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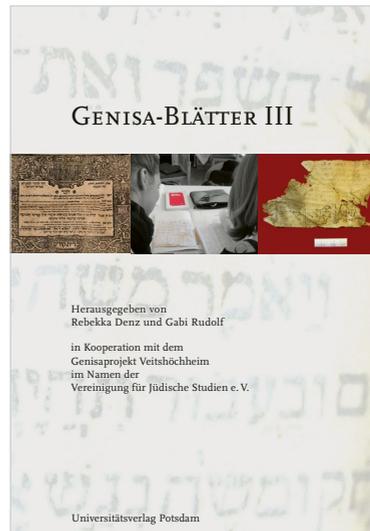
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# Amulets Found in Bohemian Genizot – A First Approach

by Lenka Uličná<sup>1</sup>

## Preface. Bohemian and Moravian Genizot

The Jewish Museum in Prague has been researching genizot in Bohemia and Moravia since 1996.<sup>2</sup> This research was initiated by the Federation of Jewish Communities in the Czech Republic, which is the owner of most of the synagogues in the Czech Republic (and therefore also the owner of the genizah finds) and also the founder of the Jewish Museum in Prague. The research was initiated because the genizah finds were in acute danger, as many of the synagogue buildings (particularly in Moravia) were literally plundered by individuals in the 1990s, as a result of which the objects in genizot were either damaged or wrongfully and improperly exploited and hence devalued. The aim was to rescue and preserve the genizah finds by carefully removing them and taking them to the Jewish Museum in Prague for safe-keeping and further research. At present, the Jewish Museum in Prague has collected finds from twelve genizot in Bohemia and from one in Moravia, comprising about 4–5,000 items (mainly textiles, paper and parchment).

To date, the Jewish Museum's approach with regard to the genizah finds has been significantly influenced by budget considerations and limited staff: only a few dozen of the most precious and most endangered archaeological finds have been researched, conserved, evaluated and made available to the public. Priority has been given to items that have enriched the Jewish Museum's special one-off exhibitions<sup>3</sup> (e.g., *May God let him Grow* and *Hebrew Printing*) or permanent exhibitions. The research that has been undertaken so far with regard to individual items shows that the genizah finds contain a large amount of completely unknown and unique material and even types of objects that could contribute in an indispensable way to our knowledge of the culture, customs, traditions and life of the Jews of Bohemia and Moravia, particularly in the regions and rural areas.

<sup>1</sup> I would like to thank Heinz Günther Halbeisen who has voluntarily been helping me with proofreading this text.

<sup>2</sup> Olga Sixtová: Findings from Genizot in Bohemia and Moravia. In: *Judaica Bohemiae* 34, 1995, pp. 126–134; Dana Veselská: Nález textilí z genizot českých a moravských synagog [Textile Finds from the Genizot of Bohemian and Moravian Synagogues]. In: *Český lid / The Czech Ethnological Journal* 87, 2000, 4, pp. 295–306; Lenka Uličná: The Genizah of Rychnov nad Kněžnou: Preliminary Research for a Project Involving the Processing of Genizot Finds from Synagogues in Bohemia and Moravia. In: *Judaica Bohemiae* 52, 2017, pp. 135–141.

<sup>3</sup> Dana Veselská (ed.): *May God Let Him Grow: A Child's Birth in the Culture and Customs of Bohemian and Moravian Jews = Adonaj jegadlehu*. Prague 2009; Olga Sixtová: "You won't need to see a rabbi": 500 Years of Hebrew Printing in Bohemia and Moravia. In: *Judaica Bohemiae* 48, 2013, pp. 99–108; Olga Sixtová (ed.): *Hebrew Printing in Bohemia and Moravia*. Prague 2012.

In Bohemia and Moravia, the genizot are commonly found in the attics of synagogues. Textual objects with written text predominate. In addition to religious texts (scrolls, codices, single sheets and small manuscripts) and secular texts in different languages (fragments of correspondence and brief messages, business contact records, etc.), genizah finds in Bohemia and Moravia also include synagogue textiles (mainly Torah mantles, bimah covers, Torah binders and personal textiles – tallitot and waistcoats) and parts of synagogue furnishings (fragments of decorative architectural features).

The oldest genizah objects from Bohemia and Moravia that have been researched so far are from the 16th century, but also items of the latter half of the 19th century occurred. As such, this material constitutes a data bank of yet unexamined information that should be researched and made available on the internet as soon as possible. The Jewish Museum's long-term goal is to research, sort, conserve and digitize all the genizah finds and then to include them in its collections and to make them available in digital form.<sup>4</sup>

Genizot are of invaluable importance for providing additional information about life in the Jewish communities of Bohemia and Moravia. Genizah finds that have yet to be researched have a unique potential to supplement existing information in a fundamental way. The objects that were sent by the local Jewish communities to the Central Jewish Museum<sup>5</sup> in Prague during the Second World War were items that were in active use in synagogues etc., while the objects found in genizot are old and discarded, and relate to the past of the Jewish community, both in its religious aspects (liturgical objects of all kinds) and on a personal level (correspondence, teaching aids, toys, amulets for mothers-to-be and new born children, etc.). The Bohemian and Moravian genizot also contain historical objects of an ephemeral nature, the informational value of which has only been fully appreciated recently. Attention should also be drawn to the completely specific situation of genizah finds in the Czech Republic, for example in comparison with Germany, where research into local genizot is also being carried out, on the one hand the original objects of synagogues in Germany have been preserved only occasionally and the discarded and unused objects from genizot there are often the only surviving material evidence of a former local community and its culture. On the other hand, the genizah finds in Bohemia and Moravia may be related to the groups of objects that were in active use before they were sent directly to the Jewish museum

<sup>4</sup> <http://collections.jewishmuseum.cz/> (accessed on January 31, 2019).

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Magda Veselská: *Archa paměti: Cesta pražského židovského muzea pohnutým 20. stoletím* [The Ark of Memory: The Prague Jewish Museum's Journey through the Turbulent Twentieth Century]. Prague 2012; Natalia Berger: *The Jewish Museum: History and Memory. Identity and Art from Vienna to the Bezalel National Museum*. Jerusalem / Leiden / Boston 2017.

in Prague during the Second World War. As such, genizot in the Czech Republic do not provide the only information about former Jewish communities; rather, they provide supplementary and extensive information and allow researchers to draw conclusions from a wider perspective in terms of ethnology, art history, sociology and other disciplines. In this sense, the nature of this museum's continually supplemented collection is unique.

## Basic data about the sources

### Print 1



Fig. 1:  
Inventarnummer: JMP 178.801.  
© Jewish Museum Prague.

**Locality of Geniza:** Luže (Eastern Bohemia).

**Inventory number:** JMP 178.801.

**Type and extent:** Manuscript on paper, 1 leaf.

**Condition:** Fairly good, restored.

**Language:** Hebrew, Yiddish.

**Title:** —.

**Author:** Unknown.

**Locality:** [Sulzbach?].

**Year:** [18<sup>th</sup> century].

## Manuscript 2



Fig. 2:  
Inventarnummer: JMP 177.922.  
© Jewish Museum Prague.

**Locality of Geniza:** Luže (Eastern Bohemia).

**Inventory number:** JMP 177.922.

**Type and extent:** Manuscript on parchment, 1 leaf.

**Condition:** Fairly good, signs of use, restored.

**Language:** Hebrew.

**Title:** –.

**Author:** Unknown.

**Locality:** [Bohemia].

**Year:** [18<sup>th</sup> century].

## Manuscript 3



Fig. 3:  
Inventarnummer: JMP 178.816.  
© Jewish Museum Prague.

**Locality of Geniza:** Rychnov nad Kněžnou (Eastern Bohemia).

**Inventory number:** JMP 178.816.

**Type and extent:** Manuscript on paper, 2 leaves, 1 page.

**Condition:** Bad, holes, loss of text, restored.

**Language:** Hebrew.

**Title:** –.

**Author:** Unknown.

**Locality:** [Bohemia].

**Year:** [18<sup>th</sup> century].

### Source text

#### Editorial note:

Bold words in the original source are printed in bold>.

#### Print 1:

אדם וחווה חוץ לילית (M1/RIGHT 01)

חווה ראשונה (M1/RIGHT 02)

סינוי וסנסנוי וסנמנגלוף (M1/LEFT 01)

שמריאל חסדיאל :

(03) לזכר

דאז איז דיא (השבעה פֿון אליהו הנביא ז"ל) וויא ער האט (משביע) גיוועזן דיא (מכשפות) ביז זיא האבן אים מוזן צו זאגן

וואז מן ווערט (מזכיר) זיין אירי נעמן וועלין זיא פֿון דאז הויז אוועק לויפֿן:

בשם יהוה אלהי ישראל ששטו<sup>6</sup> גדול ונורא אליהו הנביא זכור לטוב היה הולך בדרך ופגע בלילית ובכל כת דילה ואמר ללילית הרשעה

אתה<sup>7</sup> טמאה ורוח טמאה וכל כת דילך כולם טמאים אן אתם הולכים ותען ותאמר לו אדוני אליהו אנכי הולכת לבית היולדות<sup>8</sup> (פב"פ) לתת

לה שינת המות ולקחת את בן הנולד לה לשתות את דמו ולמצות את מוח עצמותיו ולאכול את בשרו והשיב לה איהו הנביא זכור לטוב ואמר לה

בחרם עצורה תהיה מאת הש"י וכאבן דומם תהיה וענתה ואמרה לו למען השם התירני ואנכי אברח ואשבע לך בשם יהוה אלהי מערכת

ישראל לעזוב את דרכים הללו מהיולדות הזאת ומבנה הנולד לה וכל זמן שאני שומע את שמותי אני אברח ועתה אודיע לך שמותי וכל זמן שמזכירי<sup>9</sup>

אותם לא יהיה לי ולכל כת דילי כח להרע ליכנס לבית היולדת ומכ"ש להזיק :

אלו הן שמותי לילית אביטי אביזו אמוזרפו הקש אודם איקפודו איילו שטרופטה

אבנוקטה

(13) שטרונה קליפטה תילתוי פירטשה

<sup>6</sup> [sic], recte: שמו.

<sup>7</sup> [sic], recte: את.

<sup>8</sup> [sic], recte: היולדת/היולדה.

<sup>9</sup> [sic], recte: מזכיריים/שמוזכירין/מזכירי.

- (M1/14) קרע שטן מכשפה לא תחיה . מכשפה תחיה לא . לא תחיה מכשפה . לא  
מכשפה תחיה . תחיה מכשפה לא . תחיה לא מכשפה :
- (M1/15) א"ס א"ס א"ס : אדם וחיה חוץ לילית חיה ראשונה סיני וסנסנוי וסנמנגלוף  
שמריאל חסדיאל
- (M1/16) שיר למעלות אשא עיני אל ההרים מאין יבא עזרי : עזרי מעם יי עושה שמיים  
וארץ : אל יתן למוט רגליך לי ינום שומרך
- (M1/17) הנה לא ינום ולא יישן שומר ישראל : יי שמרך : יי צלך על יד ימינה : יומם  
השמש לא יכפה וירח בלילה יי
- (M1/18) שמרך מכל רע ישמור את נפשך : יי ישמר צאתך ובאך מעתה ועד עולם :
- (M1/19) ברית קודש
- (M1/RIGHT) אדם
- (M1/LEFT) וחיה

### Translation:

(M1/RIGHT 01) Adam and Eve, out, Lilit!

(M1/RIGHT 02) The first Eve

(M1/LEFT 01) Sanoi, Sansanoi, Semangalof

(M1/LEFT 02) Shamriel, Hasdiel

(M1/04) This is the swearing of the prophet Elijah, how he put a spell on witches until they told him that

(M1/05) when a man mentions their names, they will run away from the house.

(M1/06) In the name of LORD, God of Israel, whose name is great and awesome, the prophet Elijah, may his memory be for good, was walking on the way and he chanced upon Lilit and her cohorts and he told to the wicked Lilit:

(M1/07) You are impure, and a spirit of impurity and all your cohorts are impure. Where are you going? And she answered and told him: My lord, Elijah, I am going to the house of the lying-in woman (X, daughter of Y) to give

(M1/08) her the sleep of death and to take her new born son to drink his blood and to suck the marrow from his bones and to eat his body. And the prophet Elijah, may his memory be for good, answered and told her:

(M1/09) you will be banished by the Blessed Name and you will become a dumb stone. And she answered and told him: for God's sake, set me free and I will flee and swear to you in the name of Lord, the God of the armies

(M1/10) of Israel,<sup>10</sup> to leave these routes from the lying-in woman and her newborn son, and whenever I hear my names, I will flee. Now I will tell you my names, and whenever someone mentions

<sup>10</sup> 1 Samuel 17:45.

(M1/11) them neither I nor my cohorts will have power to do evil and to enter to do evil and to come into the house of the lying-in woman and much less to harm (her).

(M1/12) These are my names: Lilit, Aviti, Avizu, Amzarfo, Hakash, Odem, Ikfodu, Iyelu, Tatrota, Avanutka

(M1/13) Satruna, Kalikataza, Tilatui, Firatsha.

(M1/14) Tear Satan. A witch, you will not let live.<sup>11</sup> A witch, you will let live – not. Not will you let the witch live. You will let the witch live – not. You will not let the witch live.

(M1/15) Amen sela, amen sela, amen sela. Adam and Eve, out, Lilit, the first Eve, Sanoi, Sansanoi, Semangalof, Shamriel, Hasdiel

(M1/16) Song of Ascents.<sup>12</sup> I will lift up mine eyes unto the mountains: from whence shall my help come? My help cometh from the LORD, who made heaven and earth. He will not suffer thy foot to be moved; He that keepeth<sup>13</sup> thee will not slumber.

(M1/17) Behold, He that keepeth Israel doth neither slumber nor sleep. The LORD is thy keeper; the LORD is thy shade upon thy right hand. The sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the moon by night. The LORD

(M1/18) shall keep thee from all evil; He shall keep thy soul. The LORD shall guard thy going out and thy coming in, from this time forth and forever.

(M1/19) Holy covenant<sup>14</sup>

(M1/RIGHT) Adam

(M1/LEFT) and Eve

## Manuscript 2:

אל תִּירָא מִפְּתוֹד פְּתָאִים (M2/01)

וּמִדְבַר הַגּוֹת כִּי יִי יִשְׁמְרֶךָ (M2/01)

הוּא יִצְיִלְךָ הוּא רִפְאֵיךָ (M2/01)

## Translation:

(M2/01) Be not afraid of sudden terror<sup>15</sup>

(M2/02) and from the noisome pestilence<sup>16</sup> because The LORD shall keep thee from all evil

(M2/03) He will save you, He is your healer.

<sup>11</sup> Permutations of Exodus 22:17: Thou shalt not suffer a sorceress to live.

<sup>12</sup> Psalm 121.

<sup>13</sup> Watches over.

<sup>14</sup> Circumcision.

<sup>15</sup> Proverbs 3:25.

<sup>16</sup> Psalms 91:3.

**Manuscript 3:**

Editorial note:

The text is heavily damaged. Illegible passages are indicated by [unreadable], missing passages are supplied in square brackets.

[unreadable] (M3/01) היא מעוברת תאמר ה'יא פסוק' תחי' בתוח שלא ישלוט עין הרע על ילדי'

(M3/02) [נגע] צרעת [פי]ת[ה]יה באדם והובא אל

(M3/03) [הכוהן] : [נחנח] נעבור חלוצים לפני יי ארץ כ

(M3/04) כגען ואתנו אחוזת נחלתנו מעבר לירדן נביא

(M3/05) מקרבך מאחיה כמוני יקנים לך יי אהיה אליו

(M3/06) תשמעון : נהר פלגיו ישמחו [עיר] אהים קדוש

(M3/07) משפני עליון : נגד אבותם [ע]שה [פלא] בארץ מ

(M3/08) מצרים שדה צוען : נחית כצאן [ע]מך ביד [משה]

(M3/09) ו[ה]רוח : נפתי משפכי מור אלהים ו[ק]נמון : גר יי

(M3/10) נשמת אדם חופש כל חדרי בוסן : נפת [תטפנה]

(M3/11) שפתותיך כלה דבש וחלב תחת לשונך וריח שן

(M3/12) שלמותיך [כריח] לבנון נודן מתוך [בבל] ומארץ

(M3/13) פשדים וצאו והיו כעתודים לפני צאן : נושקי קשת

(M3/14) מימנם ומשמאלים [באבנים] ובהיציים בקשת מאחי

(M3/15) שאול מבנימין : [רבנו] של עולם, הצלן את עמך בית ישראל מכל מיני

(M3/16) כשפים ומכל מיני עין הרע : וכשם שפרשןת כנפיך על אבותינו שבמדבר : שלא

(M3/17) שלטה עליהם עינא בישא דבל[עם] כן תפרוש עלינו ברחמיך הרבים ל

(M3/18) להיו[תנו] מ[כוסים] במכסה ובהנהגה בשמותיך [הקדושים] מכל

(M3/19) עינא בישא אמן

**Translation:**

(M3/01) The one who is pregnant says these 16 verses to make sure that the evil eye should not control the children

(M3/02) When the plague of leprosy is in a man, then he shall be brought unto

(M3/03) the priest<sup>17</sup>. We will pass over armed before the LORD into the land of

(M3/04) Canaan, and the possession of our inheritance shall remain with us beyond the Jordan.<sup>18</sup> A prophet

<sup>17</sup> Leviticus 13:9, all Bible translations come from <https://www.mechon-mamre.org> (accessed on January 31, 2019).

<sup>18</sup> Numeri 32:32.

(M3/05) will the LORD thy God raise up unto thee, from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him

(M3/06) ye shall hearken.<sup>19</sup> There is a river, the streams whereof make glad the city of God, the holiest

(M3/07) dwelling-place of the Most High.<sup>20</sup> Marvellous things did He in the sight of their fathers, in the land

(M3/08) of Egypt, in the field of Zoan.<sup>21</sup> Thou didst lead Thy people like a flock, by the hand of Moses

(M3/09) and Aaron.<sup>22</sup> I have perfumed my bed with myrrh, aloes, and cinnamon.<sup>23</sup> The spirit of man is the lamp of the LORD,

(M3/10) searching all the inward parts.<sup>24</sup> Thy lips,

(M3/11) O my bride, drop honey – honey and milk are under thy tongue; and the smell

(M3/12) of thy garments is like the smell of Lebanon.<sup>25</sup> Flee out of the midst of Babylon,

(M3/13) and go forth out of the land of the Chaldeans and be as the he-goats before the flocks.<sup>26</sup> They were armed with bows,

(M3/14) and could use both the right hand and the left in slinging stones and in shooting arrows from the bow; they were of

(M3/15) Saul's brethren of Benjamin.<sup>27</sup> Master of the World, save your nation Israel from all kinds

(M3/16) of magic and all types of evil eye, as you spread your wings on our forefathers in the desert so that the evil eye of Balaam

(M3/17) could control them, so spread over us your great compassion

(M3/18) to cover us and protect us, through your holy names,

(M3/19) from all evil eyes. Amen.

<sup>19</sup> Deuteronomy 18:15.

<sup>20</sup> Psalms 46:5.

<sup>21</sup> Psalms 78:12.

<sup>22</sup> Psalms 77:21.

<sup>23</sup> Proverbs 7:17.

<sup>24</sup> Proverbs 20:27.

<sup>25</sup> Song of Songs 4:11.

<sup>26</sup> Jeremiah 50:8.

<sup>27</sup> 1 Chronicles 12:2.

## Text to the finds

Various textual amulets and magical instructions can be expected to be rather frequent among genizah finds. The main reason is the presence of verses from Tanach and the use of names of God, ‘shemot’, and as such they indisputably require genizah, which is confirmed by the finds in the Cairo Genizah, less so in the local modern genizot in middle Europe.

Amulets and evidence of magical practices found in the Bohemian and Moravian genizot are mostly on paper, both handwritten and printed, or on parchment. These finds complement amulets made of silver or copper alloy as well as paper and textile amulets, mostly Shiviti plaques, were already part of the core collection of the Jewish museum in Prague. Thanks to the research of local rural genizot, the number of items that can be considered amulets, slowly grows. However, no systematic scholarly attention has been paid to this part of Bohemian and Moravian Judaica collection so far.

Bohemian and Moravian genizot testify to the situation of the magical practices among the local Jewish population mostly in the 18<sup>th</sup> and the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Regrettably, scholarly interest<sup>28</sup> in amulets and magical behaviour focuses rather on its earlier stages than on the Early Modern era.<sup>29</sup> The reason might be a general assumption that from the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, among Jews, the “faith in amulets [...] has gradually diminished and may now be said to practically extinct except in the Orient.”<sup>30</sup>

The number of amulets found so far in the Bohemian and Moravian is not big. None of the objects presented here bears an explicit indication that it was a ‘kame’a’, a Hebrew word for amulet. In fact, it might be rather tricky to recognize a textual amulet, when the object contains only or mainly Biblical verses. Joshua Trachtenberg<sup>31</sup> draws attention to the list of “uses of the Psalms” that Max Grunwald published in the *Jewish Encyclopedia*,<sup>32</sup> Trachtenberg himself adds “prescriptions found in a fourteenth-century manuscript work, ‘Sefer Gematriot’, which, true to its title, consists of

<sup>28</sup> For the most useful overview of bibliography, see Gideon Bohak: Prolegomena to the Study of the Jewish Magical Tradition. *Currents in Biblical Research* 8 (2009), pp. 107–150.

<sup>29</sup> With the exception of the so-called Emden-Eybeschütz controversy: in 1751, Jacob Emden, a leading German rabbi and scholar, accused the Hamburg Chief Rabbi Jonathan Eybeschütz/Eibenschütz, who also spent some years in Moravia and then in Prague, of being a secret Sabbatean. The affair has been widely studied, however, a possible influence of this controversy on amulets used in this period and after in Bohemia and Moravia has not yet been researched.

<sup>30</sup> Ludwig Blau: Amulet. In <http://www.jewishencyclopedia.com/articles/1445-amulet> (accessed on January 31, 2019).

<sup>31</sup> Joshua Trachtenberg: *Jewish Magic and Superstition. A Study in Folk Religion*. Philadelphia 2004, p. 109.

<sup>32</sup> Online version <http://www.jewishencyclopedia.com/articles/3273-bibliomancy> (accessed on January 31, 2019).

mathematical speculations and permutations on the text of the Bible<sup>33</sup> and confirms a wide use of many different portions of the Bible for protection against diverse dangers in the medieval period.

The Manuscript 2, although much later, is an example of such an object. It contains a part of the second verse of Psalm 91 that was believed to be effective against plague, as stated in a widely used and frequently reprinted medieval compilation 'Shimmush Tehillim'.<sup>34</sup> The assumption that this object was indeed used as an amulet is supported by its material characteristics: it is a tiny object, 30 x 85 mm, on parchment, thus most probably it was intended to be inserted in some case or a pouch, worn by an individual as a protection. The text was most probably written by a professional scribe or a rabbi, in punctuated Ashkenazi square script with a noticeable decorative ן. The use of parchment ensures respect and seriousness on the one hand, and durability on the other hand.

Manuscript 3 also widely uses Psalms as well as other Biblical verses. This object was probably not an amulet, but rather an instruction for magical practice. It was obviously prepared by an expert, probably a rabbi, to meet needs of a pregnant woman, explicitly to protect her child against the evil eye. The instruction is written in Hebrew, even though Yiddish or Judeo-German might be expected in such case, in Ashkenazi cursive script. The Biblical verses are again written in bold punctuated square script. Here the combination of used materials, ink on paper, caused heavy damage to the artefact, which was most probably meant to be for short-term use only, perhaps inserted in a prayer book or Tehillim, unlike Manuscript 2.

Likewise, the Print 1 is connected to the protection of a mother and her new-born child,<sup>35</sup> in this case specifically a boy.<sup>36</sup> This printed artefact was most probably attached to the wall, or placed in the four corners of a house.<sup>37</sup> This possibly inexpensive print might have been considered merely a visual object, however, it was also intended to be read aloud, and personalized with the name of the new mother. Nevertheless, it contains a couple of errors and thus resembles the usually less accurate amulets engraved on metal, whereas the researched written amulets tend to be flawless.

The printed amulet again contains Biblical verses (Exodus 22:17 and the whole Psalm 121), typical names of angels Sanvi/Sanoi, Sansanvi/Sansanoi, Semangelaf/Semangalof, Shamriel and Hasdiel, and the central part is composed of a story of

<sup>33</sup> Trachtenberg, ditto.

<sup>34</sup> *Sefer Shimmush Tehillim. Buch vom magischen Gebrauch der Psalmen. Edition, Übersetzung und Kommentar* herausgegeben von Bill Rebigier. Tübingen 2010, pp. 7–9, p. 156, p. 201.

<sup>35</sup> Amulets for protection of a mother and her child are the most frequently represented in the collection of the Jewish museum in Prague, followed by amulets meant for protection of the house.

<sup>36</sup> Similar prints intended for girls have been preserved, with the same layout and woodcut, cf. <http://www.drawingsandprints.com/CurrentExhibition/detail.cfm?ExhibitionID=40&Exhibition=42> (accessed on January 31, 2019).

<sup>37</sup> Cf. Trachtenberg, p. 139.

Lilit, one of the few personalized demons in Jewish lore.<sup>38</sup> The short narrative vividly describes the encounter of Lilit and her companions with the prophet Elijah. On being asked where she goes, Lilit replies that she intends to kidnap and harm the new-born child of “the lying-in woman”. At this place, the brackets (X, daughter of Y) should be replaced by the name of the owner of the amulet. In order to escape Elijah’s curse in the name of the Lord, Lilit reveals her fourteen secret names, by which she can be repelled.<sup>39</sup>

The amulet is printed mainly in Hebrew, in square fonts of different sizes, emphasizing the names of the angels, of Adam and Eve, the prophet Elijah and the Lord, but especially the names of Lilit, that are vocalized. The only other vocalized part of the amulet is the Psalm 121, which is quite frequently found on this type of amulets.<sup>40</sup> In the upper part of the amulet, a short summary of the story of Lilit and Elijah in Yiddish is presented, combining square and Rashi script.

## Outlook

By presenting three different texts connected to magical practices among the Bohemian and Moravian Jewry, I wanted to draw attention to one rather neglected aspect of modern genizah finds and the complicated nature of this material. In the future, a thorough research on mezuzah scrolls and tefillin from genizot is needed. The research question is not whether these items were considered amulets as such among their users,<sup>41</sup> but rather if some secondary use of these objects can be traced within the finds. A preliminary examination indicates that some mezuzah scrolls have indeed been modified, with inscribed or drawn symbols or pieces of the scroll cut off.<sup>42</sup>

Attention should also be paid to objects so far described as fragments of Biblical or other texts, especially handwritten. A close comparison with lists of uses of Psalms and other texts can be instructive for a possible recognition of an inconspicuous amulet. The same goes for specific fragments of printed books, e.g. the menorah pages with Psalm 67, against the evil eye.<sup>43</sup>

<sup>38</sup> Trachtenberg places Lilit “among ‘Jewish’ demons and spirits, [...] which the Middle Ages inherited with the Talmudic tradition” (p. 35). Further (pp. 36–37), he describes her main role, i. e. “that Lilit terrorized medieval Jewry. As the demon whose special prey is lying-in women and their babes, it was necessary to adopt an extensive series of protective measures against her.”

<sup>39</sup> Trachtenberg traces similar concepts to the Geonic period (p. 37). For contextualization of texts on the amulet, cf. a doctoral thesis by Marek Vinklát: *Magie, mystika a liturgie: židovská tradice v amuletech pozdní antiky* (Magic, Mysticism and Liturgy: Jewish Tradition in Amulets of Late Antiquity). Prague 2014.

<sup>40</sup> Cf. Rebigier, p. 295.

<sup>41</sup> Cf. Trachtenberg, p. 107.

<sup>42</sup> These mezuzah scrolls are part of the so far unprocessed part collection of genizah finds.

<sup>43</sup> Cf. a fragment Inv. no. JMP 179.978; [http://collections.jewishmuseum.cz/index.php/Detail/Object/Show/object\\_id/226716](http://collections.jewishmuseum.cz/index.php/Detail/Object/Show/object_id/226716) (accessed on January 31, 2018).