Bar Bahlūl was a tenth-century Nestorian who spent most of his life in Baghdad\(^1\). He is primarily remembered today for his remarkable lexicon of the Syriac language\(^2\). In the early 1970s Fuat Sezgin discovered in Istanbul another work by Bar Bahlūl, his *Kitāb al-Dalāʾil* or *Book of Signs*. This new text is not unlike a modern almanac\(^3\). It presents first chronological synopses of the various feasts and festivals of the eastern churches, as well as of the Jews, Muslims, Harrānian pagans, and others. It then turns its attention to other matters — how to determine the health of slaves, poisons, physiognomy, dream divination, and so on. Joseph Habbi has now published an edition of this text\(^4\).

The only complete manuscript of the *Book of Signs* known to Habbi is that discovered by Sezgin: *Süleymaniye Ktp.*, Hekimoğlu Ali Paşa 572.1, ff. 1a-291a, 556/1161. Another short excerpt of the text is preserved in *Süleymaniye Ktp.*, Fâtih 5411.4, ff. 113a-136b, 688/1289\(^5\). Habbi was aware of the existence of the latter but was unable to utilize it in his edition\(^6\). In this note I would like to call attention to yet another, fairly extensive excerpt of Bar Bahlūl’s *Book of Signs*.

*Vatican ar.* 1304 consists of a number of works on the interpretation of dreams. Two of these are well known: the dream manuals of Ibn Ghannām (ff. 2a-167a) and Kharkūshī (ff. 230a-314b)\(^7\). Sandwiched between these is another (ff. 174a-229b) that Giorgio Levi Della Vida has

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5. Corresponding to Chapter One of HABBI’s edition (pp. 57-67).
6. See the comments in the introduction to his edition (p. 24).
described as the “Ta’bīr ar-ru’yā di Abu’l-Ḥasan ʿAlī b. Saʿīd al-
Ḥawālīnī”\textsuperscript{8}. It is a question here of Ibn al-Qaṣṣār al-Qayrawānī, a North
African jurist who flourished in the early 5th/11th century\textsuperscript{9}. Qayrawānī
was a prolific author of dream manuals; three others are known\textsuperscript{10}, with
\textit{Vatican ar.} 1304.2 now making a fourth\textsuperscript{11}.

Della Vida’s description of \textit{Vatican ar.} 1304.2 is not entirely accurate.
He seems not to have noticed that the work of Qayrawānī ended on folio
198a (not 229b). There follows Qayrawānī’s dream manual a miscellany
of other texts on dreams. These were drawn from a number of different
sources: (1) ff. 198a-204b, a section entitled \textit{Baqiyah min ta’bīr al-
ahlām}, containing a collection of traditions on dreams, the source of
which I have been unable to determine; (2) ff. 204b-206a, selections
from Baghawī’s (d. 516/1122) \textit{Sharḥ al-sunnah}\textsuperscript{12}; (3) ff. 206a-b, two

\textsuperscript{8} Elenco dei manoscritti arabi islamici della Biblioteca Vaticana. Vaticani, Barberi-
niani, Borgiani, Rossiani (Studi e Testi, 67), Rome, 1935, p. 199.

\textsuperscript{9} Qayrawānī seems to have escaped the notice of the medieval Muslim biographical
tradition, including that devoted to the Mālikī school of jurists and to the city of
Qayrawān. Indications contained in his \textit{Mumattī} (see next note) suggest that he flour-
ished in the early fifth century A.H. In particular, at fol. 169b he dates his reception of a
prophetic tradition to the year 420/1029. Qayrawānī’s oneirocritic labors are treated at
length in my \textit{Dream Interpretation in the Early Medieval Near East}.

\textsuperscript{10} The first is an enormous dream manual arranged by subject, entitled \textit{Ḳitāb al-
mumattī} fi ta’bīr al-ru’yā wa-sharḥ usūlihā, extant only in Sūl., Carullah 1571, 144ff.,
1049/1640. Although the ms. is not terribly old, it has suffered much due to water,
worms, and coal dust. There are also a significant number of lacunae in the text. It is thus
fortunate that there are two anonymous dream manuals that made extensive use of
Qayrawānī’s \textit{Mumattī}: Sūl., Hekimoğlu Ali Paşa 590, 343ff., undated, and Sūl., 
Baḡdāthi Vehbi Efendi 941, 121ff., 1005/1596, the latter being basically a mukhtaṣar. — The sec-
ond is a shorter dream manual arranged by subject, including 30 chapters, the order
of which follows closely that found in his \textit{Mumattī}. This work is extant in five mss.: (1)
Sūl., Reṣḥi Efendi 1003.17, ff. 302b-319a, undated, (2) Top., Ah. III 1458.3, ff. 126a-154b,
868/1463, (3) Paris, BN ar. 2746, 44ff., undated, (4) \textit{Rabat}, Ḥasanīyah 4536, 30ff.,
1159/1649, and (5) Milan, Bib. Amb. ar. n.s. 1031.7, ff. 111a-129a, 1050/1640. — The
third is another shorter dream manual that Qayrawānī arranged not according to the ob-
jects that appear in dreams, but according to their meaning, so that, e.g., all dreams mean-
ing that the dreamer will have political power are grouped in a single chapter. This work is
extant only in \textit{Rabat}, Ḥasanīyah 5596, 57ff., undated.

\textsuperscript{11} This text is divided into 58 chapters, the order of which diverges sharply from that
found in his other dream manuals. Apart from a rather generic praise of God, the work
has no preface. Qayrawānī begins immediately with his introduction, the themes of
which and even at times its wording closely parallel what is found in the first of his shorter
dream manuals. — There may be another copy of this work in Cairo. I have not yet been
able to examine the relevant mss., but have had to rely on F. Sаyyid, Fihrist al-makhtūṯār.
\textit{Nashrah bi-l-makhtūṯāt allātī iqṭanathā al-Dār min sanat 1936-1955}, 1, Cairo, 1961,
p. 243. Sаyyid records that Dār al-kutub, Shanqītī 57, 45ff., 1255/1839, contains a dream
manual entitled \textit{Ḳitāb fi ta’bīr al-ru’yā}, which is ascribed to Abū al-Ḥasan ʿAlī b. Saʿīd al-
Khawlānī al-Qaṣṣār. The \textit{incipit} appears to be identical with that of the Vatican ms., al-
though Sаyyid gives only the first six, rather generic words of the \textit{dīḇājah}. Sаyyid states,
however, that this dream manual contains 60 chapters (rather than 58).


\textsuperscript{10} J.C. LAMOREAUX.
short poetic excerpts on dream interpretation, the first treating dreams of people, the second, dreams of marriage13; (4) ff. 206b-207a, a passage derived from an unnamed work (not a dream manual) in which it is explained that the interpretation of a dream can vary with the month in which it is seen; and (5) ff. 207a-229a, an untitled and unascribed dream manual, which is in fact a copy (nearly complete) of the last chapter of Bar Bahlil’s Books of Signs, that treating of dream interpretation14.

Although Hekimoğlu 572.1 is a well written and relatively early copy of Bar Bahlil’s Book of Signs, it is not without faults. The chapter on dreams, in particular, is often obscure. This is due in part to its extremely laconic style. In part it also stems from what can only be scribal errors. (These problems are compounded by occasional misprints and misreadings in Habbi’s edition). There is no need to give a complete collation of this new manuscript witness. To establish its importance, a small sample should suffice (corresponding to the first section of this chapter in Habbi’s edition, pp. 382-5)15.

Page 382 — 4.  
Page 383 — 2.  
Page 384 — 3.  
Page 385 — 2.  
Page 386 — 5.

Where H and V differ in ways that affect the sense of the text, V often offers better readings. Note, for example, the following instances: (i) in H, at 383.15 and 17, the ordinal al-thāmin is repeated, while at 383.13, al-sādis and al-sābi are refer to just one type of dream; V offers a consecutive numeration; (ii) at 383.18, the reading of H and Habbi’s tacit cor-

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13 I have been unable to identify the provenance of these verses.  
14 It corresponds to pp. 382.4-439.9 of Habbi’s edition.  
15 H = Hekimoğlu 572. V = Vatican ar. 1304.
rection make little sense; V does (“food that sends vapors to the brain”); (iii) at 384.3, V’s sittah is superior to H’s khamsah (there is an allusion here to a well-known hadith in which Muhammad defined the true dream as “one of the 46 parts of prophecy”); (iv) at 384.5, V’s ayyâm is clearly demanded by the sense of the passage (“and when the trees blossom”); and (v) at 385.4, V’s adabihim appears to fit the context better than H’s irâdihim. Other examples could be noted. Enough have been cited, however, to suggest the value of V for establishing the text of Bar Bahlūl’s Book of Signs.

This new witness to Bar Bahlūl’s chapter on dream interpretation is valuable for yet another reason. I have argued elsewhere that this chapter is an abbreviated, but extremely accurate rendering of the dream manual of Ibn Qutaybah (d. 276/889), the earliest extant Muslim dream manual. Ibn Qutaybah’s text rests on an extremely slight manuscript basis. The parallels between the two texts are so strong that any future edition of Ibn Qutaybah’s text would have to take into account the witness of Bar Bahlūl. This can be done with far more confidence now that an additional manuscript of the latter has come to light.

16 The Sources of Ibn Bahlūl’s Chapter on Dream Divination, in Studia patristica, vol. 33, Louvain, 1996, pp. 553-57
17 Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Yah. ar. 196, 67ff., 845/1441, is the only complete copy of Ibn Qutaybah’s dream manual, although a version of its introduction can be found in Ankara Üniv. Dil ve Tarih-Coğrafya Fakültesi Ktp., Ismail Sâib 4501.2, ff. 180a-217b, undated.