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THE ARAMAIC AND EGYPTIAN LEGAL TRADITIONS AT ELEPHANTINE

An Egyptological Approach

ALEJANDRO F. BOTTA

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'Everything is vague to a degree you do not realize till you have tried to make it precise.'

Bertrand Russell, *The Philosophy of Logical Atomism*, p. 5.

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Alejandro F. Botta
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Abbreviations

ÄAT	Ägypten und Altes Testament
AHDO	*Archives d'Histoire du Droit Oriental*
AHW	Wolfram von Soden, *Akkadische Handwörterbuch*, 3 vols. (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1965–81)
ALASP	*Abhandlungen zur Literatur Alt-Syren-Palästinas und Mesopotamiens*
AJSL	*American Journal of Semitic Languages*
AJT	*American Journal of Theology*
AncSoc	*Ancient Society*
AOAT	Alter Orient und Altes Testament
AOF	*Altorientalische Forschungen*
APF	*Archiv fur Papyrusforschung und verwandte Gebiete*
ARM	*Archives Royales de Mari* (Paris: P. Geuthner, 1946–)
ASAE	*Annales du Service des antiquités de l'Égypte*
AuOr	*Aula orientalis*
BASOR	*Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research*
BdE	Bibliothèque d'Étude
BGU	Königliche Museen Berlin, Ägyptische Urkunden, Griechische Urkurden (Berlin)
Bib	*Biblica*
BIE	*Bulletin de l'Institut d'Égypte*
BIFAO	*Bulletin de l'Institut français d'archéologie orientale*
BM	British Museum
BO	*Bibliotheca orientalis*
BZAW	Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft
CAD	*Chicago Assyrian Dictionary*, 27 vols. (Chicago: Oriental Institute, 1956–2007)
CAH	J. Boardman and N. G. L. Hammond (eds.), *The Cambridge Ancient History*, 2nd edn. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982)
CdE	*Chronique d'Égypte*
DE	*Discussions in Egyptology*

DG	W. Erichsen, *Demotisches Glossar* (Copenhagen: E. Munksgaard, 1954)
DJD	Discoveries in the Judaean Desert
DMOA	Documenta et Monumenta Orientis Antiqui
DNWSI	J. Hoftijzer and K. Jongeling, *Dictionary of the North-West Semitic Inscriptions*, 2 vols., Handbuch der Orientalistik, part 1: Nahe und der Mittlere Osten, 21.1-2 (Leiden, New York, and Cologne: E. J. Brill, 1995)
ErIsr	*Eretz Israel*
EVO	*Egitto e Vicino Oriente*
GM	*Göttinger Miszellen*
HSS	*Harvard Semitic Studies*
HUCA	*Hebrew Union College Annual*
HWB	R. Hannig, *Grosses Handwörterbuch Ägyptisch–Deutsch (2800–950 v. Chr.): die Sprache der Pharaonen*. Kulturgeschichte der antiken Welt; Bd. 64, 4th Edn. (Mainz: P. von Zabern, 2006)
IEJ	*Israel Exploration Journal*
ILR	*Israel Law Review*
JACiv	*Journal of Ancient Civilizations*
JAOS	*Journal of the American Oriental Society*
JARCE	*Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt*
JBL	*Journal of Biblical Literature*
JEA	*Journal of Egyptian Archaeology*
JEN	*Joint Expedition with the Iraq Museum at Nuzi* (New Haven: American Schools of Oriental Research, 1927–)
JESHO	*Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient*
JJP	*Journal of Juristic Papyrology*
JNES	*Journal of Near Eastern Studies*
JRAS	*Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*
JSJ	*Journal for the Study of Judaism*
JSOTSS	Journal for the Study of the Old Testament, Supplement Series
JSS	*Journal of Semitic Studies*
JSSEA	*Journal of the Society for the Study of Egyptian Antiquities*
KAI	*H. Donner and W. Röllig, Kanaanäische und aramäische Inschriften*, 2nd. edn. (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1966–69)
LÄ	*Lexicon der Ägyptologie*
Liddell-Scott	H. G. Liddell and R. Scott, *A Greek–English Lexicon*, 9th edn. (Oxford: Clarendon, 1996)

MDAIK	*Mitteilungen des Deutschen archäologischen Instituts Kairo*
Mitteis, *Chrestomathie*	*L. Mitteis and U. Wilcken Grundzüge und Chrestomathie der Papyruskunde* (Hildesheim: Olms, 1963, reprint of 1912 edn. Published by B. G. Teubner)
MUSJ	*Mélanges de l'Université Saint-Joseph*
OA	*Oriens antiquus*
OLA	Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta
OLZ	*Orientalische Literaturzeitung*
Or	*Orientalia*
P.BM	Greek Papyri in the British Museum
P.Giss.	Griechische Papyri im Museum des oberhessischen Geschichtsvereins zu Giessen
P.Leid.	*Papyri Graeci Musei Antiquarii Lugduni-Batavi*, ed. C. Leemans (Leiden: Brill, 1843–85)
P.Tebt.	Tebtunis Papyri
PAT	D. R. Hillers and E. Cussini, *Palmyrene Aramaic Texts* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996)
PRU	*Le Palais Royal d'Ugarit* (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1955–)
PSBA	*Proceedings of the Society of Biblical Archaeology*
RAAO	*Revue d'assyriologie et d'archéologie orientale*
RB	*Revue Biblique*
RdE	*Revue d'Égyptologie*
RHDFE	*Revue Historique de Droit Français et Étranger*
RIDA	*Revue Internationale des Droits de l'Antiquité*
RSO	*Rivista degli Studi Orientali*
SAAS	State Archives of Assyria Studies
SAK	*Studien zur altägyptische Kultur*
SAOC	Studies in Ancient Oriental Civilization
SB	*Sammelbuch griechischer Urkunden aus Aegypten*
TAD	B. Porten and A. Yardeni, *Textbook of Aramaic Documents from Ancient Egypt* (Jerusalem: Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 1989–99)
TSSI	J. C. L. Gibson, *Textbook of Syrian Semitic Inscriptions*, 3 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon, 1971–82)
TynBul	*Tyndale Bulletin*
UF	*Ugarit-Forschungen*
VT	*Vetus Testamentum*
Wb	*A. Erman und H. Grapow, Wörterbuch der aegyptischen Sprache* (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs, 1926–63)
WDSP	Wadi Daliyeh Samaria Papyri
WZKM	Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes

YOS	*Yale Oriental Series*
ZA	*Zeitschrift für Assyriologie*
ZÄS	*Zeitschrift für Ägyptische Sprache und Altertumskunde*
ZAW	*Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft*
ZDMG	*Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft*
ZSSRA	*Zeitschrift der Savigny-Stiftung, romanistische Abteilung*
ZVRW	*Zeitschrift für vergleichende Rechtswissenschaft*

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1

Introduction: The Egyptological Approach to the Study of Aramaic Legal Formulae

Since the dawn of history and through the millennia, the Near East has been a crossroads of different peoples, civilizations, and empires, in a continuous and complex process of cultural interchange. During the fifth century BCE, the Jewish colony of Elephantine at the border of the Persian empire was a vivid example of such a cross-cultural environment. At Elephantine, language, religious customs, and legal practices were a synthesis of inherited traditions and new influences in a dynamic and fluid process of assimilation and differentiation.

The result of such a situation provides a rich context for comparative studies for the linguist, and for the historian of religion and legal systems. Given a corpus of legal documents originating in the Jewish colony of Elephantine, a corpus which has many similarities to that of their contemporary Egyptian counterparts, one of the main questions which arises is the origin of the legal formulary that they employed, i.e., to what extent the formulary belongs to the Semitic legal tradition and to what extent it was influenced by the local Egyptian legal formulary. The general subject of this monograph, therefore, will be the study of the interrelationships between the legal formulary traditions of the inhabitants of the Jewish colony of Elephantine and the legal formulary traditions of the Egyptians as reflected in their legal documents.

In his *Introduction to the Law of the Aramaic Papyri*, R. Yaron stated that 'the documents will gain in interest and importance if it is possible to establish, at least to some extent, their relationship to other systems of ancient law, earlier and later, within Egypt and outside it'.[1] This attempt to understand the connections between the law and legal formulae of the Aramaic papyri and the law and legal formulae of the ancient Near East and Egypt was carried out mostly by Assyriologists and Semitists,

1 R. Yaron, *Introduction to the Law of the Aramaic Papyri* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1961), 99.

sometimes with opposite conclusions from the few studies undertaken from the Egyptological perspective.[2]

In 1912 Revillout reminded us that 'Locus regit actum'[3] complaining about the abundant use of Babylonian and Persian materials to illuminate the law of the Aramaic papyri in contrast to the scant references to Egyptian legal history,[4] even though these papyri were found in Egypt. Revillout provided the first attempt to understand the Aramaic papyri in light of their Egyptian context. In his brief treatment, he dealt with the monetary units used in the papyri, the different jurisdictions presented in them, and some aspects of the marriage contracts. He concluded that 'en ce qui touche le fond même du droit de nos contrats égypto-araméens, il est absolument égyptien'.[5]

The striking similarities between the Aramaic and Demotic deeds were not only noticed by Egyptologists such as Revillout[6] and Spiegelberg,[7] but were also discussed by Talmudists such as L. Blau.[8] These scholars already had pointed out the similar structure and legal formulae that are found in both Egyptian and Aramaic legal documents. At that time, their consensus was that the Aramaic legal formulae were borrowed from Egyptian legal practices, although the necessary historic-philological ground for such assertion was very often lacking. In his review of Sayce and Cowley, Nöldeke published a personal communication by Spiegelberg which affirmed that רחק and שנא in their technical legal meaning were a

2 See the bibliography listed in B. Porten, *Archives from Elephantine: The Life of an Ancient Jewish Military Colony* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1968), 334 n. 1. R. Ritner's recent contribution to the discussion offers an excellent example of the rich possibilities of the Egyptological approach, R. Ritner, 'Third Intermediate Period Antecedents of Demotic Legal Termonology', in K. Ryholt, ed., *Acts of the Seventh International Conference of Demotic Studies, Copenhagen, 23–27 August 1999* (Copenhagen: Carsten Niebuhr Institute of Near Eastern Studies, Museum Tusculanum Press, 2002), 343–59.

3 'The location determines the act', a traditional (and still accepted) legal proposition originating in Roman law. See, R. Genin-Meric, *La maxime 'locus regit actum,' nature et fondement* (Paris: Librairie générale de droit et de jurisprudence, 1976).

4 E. Revillout, 'Supplément sur les contrats égypto-araméens d'Elephantine', in *Les origines égyptiennes du droit civil romain; nouvelle étude faite d'après les textes juridiques hiéroglyphiques, hiératiques et démotiques, rapprochés de ceux des Assyro-Chaldéens et des Hébreux, avec un premier supplément sur les contrats égypto-araméens d'Eléphantine, un index alphabétique des questions juridiques, économiques et historiques, un index alphabétique des noms propres et des addenda* (Paris: P. Geuthner, 1912), 52.

5 Revillout 'Supplément', 55.

6 Revillout 'Supplément', 52–60.

7 See his personal communications in T. Nöldeke, 'Die aramäischen papyri von Assuan', *ZA* 20 (1907): 145.

8 L. Blau, 'Zur demotischen und griechischen Papyrusurkunde', in *Judaica: Festschrift zu Herman Cohens siebzigsten Geburtstage* (Berlin: B. Cassirer, 1912), 207–26.

'Nachahmung einer ägyptischen Ausdruckweise',[9] but without adducing any evidence in support. Egyptian loan words and personal names in the Aramaic papyri were pointed out by W. Spiegelberg, B. Courouyer, and K.-Th. Zauzich,[10] and some aspects of linguistic interference between the Aramaic and Demotic legal documents were traced by G. K. Tepstad.[11]

E. Seidl devoted a steadily increasing amount of attention to the Aramaic papyri from the perspective of Egyptian legal history. In his first publications, he recognized the similarity in their formulae and legal conceptions. Based on this fact, and on the chronological precedence of some of the Demotic papyri, he concluded that the Aramaic legal formulary was dependent on its Egyptian counterpart.[12] He stated that:

> Up to the present it has been impossible to prove that during the Persian period any part of the law of the Near East was adopted by the Egyptians. We find on the contrary that certain Aramaic documents drawn up by Jewish soldier colonists at Aswan where they formed the Persian garrison were literal translations into Aramaic of clauses taken from Egyptian forms of contract.[13]

In a later monograph, Seidl dealt more extensively with the relationships of the Egyptian law to the law of the ancient Near East.[14] He summarized the differences and similarities between the Aramaic and Saite legal documents, giving a more balanced picture. Seidl contrasted the schemata of the Egyptian and Babylonian legal documents but found similarities in formulary and procedure. He was inclined to accept a Near Eastern origin for the satisfaction clause (טיב לבבי), but proposed an Egyptian origin for the 'document of withdrawal', the practice of transferring the old documents with the property to the new owner, and the legal status of the woman. Nevertheless, the Aramaic papyri would exhibit neither a

9 T. Nöldeke, 'Die aramäischen Papyri von Assuan', *ZA* 20 (1907): 145.

10 W. Spiegelberg, 'Ägyptisches Sprachgut in der aus Ägypten stammenden aramäischen Urkunden der Perserzeit', in *Orientalischen Studien Theodor Nöldeke zum 70 Geburstag gewindet* (Giessen: Töpelmann, 1906), 1093–1115; B. Couroyer, 'Termes égyptiens dans les papyri araméens du Musée de Brooklyn', *RB* 61 (1954): 554–59; K.-T. Zauzich, 'Ägyptologische Bemerkungen zu den neuen aramäischen papyri aus Saqqara', *Enchoria* 13 (1995): 115–18. For a complete list of Egyptian, Old Persian, Akkadian and Greek loan-words in the Aramaic papyri, see T. Muraoka and B. Porten, *A Grammar of Egyptian Aramaic* (Leiden: Brill, 1998), Appendix III, 370–82.

11 G. K. Tepstad, 'Contributions to the Study of the Aramaic Legal Papyri of Elephantine' (Ph.D. diss., University. of California, Los Angeles, 1989).

12 E. Seidl, 'Rechtgeschichte. Sammelbericht, Übersetzungen und Abhandlungen zum vorptolomäischen Rechte Ägyptens (1903–1929)', *Kritische Vierteljahre Schrift* 2 (1931): 53–54.

13 E. Seidl, 'Law', in S. R. K. Glanville, ed., *The Legacy of Egypt* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1942), 210.

14 E. Seidl, *Ägyptische Rechtgeschichte der Saiten- und Perserzeit*, 2nd edn. (Glückstadt: J. J. Agustin, 1968), 85–88.

complete assimilation of Egyptian law and formulary, nor a fully independent development, but a middle way between these extremes.[15] Seidl still denied, however, the possibility that Near Eastern legal practices could have come to Egypt through the Aramaic documents and even suggested a possible Egyptian influence on the Aramaic formulary before the Aramaic papyri were produced in Egypt.[16]

E. Y. Kutscher[17] and Y. Muffs[18] saw the Aramaic tradition as the origin or the medium in which West Semitic legal traditions influenced the Egyptian documents. However, in the 'Addenda et Corrigenda' to his book, Muffs corrected his previous position and suggested that earlier contacts between Mesopotamia and Egypt could explain the similarity of Egyptian and Akkadian legal formulae.[19]

In 1968, B. Porten[20] compared the schemata of Demotic and Aramaic conveyances, loans, and marriage documents, listing many similarities in the way the Jews of Elephantine, the Aramaeans of Syene, and the Egyptians conducted certain activities. In a recent article (1992), Porten noted 35 expressions in Egyptian documents that have Aramaic equivalents.[21] He offered four possible explanations for these equivalents: (1) the Aramaic borrowed from the Demotic, (2) the Demotic borrowed from the Aramaic, (3) both borrowed from a third source, (4) both evolved independently if coincidentally. The problem still remained to determine which was the original legal tradition of each of the listed terms, 'ideally, we should be able to probe the Semitic background of every Aramaic term as Muffs did for *ṭyb lbby* (Demotic *ḥꜣt=y mtr.w*) and see if the Demotic equivalent has roots in earlier Egyptian'.[22] In this way, it would be possible to assess which legal tradition is the borrower and which is the lender.

Aramaists, however, have approached the legal documents of Elephantine only in three ways thus far:[23] first, comparing them to the later Aramaic legal tradition;[24] second, as part of a self-contained

15 Seidl, *Ägyptische Rechtgeschichte*, 86.

16 Seidl, *Ägyptische Rechtgeschichte*, 87.

17 E. Y. Kutscher 'New Aramaic Texts', *JAOS* 74 (1954): 233–48.

18 Y. Muffs, *Studies in the Aramaic Legal Papyri from Elephantine* (Leiden: Brill, 1969), 190–92.

19 Muffs, *Studies*, 205.

20 Porten, *Archives from Elephantine*, 334–43.

21 B. Porten, 'Aramaic-Demotic Equivalents: Who is the Borrower and Who the Lender?' in J. Johnson, ed., *Life in a Multi-Cultural Society: Egypt from Cambyses to Constantine and Beyond,* SAOC 51 (Chicago: Oriental Institute, 1992), 259–64.

22 Porten, 'Aramaic-Demotic Equivalents', 264.

23 Summarized by Muffs, *Studies*, 12.

24 See Kutscher, 'New Aramaic Texts' and also A. D. Gross, *Continuity and Innovation in the Aramaic Legal Tradition*, SJSJ 128 (Leiden: Brill, 2008).

system;[25] and more recently from the point of view of the Assyriological legal tradition.[26] However, there is still a fourth possible approach, which has long been neglected by Aramaists, and that is to study the Elephantine legal documents from an Egyptological perspective.[27] As Kutscher pointed out, 'these papyri, when put in the focus of these studies, will assume a kind of pivotal interest for this entire field and may well change the entire conception of legal evolution in the areas concerned'.[28]

In this direction, E. Cruz-Uribe suggested an Egyptian origin of the withdrawal clause, but based only on the occurrence of the verb *wꜣy* in previous literary – non-legal – texts.[29] A more significant contribution was more recently offered by R. Ritner,[30] who presented 24 Egyptian antecedents of the 35 Aramaic-Demotic parallels listed by Porten.[31] Ritner's work has demonstrated the urgent need to deepen the study of the Egyptian roots of Aramaic-Demotic legal formulae previously considered to be of foreign origin.

The aim of this research is, therefore, to compensate for the lack of attention to the relationship between Egyptian and Aramaic legal traditions, with the intention of completing the picture that we have of the Elephantine documents and of the legal traditions reflected in them. According to B. Levine, their legal formulae 'could be analyzed as composites, containing several originally unconnected components, each of which bears close affinities to a different stratum of the legal tradition of the ancient Near East',[32] but more recently he limited those strata to: (1) Terms and formulae that most likely entered Aramaic from Akkadian in the Neo-Assyrian period; (2) Terms and formulae that entered Elephantine Aramaic from Akkadian in the Neo-Babylonian period; and (3) Terms and formulae native to West Semitic/Aramaic and not take from Akkadian.[33]

An Egyptological approach, that at the same time will provide the ancient Egyptian roots of some of West Semitic legal terminology, might confirm the influence of foreign legal practices on other Aramaic formulae

25 Yaron, *Introduction*.

26 Muffs, *Studies*, and E. Cussini, 'The Aramaic Law of Sale and the Cuneiform Legal Tradition' (Ph.D. diss., Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993).

27 See the remarks by E. Cussini, '[S]ince the richest portion of the early Aramaic legal corpus is from Egypt, it would be appropriate to inquire into the relations to Egyptian legal tradition', Cussini, 'Aramaic Law of Sale', 7.

28 Kutscher, 'New Aramaic Texts', 233–48.

29 E. Cruz-Uribe, *Saite and Persian Demotic Cattle Documents, A Study in Legal Forms and Principles in Ancient Egypt* (Chico, Calif.: Scholars Press, 1985), 63.

30 Ritner, 'Third Intermediate Period Antecedents', 343–59.

31 Porten, 'Aramaic-Demotic Equivalents', 259–64.

32 Levine, 'On the Origins', 46.

33 B. Levine, 'Prolegomenon', to Y. Muffs, *Studies in the Aramaic Legal Papyri from Elephantine* (Leiden: Brill, 2003), xxxviii–xxxix.

which do not have their roots in Egypt and it could allow us to point to those formulae which are indigenously Aramaic, without any known roots in either the Mesopotamian or Egyptian tradition. In seeking the Egyptian parallels and antecedents to the Aramaic formulary, we hope to balance the current scholarly perspective, based mostly upon Aramaic and Assyriological comparative studies.

More specifically, we want to probe the legal purpose, meaning, and origins of two legal formulae that appear in the Demotic and Aramaic instruments.[34] The first one is the so-called שליט formula and is used to establish a party certain rights in a transaction. The second one is based on the verb 'to be far', Demotic *wy*, Aramaic רחק, and is called 'the withdrawal formula'. In Demotic, its constitutive element is the expression '*tw=y wy.k r-r=k n X Property*': 'I am far from you regarding the X Property.' This formula is one of the essential features of the Demotic *sẖ n wy* ('Abstandsschrift', or 'document of withdrawal')[35] and is also attested in a variety of other documents.[36] It is expressed in Aramaic by *rḥqt mnkm mn X property*, 'I withdrew from you from X property' and its variations,[37] which is also a central formula in the *spr mrḥq*.[38]

In close connection with the Demotic withdrawal clause, we shall also analyse the Demotic formula *iw=y r dy.t wy=f r-r=k* ('I will cause him to be far from you') based on the same verb. This second formula is one of the clauses in the *sẖ ḏbꜣ ḥḏ* ('Geldbezahlungsschrift', or 'document concerning money')[39] and can be defined as a defension clause.[40] It functions as a warranty against third party claims on the sold property and is one of the various kinds of warranties that a seller offers a buyer.

Focusing on the Egyptian perspective, we intend to demonstrate the Egyptian origin of the withdrawal clause, and to locate the Aramaic legal formulary in the context of the Egyptian legal tradition. We begin our

34 A distinction should be made between a contract and the legal instrument that registers the transaction. The instrument was concerned with obtaining enforcement of the contract in the case of eventual litigation. See R. H. Pierce, *Three Demotic Papyri in the Brooklyn Museum* (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 1972), 83.

35 See M. Depauw, *A Companion to Demotic Studies* (Brussels: Fondation egyptologique Reine Elisabeth, 1997), 143.

36 See below 6.2, 'The Uses of *wy* in the Saite and Persian Periods (664–332 BCE)'.

37 See B. Porten and A. Yardeni, *Textbook of Aramaic Documents from Ancient Egypt* (hereafter *TAD*) (Jerusalem: Hebrew University, Department of the Jewish People, Texts and Studies for Students, 1989), vol. 2, *Contracts*, B2.7:7, 16; B2.8:6; B2.9:9; B2.10:4; B3.2:7; B3.4:11, 13; B5.2:8; B5.5:5, 8. For רחיק in a legal sense: B2.2:15; B2.8:11; B2.9:15.

38 *TAD* B2.2:15; B2.8:5-6; B2.9:15; B2.10:4; B3.6 is a document of withdrawal, but does not include a withdrawal formula.

39 See Depauw, *Companion*, 140–2.

40 See R. Yaron, 'On Defension Clauses of Some Oriental Deeds of Sale and Lease from Mesopotamia and Egypt', *BO* 15 (1958): 15–22; idem, *Introduction to the Law of the Aramaic Papyri* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1961), 89.

study with a survey of previous works on the legal documents and a brief description of the legal practices attested in Elephantine: 2. 'The Elephantine Community and Aramaic Law'. In the following chapter we set the stage for our Egyptological approach to the Aramaic documents by examining relevant aspects of the Egyptian legal history: 3. 'The Egyptian Formulary Tradition'. Our study of the function and origins of the שליט clause (4. 'Challenging the Consensus: The שליט Clause') opens the door for considering the possibility of an Egyptian origin for an Aramaic legal formula and its Mesopotamian counterpart. The following three chapters (5. 'The "Withdrawal" and Related Formulae in the Aramaic Legal Tradition', 6. 'The use of *wꜣy* in the Egyptian Legal Tradition', and 7. 'A Comparison of the Aramaic and Egyptian Uses of Withdrawal Formulae') constitute the core of this monograph and are dedicated to demonstrating the Egyptian roots of the legal formulae associated with the metaphor of 'withdrawal'. Chapter 8 summarizes the achieved results and offers some suggestions for redefining the way we approach the study of Aramaic and Demotic legal formulae.

The main sources for this study are the Aramaic legal documents from Elephantine and their counterparts in the Egyptian legal tradition. The rest of the corpus of Aramaic documents, the Mesopotamian deeds, and the Greek and Coptic papyri will also be used for comparisons.