4.10. Concerning Jannes and Mambres

The document is found in a longer work which commences on the last line of fol. 7d\textsuperscript{1157} of manuscript M682. It opens with the words տրգել Աբրահամի որդի “Concerning Abraham and His Sons.” Here we have edited the text taken from fol. 8v of the manuscript. The material is drawn from the same textual source as Genealogy of Abraham in Galata 154 (Stone 2012, 78–81). In M682 the text is a little longer than the text of Galata 154. It is also presented in an elenchic form, which is not the case in Galata 154.

We have given its copy of the list of Ten Plagues, which is much the same in both manuscripts.\textsuperscript{1158} The material on Jannes and Mamres, which comes directly after the list of plagues is not found in Galata 154. Indeed, there were references through the ages to this pair of magicians and their work, but such mentions are rather uncommon in Armenian texts.\textsuperscript{1159} They were conceived of as Egyptian magicians, opponents of Moses in the magical contest before Pharaoh. Some years ago, a copy of the lost Book of Jannes and Mambres was discovered on a papyrus, now in Chester Beatty Library in Dublin (Pietersma\textsuperscript{1155}.

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\textsuperscript{1155} Apparently the case ending is missing. The biblical references to the plagues are given in the preceding text.
\textsuperscript{1156} The ninth plague is missing from M605.
\textsuperscript{1157} On the folio numbers in this manuscript, see part 3, note 86, in 3.7 above.
\textsuperscript{1158} See also 4.9 above.
\textsuperscript{1159} James 1920, 31–38. For extensive bibliography DiTommaso 2001, 559–63.
1994). We have, therefore, given the Armenian text in full for its inherent interest. Some of the details seem unparalleled, such as their father's name and their Chaldean origin.

Traditionally the name of Jannes and Mambres' father is Balaam, not Bar K'obay as in our text. The Armenian designation calls to mind the Jewish leader Bar Kochba, but there is no mention of this name among the widely scattered literary traditions about Jannes and Mambres, nor any discernable connection. This seems to be a uniquely Armenian tradition. The legend of their Chaldean origin is mentioned in Jewish sources; Targum Pseudo-Jonathan of Num 22:22 and Yalqut Reuben i wa're 19a on Exod 7:11 drawing on Zohar Ki Tissa 191a state that they were "chiefs of the Chaldaeans" and expert magicians. This tradition may be influenced by the view that Balaam was the brothers' father and was of Mesopotamian origin (Num 22:5; 23:7; Deut 23:5 [Eng. 23:4]).

Also unique to our text is the legend that they "were stealing the children of the Chaldeans and were sacrificing them to idols who<se> name was their father's." This accusation is reminiscent of the story recorded in Josephus, Ag. Ap. 2.83, 93–96, that during the time of Antiochus Epiphanes each year Jews would steal a Greek, fatten and sacrifice him, consume his flesh and then swear hatred towards the Greeks. Josephus states that Posidonius and Apollonius Molon are the source of this calumny, as well as of the remainder of Apion's anti-Jewish bias (Ag. Ap. 2.79). The legend in our text also resonates with blood libel accusations of Jews killing Christian children and drinking their blood that arose in the fifth century and became prominent in the Middle Ages. The mention in M682 that demons became obedient to Jannes and Mambres because they sacrificed children to them, is not extant in any other traditions about the brothers. While the brothers' connection with demons is mentioned in extant traditions, and their designation as magicians may engender the conclusion that they would control or be controlled by a demon(s), the reason for the demons' subjugation to Jannes and Mambres, as well as their obedience to the brothers is unique to this text.

After the material on Jannes and Mambres, and Moses' splitting of the Red Sea, the text continues with questions about subsequent Israelite history, and associated topics, starting with the Golden Calf.

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1161. This and the preceding paragraph embody research by Dr. V. Hillel, to whom hearty thanks are here extended.
Moses splits the sea using divine names and his staff. He calls on God using three names of power, one pronounced forward, one to the right, and one to the left. The same names occur in the same context in 3.8 §§33–34 and in 4.10 §6.\textsuperscript{1162} See the discussion there.

Text

1/ ژیش: پچ را به همان‌نام پیچیده‌اند. 
ماش پچ پیچیده‌ها یافت کردیم. 
<پیش‌تریسته>: علامت‌یابی پیچیده‌ی تعدادی پیچیده: 
§. پیچیده: 
§. پیچیده: 
§. پیچیده: 
§. پیچیده: 
§. پیچیده: 
§. پیچیده: 
§. پیچیده: 

2/ شاید پچ پچ همان‌نام‌ها پیچیده‌اند. 
ماش پچ پیچیده‌ها یافت کردیم. 
ماش پچ پیچیده‌ها یافت کردیم. 
ماش پچ پیچیده‌ها یافت کردیم. 
ماش پچ پیچیده‌ها یافت کردیم. 
ماش پچ پیچیده‌ها یافت کردیم. 
ماش پچ پیچیده‌ها یافت کردیم. 

3/ شاید پچ پچ همان‌نام‌ها پیچیده‌اند. 
ماش پچ پیچیده‌ها یافت کردیم. 
ماش پچ پیچیده‌ها یافت کردیم. 
ماش پچ پیچیده‌ها یافت کردیم. 

4/ در پیچیده‌ی تعدادی پیچیده: 
ماش پچ پیچیده‌ها یافت کردیم.

1162. Note that one such name appears in Sinai Armenian inscriptions H Arm 50 and 54.
1163. \(\text{\textendash}\) written over \&. p.m.
1164. Written over another letter. The process seems to have been: (1) plague 6 was written erroneously right after plague 3; (2) then the content of plague 4 was written directly following the end of misplaced plague 6; (3) then \(\text{\textendash}\), i.e., the numeral "4" was written between the lines at the beginning of the text of plague 4. The original scribe did all this.
1165. This word is corrupt for "dummeta" "abscess," found in the other versions.
1166. Numerals \textit{inter lines} p.m.
1167. For confusion of o/n, see Stone and Hillel, "Index" no. 408 for this phonetic variant.
Translation

1/ Question: How many are the plagues of Egypt?—ten.
Say (them) so that I may learn in order, briefly.
<Answer>\(^1\) The first, the water becoming blood.
2. The frogs.
3. The gnats.
6. Sores and {darkness.}\(^1\)
4. Dog ticks.
5. Death of sheep.
(6. see above)
7. The hail and fire.
8. The locusts.
10. The death of the firstborn.

2/ <Question>: And, why did they not believe the signs?
<Answer>: This is the reason. Since Yanés and Yambrés\(^2\) sons of Bar K’obay the Chaldean\(^3\) magician, were stealing the children of the Chaldeans and were sacrificing them to idols who<se> name was their father’s. The Chaldeans, learning this, chased them away and they went to Egypt.

\(^{1168}\) This reading is uncertain, particularly of the latter part of the word.
\(^{1169}\) Apparently this is an abbreviation of huipg “question” and տարբերակային “answer.”
\(^{1170}\) This might be expected here.
\(^{1171}\) See note 1165 above.
\(^{1172}\) I.e., Jannes and Mambres, perhaps indicating that they played a role in Moses’ education. This would be an unusual idea.
\(^{1173}\) See the introductory remarks above.
When Moses was ten years old they gave teaching to them, on account of which they were reckoned as magic. And in the 22nd year of Moses he began the fashioning of linen. In his 28th year he became a prince, and in his 40th year he slew the evil-doing Israelite and fled.

After he fled, Yanēs and Yambrēs built the garden of demons through the sufferings of the children of Israel. And they took 980 children from them and sacrificed to demons and from that day forth the demons became obedient to the magicians.

Question: How many chariots did Pharaoh have?
Answer: The chariots were six hundred.

Question (and) Answer: How did Moses split the sea,?
He held forth his staff before (him) and said, “Ayia,” that is, my God (is) before me. To the right side (he said), “Šrayia,” (that is) , God you brought us forth. To the left side (he said), “Adonia,” (that is) you, Lord of Lords (are) with us.