiš) unafših bašqar*. Drower translated it: 'Thereupon every mystery of them grasped its neighbour and perceived its *našš* (its Self, its natural or physical self)'. See *ATŠ*, p. 184. We can see that *DQRDK* omitted *minaihun* because the word(s) *kul-had* makes the meaning clear so he needs only a short sentence. He also nicely reverses *bhabrH lgaš* to *lgaš bhabrH*. In addition to Drower's acceptable translation, we can also suggest four other possibilities for the sentence ... *unapših bašqar* as follows:

- (i) '... and discerned (itself) as separate (from the others)'.
- (ii) '... recognised (itself) as distinct (from the others)'.
- (iii) '... and discerned (each one) separately'.
- (iv) '... and distinguished itself (separately)'.

The sense is that the all beings recognized their uniqueness, but so did the internal organs as well.

⁴⁷⁷ *gbil*: pass. pt. of *GBL* 'to mould, form, fashion, mix, make up'. *MD*, pp. 79b, 80a.

stench and dirty sediment⁴⁸² [nourished] the fruit(s) and (water-) melon and pumpkin and (sugar-) reed⁴⁸³ and frankincense (tree) [120] and *lote* (tree)⁴⁸⁴ and palm (tree); and everything that [green] edible stuff is from.⁴⁸⁵

⁴⁷⁸ *tina*: 'clay, mud'. See *MD*, p. 179b, but Drower translated it as 'shadow' because *ATŠ* I no. 268 has (*DC* 36: *ṭuna*, *DC* 6: *ṭula*); but she mentioned in her note that it is 'probably a miswriting for *ṭina*, "clay"'. (*ATŠ*, p. 184 n. 9). She was correct in her assumption. We can also consider both *ṭuna* and *ṭula* as a var. *ṭina*. If Drower had read *DQRDK* carefully she definitely would not translate this word as a 'shadow'. Thus, we can add another correction of *ATŠ* based on *DQRDK*.

⁴⁷⁹ For this part of the passage, *DQRDK*, 118 has:

'it minaihun d-gbil mn ṭina umia uapra

ATŠ, p. 54 (I no. 268) (with many differences) has:

it minaihun d-gbal mn ṭuna (ṭula) u 'it minaihun mn tbibia uaqafra hua

There were some of them that were fashioned from a shadow, there were some who came into being from dust-storms and pitch (or 'dust').

I think the writer of *DQRDK* tried to summarize *ATŠ* and make it clear and simple.

⁴⁸⁰ *Tibna** (n.) means 'straw, haulm; hay'; *ATŠ* I, no. 268 has *tibta*. It is very strange and puzzling that *MD* did not include this word, while it contains the word *tibta*, 'dung, excrement'. (*MD*, p. 485a). I wonder why *DQRDK* here changes *tibta* to *tibna*. Is it because the 'dung' (esp. of the herbivorous animals) contains a high percentage of straw and cellulose or is it more likely that the original is *tibna* but it was changed in *ATŠ* to *tibta* for some reason, perhaps because of miscopying. People (esp. in the countryside) used it as fertiliser, firewood and also as one of the building materials (by mixing it with the soil and water to hold it fast or stick it together). Also, I wonder why *DQRDK*, 93 changed *mirta* ('bile') in *ATŠ* I, no. 261 to *tibna*. I think this happened probably because the 'straw', the 'dung' and the 'bile' resemble each other in colour, putridity, decay, viscosity, flavour, redundancy, etc.

⁴⁸¹ *mimihlia** is not mentioned in *MD*. The same case applies for its substitute in *ATŠ* I, no. 168, i.e. *mithilu*. I think it is a verb, not a noun. It is pe. pt. pl. of *MHL*, 'to salt' (*MD*, p. 260a) but *mimihlia* here gives the meaning of *HIL* 'to strengthen, give courage, force' (*MD*, p. 143b). This root is the same as for *mithilu* in *ATŠ* I, no. 268, the substitute word of *mimihlia* in *DQRDK*. The word *mithilu* (*ETHPA* pt. pl. of *HIL*) is also not mentioned in *MD* (in *HIL*). That means *MD* did not make (full) use of (or benefit from) *ATŠ*. I think both *mimihlia* and *mithilu* are in passive voice and are giving a similar meaning, that is, 'to salt' means (metaphorically and mystically) 'to strength(en)'; and when you salt something, that means you give it nourishment, make it strong, give purity and protection, and make it grow freely. Or, in other words, give it the spirit or the soul.

It is interesting to note that the salt in the Mandaeen religion represents the mystery of the soul (and her freedom): *raz mihla d-h' raza 'tšaiiaia* (*DC* 6; *tšiiiaia*)' (*ATŠ* I, no. 116); salt is the lord of (gods), *DC* 40 said: *mihla anat mara alahia*, 'salt, thou art lord of gods'. See *MD* 266a, *JB*, 166: 9f. *PD*, 1135 and (often) in *ŠQ & C*. For this part of the passage, *DQRDK*, 119 has:

utibna ušlanda u'lana ununia ušiprie d-mimihlia

While *ATŠ*, p. 54 (I no. 268) has:

u'it minaihun d-mn tibta ušlanda u'lana d-nuna ušipra (*DC* 6: d-) *mithilu*.

... and some of them from dung and putrefaction, for tree, fish and bird were strengthened (thereby ?).

ATŠ, p. 184. See also *ibid.* n. 10.

⁴⁸² *uhala ušanta ukamka*: for this *ATŠ* I, no. 268 has (from (*DC* 36) *uhala ušanta ukamka* and (from (*DC* 6): *uhala ušanda ukamka*; but *MD*, p. 197b mistakenly reverses the sentence from *DC* 36 to *DC* 6 and then makes it = to *Bodl.12* (which is *DQRDK* itself). Drower and Macuch have used many examples from *DQRDK* in their dictionary (*MD*), but the majority are from the texts around the illustration (mostly nouns). This one, and very few other examples, are from the text itself. That means *MD* did not derive full benefit from the text (or even the texts around the illustrations) despite the great importance of many of *DQRDK*'s words. That can explain the large number of words in the whole of *DQRDK* which are not mentioned in *MD*. I wonder why this is so. It is probably because *DQRDK* was not translated or studied, so it would have been difficult for Drower and Macuch to include these words in *MD*.

⁴⁸³ *qaina*: lit. 'reed, cane, stalk, rod, shaft, reed-pen'. This word in this place suggests the meaning of '(sugar-) reed', '(sugar-) cane', as an abbreviation for *qaina halia*. See *MD* 400a, *DC* 41 (*ARR*) (illustration: 1st group) *ATŠ* I, no. 268.

And there are some that come out of an egg, and there are some that were brought forth (or born) from the womb of its mother.

[121] All *Biriata* (creatures)⁴⁸⁶ that were created without ears in the head⁴⁸⁷ - their mysteries⁴⁸⁸ (i.e. ears) are hidden, and (they - the *Biriata*-) are laid [in] egg(s)⁴⁸⁹. They are the eggs [122] that are laid [in] various kinds (or colours). And for every mystery [i.e. Creature] that comes out of an egg, there is none which suckles milk. [123] It sucks the milk [i.e. the white of the egg, albumen]⁴⁹⁰ in the egg, and there will be no milk [i.e. Albumen] afterwards for it,⁴⁹¹ because the dryness and cartilage (or gristle)

⁴⁸⁴ *Knara*: the tree is illustrated only in this scroll.

⁴⁸⁵ *ukul mindam d-mn iarqunia*: lit. 'and everything that is from the green ((sub) family of plants)'. The word *iarqunia* usually means 'vegetables, herbs, edible green-stuff'. I have found a similar sentence, but slightly different, that appears in *ATŠ* but not from a similar passage, that is *ukul mahu d-hauia mn iarqunia* ('... and whatever green edible stuff'). See *ATŠ*, (I, no. 116); *MD*, p. 187b.

⁴⁸⁶ *biriata* (rt. *BRA*): fem. pl. of *brita* (fem. n.) 'creature, creation; ritual food for the dead'. See *MD*, pp. 62b, 69b, 70a. The writer deals with this word as a fem. sg. n. in the form of pl. That is why we find that the related following words/sentences occur also in fem. sg. form: *briša, dilH, rmat*.

⁴⁸⁷ Lit. 'created and there are no ears in her (or their) (the *biriata*) head'.

⁴⁸⁸ *razia dilH*: lit., his mysteries.

⁴⁸⁹ Another translation: '... laid (in an) egg; so alt.: All creatures born without ears have their mysteries hidden and they are formed in an egg.'

⁴⁹⁰ *halba*: lit. 'milk'. However, it means here the (white) juice in the egg, or, in other words, the albumen (of the egg). Perhaps we can find in this passage an unprecedented, unique metaphorical likening of the milk and the albumen; also the sucking of the milk and its assimilation of /with the albumen.

⁴⁹¹ For this part, *DQRDK*, 122-23 has:

ukul raza d-mn bita npaq halba litlH d-nimuš aminžul [123] *d-halba bgu bita mašH ulaiit halba lbatraiaa nihiuilH*.

This could be compared with a similar part in *ATŠ*, p. 55 (I, no. 270), which has:

*tum amar d kul mindam d mn bita nafiq halba d šatia litlh * aminžul d halba dilh* (DC. 6: *bhanath*) *bita šatilh* (DC. 6: *šqaltinun*) *kt aklh ugarfh* (DC. 6: *ugadfh*) *umnath dra ulaiit halba d 'l batraiaa nihiuilh*.

From comparing both of them, we can find that the writer of *DQRDK* takes advantage of *ATŠ* to inlay his passage. He wrote it in a short and direct way, then he inserted something in his text; but during this process, he plays on some words (esp. verbs) to give (as much as he could) a clear picture. For example, he changes:

- (i) On the one hand, the (verb) *napiq* > *npaq* and on the other hand, he made it different and opposite to the (same) one in *DQRDK*, 120.
- (ii) The (verb) *šatia* > *nimuš*, then he reverses its place with *litlH*. The verb *nimuš* gives the same meaning and fits perfectly.
- (iii) The (verb) *šatilH* (in DC 36) or *šqaltinun* (in DC. 6) > *mašH*.
- (iv) The (preposition) 'b'. *b + hanatH* > *b + gu*.

After all we can say that the passage of *DQRDK* tries to tell us about the white of the egg and how it serves as the principal source of nourishment for the embryo during the first period and how the other liquids, esp. the yolk, provide after that period the necessary nourishment for the embryo's development. This can be, in a way, close to the scientific facts of today.

consume the liquid and leave (or come out) [124] and arrive and burst free [from] the great hill-stones (or shells / great hill of stones).⁴⁹²

@ Then every [creature] that has ears, has milk (in its breasts)⁴⁹³ (and) comes into existence (via cytogenesis)⁴⁹⁴ [i.e. as an embryo], and will eat and drink⁴⁹⁵ [i.e. get nourishment] [125] in (side) them and will grow and be raised up.

@ And [an illustration of] creation (follows) here.⁴⁹⁶ Here is the Egg of the mysteries,⁴⁹⁷ and the Wellspring (or Source) from which came into being the first human beings⁴⁹⁸ and creatures [126] and [other] creations and ancient trees (or plants⁴⁹⁹) which were [first] created in all kinds and sorts (or species) and this is explained to every one⁵⁰⁰ [in the following illustration].⁵⁰¹

⁴⁹² *šašia*: pl. of *šaša* 2 = *ašaša*, 'gravel, stone, boulder, pebble'. The sentence *šašia rurbia d-ṭura* lit. means 'the great stones of the mountain (or hill)'. In order to understand this sentence fully, we could rewrite it in the usual syntactic form, that is: *ṭura d-šašia rurbia*, 'The mountain (or hill) of the great stones'. In any form, the sentence used here is clearly metonymic, referring to the 'shell' of the egg. As far as I can tell, this use appears here for the first time in the whole of Mandaean literature and probably in the many other worldly (ancient) literary texts. The writer tries to provide a beautiful picture of the incubation (or hatching) of the egg and how the embryo frees itself. See also *MD*, pp. 32b, 388a.

⁴⁹³ *bizia*d- halba nihuilH*: lit. 'teared (tearing) milk there will be for it/her'. The meaning here seems to be confusing or obscure). I think *bizia* is pass. pt. of *BZA*, 'to split, cleave, rend, slit, tear, make a hole' or probably as a pl. noun 'teats'. However, it is a beautiful sentence used here metaphorically. As far as I know, this sentence appears for the first time in Mandaean literature. Cf. Ar. expression (*al-Dareu*) *yabuzu haliban* (the udder [or dug] emission [or giving, bringing out, expressing] milk'. I can give a close Arabic translation for the sentence of *DQRDK*, that is *edgaran lelhalibe sayakunu lahu/laha* 'those will be expressing milk for her (the creature)'. As I understand it, the sense is: 'It becomes a species of creature (i.e. a mammal). See also *MD*, pp. 57b, 58a. *Biza* has been defined as 'pap, breast' by both *CSD*, p. 40 and M. Jastrow, *A Dictionary of the Targumim, Talmud Babli and Yerushalmi, and the Midrashic Literature*, 2 vols, New York, 1950, p. 159.

⁴⁹⁴ *napiq uatia*: lit. 'go out and come'.

⁴⁹⁵ *akil ušatia*: lit. 'eat and drink'.

⁴⁹⁶ *uhaizak haka šararta*: lit., 'after that (part), here is (in the following part) illustration about (to, for). Cf. *MD*, pp. 120b, 226a, 388a.

⁴⁹⁷ *bita d-razia*: this expression also can mean the (first) 'house (unit: i.e. cell) which contains the elements and DNA programs' or 'fertile egg'.

⁴⁹⁸ *bnia anaša*: also means: 'individuals, peoples'. See *MD*, p. 24b, *MG*, pp. 182f.

⁴⁹⁹ *'lania qdima*: this can also refer to the first plant life/lives.

⁵⁰⁰ *Ihad uhad*: a new form of the distributive repetition of 'had'; it is equivalent to the (widespread) form *lhad had* 'to everyone'. Cf. *MD*, p. 116a.

⁵⁰¹ Following this part of the text is the final section of illustrations which explain more about the creation. The illustrations consist of two main parts. The first part contains some samples ranged from the egg(s), (uncompleted/ape-man!) human being, animals, insects, plants, microscopic beings and things, etc. The second part is a sample of tools that are used mainly in the fields of industry, especially the blacksmith, which deals mainly with the iron, the metal that is discovered in the ancient times by the developed human beings. The whole part is a reference to the development (that was achieved through the superiority of human beings over other creatures and beings in the Earthly World).

Folio 9

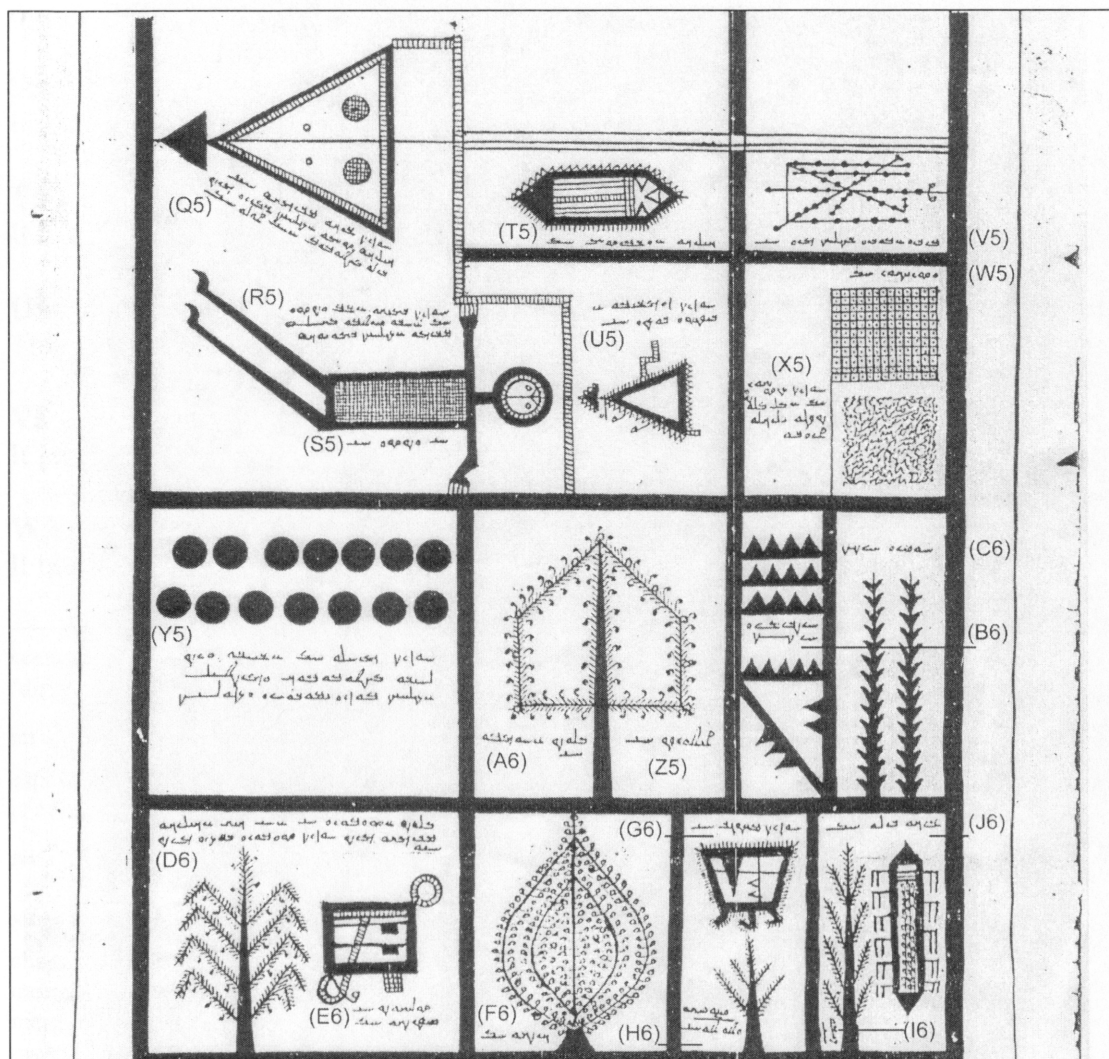


Figure 10 - Folio 9

[For an enlarged and clearer reproduction of this folio, see Appendix A.]

*Folio 9***Translation of the Text Attached to the Illustrations****(Q5)**

This is the Primeval/First Egg whose name is *Tulita* (Embryo) [and] from whom all [other] eggs emanated [and] who is [also] *Gala*.⁵⁰²

⁵⁰² *Gala* literally means 'a tortoise [egg]'. However, it may be used as an attributive term for *Qin* (the Queen of Darkness, Mother of *Ruha* and *Zahr'il*). The connection with and similarities between the tortoise and *Qin* -(as a Mother, a Womb of Darkworld creatures and an egg producer). (See *DQRDK*, 109; *MD*, p. 410b f.) is clear. This is because they both are producers of large numbers of hidden eggs. The process of reproduction can also be

R5

This is a *Dmuta* (image/likeness) of a [primeval] human being, who came into being lying on one side⁵⁰³ [and] who is more ancient than all *Dmutas* [i.e. than all the images of modern, developed human beings].

S5

It is a [primeval] human being.

T5

It is a silkworm.⁵⁰⁴

U5

This is a pure honey bee.

V5

It [shows] the moving [beings]⁵⁰⁵ that travel in all waters.

W5

It is *Ašiuntai* (the moss/lichen).⁵⁰⁶

seen as a clearing out/cleansing of the Womb, thus the possible metaphorical meaning of Gala here could be 'dirty, dark, secretive generating Womb'.

⁵⁰³ This is a reference to the incomplete human being, who is described (in many Mandaean documents, especially *GR* and *Q*), as a disabled Adam who cannot stand straight on two legs. He is not intelligent because he is acting like an animal which consists of body and *ruha* but no *Nišimta* (soul).

⁵⁰⁴ Literally, 'it is a worm of the silk'.

⁵⁰⁵ *ridia* has various meanings. However, *MD*, p. 432b included two meanings. The first one is 'affliction, chastisement' while the second one is considered as the variation of *rdia* (the pass. pt. pe of *RDA*). These meanings cannot fit properly in this sentence. It is quite possible that *ridia* is a plural of *rida* that has a different meaning from the above. According to the local Mandaean-Naṣoraean interpretation it means 'small or little moving creature(s)'. Cf. *MD*, pp. 425a, 432b. Cf. *rira* 'spittle, slaver, saliva', *MD*, p. 434a. Cf. *rira* 'spittle, discharge, phlegm', *CSD*, p. 539 and Jastrow, *A Dictionary of the Targumim*, p. 1477b. This word has the connotation of spawn, like frog spawn.

⁵⁰⁶ *ašiuntai* or *ašiunta*, according to Drower and Macuch, is considered as 'a miscopying of *ašultina?* *ašiuntai hu* Bodl. 12; this is...(accompanied by a picture which makes the meaning completely doubtful)'. *MD*, p. 40b. As we can see, the quotation here is from the above *DQRDK*, W5. By consulting the meaning of *ašultina*, *ašlutina* = *šultana*, as it is mentioned in the *MD*, pp. 40b, 41a, 454b, respectively, it means 'bat'. Thus, Drower and Macuch were right when they left *ašiuntai* in the above quotation without any translation, because this meaning does not match the illustrated picture that it refers to. This makes the meaning of 'bat' completely doubtful. However, I disagree with Drower and Macuch about considering *ašiuntai* or *ašiunta* as 'a miscopying of *ašultina?*'. According to my recent investigation, *ašiuntai* here means 'moss, lichen, alga'. This is an aquatic plant that covers the marshes/swamp. This meaning matches perfectly the illustrated picture, which contains a big square with 143 small squares. Each one has a small dot in the centre, which may refer to the large number of these plants, especially in the water and the wet areas, where they are usually found in large groups. Some of its kind are even considered as a weed, a kind of small unwanted plant that retards the growth of some useful plants in wet areas. Furthermore, this illustrated picture fits quite well with the other illustrations that appear in the same folio (*DQRDK*, folio 9), especially the plants. The folio depicts illustrations of many primeval things that appear in the early stages of the Earthly life creation. In the Mandaean theology, these things originated from both Worlds, i.e. the World of Light and the World of Darkness. In addition, linguistically, *ašiuntai* or *ašiunta* are equivalent to the Arabic word *aushnat*, which has (up till now) a similar root, close pronunciation and close meaning to these Mandaic words.

X5

This is *Kišutai* (a microbial disease) that covers the trees and has no tissue/fibre.⁵⁰⁷

Y5

This is the salt, which was formed by itself in one Wellspring, for all the mysteries and *Qadahas* (creatures) eat of it [i.e. the salt].

Z5

It is a vine.

A6

It is a tree of wine. [i.e. It produces the best grapes for wine.]

B6

These are endives.

C6

They are *Hasia* (lettuce/or a type of thorny plant?).⁵⁰⁸

D6

It is a tree of silk, which is the mulberry tree. It is [the tree on which lived] the primeval [silk] worm, from whom the pure silk came.

E6

It is *Šlutana* (a bat).

It is a boat (or vessel).

F6

It is a Figure [tree].

G6

This is a hedgehog.

H6

It is *Suasta*.⁵⁰⁹ It is [a] thorny [bush].⁵¹⁰

⁵⁰⁷ *giada* in many cases means 'nerve, sinew, tendon, muscle, membrane'. *giada* = *gida* 3, (and probably, figuratively, *gida* 4 'fibre (of a tree), grain'. Consult *MD*, p. 88a f. However, *giada* here may refer to the down that covers many trees. In the eye of the viewer, this kind of plant has no fibre or tissue and it appears in spots that contain a large number of tiny zigzag lines and dots. The illustrated picture confirms this textual description.

⁵⁰⁸ *Hasia** may be some kind/type of thorny plant known by this name. *CSD*, p. 160b, has *hasa* = thyme, while Jastrow, *A Dictionary of the Targumim*, p. 485b, has *hasa* = 'lettuce'. This latter translation may fit the illustration best, as it looks like a tall bolting lettuce.

⁵⁰⁹ *suasta* 'some kind of thorny vegetation' *MD*, p. 320b. *MD* also included the above (*DQRDK*, H6) text as an example of *suasta* with a slightly different translation as follows: 'suasta h' atata hu Oxf. xii it is a s.-bush, it is thorn(y)'. In addition, as we can see, the word *aṭaṭa* mistakenly written as *atata*. Cf. *ibid.* p. 13a (*aṭaṭa*).

⁵¹⁰ *MD*, p. 320b.

I6

It is *Kiba* [tree]⁵¹¹

J6

It is its [*Kiba's*] seed

⁵¹¹ *kiba*, according to the *MD*, p. 205 it means 'thorn(s), thistle(s), prickle(s)'. However, the illustrated picture clearly shows that *kiba* here means a kind of a tree, may be with thorns. Looking at the combined, next picture and its description (i.e. *DQRDK*, J6), which depicts an enlarged image of the seed of that tree, it looks like a long container of many seeds covered on both sides with some thorns. We sense that the tree has cones or acorns. It is a large tree and not a small bushy thorny plant.

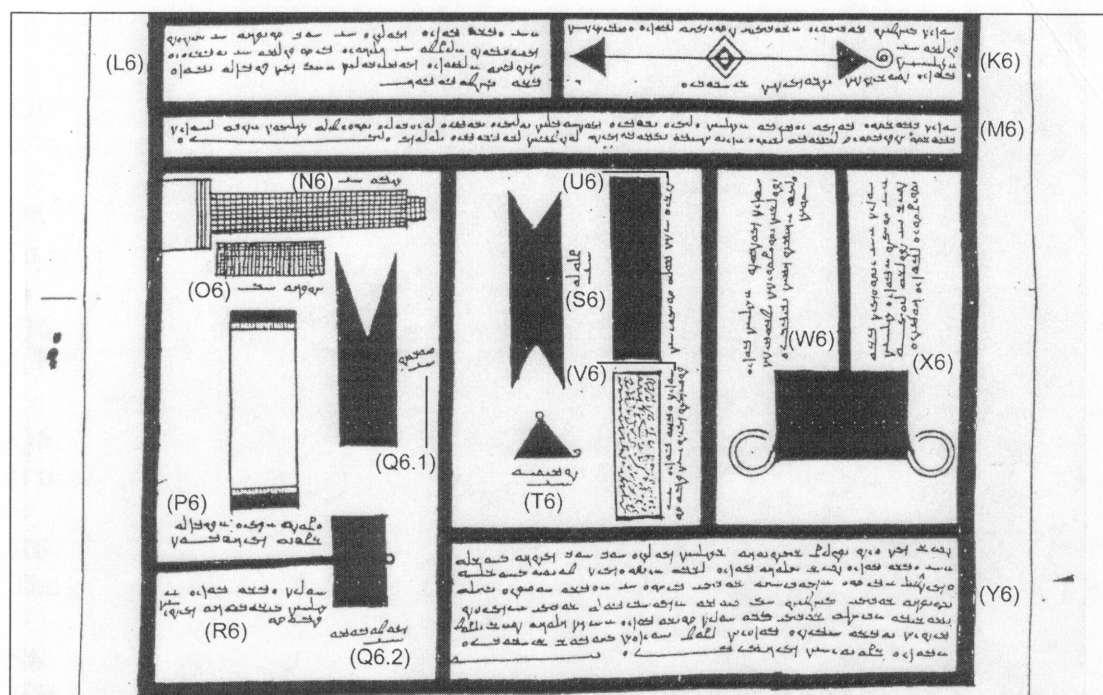


Figure 11 - Folio 10

[For an enlarged and clearer reproduction of this folio, see Appendix A.]

Folio 10

Translation of the Text Attached to the Illustrations

K6

This is the First 'Uşṭuna (the Banner-pole (support)/pillar) that kindles the Mysteries in the Image/Likeness of Nišmata (the soul).

It is an Ax that is all the Mysteries taken and made to serve one another.

L6

It [i.e. the object/'Uşṭuna] is Four Mysteries. It is the Kings. The First is Šupta (Smoothness); the Second is Msadrana (the Organizer), who held It fast; the Third is Riš Falqa (the Head of the Ax); and the Fourth is Šunarta (the Hook) that grasps firmly the Mysteries, [and] that is formed from Iron, and the Great Mystery is formed.

M6

This is the lofty, honoured (venerated) Banner that is illuminating all of the 'Worlds and Generations', and 'Worlds and Generations' do not know it [i.e. the Banner] and stray away from it. Everyone that knows (or recognizes) this Drabša and understands its glory, will not have the Garment of radiance, light and glory taken off/driven away from him through 'all ages and forever'.

N6

It is *Kura* (a forge).⁵¹²

O6

It is *Ṣapta* (hafetah -?safe box/or the strainer).⁵¹³

P6

[It is] *Agana* (the bowl)⁵¹⁴ of the water in which the [hot] iron is set...!/?.

Q6.1

It is an anvil

Q6.2

It is a hammer.

R6

These are Four Mysteries from which all Works emanated.

S6

It is a *Glala* ((the ironsmith's) stone).

T6

It is a *Naqusa*⁵¹⁵ (the bell/ cymbal).

U6

They are *Ṣibia* (fuel/firewood);⁵¹⁶ their name is *Qalia* (voices).

V6

These are Four mysteries from which *Pasimka* (light beam or ray) emanated.

W6

⁵¹² *kura*: in *MD*, p. 209 is defined as 'a dry measure'. However, here it is very clear that the suitable meaning is 'the forge of the ironsmith'. The illustrated picture indicates some realistic features of this forge which confirms the right meaning. Furthermore, *Kura* is equivalent to the Arabic word *kur*. Also, *CSD*, p. 211 refer to *kura* as 'furnace, forge'; while Jastrow, *A Dictionary of the Targumim*, p. 625b defined it as 'smelting-furnacem forge'.

⁵¹³ *ṣapta* is not mentioned in the *MD*. However, the word is still in use in the Modern Mandaic (of both the Iraqi and the Iranian dialects), which means 'a (small) box used as a safe or bucket in which all the tools of the blacksmith is kept or arranged'. However, here it might also mean 'the strainer of the ironsmith, filter, arranger to remove impurities'. Again, the illustrated picture indicates some realistic features of this forge which confirms the right meaning. The equivalent Arabic word is *misfat*.

⁵¹⁴ *Agana* here is understood as 'a (big) vessel of the ironsmith usually filled with water to put the heated iron in'. This word is mistakenly mentioned in *MD*, p. 5b only in the plural form. Drower and Macuch may have thought, mistakenly, that this word plays the role of both the singular and plural forms. This is one of the many linguistic benefits we have achieved through this study.

⁵¹⁵ *naqusa*: literally means 'bill'. *MD* did not include this word; however it did mention that *naquša* means: '(a) torturer, executioner, (b) ... cymbal'. *MD*, p. 286a. I believe that *naqusa* is a var. of *naquša*, and it is close to the second meaning of *naquša*, that is a 'cymbal' or 'bell'. However, here *naqusa* may mean 'measure(ment)' or 'gauge'. This is because it fits better with the context.

⁵¹⁶ *ṣibia*: originally, 'slices, chips, or (dry?) twigs, used with the meaning of fuel, firewood'. *MD*, p. 392b (*ṣibia* 2).

This is the *Mandana* (stirrer/mixer)⁵¹⁷ of all those mysteries, falling and disturbing and mixing them up until the construction was set in order and the small [things] became obscured.

X6

This is He, the Great [Lightworld Being] *Yušamin* who received *Šumna*⁵¹⁸ (the Bulk) of all Mysteries. He came into the sea, and disturbed the well ordered Mysteries.

Y6

He [Mara d-Rabuta/Hiia (First Life)]⁵¹⁹ took from the Wellspring and divided [its contents] into [secret] Portions for all Kings [i.e. Lightworld Beings]. To each one of them, He gave a [secret] Portion. He took Four Mysteries and gave Three Mysteries to His Son, *Yušamin*, the peacock. For the Head of Understanding [of *Yušamin*] is similar to His (the peacock's) Head,⁵²⁰ which has four *Haspas* (tissues) on it. And the *Šupta* (Smoothness/polish) is similar to [*Yušamin*'s] '*Ušfuna* ([shining/beautiful-ethereal] Body)⁵²¹. The *Saga* (sack cloth) that surrounds Him is similar to the *Himiana* (sacred Girdle) and the *Qabura* (coil) that is thrust in is similar to the [*Yušamin*'s] Hand.

These are Seven Mysteries, Three of which He took and grasped their 'nest maker',⁵²² while the other Four Mysteries He grasped. And then He mixed them together. From them, 'the Mysteries' were called.⁵²³ S-----A

⁵¹⁷ *Mandana*: may be an object or a machine used by the blacksmith. It is used practically for pounding and for polishing. It may be a kind of pestle.

⁵¹⁸ *Šumna*: may be the fat (bulk). Cf. *šumna* = 'fatness, best part', *CSD*, p. 566, and *šumna* = 'fat', Jastrow, *A Dictionary of the Targumim*, p. 1536b. The fat of the lamb's tail is still considered the best part of the sheep to eat by contemporary people in the Middle East, especially the Bedouins.

⁵¹⁹ 'He' may refer to *Hiia Qadmaia* (the First Life), which is the Life that preceded the Second Life, that is *Yušamin*. *Hiia Qadmaia* is/are the Father of *Yušamin*. *Hiia Qadmaia* here may also identify with *Mara d-Rabuta*, to whom the 'He' may refer.

⁵²⁰ This similarity between the peacock and *Yušamin* (the angle) is basically because of their arrogance. According to the Mandaean creation story the Second Life, i.e. *Yušamin* and His World(s) become very powerful, expanding in the Universe. The Second Life becomes huge, beautiful and full of Lightword Creatures (or Angels).

⁵²¹ It is a metaphorical use of '*ušfuna*).

⁵²² *Qinaiun*: from *qina* which has various meanings such as, 'nest, group; smith, maker, metal worker (in the case of derivation from *qinaia* and QNA II 'to forge'); envious, rancour; etc.'. Cf. *MD*, pp. 411a-b, 414a. Here it is difficult to know the exact meaning of *qinaiun* in this context. However, we believe that it has a combined meaning, mainly between the 'nest' and the 'smith/maker'. Thus, the meaning we suggest is 'nest maker' or, in other words, 'the elementary maker', as it is a reference to the secret relationships among 'the structure of the primary elements'.

⁵²³ That is, reformed or created and thus called Razia (Mysteries).

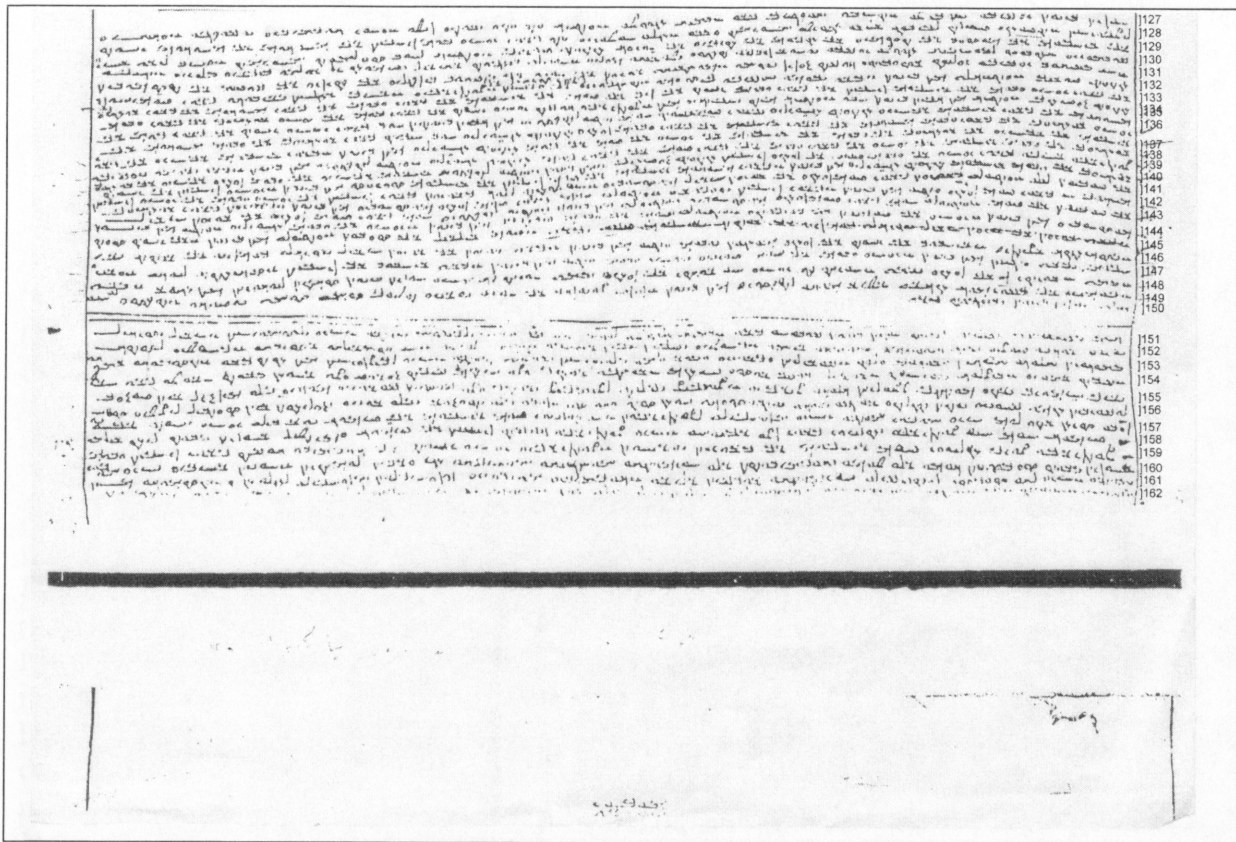


Figure 12 - Folio 11
 [For an enlarged and clearer reproduction of this folio, see Appendix A.]

Folio 11

Translation of the Text (Colophon)

[127] This is the precious *Diuan* (scroll), the bright (or luminous) lamp, and the *Tapsir Rba d-Dmut Kušta* (the Great Explanation of the Image/Likeness of Truth) and I am [the one] that who is poor, and lowly (or humble), small amongst my brothers, *Tarmidas*, and dust beneath [128] the feet of *Nasakas* (the pious or devout),⁵²⁴ I endure persecution with a sincere and faithful heart. I am a slave who is all sins. I am Rabbi *Yahia Ram Zihrun*, son of *Mhatam Yuhana*, [129] son of *Bihrami*, son of *Majad*,⁵²⁵ son of *Našmia*, son of *Karam*, son of *Kairia*, son of *Haiat*, family name *Sabur*.

I copied [this] for one who is righteous and faithful, whose heart testified to *Hiia* [130] *Qadmaia* (the First Living One(s)/the First Life) and he strove for the love of the precious *Kušta* (the Divine Truth) and gave many alms and much goodness, so that there may be a commemoration for him on earth and support [for him] in the mighty and lofty World[s]⁵²⁶ of Light. [131] He is the respected (or honorable) '*Ustad* (master/skilled craftsman/skilful man)⁵²⁷ [and] the *Ialupa* (disciple, knower) in *Šarša Taqna* (the Perfect Faith (of Enlightenment))⁵²⁸ *ξaziz* and his baptismal name is *Baian*, son of *Haua*, [who is the] son of '*Ustad* (master) *Dizpolia*, son of *Paizia*, son of *Qasum*, son of *Najmadin*, [132] family name *Sabur*. For whom I copied from the *Diuan* [by] a great, lofty, revered (religious man), *Riš Ama* (the head of the nation) of the Naṣōraeans, father of the *Ganzibras*, who is proven in all the works. [He is] Rabbi *Sam-Yuhana*, [133] son of Rabbi *Yahia Adam*, son of *Bihram Zihrun*, son of Rabbi *Adam Yuhana*, son of *Zad*, son of *Sam*, son of *Bihram*, son of Rabbi *Adam*, son of Rabbi *Mhatam*, son of Rabbi *Baktiar*, [134] family name *ξasikir*. I copied from two *Diuan*s,⁵²⁹ one [of them is the one from] which I [mainly] copied [this scroll],⁵³⁰ and the other [is] from a reliable *Ganzibra*, *Yahia Yuhana*, son of Rabbi *Ram*, son of *Yahia Baktiar*,

⁵²⁴ *nasaka* could also mean here 'copyist'. See *MD*, p. 284.

⁵²⁵ Read: *Majid*.

⁵²⁶ Read: *balmia*.

⁵²⁷ '*ustad*: lit., 'skilled workman, craftsman'. Cf. *MD*, pp. 344b, 355a. However, it may here refer to more than a skilled workman in the trade, meaning also 'a religious teacher or a master'.

⁵²⁸ *šarša* (var. of *širša*) *taqna*: a frequent Mandaean-Naṣōraean religious expression that refers to the religion or the root of the Lightword Beings, that is, the Great Life/the Divine Path of Enlightenment/the Mandaean religion, race, community, orthodox literature, etc. Cf. *MD*, pp. 446a, 463b-64a.

⁵²⁹ *diuan*: here it is written in the form of singular; however it should be in the form of the feminine plural, which is *diuanan*. Cf. *MD*, p. 107a; *MG*, p. 317 n. 2. The inaccurate grammatical use of this word may refer to the local use of it in modern Mandaic, which is the type of language that is usually used by the copyists in the Mandaean colophons.

⁵³⁰ When a Mandaean copyist was copying a scroll he usually used a reliable copy to do that. However, when he finished, he examined his work carefully against the copy that he used and against other copies that may have been available to him. Sometimes the copyist checked his work by comparing it with the other copies, section by section, but not after he finished the full copying. The latter technique is the most accurate one.

son of Rabbi Adam [135] *Mhatam*, son of Rabbi *Bihram - Br-Hiia* (son of Life),⁵³¹ family name *Kuḥailia*.

And Rabbi *Sam Yuhana*⁵³² also copied for himself from two *Diuan*s,⁵³³ one [is the copy of] Rabbi *Yahia Yuhana*, son of Rabbi *Ram*, son of [136] *Yahia Baktiar*, son of Rabbi *Adam Mhatam*, son of Rabbi *Bihram*, son of Rabbi *Adam Zakia*, family name *Kuḥailia*. The other one [is the copy of] Rabbi *Baktiar*, son of *Adam Mhatam*, son of [137] *Bihram*, son of *Br-Hiia*, son of *Baktiar*, son of *Adam*, son of *Bihram*, son of *Yahia*, [son of Rabbi *Adam*],⁵³⁴ son of *Sam*, son of *Ram*, family name *Kuḥailia*.

[Copied] from the *Diuan* of Rabbi *Bihram - Br-Hiia*, son of Rabbi [138] *Baktiar*, son of *Adam Bihram*, son of *Yahia*, son of Rabbi *Adam*, son of Rabbi *Sam*, son of Rabbi *Ram*, family name *Kuḥailia*, who copied for himself from the *Diuan* of the great, lofty and revered, [139] the elect *Ganzibra* Rabbi *Yahia*, son of *Adam Sam*, son of *Zakia Zihrun*, family name *ḡasikir*.

[Copied] from the *Diuan* of [the copyist] who copied for himself, *Bihram - Br-Hiia*, son of *Adam Zakia - Br-Hiia?* [or, son of *Hiia?*]⁵³⁵ son of *Baktiar*, [140] *Baktiar*,⁵³⁶ son of *Adam Bihram*, family name *Kuḥailia*. [Copied] from the *Diuan* of Rabbi *Mhatam Bihram* son of *Sam Zihrun*, son of *Bihram Šaiiaš*. [Copied] from the *Diuan* of *Yahia Zihrun*, son of *Yuhana*, [141] son of *Saruan Lula*, who copied it [from]⁵³⁷ our Rabbi (our master priest), Rabbi *Sam Zakia*, son of *Baian Hibil Mašhadia*, who lived with our Rabbi, Rabbi *Zihrun*, son of *Yahia Adam*, son of *Yahia Zihrun* [142] *Muktar*. He is Rabbi *Sam Zakia* [who] copied from the *Diuan* of Rabbi *Zihrun Šarabia?* [or *saraba?*], who also copied it [from] Rabbi *Sam Zakia Mašhadia*, from the *Diuan* of our Rabbi, Rabbi *Baktiar*, [143] son of *Saruan*, son of *Sam*, who also copied it [from] Rabbi *Sam Zakia Mašhadia*, who copied it from the *Diuan* which he copied for himself also [from?] Rabbi *Sam Zakia*, son of *Baian Hibil* [144] *Mašhadia*. [Copied] from the *Diuan* of *Yahia*, son of *Saruan*, son of *Daidania*, who copied it [from] *Sam*, son of *Adam*, who copied it from the *Diuan* of *Yahia*, son of *Adam Kuḥailia*, who copied from the *Diuan* [145]⁵³⁸ of *Sam Bulbul*, son of *Šadan*, who copied it from the *Diuan* of *Br-Yuhana*

⁵³¹ *br-hiia* is a Maluaša compound name used for men. See *MD*, pp. 69a, 143a-b Thus, I believe that this compound name is, in fact, used here as a compound name of *Bihram*. For that reason, *br* is not used here to inform us that *Bihram* is the son of *Hiia* (which should be written as e.g. *bihram br br-hiia*) but rather to refer to the name of the copyist, that is *Bihram - Br-Hiia*. It should be noted here that the name of this copyist also appeared in the colophons of some other Mandaean documents. See for example *ATŠ*, I no. 295.

⁵³² *Sam Yuhana* is the same as *Riš Ama* who is mentioned in *DQRDK*, 132 (end).

⁵³³ *Diuanan* used here in the right grammatical classic Mandaic form. Cf. *DQRDK*, 134.

⁵³⁴ This name is not in *DQRDK*; however, from my investigation, I have found that a similar lineage to that of this copyist appears also in *ATŠ* I, no. 295. Thus, I prefer to include it for the benefit of further studies on the Mandaean colophons.

⁵³⁵ *br-Hiia*: it is quite possible that it *br* here is used to mean 'son of' rather than (-*Br*-), that is, as part of one long name.

⁵³⁶ The copyist has repeated this twice, and it could possibly be a mistake.

⁵³⁷ *ansalH*: lit. means '[he] copied it for him'. However, this form of the verb frequently appears in the Mandaean colophons and usually means '[he] copied it'.

⁵³⁸ Here the copyist deleted the following words by crossing them out with a line, perhaps because he realized that he had jumped to another line (146) in his copying, so he deleted that and started again correctly. These words are as follows:

[145] *d-rbH baian br baian hibil ušitlH ram ziua br bananu ubihram urbH*.

of his Rabbi, *Baian*, son of *Baian Hibil* and his son(s) *Ram Ziua*, son of *Bananu*, and *Bihram* and his Rabbi.

Šana [146] that was housed in the library of *Bihdad*, son of *Yuhana*, son of *Zakia Makuan* and *Adam* copied from the *Diuan* of his Rabbi *Baian*, son of *Baian Hibil* and his sons, *Ram-Ziua* son of *Bananu*, and [147] *Bihram* and his Rabbi copied from the *Diuan* of *Yahia Adam*, son of *Sam Saiuia* and *Yahia Adam* copied from the *Diuan* of his Rabbi *Bihdad*, son of *Zihrun* that was housed with the father [148] of his mother [i.e. his grandfather] of *Bainai*, son of *Zakia* and his mother [whose name is] *Haiuna*,⁵³⁹ daughter of *Yahia*.⁵⁴⁰

And this *Diuan* was discovered (or housed) with them, *Bainai* son of *Zakia* and his mother *Haiuna* daughter of *Yahia*, and was from the [original] handwriting [149] of *Ramuia*, son of 'Qaimat, who wrote it in the town of *Tib*. [He wrote it] for himself from the *Diuan* of⁵⁴¹ *Zazai* [of]⁵⁴² *Gauazta*, son of *Haua* and the name of his father is *Nařar*, and he himself has [150] no copies of this *Diuan* and the Great Memorial (or commemoration).

[151] Thus was set in order and brought to a successful completion this *Diuan*, *Qadaha Rba d-Dmut Kuřa* (the Great Creation of the Image/Likeness of Truth) to the glory of the name of *Hiia Qadmaia* (the First Living One(s)/First Life) and in the Sign of *Manda d-Hiia* and the names of *Hibil*, *řitil* [152] and *Anuř* [and] in the Exalted Place, the Place of Perfection, I sealed (or finished) it on the day of Friday, the twenty second of the month of *Miřai Gaiřa* (mid summer), which is *řumbulta* (Virgo), in the [Mandaean] year of Friday.⁵⁴³ [153] [That is] in the year 1233 of the Arab computation,⁵⁴⁴ may the world fonder upon them and may *Manda d-Hiia* bring their wrath against the great congregation of souls to an end. [I finished copying it] in the town [154] of *Qurna* by the waters of the Tigris and [during] the ruler of *Babil* (Iraq), *Dauud Bařa* and the governor of *Basra*, *Bakir Aga*⁵⁴⁵ and the governor of *Qurna* *řabas Aga*.

At⁵⁴⁶ that time⁵⁴⁷ a great fright⁵⁴⁸ assailed [us], [155] for⁵⁴⁹ both *Bir-Himaid*⁵⁵⁰ and *Bnia-Manřur*⁵⁵¹ killed three men at the [Qurna] *Gumrug* (check point),⁵⁵² and burnt down⁵⁵³ the

⁵³⁹ *u'mH d-haiuna*: lit. means 'and the mother of *Haiuna*', but also it may be 'and his mother, who is *haiuna*'. This might also be considered as another possibility for the translation.

⁵⁴⁰ In the prayer of *abahatan qadmaia* 'the First Fathers', the name of *Haiuna* appears as *haiuna pt tihuia* instead of *haiuna pt Yahia*. *Tihuia* seems to be a female name, thus, *Tihuia* could be *Haiuna*'s mother/master (i.e. initiator, father) but could not be name of her biological father.

⁵⁴¹ řganda Br Yasmin does not mention here in *DQRDK*, as some other Documents did. See p. 120, above.

⁵⁴² *d-* is missing from the original text. Probably intentionally by *DQRDK*'s latest copyist, *Yahia*.

⁵⁴³ I.e. the year began on Friday.

⁵⁴⁴ This year is of the Hegira Muslim calendar, which has also been used by the Arabs after Islam.

⁵⁴⁵ *Aga*. (T.-P. ٱٱ) means 'Sir, Mr.'. See *MD*, p. 5a.

⁵⁴⁶ *bhak*: lit. 'in that'.

⁵⁴⁷ *'dana*: adv. of time. Comes in various meanings (especially in modern Mandaean) centred around time, period of time, point of time. The actual sense seems to be that at the time of writing this scroll he experienced or received news of the events to which he refers. See *MD*, p. 341a, b and *MG*, 136:16.

⁵⁴⁸ *hbata*:* is of the root *HBT*, lit. batter down, beat down, strike upon, assail with blows, trample. However, one gets the sense of the word meaning a frightening force. See *MD*, p. 129a.

Gumrug. And [thus,] *Bakir Aga*⁵⁵⁴ wanted⁵⁵⁵ to bring⁵⁵⁶ an army⁵⁵⁷ against⁵⁵⁸ *Mizxil*, son of *Saḡad*.⁵⁵⁹ [156] We do not know⁵⁶⁰ what⁵⁶¹ will happen,⁵⁶² and (so) we have fallen⁵⁶³ into dread⁵⁶⁴ and anxious thoughts.

⁵⁴⁹ *u*: lit. 'and'.

⁵⁵⁰ *Bir Himaid*: pronounced as *bir ehmead*. As I searched for a meaning to this I first was under the impression that it was a place in Qurna as *bir* commonly means 'well'. My investigation via an old lady, whose family has lived at *Qurna* for over eight centuries, brought forth the answer. It turns out that *Bir Himaid* is an Arab tribe that is still in existence today at the same location. They are infamous fighters and trouble makers.

⁵⁵¹ This is also an Arab tribe who are also still living at *Qurna* at the present time.

⁵⁵² *gumrug*: an Iranian word that means 'check point'. It is still used today in Southern Iraq meaning both the 'check point' or customs, and the tax and/or duty taken at such places.

⁵⁵³ *qlunH*: pe. pf. pl. with encl. Of *QLA*, 'to burn, consume by fire, roast, porch, fry'. *MD* did not mention this form. Cf. *MD*, p. 413a.

⁵⁵⁴ The Ottoman governor of Basra. See *DQRDK*, 154, above.

⁵⁵⁵ *qabaiia*:* modern Mandaic use of pt. of *BAA* 'to ask, demand, desire, want, seek; pray, beg wish'. Cf. *MD*, pp. 44b-45a. The use of *qa* as a prefix is characteristic of many forms, especially of Modern Mandaic verbs. Here in its idiomatic use it means 'he wanted (him) by demand'.

⁵⁵⁶ *matia*: [pa. & af.] pt. of *ATA*. See *MD*, pp. 41b-2a.

⁵⁵⁷ *qašin*:* it means 'army, force of hard (or cruel) men'. It is a modern Mandaic word derived from *QŠA*, 'to be hard, stiff, rough, difficult; PA: to harden, stiffen'. See *MD*, pp. 403, 416b. This word appeared in this form probably for the first time in the Mandaean documents. It seems that it is derived from this root because usually hard, cruel men are the people who join the army. Thus the Modern Mandaic uses the adjective to create a new word. Moreover, the writer did not use the classic word for the army, which is *haila* ('strength, power, army, force; see *MD*, p. 120a) because he is writing in his colophon and that is usually written in modern Mandaic.

⁵⁵⁸ '*la*: modern colloquial Mandaic; means 'against, upon, over, on'.

⁵⁵⁹ *Mizxil Bin Saḡad*: an Arabic name. According to the search I did about him, he was the leader of the *Bnia Maṣṣur* tribe, based in Qurna city (which is part of *Basra* city/state). Also he seems to be the general leader of the tribes in the region of Qurna and the villages around it, such as *Sharesh*, *Nhirat*, *MDainah*, *Shwech*, etc. So the Mayor/governor of Basrah city wanted to attack *Mizxil Bin Saḡad* and his tribe(s) because the attack on the *Gumrug* was from his tribes and may be by his command.

⁵⁶⁰ *qaidin*:* pe. part. pres. with encl. & prefix (*qa*) of *YDA* (= 'DA II) 'to know, perceive; recognize; become cognizant, aware of'. Cf. *MD*, p. 341a. It is a Modern Mandaic word, consisting of the prefix (*qa*) + Verb (from the root(s) *YDA*, 'DA) + suff. However, it usually comes in a different form, which is *qiadin*: the prefix (*q*) + verb (*iad*) + Suff. I think *qaidin* has the same meaning (and use) as *qiadan* but in a different Modern Mandaic form of accent. However, sometimes writers of the colophons did not pay attention to (or were aware of) the spelling or grammatical mistakes. That is why we can easily find lots of these mistakes when they describe something in writing. See *MD*, pp. 188b, 341a. Cf. Ar. *دری, ودع, استودی*. (see the reverse use of the letters R and D).

⁵⁶¹ *kima*:* a new var. of *kma* 'how, how much, how long'. See *MD*, pp. 218a, 213a. However, here it fits with the meaning of 'what' better than 'how'.

⁵⁶² *Qhauia*:* a modern Mandaic use of *hauia* (rt. *HUA*) comes with the (modern use of) the prefix *q*. *MD*, pp. 133a-b.

⁵⁶³ *npilna*:* pe. pf. 1st. pl. of *NPL* 'to fall'. Seemingly, it is a new modern Mandaic use of *npalnin*. It is worth mentioning that the copyist changed the classic form of the verb (i.e. *npalnin*) to the modern form (i.e. *npilnia*).

⁵⁶⁵ And [also at] that⁵⁶⁶ time *Šah-Zada*⁵⁶⁷ came against (or down on)⁵⁶⁸ *Šaḫab*, and [then] against *Bauia*⁵⁶⁹ and *Ḫali-Kan*,⁵⁷⁰ son of *Jandil*. *Šah- [157] Zada*, captured⁵⁷¹ the Sheik⁵⁷² of *Bnia-Lam*.⁵⁷³ And *Hiia*, *Marai* and *Manda d-Hiia* protect⁵⁷⁴ our *Ganzibra*,⁵⁷⁵ who is my (maternal) uncle,⁵⁷⁶ *Sam Bihram* son of *Simat*. And⁵⁷⁷ my [own] father *Yahia Yuhana*, son of

This may help in a further study of the development of the Mandaic language, especially the forms of the verbs. Cf. *MD*, p. 303a-b.

⁵⁶⁴ *anqašata*:* it means ‘shiverings, palpitations, shakings, throbbings’. It is a var. of *nqašata*, which is pl. of *nqašta* or *nqaša*?. However, *nqašata* (or/and *anqašata*) are var. of *nqašia*. All those forms are from the root *NQŠ* ‘to strike, smite; beat; shake, palpitate’. Cf. *MD*, p. 306a, b.

⁵⁶⁵ From the following sentence, the copyist started talking about another event that had happened probably shortly before the first incident, but perhaps he mentioned it after the former one because it was more important and the copyist was living through the action at the time of writing. Thus, I believe that the copyist begins with the one that is still happening and then he mentions the previous one that happened before, the one he will explain soon. Another possibility might be both incidents are one incident that developed during that year/time.

⁵⁶⁶ *uhak*: lit. ‘and that’. Probably the writer should say (as with the first one) *u+bhak*. See (*bhak* /at the beginning of this colophon).

⁵⁶⁷ *šah-zada* is a Persian noun. It should be written and read in two parts. It is a compound noun (or: governed noun of a genitive construction). *Šah* means king, (see *MD*, p. 439b), *Zada* is the name of the Persian king during that time. In his time the relationship between the Persians and the Ottomans was very bad. Both were trying to take control of the area of Khozistan, the Arab area, which is very well connected with Basra and Amara Iraqi cities, and for long time under the control of Ottomans.

⁵⁶⁸ *’la*: comes here with a new meaning, thus another example for *’la* could be added here.

⁵⁶⁹ *bauia**: a local Arabic name of a person. After long investigation, however, I have found that it is also a name of an Arab tribe. Its name is pronounced *baweyyah*. Thus, I suggest that the name here is referring to this tribe and its members rather than the name of a person. The *baweyyah* tribe is usually living in Khozestan, Iran, part of it is also living in the south region of Iraq.

⁵⁷⁰ *Ḫalikan* should be read in two parts: *Ḫali* + *Khan*. The second part (i.e. *Khan*) indicates that it is the name of a person and is usually used by a well-known group of people who live in Khozestan. This group includes the *Chaḫab* and the *baweyyah* tribes. The passage indicates that this person may be considered as an important leader of many tribes in Khozestan region at that time. The name might also match the local southern (accent of) Arabic Iraqi name, that is *Ḫligan*.

⁵⁷¹ *ligḫia**: modern use of the pe. pf. with masc. suff. of *LGḫ*, ‘to hold, grasp, take (hold of); have, overwhelm’. It is used here idiomatically to mean ‘capture, take as prisoner, arrest, jail’. Cf. *MD*, p. 230a; *MG*, pp. 269: 11, 275: 1.

⁵⁷² *šik*: ‘old man, religious leader, chieftain, head of tribe’. Here it means ‘leader/head of tribe’.

⁵⁷³ *bnia lam*: the name of a large powerful Arab tribe, the majority of whom to this day live in the southern region of Iraq, especially Basra and also in many parts of *Khozestan*.

⁵⁷⁴ *MzahriH**: pa. pt. with encl. of *ZHR* ‘to be careful, prudent; PA, to warn, make sure, make safe, watch’. Cf. 163a-b. However, here it is used in the modern Mandaic form to mean ‘protect, preserve’.

⁵⁷⁵ *ganzibran*. See (chapter 2) p. 20 n. 9, above.

⁵⁷⁶ *Kaluiai**: read as *khälöyay*, originally, in classic Mandaic, *kalai*, ‘my maternal uncle’. However, this form is a modern Mandaic word. It consists of *kala* (2), a noun meaning ‘maternal uncle’ + the 1st pronoun *ai*. However, in this modern form *kala* is modified by adding additional letters, i.e. *ui*, maybe to pronounce it more easily with the pronoun *ai*. Drower and Macuch did not mention *kal(a)* (2) or any of its classic or modern forms. See *MD*, p. 197a.

Haua [158] *Simat*, who also was a *Ganzibra*. And (the rabbi), my oldest⁵⁷⁸ (maternal) uncle, [who] passed a way⁵⁷⁹ into the renewal⁵⁸⁰ of Eternal Life,⁵⁸¹ [he was] the reliable *Ganzibra Zihrun*, son *Simat*.⁵⁸² So at this time there is no⁵⁸³ [159] *Ganzibra* in the [whole] world⁵⁸⁴ other than my (maternal) uncle, *Sam Bihram*, son of our Rabbi⁵⁸⁵ and the father of *Ganzibras Yahia Yuhana*, son of the reliable *Tarmida Rabbi Zihrun Adam*.⁵⁸⁶

⁵⁷⁷ ‘And’: joins (by means of a conjunction) the meaning regarding the recent Mandaean *Ganzibras*, that is the former (only) living one and the latter recent two dead, whose names he will record in the following sentences.

⁵⁷⁸ *Rbai*: read: *rabbai*. It means ‘my master, Rabbi, master, teacher, initiator, instructor’. But here, on the one hand, I think it is used in the modern Mandaic sense to mean ‘the oldest, the bigger (brother), greater’. It is derived from the root *RBA* ‘to become big, grow; bring up, nourish’. On the other hand, I strongly suggest that the copyist meant ‘Rabbi, the master’ including the first meaning. Cf. *MD*, pp. 417a, 422a and b; *MG*, p. 175: 14f. This is also because from some of my priestly sources I know that his uncle was a Rabbi and he was the eldest of his brothers (including the copyist’s mother). Moreover, he died a few years before the date of writing this scroll (i.e. A. H. 1233). He probably died 5-10 years earlier.

⁵⁷⁹ *Zga*:* pe. pf. of *ZGA*, ‘to: go, depart’. This root is a modern Mandaic form derived (or can be considered as a derivation, by progressive assimilation) from *SGA* ‘to go’. Here *zga* is used idiomatically to mean ‘died, passed away, departed from this earthly (material) world’. It should be noted here that this word has a rare inflection (or declension) form for classic and modern Mandaic. The usual classic and modern forms for this meaning are *sga* or *zga* (pe. pf. of *SGA*, *ZGA*) respectively. It is interesting to note that the colloquial pronunciation for both of them nowadays is *ezga*. That applies also for all the letter *s* in all of the inflections (or declensions) of *SGA*. The *s* is always pronounced as *z*. Cf. *MD*, pp. 162a, 317b.

⁵⁸⁰ *ruaha* (root *RWH*): ‘ease, recovery, relief, solace, refreshment, restoration, revival’.

⁵⁸¹ *zga bruaha d-hiia*: this phrase is often used in the Mandaean literature and also very frequently in the modern Mandaic. The Madaeans usually say it when they mention/remember any dead (Mandaean) person’s name (especially for the recent dead) as a short expression (or prayer) to bring ease, relief and refreshment to that person and to ask *Hiia* (God) to bless him/her with His great forgiveness. Thus, the copyist here used the whole phrase as a modern expression exactly in the modern religious informal meaning – for the newly dead – in a simple way carrying the meanings ‘communion and renewal of Life’, ‘restoration (revival) of Life’ and ‘ease of Life’, for all these meanings refer to having a pure life again with relief and ease.

⁵⁸² This passage which lists the names of the *Ganzibras* seems to be confusing. Maybe it is an attempt by the copyist to give the sense that *Sam Bihram* is the only surviving *Ganzibra* after his father died. The writer did not mention his father’s dying clearly, maybe because it was known to the local Mandaean people and he died a long time before the death of his eldest (maternal) uncle, i.e. before *Zihrun*, son of *Simat*, died.

⁵⁸³ *lika*: ‘there is not, there are not’. This word is in a classic form but it also occurs in the modern Mandaic, is pronounced *lekka*. It was coined originally from: *lit + kal’ka*. The letter *t* is omitted for easier and quicker pronunciation. The same has happened to the equivalent Talmudic word ליכא, which came from ליה + כא. See *MD*, p. 236a; *MG*, pp. 42: 20, 204: 6, 296: 2.

⁵⁸⁴ *gair*: ‘except, not, other (than), but, another, different from, unlike, not the same’. This word has wide meaning, originally seems to have been an Arabic word (cf. Ar. غير), and has been used in modern Mandaic for nearly thirteen centuries. For example it is found in *AM*, p. 257: 39. See also *MD*, p. 76a.

⁵⁸⁵ *rabaian*:* a modern Mandaic form of the 1st. pl. of *rba* which comes with the suff. ‘an’. This form is not found in the classic Mandaean writings, as far as I can tell. Note that *Rbai* should be read as *rabbai*. It means ‘my master’.

⁵⁸⁶ *abuhan*:* read as *abuhun*. It is a modern Mandaic form of the 3rd. pl. of *aba*. Here *abuhun* is considered a var. of *abuhun*, which already has, at least, three other varr., that is *abhun*, *abaihun* and *abuihun*, all of which mean ‘their father’. See *MD*, p. 181: 21f.; *MD*, p. 1a. However, the most frequently used word for ‘our father’ is *abun*. *MG*, p. 179: 12, n. 1; *MD*, loc. cit.

[160] During this time⁵⁸⁷ our [Mandaean] community (or faith)⁵⁸⁸ is⁵⁸⁹ without quality (or pleasure, substance);⁵⁹⁰ and our *Tarmidas* (priests)⁵⁹¹ (are) without piety (or observance of faith). And when they [i.e. the priests] perform⁵⁹² *Mašbuta* (Baptism) and *Masiqta* (Rising), they are not able to (perform) them equally with (or like) the chosen ones.⁵⁹³ And *Hiia* (the Living One(s)), and *Marai* (my Lord), [161] and *Manda d-Hiia* (the Gnosis/Knowledge of Life), do not cut off (or put an end to) this *Šarša* (nation/faith/religion);⁵⁹⁴ and put⁵⁹⁵ piety in the hearts of the *Tarmidas*; and protect (or bless preserve)⁵⁹⁶ the Madaeans; and protect⁵⁹⁷ the ‘whole Congregation of Souls’ [i.e. the whole Mandaean nation]⁵⁹⁸ from [162] the torture (punishment, condemnation)⁵⁹⁹ of the Darkness; and do not [let] the hand(s) of the children⁶⁰⁰

⁵⁸⁷ *dana*: this is the third time the copyist used this word in different, though similar meaning.

⁵⁸⁸ *šaršan*:* consists of *šarš(a)* + *an* (the pronoun of 1st. pl.). *šarša* is a var. of *širša*, originally, ‘root, kin, tribe, family, genus; source, fountain-head’. The meaning here, however, has a religious connotation referring to the Mandaean faith, stock, community, etc. See *MD*, pp. 463a-64b; *MG*, pp. 13: 18, 20: 2.

⁵⁸⁹ *tama*: pronounced *tammä*, pe. pf. of *TMM*, ‘to be(come), remain, stay’. It is used a few times in the later classic Mandaic. However, it is used very often in the colloquial Mandaic, including the colophons, Now it has several meanings as follows: ‘come to be, turn (into), where, come to end (up) in, result in’. See *MD*, p. 488a-b.

⁵⁹⁰ *ṭama*: lit. ‘test, flavor, judgment’. This word is used in both classic and modern Mandaic. Cf. *MD*, p. 174b. However, in this colophon it is used metaphorically to refer to the bad situation of the whole nation of Madaeans at that time because of illiteracy, ignorance, poverty and persecution. Thus, the lay Mandaean people did not know well the essence of their religion. Many of them did not read, write, speak or understand Mandaic and the Mandaean priests did not teach them properly. The majority knew just the traditions and the service of some practices. For this reason this priest (i.e. the copyist) says that in a sad tone and records some details of this situation, in the rest of his statement.

⁵⁹¹ *tarmidanan*:* this form of pl. consists of *tarmida* + (*a*)*nan* (the 1st. pl. suff.). It is used in the usual classic way in this modern passage to refer to most, if not all, the Mandaean priests. See *MD*, pp. 481b-82a; *MG*, pp. 55: 3, 133: 16.

From that and the preceding we can surmise that there was only one (probably very old) *Ganzibra* still alive (i.e. *Sam Bihram*) and many *Tarmidas*, including the copyist of this scroll.

⁵⁹² *abdin*: pe. act. pt. pl. of *ABD I*, ‘to do, make, act’. The writer used here the classic form of this verb. The later and colloquial form *qabdin* (lit. they [will] do) is used more often than *abdin*. This verb is used here metaphorically to emphasize the rituals that the Mandaean priests performed, especially the *Mašbuta* and the *Masiqta*.

⁵⁹³ The sentence is unclear. Thus another translation is probable, as follows: ‘they [i.e. priests] do not know how to perform them (i.e. *Mašbuta* and *Masiqta*) perfectly so that they can become *Bhiria* (chosen ones)’.

⁵⁹⁴ The sense we get here is of a frequently used saying of Madaeans to wish the whole Mandaean nation/race peace, goodness and protection on earth till the end of life in this physical world.

⁵⁹⁵ *Badqin*.

⁵⁹⁶ *mzahirlan*:* pa. pt. with encl. of *ZHR* ‘to be careful, prudent’; *PA.*, ‘to warn, keep up, preserve, safe, make sure; bless’. This form is a modern Mandaic use of this word.

⁵⁹⁷ *mzahrilu*:* pa. pf. pass, with encl. of *ZHR*. See the previous note. It should be read as *mzahrilH*.

⁵⁹⁸ *kula kana d-nišmata* is a classic Mandaean expression that refers to the Mandaean nation/race. It is still in use in the modern daily life of Madaeans.

⁵⁹⁹ *agzarta*: usually means ‘judgment, verdict, condemnation, sentence’. See *MD*, p. 5b. However, the classic form in this modern passage fits better with the colloquial Mandaean meaning of it (i.e. torture/punishment).

of *Šibiahia* (the demons)⁶⁰¹ have power over us [i.e. the Mandaeans], and over ‘the whole Congregation of [the enlightened Mandaean] Souls’. And *Hiiā* (the Living One(s)/Life) rejoice(d) for ever; and *Hiiā* (the Living One(s)/Life) is [eternally] Victorious.

⁶⁰⁰ *da d-ianqā*: lit. means ‘the hand of the child’. However, it should be read as if it is in a plural form, that is ‘*dia d-ianqia*’.

⁶⁰¹ *dia d-ianqia d-šibiahia*: metaphorically means the power of the non-Enlightened people, i.e. ‘Children of Darkness’.

CHAPTER 7

Conclusion

The Mandaean scrolls are sensitive, secret documents whose purpose is to preserve hidden sacred knowledge as well as to delve deeply into mystical meanings. To protect the knowledge revealed in the scrolls, they are usually written in an enigmatic and metaphorical way. For lay readers and even for Western scholars of Mandaeism, therefore, these documents may seem to be both very puzzling and obscure. Indeed, translators of these ancient documents have often run into confusion, obstacles or other difficulties when they have attempted to translate mystical passages. That is because translating these sensitive documents successfully requires not only a high level of academic skill and rigorous scholarship, but also, and more importantly, an 'insider's' knowledge, the kind of knowledge possessed by a Naṣōraean who is fully initiated in the Naṣōraean secret teachings. Such 'inside' knowledge allows the translator greater access to both the linguistic system in the scrolls and to the religious secret system and the symbolism therein, thus permitting a fuller understanding of the original secret meanings than has hitherto been provided by previous scholars. That, I believe, is the most significant achievement of this current translation and study of *DQRDK*.

The purpose of this study has not only been to provide a thorough and insightful translation of an important Mandaean secret, mystical scroll, but also to draw together the major research findings from previous scholarly works and to indicate possible directions ('keys') for further Mandaean study. It is hoped that the practical model of translation offered here, via the translation and studying of *DQRDK* that brings together both (Western) scholarly effort and (Middle Eastern) Naṣōraean thoughts and interpretations will encourage further and more illuminating study of this and other Mandaean scrolls.

As a Mandaean, Middle Eastern scholar and Naṣōraean initiate, I have attempted to explore in some depth many Naṣōraean views that may help to explain and simplify *DQRDK*'s inner mystical contents and thus help the reader to appreciate this very significant scroll, especially in relation to the secret theological belief systems regarding the creation of the universe and existence in the world. Most importantly, the scroll covers the embryo and the stages of its development, which play an important role in this creation story. In addition, it demonstrates the variety of living things and creatures and

the development of human activities in many aspects of life. It certainly provides the missing link in the Mandaean hidden teachings, some of which are revealed in other esoteric scrolls, such as *DM'L*, *ATŠ*, *AAR*, *AAZ*, *ZRK*, *DA*.

This study has also shown how *DQRDK* significantly captures the doctrines of the Mandaean Gnostic system, frequently using a unique, mystical language to convey various theological, cosmological and theosophical concepts, including the dualisms of good and evil, upper world and lower world, truth and falsehood, the spiritual and the material, heaven and earth, male and female, right and left, water and blood, life and death, and light and darkness. These concepts reveal the strong dualistic Mandaean-Gnostic systems, which are not only explained in the written text of *DQRDK* but are also depicted in the majority of the extensive illustrations throughout the whole scroll. These dualisms are not separated from each other, but, in fact, exist in special relationships and in cooperation with each other, as in cases like *Nišimta* and *Ruha*, water and blood, Adam and Eve, etc. The proper and true mystical Naṣōraean interpretation of these elements would certainly assist scholars in genuinely understanding an important aspect of the Mandaean religion and its belief systems.

In terms of Mandaean belief systems, *DQRDK* is, in fact, one of the most important Mandaean-Naṣōraean secret scrolls. Yet, until this current study, it had remained hidden, not only from lay Mandaeans and the majority of the Mandaean priests and lay Naṣōraeans, but also from most Mandaean scholars. Even the complete name of this scroll has remained a puzzle until now, as has its nature and actual physical construction. Although some scholars have previously believed that this scroll is either a ritual or an exorcism scroll, this study has proved, with substantial evidence, that *DQRDK* is a very important, esoteric, mystical scroll. Likewise, it was previously believed that there were two separate scrolls, that is *Dmut Kušṭa* and *Qadaha Rba*. However, this thesis demonstrates that these two are, in fact, one scroll, that is *DQRDK*, and that the roll of *DQRDK* is attached to and combined in one roll with another separate scroll, that is *DRA*. The significance of this finding is that it points to the necessity of re-examining previous scholarly works on the Mandaean secret scrolls to discover if similar mistakes have been made.

This study has also offered important information regarding the other MSS of this scroll that still exist in private Mandaean collections and identified owners of the MSS in case they need to be consulted for further comparative study. In addition, it has provided a detailed and critical description of *DQRDK*, which should certainly help the reader to know which material and traditional technique has been used in copying this scroll, as well as its current condition and age. A more accurate view of these matters will, it is hoped, stimulate further interest.

Because the intricacy of Mandaic scripts in the early manuscripts requires that one be trained according to the ancient traditions of writing, this study has offered insights into important elements of Mandaean writing, brought attention to the special nature of the scripture of *DQRDK*, and made some remarks on the historical provenance and calligraphic features of the script of *DQRDK*. In addition, the essential syntactic features of the Mandaic of this scroll have been highlighted to achieve better understanding of the qualities of *DQRDK*. It is often the abundance of (mystical) marker-words in Mandaic that makes it difficult for beginners to understand the meaning of the author's ideas as the original readers experienced them. Thus, I have pointed out five main types of sentence structure which are used frequently in *DQRDK* and many other secret Mandaean writings, such as *ATŠ*, *DM'L* and which have hardly been adequately mentioned by scholars in their studies of other Mandaic texts. These styles are as follows: (i) the running style (or the loose style); (ii) the periodic style; (iii) the esoteric style; (iv) the cyclical style; and (v) the elliptic locution style. Knowing these styles will indeed assist scholars in understanding the structure and the relation of the sentences in the individual passages of *DQRDK*, thus facilitating the interpretation of the whole text of the scroll.

Furthermore, I have commented on the scriptural and technical aspects of *DQRDK*, specifically the orthography, grammar, semantics, and special mystical features of the language. These comments concern verb tense and certain mystical features that affect grammar. For example, the unity of past, present and future is an important concept in Mandaean-Naṣōraean philosophy. The universality of the tense's meaning is implied, and readers would understand past, present and future within the verb. As we are dealing with a scroll containing esoteric textual explanations, we must also be sensitive to the inherent mysticism and the secret meanings that go beyond the literal meanings of the

words. A full understanding of the above features of *DQRDK* will certainly help to establish the place of this scroll in Mandaean studies.

Even though this *Diuan* cannot be said to reflect all aspects of Mandaic grammar in the period of ‘Middle Aramaic’, it is quite representative because of its length. There is, then, a further reason to have studied the language of this text, which represents an important link in the division of Middle Aramaic. Although a lot of work has been done on this aspect of *DQRDK* in this thesis, however, there is still room for further detailed study of this important scroll. Such a study would also provide the opportunity to re-evaluate explanations found in Mandaic grammars as well as in other scholarly studies.

The journey of this research has led to another important exploration, that is, the question of the ‘authorship’ of *DQRDK*. This question has been addressed in an attempt to establish the historical timeframe for the scroll. This is one of the most difficult thematic questions of this study. Although this research has found no evidence contrary to the Mandaean tradition which emphasises that there are no earthly authors for the Mandaean scriptures, including *DQRDK* (and indeed no Mandaean colophon has ever described any of the extensive recorded lists of names as authors, but rather as copyists or as early scribes or as editors); it is possible to examine the names in the various colophons, of the earthly copyists/scribes and editors, as well as other internal and external evidence, to establish the history of *DQRDK*’s transmission.

Given that there is no recognised author for *DQRDK* or other scriptures, I concentrated mainly on the latest copyist (i.e., Rabbi Yahia Ram Zihrun, son of Mhatam Yuhana)¹ and on the earliest recorded copyist/editor (ie. Zazai d-Gauazta), who has played a very important theological and historical role in the life of the Mandaeans from the death of John the Baptist to the present day. As a result of the close examination of the colophons and other evidence and analyses, especially from *DQRDK* and other Mandaean documents, I have put forward several important theories about the

¹ The life of this copyist and his works is worth further investigation because he came from the last generation of the Mandaean-Naṣoraean old school, which differs from the new schools which began flourishing since 1831 CE.

‘authorship’ of *DQRDK*, its scribes, its place(s) of composition and copying, and, thus, the dating of *DQRDK*.²

Specifically, this thesis has used *DQRDK* to develop a new hypothesis that Zazai lived in the first century CE, not in the second or the third century CE, as other Mandaean scholars previously believed. In addition, the esoteric nature of the texts (including *DQRDK*), affixed with colophons associated with Zazai who I have situated in the first half of the first century CE, has also been used to point to the existence of a fully developed Mandaean religion, at least in some more ancient inherited form, by early in the first century CE. The indications of the existence of a completely formed Mandaean religion with most of its liturgical and esoteric tradition and literature already developed in the pre-Christian era is also supported by the timing of the migration of a great number of Mandaeans of the west to the east, especially to Mesopotamia, as well as the appearance of Zazai as an important Mandaean-Naṣōraean figure in the first century CE.

Based on the evidence that Zazai lived in the first century and the other evidence presented in this thesis, I also believe that most of the dating of Mandaean literature needs to be revised and probably dated back at least two hundred years. Indeed, dating *DQRDK* in the first century CE would solve many linguistic, esoteric, theological and historical problems. It would certainly improve the translation of and commentaries on *DQRDK*, and provide us with a better understanding of the strong esoteric nature of *DQRDK* as well as many of its difficult and complex mystical Naṣōraean passages. That is because moving the timeframe back two hundred years would take the literature to the right time, environment and people, to the time when Naṣōraean Gnostic literature strongly and widely flourished in the period from the first century CE and backward to the second century BCE.

This situating of *DQRDK* in the first century and a close comparison of *DQRDK*, *Q*, *GR* and *ATŠ* (especially *DTP*) allow not only for a better interpretation of the material

² Further study is definitely required to establish the authorship of all Mandaean works. See my earlier comments, chapter 4, regarding the changes made by Drower in the colophon of *HGBHZ*, 85: “Nobody has noticed or commented on this point before now and it may provide evidence that Drower was not always accurate. This is another reason why the rest of her work may need to be rechecked and reexamined.”

under study but also provide a more logical, if more ancient, framework for understanding it. Such a comparative study, using certain supporting views from other esoteric, illustrated scrolls, also definitely provides a very effective method of understanding the mystical artistic material and of decoding the esoteric Naṣoraeen visual symbols, which need further study to fill the gaps left by previous scholars. The work of this part of the thesis should, therefore, also offer scholars a clearer view of the process by which this classical literature has been transmitted from the ancient world to the present day.

Connecting the past, present and future is important in Mandaean life. Thus, by providing an overview of the contemporary history and local events revealed in the colophon of *DQRDK*, this study has drawn attention to the decrease in the number of Naṣoraeans and high priests and the weakness of the Mandaean community, its priesthood and its educational system at the time. This information is crucial for an understanding of the Mandaeans and their situation before the year 1831, the year of cholera in which all the Mandaean priests died along with many thousands of Mandaeans. The analysis of *DQRDK*'s colophon also reveals details that have not been mentioned before in any official record. It clearly shows that the Mandaeans were very vulnerable among the Muslims and their authorities in both Iraq and Iran at the time this scroll was last copied. Moreover, this analysis of the colophon suggests some misunderstanding and/or misinterpretation of *DQRDK*'s title and colophon by other scholars, which may require a re-examination of previous scholarly translations, interpretations and studies on Mandaean documents, particularly the colophons.³

The study of *DQRDK* has highlighted several important aspects of this scroll and its place in Mandaean literature, which should increase our understanding of its value and meaning. Specifically, this study has revealed that much of the material used in *DQRDK* was clearly derived from ancient Mandaean-Naṣoraeen Gnostic sources. My investigation has uncovered strong links between the text of *DQRDK* and early Mandaean liturgical texts, especially some parts of *Q* and *GR*, many parts of which were considered authoritative in the centuries prior to the time of *Zazai d-Gawazta*, i.e. the first

³ See chapter4 (4. 4).

century CE. There is also a strong connection between *DQRDK* and *ATŠ*, particularly *DTP* as revealed through the similar, corresponding or parallel small passages, sentences, and Naṣoraean terms found in both scrolls. In addition, there are thoughts similar to those expressed in *DQRDK* in *DTP* and other Mandaean literature. The extensive details and the contents of *DQRDK* are also very much connected to the other Mandaean documents, especially to *ATŠ*.

These connections have hitherto not been mentioned by other Mandaean scholars, yet the contents of *DQRDK*, its theology and its connection to other Mandaean works, as just noted, could provide an important contribution to our understanding of the whole body of Mandaean literature. Generally, this literature has a moral or didactic purpose and indeed, special mystical theological beliefs are depicted within *DQRDK*. The creation topic detailed in *DQRDK* is monumental and plays a significant and substantial role in the Mandaean religion, because the creation is extensively connected to all important issues of Mandaean religion and life. Such issues form an essential and major constituent in Mandaean literature which, for this reason, is described by most scholars as religious literature. *DQRDK*, however, is distinguished from all other Mandaean literature insofar as it contains only one major topic, that is, the creation, starting from the Divine Creation and finishing with the Earthly Existence and Creations.

Furthermore, it is important to note that *DQRDK*, aided by the use of symbolic illustrations, presents the story of the creation to achieve higher educational purposes in ways that are clearer than, though similar to, its presentation in many other important Mandaean documents; presentation is also aided by the use of symbolic illustrations. In addition, *DQRDK* is written in a unique way and style. Despite the complex and esoteric style of the text, it is generally written in a clear and fluid classic Mandaic. The style of the prose of *DQRDK* appears to be rich in mystical concepts, which are repeated in a special semantic style, sometimes, however, with little attention to expected literary patterns. (This style deserves further investigation in a separate study, which is already being undertaken by this author). The language of this ancient secret work is full of classical metaphors and terminology, making it a text in the Naṣoraean library which is certainly bound to interest experienced scholars of Mandaean literature. It may also encourage scholars to undertake a critical or detailed study of the literary patterns of

Mandaean scrolls or even of the other Mandaean literature, a task which has been neglected to the present time.⁴

This study has also demonstrated that *DQRDK* holds a unique place in Mandaean literature because it employs enlightened visions of the so-called 'Sons of Light', the Mandaeans. This scroll's vision is expressed in a specific literary mystical style which is enhanced in strong material form through the illustrations. The complex layers of the black and white illustrations are not fine materialistic or realistic pictures, but they have their own unusual unique beauty which reveals deep layers of esoteric meanings to such a degree that no one can escape their gravity. Its beauty shines forth through its divine symbolic and abstract illustrations. Their lavishness seems to have been done naturally, as if by an inspired 'expert meditator'. In fact, the whole work of *DQRDK* indicates a long universal meditative journey and it is a unique piece of art in its own geometric style. The illustrations also represent an important piece in the mosaic of the unique Mandaean-Naṣoraeen art, that we call 'mysterious art' or, in other words, the 'Art of Mysteries'.

Thus, the study of both the text and illustrations of *DQRDK* reveals that this scroll represents a missing link in the mystical Mandaean traditions, especially in relation to the deeper esoteric, symbolic and artistic dimensions of this scroll.⁵ The further study of *DQRDK*'s parallels and connections of these dimensions with those of other ancient traditions and cultures that emerged or mingled, especially in the Middle East would also

⁴ As far as I know, my unpublished research project (at the Department of Semitic Studies, College of Languages, Baghdad University, 1996), entitled 'The Main literary Patterns in *Ginza Rabba*', was the only academic analytical study in the whole Mandaean literature that examined in depth these patterns in the main Mandaean holy book, i.e. *Ginza Rba*.

⁵ An extensive research project of these matters is intended by this author for 2005-2006. In addition, the still unstudied Mandaean art of the scrolls is an important area that remains open for scholarly study. As a Mandaean artist/painter, I was able to conduct a series of academic and public lectures on the Mandaean art during the last few years of the studying of *DQRDK*. I was also able to present three scholarly papers on the same subject, which are to be published in the near future. They are as follows:

- 'The Mandaean Art of the Secret Scrolls', presented to the Ist Mandaean Symposium, Liverpool Museum, Sydney (August, 2004).
- 'The Image of the Dark Side "Ruha" in Humanity: A Study of the Mandaean Secret Scroll "The Great Creation of the Image/Likeness of Truth"', presented to the VII International RLA Conference, University of Sydney (October, 2002).
- 'Perspectives on Mandaean Art: Seeking the Centre', presented to the VI International RLA Conference, University of Sydney (October, 2001).

reveal another missing link in the history of Mandaeans and their mysticism, art and culture.

Overall, the most valuable and richest achievement of this study in my view, however, has been detailed linguistic analysis of and the approach to the translation of *DQRDK* via the extensive annotated translation and explication of *DQRDK*. In previous translations of Mandaean material, especially the secret documents, leading scholars like Lidzbarski, Drower, Rudolph, Buckley and some others have usually not given much attention to, or explained in depth, the kinds of secret Naṣōraean connections I have mentioned/discussed in this study. Through an analysis of *DQRDK* this thesis has been able to provide new and deep explanations of many important terms, life forces and issues that are involved in the most complex and difficult parts of the esoteric side of the Mandaean creation story, especially regarding the spiritual and physical forces and elements, earthly existence, primordial forms of life existence, humanity and its development.

Indeed, the translation presented here has been able to achieve the deeper level of Mandaean and Naṣōraean meanings because of its approach to translation, which is not based solely on textual words, but also on the intuitive understanding of the probable state of mind of the ancient Naṣōraean author, also a priest, who was obviously attempting to illustrate the inner meanings of Naṣōraean thought.

In summary, this study of the text of *DQRDK* has mainly provided the following:

- (1) A comprehensive translation of the scroll (including an explication of the text within the illustrations)
- (2) A detailed comparative study of the scroll in relation to other Mandaean materials, particularly *DTP*
- (3) An expansion and, where possible, a correction of the works of other scholars, most notably that of Lady E. S. Drower, Kurt Rudolph, Rudolph Macuch, J. J. Buckley and others.
- (4) An explanation of the most important religious values of the text and the special place that it holds in Mandaean literature.
- (5) A study of the value of the artwork in the scroll.

- (6) An exploration of the levels of the scroll's complex meanings, not only from scholarly perspectives, but more importantly, from the traditional Mandaean and secret Naṣoraeen teachings, many of which have not been understood, explained properly, or even revealed to the present day. Thus, this thesis has provided a better, more accurate understanding of the Mandaean religion.
- (7) A major re-translation of significant passages from other Mandaean literature, including *ATŠ*, with particular reference to *DTP*, in the light of new evidence provided by *DQRDK*. In studying *DQRDK* and the other scrolls, I have attempted to shed a more accurate light on previous opinions of scholars in many fields of Mandaeanism and offer a new approach to Mandaean studies.

In spite of the revelations of this thesis, however, there are many important Mandaean documents that still remain untouched, unstudied and/or untranslated by the few Mandaean scholars qualified to undertake this difficult task. It is hoped that work begun here and the achievements made will be of assistance to these scholars who may be encouraged, by the better understanding provided herein of this and other Mandaean documents, to take on the challenge to study these documents, particularly the esoteric writings, in greater depth. Furthermore, it is hoped that the results of this critical and analytical study of *DQRDK* will encourage further comparative studies of Mandaean texts not only with each other but also in relation to other well known ancient mystical traditions and beliefs in the Middle East, some of which, like Mandaeanism, have also survived to the present day. Finally, it is hoped that the translation and study of this scroll and other related scrolls can both extend and deepen our understanding of several important aspects of Mandaean theology, particularly the mystical (esoteric) tradition that is taught and practised by the Mandaean-Naṣoraeans so that this may supply both scholars and students with an essential direction for study in the new century/millennium.

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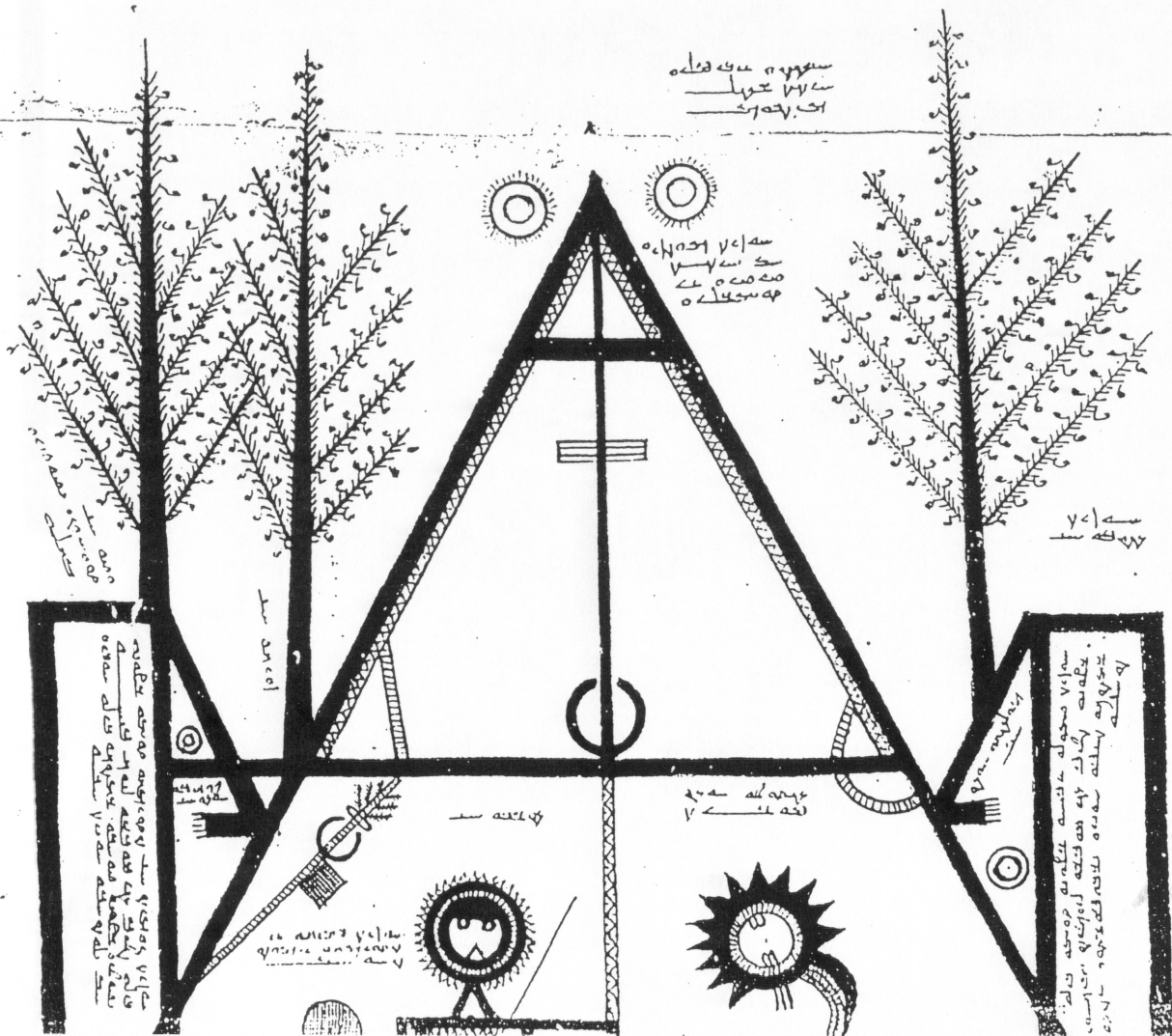
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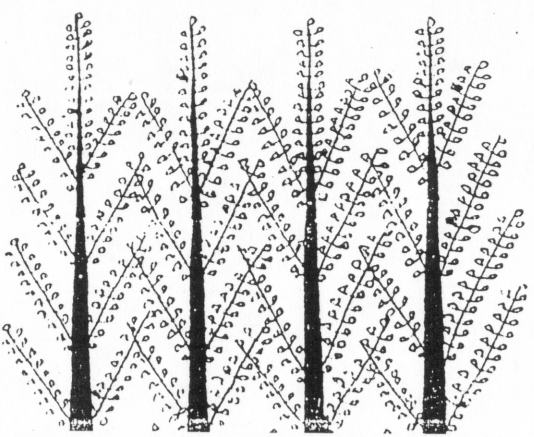
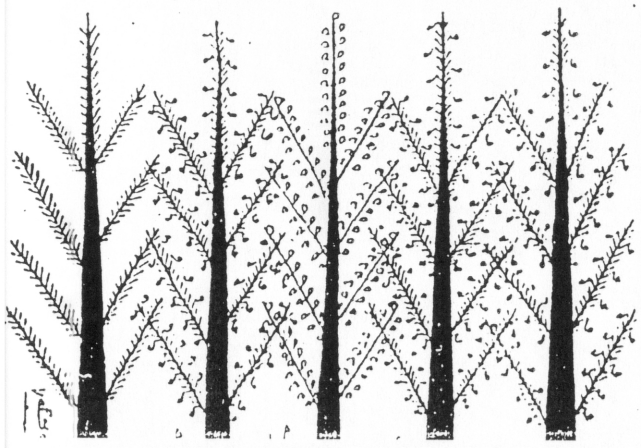
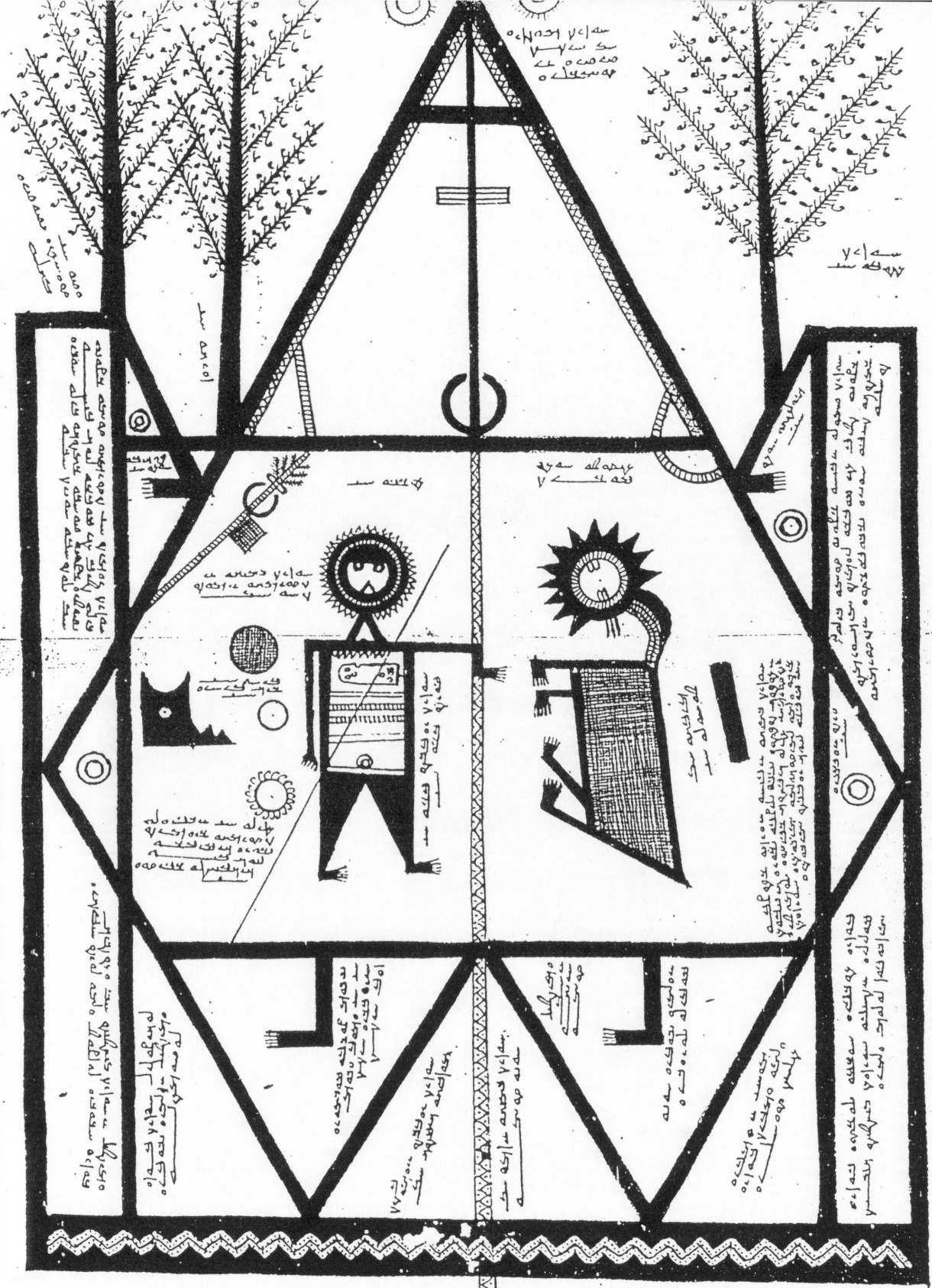
APPENDIX A

The Complete Copy of *DQRDK*

۱- در این نقشه که در کتاب "تاریخ طبیعی" آمده است، یک کوه بزرگ در مرکز قرار دارد که به آن "کوه قاف" می‌گویند. این کوه از طرف شمال به طرف جنوب امتداد دارد و در هر دو طرف آن رودخانه‌ها جاری است. در پایین کوه، یک شهر بزرگ قرار دارد که به آن "شهر قاف" می‌گویند. در اطراف این شهر، یک دیوار محکم کشیده شده است. در هر دو طرف این دیوار، یک برج دیده‌بانی قرار دارد. در بالای کوه، یک شهر کوچک قرار دارد که به آن "شهر قاف علیا" می‌گویند. در اطراف این شهر، یک دیوار محکم کشیده شده است. در هر دو طرف این دیوار، یک برج دیده‌بانی قرار دارد.

۲- در این نقشه که در کتاب "تاریخ طبیعی" آمده است، یک کوه بزرگ در مرکز قرار دارد که به آن "کوه قاف" می‌گویند. این کوه از طرف شمال به طرف جنوب امتداد دارد و در هر دو طرف آن رودخانه‌ها جاری است. در پایین کوه، یک شهر بزرگ قرار دارد که به آن "شهر قاف" می‌گویند. در اطراف این شهر، یک دیوار محکم کشیده شده است. در هر دو طرف این دیوار، یک برج دیده‌بانی قرار دارد. در بالای کوه، یک شهر کوچک قرار دارد که به آن "شهر قاف علیا" می‌گویند. در اطراف این شهر، یک دیوار محکم کشیده شده است. در هر دو طرف این دیوار، یک برج دیده‌بانی قرار دارد.





Handwritten text in Arabic script, likely a legal or administrative document. The text is densely packed and covers most of the page. There are several boxed-in sections, possibly indicating specific clauses or dates. The script is cursive and characteristic of historical Arabic documents. The text appears to be a formal record or a set of regulations, given the structured nature of the boxed sections and the formal tone of the surrounding text.

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APPENDIX B

- Letter from Sheikh Negm to Lady Drower
Dated February 1950
- Letter from Lady Drower to Sheikh Negm
Dated 14 May 1951

1st Feb 1950

askas

Dear Lady Drowes

I am so glad to receive your very kind letter & to know you all are keeping very well at home with the children & the small Leila, my son Abdulla has finished his military course his out now, thank God he has finished.

Dear Lady I am awfully sorry to say that the book you are asking me to send it to you it is at the hand of Sheikh Yikha in wich his at isan now, I mean his at Pessia and it takes a long time till he returns & have told him about it the

as far ^{wrote} mitwasha you say about the Dinan Diman, Khachta,

wa dinan daspi owaty, wa Dinan Kadaha sabalm, all these Books are at Sheikh Yikha hand but as soon I get them I will send it back to you. P.T.O

I hope everything is going well at home as here in Basrah it has been very cold this year I shall let you whatever I hear from Sheikh Yikha about the Books now I enclose & wishing all the best success & good luck for this new coming year all happiness & prosperity.

I am your most obedient

~~Sheikh~~
~~mejm~~
2009

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