

SAMARITAN MAJUSCULE PALAEOGRAPHY: ELEVENTH TO TWENTIETH CENTURY: II

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PART II

It is time now to present our own palaeographical sequences.

The sample scripts shown are presented in two ways. In some cases a plate is shown which not only allows the orthography of the letters to be checked but also permits us to see their relationship to each other. In other cases the letters are redrawn and presented in a series. All these scripts are from manuscripts which are dated and of known provenance, or which can be dated beyond reasonable doubt, so that the series has an *actual* chronology not a hypothetical one. An additional script is added, a redrawn series from the Paris Polyglot drawn in the same way as all the other scripts, so that the accuracy of the method of drafting can be checked in any library where an edition of the Polyglot is available. Each alphabet shown is typical of the alphabets of the period and is not unique. Other manuscripts of equivalent age show parallel forms, so that the series represents not only one particular set of manuscripts but an average of all the manuscripts available to scholars.

The drawings of the scripts have been made directly from the manuscripts, unless otherwise stated. The method used is to redraw the letters on graph paper using a clear plastic overlay photographically reduced to a two centimetre square with millimetre divisions to which a protractor had also been appended.¹ This reduction allowed letters to be redrawn in correct proportion and true shape but with a fourfold exaggeration. This exaggeration was necessary to allow for the careful drawing of detail, since it is the variation in detail which is so important in describing changing shape as the years pass by. The scripts were then photographically reduced to their true size.

The first part of this article appeared in the preceding number of the BULLETIN.

¹ This sample piece of equipment worked very well, but could be improved by incorporating a series of stock curves in the measured squares so that time spent in calculation could be reduced to a minimum.

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As noted above, wherever a microfilm copy was available to check the "fit" between letters, it was used to help us achieve the fictitious ideal, an *average* form of, say, *aleph* or *beth*. The ideal cannot be achieved but one can present an approximation to the average that is satisfactory for comparative purposes.

The following is the series of scripts presented :

(1) Scripts 1A and 1B are from Cambridge Add. MS. 1846, of which a plate is also given by Birnbaum which allows for useful comparison.¹ The manuscript may have been written in Nablus.² It is dated by a deed of transfer and sale at the end of Exodus, fo. 100^r). The sale took place in A.D. 1149, therefore the manuscript was written before that date. The script of the deed of transfer is presented as 1B in our series. The script of the text, the oldest in the series, is 1A and was probably written not much before the manuscript was sold.³ 1B is "legal" majuscule and is not only written without ornament but is also written carelessly, so that too much may not be inferred from this script which, in any event, does not give us all the letters of the alphabet. It is so carelessly written that it is easy to confuse the letters *vav* and *hē*. The last line presents a series of drafts of *vav* out of the normal sequence. The similarity to *hē* (in its proper place in the sequence) is obvious. Because of the miraculous traditions attaching to this manuscript and be-

¹ HS, Pl. 72. I am grateful to the Librarian of Cambridge University Library for permission to use copies of the scripts in MSS. Add. 713 and 1846.

² HUC, p. 28 leaves the impression that the manuscript was written in Egypt, but this is based on the assumption that "Ithamar, though of the priestly family, was not High Priest, at least in Nablus . . .". However, cf. John Bowman, *Transcript of the Original Text of the Samaritan Chronicle Toldia* (n.d., Leeds), p. 25 *aleph*-26 *aleph*. There is no need to assume an Egyptian provenance.

³ Usually the scribe sold the manuscript within a year or less of its completion, according to the information available to us. It is difficult to see why HUC, p. 28, suggests that this manuscript could date back to A.D. 1000. There is no evidence for this assumption. If the note on fo. 188^v means that Mitpatziah wrote the codex, we may have evidence to suggest that the manuscript was much later than A.D. 1000. The first Mitpatziah in the Toleda is to be found in Zerifin (on the coastal plain, see below p. 17, n. 2) c. 463 A.H. = A.D. 1072 (Bowman, op. cit. p. 21 *aleph*-21 *beth*). He is not the Mitpatziah of this manuscript, but may be the first of the paponymous series. Perhaps we should look at a grand child or great-grandchild, but this would bring us well into the twelfth century.

cause of an obvious error in the dating,¹ the possibility of forgery was considered but rejected for lack of evidence.

(2) Scripts 2A and 2B are from Cambridge Add. MS. 713. 2A is the hand of Saada ben Abraham of Zarifyah (= Zerifin),² whose son sold the manuscript in A.D. 1213³ and whose father was alive in A.D. 1149/50⁴ and his uncle in A.D. 1165. From his genealogy⁵ we can suggest that he wrote between A.D. 1165 and

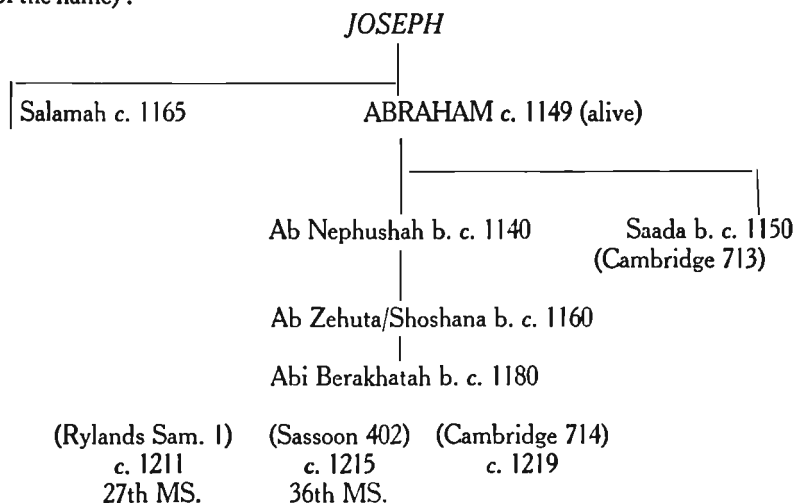
¹ Cf. *HUC*, p. 26.

² Cf. *SH*, pp. 94–95. Zarifyah would appear to be Zerifin. Cf. *Atlas of Israel* (Elsevier (Amsterdam), 1970), map 11, F. 15.

³ See the deed of sale and transfer, fo. 152^v, and *HUC*, p. 24.

⁴ Cf. *SH*, pp. 94–95. Apart from our inadequate source material, there are a number of problems in tracing the relationship of this family. In the first place, the same manuscript is often cited by different scholars in different ways, so that it is not easy to perceive that we are concerned with only one manuscript. For example, Kahle's manuscript A, cited in *SH*, p. 95 as being in the Bibliotheca Lindesiana, is cited in the same way in *HPS*, p. lxxx, whereas *HPS*, p. xxxviii notes that it is in the Rylands. It is, of course, Rylands Samaritan MS. 1, purchased for the library from the Earl of Crawford in 1901, hence the change of location from Wigan. We also find that scribes may be cited by their Arabic or Hebrew names, with consequent confusion. *SH*, p. 94, mentions Abu El Berakhat b. Abu Sarur b. Abu'l Farag dated to c. 1219/20, whereas on p. 95 we find the same manuscript cited by the Hebrew name of the scribe (cf. *HUC*, where both names are found side by side) and dated mistakenly to 1213/14. The manuscript is, in fact, Cambridge 714. Scribes may have alternative names; for example, Netanel and Matan would seem to be alternatives (cf. *HPS*, p. xi and p. xix) and it is possible, though not probable, that Haššebi and Tabiah are also alternatives (*HPS*, p. xxxvii and xxxviii).

⁵ The family tree of the scribes of Zerifin appears to be as follows (note that Abi Berakhatah b. Ab Sasson is the same man as Abi Berakhatah b. Ab Zehuta, the former giving the Arabic name of his father, the latter the Aramaic equivalent of the name):



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about A.D. 1185. If we choose A.D. 1175 as the median date we shall not go far wrong. The handwriting is close to that of his great nephew, Abi Barakhata, who wrote Rylands Samaritan MS. I (see our script 3). This would confirm that Zarifiyah is Zerifin, not Sepphoris, as was considered by Ben Zvi. This manuscript is, then, an example of the work of the scribes of the coastal Diaspora. Script 2B is that of the deed of transfer and sale on fo. 152^v, dated A.D. 1213.

(3) Script 2C, from Bodley MS. Or. 139, is presented as an example of the Damascus genre, but not for chronological evaluation. See the discussion about our sequence 21, below.

(4) Script 3 is from Rylands Samaritan MS. I. The manuscript is described in detail in Robertson's catalogue,¹ but we should add the following. The Abi Berakhata who wrote it in A.D. 1211 was the same scribe who wrote MS. Sassoon 402 and MS. Cambridge Add. 714 (see p. 17, n. 5). Since he wrote at least two codices per year and this was his twenty-seventh, he had been writing for at least thirteen years in A.D. 1211.² A plate of this manuscript is also supplied (see the following).

(5) Pl. 1. Rylands Samaritan MS. I, fo. 502^v. Since the writing resembles 2B and there are stylistic features in common with 2A/2B, we may suggest that the scribal family from Zerifin had its own short-lived genre. The plate represents this genre.³

(6) Script 4 is from the Barberini Trilogot. For a full discussion see above on the Damascus genre.

(7) Pl. 2 is from Rylands Samaritan MS. 2, showing fo. 39^r. Written in A.D. 1328 by Meshalmah b. Jacob b. Meshalmah for his son Jacob. The various deeds of sale and transfer would indicate an Egyptian provenance for the manuscript.⁴

(8) Script 5 is from B.L. MS. Or. 6461 of A.D. 1339-40. This is discussed with the Damascene manuscripts.

¹ *CJRL*, i. 1-15.

² The Sassoon Codex in A.D. 1215 was Abi Berakhata's 36th manuscript. He wrote at the rate of two manuscripts per year. He may have been born in c. A.D. 1180.

³ The plate should be compared with that of Sassoon MS. 402, illustrated in Sotheby's "Sassoon" catalogue, 1975, p. 126.

⁴ *CJRL*, i. 15-32, and *HPS*, p. lxxxii provide a full description.

(9) Script 6 is from Bodley MS. Or. 140 of A.D. 1340. A Damascus manuscript discussed above.

(10) Pl. 3 is from Vatican Samaritan MS. I. A Damascus manuscript discussed above.

(11) Script 7 is from B.L. MS. Or. 1443 of A.D. 1349. A Damascus manuscript discussed above.

(12) Scripts 8A, B, C are from Leiden MS. Or. 6 of A.D. 1350. A Damascus manuscript discussed above.

(13) Script 9 is from B.L. MS. Or. 2683 of A.D. 1356. The provenance is unknown. The scribe of the major part of the text whose hand is reproduced¹ is Sedaqa b. Halaf b. Ithamar b. Isaac. He was inexperienced since he states that this was his first Torah.²

(14) Script 10 is from B.L. MS. Add. 22369 of A.D. 1359–60. The manuscript is described by Von Gall.³ Although the date is close to those of items 13 and 15, this manuscript is included in our sequence because of its provenance. The scribe, Abraham b. Abi Neş'an, is described as a Gerari, but is said to have written the manuscript in Gaza.⁴ From this manuscript we can add substance to our view that chronology is not the only key to palaeographical development and that provenance is also a factor.

(15) Script 11 is from the Damascene B.L. MS. Cotton Claud. B VIII. The hand(s) of A.D. 1362, as discussed above.

(16) Script 12 is from Leiden MS. Or. 6. The script of A.D. 1414, as discussed above.

(17) Script 13 is from B.L. MS. Add. 21581 of A.D. 1434, written by Netanel b. Ishmael b. Netanel b. Isaac b. Netanel. The scribe, whose name has an alternative form, Matan, wrote his second Pentateuch in A.D. 1436.⁵ Although the provenance is not stated, we may well be dealing with a Nablus manuscript.

¹ Von Gall, *HPS*, p. xxi notes "... the beginning and a number of leaves in the body of the manuscript being due to a later hand." The details are as follows : fos. 1–6, 37, 47, 56, 238–64 are in one hand ; fos. 7–36, 265–8 in another ; fo. 269 is a separate portion of Gen. from xviii. 24–xix. 27 and is in a thirteenth-century hand. We are concerned with fos. 38–46, 48–55, 57–237, which are in the hand of Sedaqa b. Halaf b. Ithamar b. Isaac.

² Cf. *HPS*, p. lxxvi.

⁴ Cf. *HPS*, p. xx.

³ *HPS*, pp. xix–xxi.

⁵ For details cf. *HPS*, p. xi.

(18) Script 14 is from the Damascus B.L. MS. Or. 4446 of A.D. 1495 discussed above.

(19) Script 15 is from B.L. MS. Or. 10271—the hand of A.D. 1509 which is that of the scribe Haṣṣebi b. Joseph b. Abraham, the priest.¹ He wrote the Pentateuch for Abraham b. Obadiah (Abd Allah?) b. Mitbah.² Although the words of the *Tashqil*, “who dwells in Egypt” could be referred to the scribe rather than the customer for whom they were really written, there are good reasons for stating that the former lived and worked in Nablus. If Von Gall is correct that Haṣṣebi is an alternative name for Tabiah,³ then we can state with fair certainty that the scribe was writing in Nablus in A.D. 1505/6, i.e. four years before he wrote this manuscript. In any event, we do not need to rely on this identification to draw this conclusion: there is ample circumstantial evidence that Nablus was his home.⁴ Another sample of his work as a more mature

¹ For a full description of the manuscript cf. *HPS*, p. xxxvi f. Fo. 150, a later addition, has a separate *Tashqil* reading, “I am . . . Jacob b. Aaron, the Priest . . .”.

² Writes Von Gall, “Name nicht genannt”, *HPS*, p. xxxvii, but cf. *SH*, p. 291, for the scribe wrote another manuscript for the same client. The name Mitbah is there spelt differently.

³ Cf. *HPS*, p. xxxvii. It would be unusual, but not unknown, for a scribe to have two parallel names in Aramaic and Hebrew. Normally an Arabic equivalent of the Hebrew is presented. In the case of Tabiah we normally find Ghāzāl (cf. *CJRL*, ii. 302).

⁴ Von Gall assumed that Bodley MS. Marsh 15, dated A.D. 1505, which was written by Tabiah b. Joseph b. Abraham b. Tabiah, the priest, the Levite in Shechem (*HPS*, p. xxviii), was written by Haṣṣebi b. Joseph b. Abraham. Von Gall may have been wrong, for the hand of Marsh 15 is apparently not identical with that of MS. Keble 83 (item 20 below) which was written in A.D. 1518 by “. . . b. Joseph b. Abraham the Priest” (I rely on the judgement of Dr. Isaiah Shachar, who compared both hands for me. I am grateful for his help.) There is no doubt that MS. Keble 83 was written by the same Haṣṣebi b. Joseph b. Abraham who wrote B.L. MS. Or. 10271, for the writing is that of the same man. From the way in which Haṣṣebi worded the *Tashqil* in three manuscripts clearly known to be written by him (see also, the *Tashqil* published in *SH*, p. 291 for evidence of a manuscript written in A.D. 1525) we can see that he was the officiating priest in Nablus during the fifteen-year exile of Pinḥas, the High Priest, from 916 A.H. onwards. We do not need to equate Tabiah and Haṣṣebi to establish that the scribe lived in Nablus. (Detailed proof of the role of Haṣṣebi during Pinḥas’s exile is to appear in an article by the present writer describing a fragment of a Torah scroll also written by Haṣṣebi probably in A.D. 1516).

writer is presented in the next sequence. (The reason for this duplication is given in the discussion which follows the sequences.)

(20) Script 16 is from Keble College MS. 83 of A.D. 1518. The scribe's name is only partially preserved, thus: "... b. Joseph b. Abraham, the priest of the place ...".¹ The hand is a mature example of the work of Haṣṣebi b. Joseph b. Abraham (script 15).

(21) Script 17 is from Bodley MS. Or. 139—the hand of A.D. 1524. (See item 3 above.) The manuscript is described in detail by Von Gall.² The script shows considerable variation in individual letters, perhaps because of the age of the scribe Ab 'Elyon b. Ab Sakhwa, who was eighty when he wrote the transition sections which connected the antecedent fragments. The provenance of the manuscript is not stated but there are good reasons, as noted previously, for identifying its source as Damascus.

(22) Script 18 is from B.L. MS. Harley 5495. The manuscript is a liturgy for the marriage and circumcision services,³

¹ See p. 20, n. 4 on the scribes. Since the manuscript is not described elsewhere, the following details are given here. It is a small, parchment octavo bound in leather. Of the original Pentateuch only thirty-five folios remain, some bound upside down. Fo. 35 clearly belongs before fo. 1, having been bound out of order. The manuscript begins with the closing words of Lev. xxi. 10 and runs to Num. ix. 12. The pages are ruled and scored with letters suspended from the scoring. The first letter of the first word in each line is partly withdrawn from the following word and the last letter of each word on each line is usually detached, i.e., it is what Robertson called a "one letter manuscript". The Tetragrammaton is not retracted at the ends of lines but neither is it broken for the sake of symmetry. There is a *Tashqil* worked into the text. If we begin to read this *Tashqil* from fo. 35 it reads, "... b. Joseph b. Abraham the priest of the place. I have written this sacred law in the name of the High Priest Pinḥas b. Eleazar the High Priest, son of the High Priest Abisha, may the favour and glory of God be upon them, in the year 925 of the rule of the Ishmaelites". An extension of the *Tashqil* into Numbers, but separated from the first part by a solid body of text, reads, "This numbers thirteen Pentateuchs, Thanks be to God." The end of Leviticus is marked with the words, "Third book, 155 sections." Each page ends in a sense pause. The normal word-separator dot is employed and the paragraph final is — · < =. Inter-paragraph punctuation marks are :—:—: An unusual feature is the separation of sentences from each other using a colon (:) or =. Some corrections are visible in a darker ink. There is no trace of the columnization found in some Pentateuch codices.

² *HPS*, pp. xxiv–xxv, and pp. lxxvii–lxxviii.

³ Cf. A. E. Cowley, *The Samaritan Liturgy* (Oxford, 1909), ii. p. xii for a brief description.

which would normally have cautioned us against including its script in our series. However, not much of it is in majuscule and that part which is written in the formal style is most carefully penned. The manuscript is to be dated by the calendars it contains to between A.D. 1560 and 1570. It was one of the group of manuscripts acquired by Bishop Ussher from Damascus.¹

(23) Script 19 is from Bibliothèque Nationale MS. Samar. 11, no. 1, the letter of the Samaritans of Gaza to Scaliger. A very formal and carefully executed majuscule from the pen of Ab Zehuta b. Joseph the Romahi in 998 A.H. = A.D. 1590.²

(24) Scripts 20A, 20B, 20C, 20D. Script 20B is from Bodley MS. Marsh 209, an Arabic Pentateuch with paragraph headings in majuscule, dated A.D. 1670, from Damascus. The scribe was Abu'l Mergia b. Joseph. There were doubts as to whether the majuscule was original or whether it was written by a western scholar who had learned his script from the printed Samaritan font of the Walton Polyglot of A.D. 1653-7 because of the similarities between them. We have accepted the majuscule as an original part of the manuscript and the work of the scribe named, but the evidence for and against originality is as follows. The Polyglot is antecedent to this manuscript. The majuscule is irregularly placed on the page, sometimes rather close to the Arabic text as though inserted after the text was completed. There is an obvious similarity between a number of the characters of this majuscule and the printed font, namely *aleph*, *beth*, *gimel*, *he*, *vav*, *tet*, *yad*, *kaph*, *lamed*, *mem*, *nun*, *samech*, *'ayin*, *pe*, *šade*, *tav*. Against these similarities, *zayin*, *ḥeth*, *dalet*, *quph*, *resh* and *shin*, are sufficiently different to suggest an independent origin for this majuscule. Moreover, other Arabic Pentateuchs may have headings in majuscule in which the same relationship between heading and text indicates the later insertion of the heading. For example, in Bodley MS. Or. 345, an Arabic Pentateuch with Samaritan Hebrew majuscule headings (bought in Damascus in 1663), the headings are secondary to the text. The space above and below the heading varies, there being more

¹ Cf. *DSGD*, p. 89.

² Ben Zvi, *SH*, gives this date as A.D. 1530 but the manuscript clearly states "Senat semoneh vetisim vetasa me'owl."

room above; the heading is sometimes placed obliquely to the text. The same features are found in Marsh 209.

Script 20A is a similar majuscule hand from Damascus, to be dated about fifty years before script 20B. It is drawn from fos. 89–104 of Bodley MS. Or. 140,¹ and is probably to be dated c. A.D. 1624. This script allows us to see the development from one script to the other. One can say with reasonable certainty that script 20A has not been affected by the printed font, since it appears to have been written at the same time as the first Samaritan font was cut by Raphaelengus,² and it is unlikely that the scribe would have been acquainted with this font. In any event the Raphaelengus matrixes were so crude and unsatisfactory that they could scarcely be seriously considered as a source.³

Script 20C is the script of one of the two fragments of Genesis and Deuteronomy in the British Library known as B.L. MS. Or. 5035. The script is clearly of the same genre as 20A and 20B and, likely enough, of a similar era, though the Accessions Book in the Oriental Students Room at the Library tentatively attributes these fragments to the thirteenth or fourteenth century A.D. No claim is made either for the chronology or provenance of this script. Its inclusion here is to provide an additional point of comparison with 20A and 20B.

¹ See above, Part I, p. 450, n. 2. From the make-up of the manuscript it is clear that this section on paper was especially written to link the preceding and following portions, which were considerably older. This is the most recent section and is certainly more recent than fo. 232, which was written in A.D. 1491, and it was written before A.D. 1628, when the manuscript was purchased in Damascus. Probably the section was written to prepare the manuscript for sale to Ussher's agents, perhaps just after or just before the first sale of manuscripts from Damascus to Ussher in A.D. 1624. We may place this script, then, c. A.D. 1624 as a median date.

² According to L. Voet, Director of the Plantin–Moretus Museum, Antwerp, in a private letter, the first Samaritan type face was cut for J. Scaliger's *Opus de Emendatione Temporum*, Leyden, 1593. Cf. M. Parker, K. Melis, H. D. L. Vervliet, "Typographica Plantiniana, II: Early Inventories of Punches, Matrices and Moulds in the Plantin–Moretus Archives", *De Gulden Passer (Antwerp)*, xxxviii (1960), 108–10. I am grateful to Dr. Voet for drawing my attention to this work.

³ The more satisfactory type faces, such as the English Long Pica, seem to have been cut after A.D. 1630 and this would rule them out of consideration. Cf. J. B. Reed, (ed. A. F. Johnson), *A History of the English Letter Foundries*, 2nd edn. (1974), p. 63.

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Script 20D is drawn from the printed pages of the Paris Polyglot and its inclusion allows the reader to check the accuracy of the drawing of scripts and of the method employed.

(25) Script 21 is from B.L. Add. MS. 19017 of A.D. 1683–5. This manuscript is a liturgy for the feast of Tabernacles, mostly written in cursive. However, a few carefully written lines of majuscule are included. All the letters of the alphabet, unfortunately, are not found in the sample. The scribe's name is unknown.

(26) Pl. 4 is fo. 90 of Liverpool City Museum MS. 120017 of A.D. 1737.¹ The text, an incomplete manuscript of Exodus, was written by Salamah b. Jacob b. Ab Sakhwa the Danfi, who was twenty-one at the time he wrote this manuscript in Nablus.²

(27) Script 22 is from Bodley MS. Or. 656, written in A.D. 1767 by Tabiah b. Isaac b. Abraham, the priest in Shechem. The codex is of Genesis. Tabiah died in A.D. 1787 at a ripe age, so he was an experienced scribe when he wrote this text.³

(28) Script 23 is from B.L. Add. MS. 19012, written in A.D. 1767. The name of the scribe who wrote this manuscript of Deuteronomy is unknown.

(29) Script 24 is from Liverpool City Museum MS. 12005, a copy of Deuteronomy (see n. 1 below). Written by Isaac b. Abraham b. Isaac b. Ab Sakhwa the Danfi. There are several men who could be considered to be this Isaac, but the most appropriate would be Isaac b. Abraham b. Isaac b. Murjan (Ab

¹ The manuscript, like MS. 12005 (item 29), is now in the University of Liverpool Library. A letter from the Curator of Special Collections (28 August 1974) gives the following details: "City Museum MS. 12007. Written on a card inside: 'Samaritan manuscript of the book of Exodus. Date, about 16th century. Bought in 1854 by an English officer in Nablus (the ancient city of Shechem)'. 91 p." In fact, the date is given thus on p. 91: "The completion of this half of the second book (Exodus) on . . . 1151 of the rule of the Ishmaelites (= A.D. 1737) by the servant, Salamah b. Jacob b. Ab Sakhwa the Danfi."

² For this detail cf. *CJRL*, i. 400. Other details of this scribe are to be found in the same volume.

³ Cf. *CJRL*, i. 206 and 306. The date of the manuscript is taken from the colophon which reads: "written by the poor servant who needs the mercy of the Lord, Tabiah b. Isaac b. Abraham the priest, the Levite in Shechem, may God be merciful to him and pardon him. Amen. In the year 1181 A.H. [= A.D. 1767]. Blessed be the Lord."

Sakhwa) the Danfi, who was known to have lived in Nablus between A.D. 1824 and 1847¹; he would accord well with the date of purchase.² The script, then, must be dated to the second quarter of the nineteenth century A.D.

(30) Script 25 is from B.L. MS. Or. 1381 of A.D. 1875, a letter of the Samaritans of Nablus to Queen Victoria. The script was redrawn from a microfilm projection of the manuscript.

(31) Script 26 is from Bibl. Rosenthaliana HS. 606 of A.D. 1910. The manuscript is a portion of Leviticus (Lev.i.1—ix.21). There is no indication of the date; the information is supplied by a letter attached to it. There would seem to be no reason to question its accuracy.

(32) Scripts 27A, B, C. 27A is from B.N. MS. 12372, a Torah scroll of A.D. 1831, according to the *Tashqil*.³ 27B and C are of unknown dates and are in the hands of correctors or restorers in B.L. MSS. Or. 2683 and Or. 10271. They provide additional evidence for our selected scripts having parallels in their own day and are not unique forms.

(33) Pl. 5 and 6 are from cloths in the possession of the Public Library of New South Wales. (See Part I, p. 435, n. 1 for a description.) Pl. 5 is clearly based on the printed form of the Samaritan script, and serves to remind us that, in a palaeographical study, one must consider all aspects of the manuscript. Here, the omission of the commandment relating to Mt. Gerizim and the inclusion of the name of the place where the piece was "manufactured" would show the true nature of the manuscript, before palaeographic analysis. Palaeographic work which ignored such data would be futile.

Pl. 6 is included for another reason. Despite the obvious flaws which apply, as in Pl. 5, and the use of the masculine for

¹ Cf. *CJRL*, ii. 28, 122, and *KSH*, p. 152.

² The information provided about the manuscript in the letter of 28 August cited in p. 24, n. 1 is "City Museum MS. no. 12005. Written on a slip inside: 'The fifth part of the five books of Moses called Deutonomy [sic] in the Samaritan [sic] character—brought by W. Roger from Jerusalem in 1854. Written at the end are [sic] 'This Holy book is written for Isaac b. Abraham b. Isaac, etc. Written about the 16th century.' 158 p."

³ For details cf. *KSH*, pp. 44–45. Shunnar does not supply the date, unfortunately.

"Ten Commandments" instead of the feminine, as is normal, the scribe has chosen to imitate archaic forms of the script. He has done so carefully, yet, despite his care, our sequence and the information derived from it allows us to see that this is a modern archaizing text. Had we been presented with a portion of this text with no extraneous information to help, we should still have been able to show it for what it is. Pl. 6, then, serves as a useful check on the information derived from the sequence.

SOME GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

Though it is variation in detail which is the crucial factor in establishing a sequential development of the script, there are a number of general characteristics which are worth a preliminary discussion.

As a general observation only, we may say that Samaritan majuscule script is larger in the older manuscripts and diminishes in size in more modern ones. The larger the script the more likely it is that it is older. Despite this generalization, it is possible to point to codices which have small, almost minute scripts, which may date back to the thirteenth century A.D.¹ We must also notice that the writing in Torah *scrolls* is usually smaller than that in Torah *codices*, though the writing in older scrolls tends to be larger than that in more recent ones.

There is a tendency to simplify letters in more recent scripts. This simplification takes several forms. The thickness of lines within a letter tends not to vary. For example, in older manuscripts either the left or the right oblique stroke of *ayin* is thicker than the opposed oblique stroke. In more recent manuscripts both obliques are the same width. Likewise, in *most* letters of the alphabet where lines were of varying thicknesses, in older scripts there is a tendency towards standardization of line thickness and a degree of uniformity in more recent manuscripts.

In the "legal" majuscule, though there was a tendency to reduce the size of serifs, or even eliminate them altogether, the

¹ Robertson, *CJRL*, i, on codex VII, expresses the opinion that some of the fragments which have been bound together to form this manuscript are as old as Rylands Samaritan MS. 1. The scripts are quite minute.

shape of the letters tended to remain constant and standard with the "formal" majuscule. In more recent scripts the serifs disappear, for reasons previously suggested, and the latter shapes destabilize, with some movement towards a stylization in which letters become increasingly angular and sharp. The role of the curve in later script forms is substantially diminished. In very recent scripts majuscule is frequently mixed with cursive forms. Often enough the script appears to be executed so awkwardly that one has little doubt that cursive is the form normally employed by the scribe for his everyday use.

One of the most common characteristics from the middle of the sixteenth century onwards is the tendency for lines and serifs which had been horizontal to the direction of writing or the scored lines from which the script was suspended, to change their orientation. They tend to be written at oblique angles to the line. We may note the letter *resh* especially, for it adopts an additional oblique stroke parallel to the serif written at the left of the letter.

There is a clear change in the proportion of some parts of a given letter to the rest of that letter. These changes in proportion are one of the most useful means of showing chronological development, even allowing for different genres. For example, the letter *yad* is fashioned of three strokes, either vertical or oblique, with a cross-member at the top which intercepts the right-hand stroke, leaving a "hump" above the point of interception. In scripts 1A, 1B, the "hump" is about one half the size of the right-hand stroke. In most manuscripts of the Damascus genre, the "hump" tends to be between one third and one quarter of the length of the stroke. In later manuscripts of all sources it diminishes in proportion to about one fifth the length of the stroke until it disappears altogether in twentieth-century majuscule with the cross-member and the verticals meeting at an angle, with no projection of the right-stroke above the point of function.

The same variation in proportion is found in the upper portions of *kaph* and *mem*. With the exception of 1B, the earliest scripts show that in *kaph* and *mem* the two- or three-pronged "crown" projecting above the upper transversal is between one

third and one half of the vertical height of the letter. (The larger "crown" occurs chiefly in the scripts of the family of Abraham of Zerifin and may be a feature of the style of the coastal Diaspora.) This proportion diminishes in time to between one quarter and one fifth of the letter and, in some modern majuscules, the *kaph* may have no projecting "crown".

It is in the variation in detail from script to script that the chronological key lies. In the following account of these changes in detail we also add an assessment of the degree of importance we attach to each letter as an indicator of the age of the script.

Aleph is not an easy letter from which to make chronological judgements, except in the broadest sense, for it shows considerable stability within given periods. One of the earliest specimens in our series (1B) is the only example to retain the characteristic of antecedent early Hebrew forms with the left leg of the *aleph* being carried directly across the transversal in a straight line. The same feature is to be noted in some Samaritan inscriptions, so *aleph* in 1B is not a unique form. It may be that in the freer "legal" majuscule of 1B, an older form, which had been replaced in the "formal" majuscule, reappeared. In 1A *aleph* has the form that it retained henceforth, with a transversal orientated at approximately 45° to the line of writing, a supporting left foot forming an angle of about 90° to the transversal and two strokes above the transversal roughly parallel with the supporting foot. In the earlier non-Damascene manuscripts the transversal tends to meet the right upper oblique at the lowest point of that stroke (2A, 2B, 3, 10). In manuscripts of the Damascus genre, the transversal intercepts the right upper oblique about one third of the distance from the bottom of the stroke or else the transversal itself bends sharply, to continue the oblique as a combined stroke. In all the examples up to and including no. 21, *aleph* has either a right-turned serif at the bottom of the supporting left foot or else a mere bulbous swelling in the same place. From the beginning of the eighteenth century (Pl. 4) the serif extends on either side of the supporting foot, or, alternatively, it begins a little way up the foot (script 24). A constant movement is noted in the relative height of the left foot and the junction

of the transversal and the right upper oblique stroke. In 1A, and in most other scripts up to the sixteenth century, the junction of the transversal and the right upper oblique is the lowest point of the letter. From script 19 onwards the situation begins to reverse itself with the left foot lowering until its base becomes notably lower than the right junction (see script 26).

Beth is a useful indicator of both genre and chronology, for it adopts characteristics indicative of both. However, there seem to be long periods of stability in its history which serve to caution us against over-hasty judgements. In 1B, which is a freer script than 1A, we see a relic of the rounded head of the palaeo-Hebrew, whereas in 1A we see a form of the large trapezoid head found in Palestinian scripts of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. The round head appears to remain in concurrent use with the trapezoid head for a century or so, for we find both in script 4, a Damascus script. One of the examples shown in script 4 also demonstrates an early form of the "bird's heading" characteristic of the Damascus genre. The round head of *beth* reappears in recent Samaritan majuscule but is distinguishable in the more recent scripts because the base stroke moves further and further from the head. In our earlier scripts, 1A, 1B, 2A, 2B, we see that the base stroke of *beth* (its foot) is angled downwards. In script 4 we find additional support for our view that this is a very recent form of the Damascus genre, for the foot is also angled downwards although it turns upwards in the Damascus genre thereafter. Script 4, then, belongs near the beginning of the genre. Script 2C which is, of course, of unknown date, appears to present a transition form between the earlier scripts and script 4.

At the beginning of the sixteenth century (script 15, 16) we see an interesting experiment with the upper stroke of the trapezoid head becoming lengthened to form a "crest".¹ (The early sixteenth century, as noted above, seems to have been a time of change and experimentation in writing Samaritan majuscule, probably reflecting the contraction of the Diaspora and the loss of scribal traditions.) We are fortunate enough to possess two examples of the work of one scribe separated by ten years, at a

¹ Cf. *HS*, no. 74 for another example of similar date.

critical era in this period (scripts 15 and 16). In these two examples we see considerable development and movement, representing the transition from the stability of the classical majuscule to the appearance of a number of more ephemeral forms. (We have included both examples of this scribe's work to show the development.) In scripts 17, 18, 20A, B, C, we see the beginning of an era in which the head of *beth* again became rounded, but we can see from both 17 and 18 there was a tendency to add a "beak" to the head at the beginning of this era. Scripts 21 and 23 (see 27C for comparison) show us a phenomenon regularly found in *beth* from the mid-eighteenth century onwards, namely, the "beak" of the "bird-head" reappearing as an extra, single, extended stroke, horizontal or vertical (see Pl. 4). There is one example of this extra beak in Pl. 6 (line 8), which serves to indicate that efforts to archaize the forms of *beth* could not hide the lateness of the script.

Gimel. A most difficult letter to use for dating because of its stability in form and remarkable variation in ductus in all the examples available to us. Probably the most varied letter of the alphabet in its ductus. Up to the early sixteenth century (scripts 15, 16) there is a tendency for the two arms of *gimel* to form an angle of 110° to each other at the central loop. However, the tendency is so general as to be of minimal use for our discussion.

Daled. A useful chronological indicator, especially for the more recent forms. The earlier forms of the letter tend to be rather stable. The *daled* of script 2A may be regarded as a standard for the earlier forms. The horizontal upper stroke is intercepted by the right oblique near the middle of the upper stroke, i.e., it is almost bisected. Most of the earlier forms are similarly bisected. In later forms the point of interception moves towards the left side of the top stroke, leaving the right portion to serve as an elongated tail (e.g. script 18). Again in 2A we see that the left side of the head of *daled* is a thick curving stroke. This thickening tends to be almost absent from later forms with a considerable degree of consistency. So in Pl. 5 and 6, where attempts have been made to archaize, the oblique stroke is thickened rather than the left hand side of the head.

As with *beth* there is a tendency to "bird's-head" in the earlier forms (scripts 5, 8A, 8B), especially in the Damascus genre. This "bird's-heading" is replaced in later examples by a single line "beak". We see this single line "beak" for the first time in script 19 (late sixteenth century), and then, after a break of about a century, we find the form well-established, as in scripts 22, 23, 24, 25, 27A.

Hē. A letter which has sufficient instability to provide some useful chronological information. The ductus of *hē* varies substantially, but this appears to have some chronological basis. Scripts 1A, 1B and 2B show a form of *hē* that is also found on one of the stone inscriptions from the thirteenth century.¹ In this there appear to be the following constituent elements. An oblique spine that angles from the top left to the bottom right: three short "legs" set at right angles to the spine. One top "leg" is really a right-angled bend in the spine. The middle "leg" is really a long narrow loop that starts in a knot on the spine which the scribe's pen changes in direction to form the loop. The scribe's pen forms a long narrow loop at the bottom of the leg to reverse its direction. The third "leg" is formed by the scribe reversing his pen movement again at the bottom of the spine and forming the additional "leg". Script 1A shows this ductus fairly clearly. In the thirteenth century, as script 2B and Pl. 2 show, this ductus was still used, but the shape of *hē* was changing, so that the lower spine was angling to the left, almost at 90°, to form a fourth short leg. In the manuscripts of the Zerifin scribes (exemplified in our series by Rylands Sam. MS. 1 = script 3 and Pl. 1), the fourth short leg is found, but the ductus changes so that the scribe has to lift his pen to make an extra stroke for the third leg. In the Damascus genre the scribe uses this same ductus. In scripts 12 and 13 (early to mid-fourteenth century), the three-legged appearance has returned, but the third leg is still made by a separate movement of the scribe's hand, rather than by a continuous flowing movement as in the twelfth century. At the end of the life of the Damascus genre (script 14) we see a variable three-legged/four-legged appearance.

¹ Cf. *SH*, p. 166 and Pl. 10.

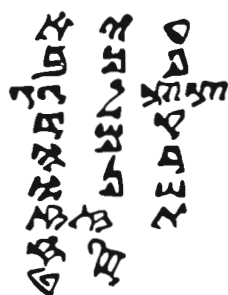
From the end of the fifteenth century until the middle of the seventeenth century (scripts 15–20) we see that *hē* retains its three-legged appearance, with varying methods of writing the letter, but always involving the scribe lifting his pen from the paper once if not twice (script 15).

In the late seventeenth century, the ductus changes so that none of the legs is formed by a continuous movement of the scribe's hand. The spine is still continuous, with the central knot, once the means of changing direction of the pen to form a leg, now becoming a fulcrum round which the spine itself bends, even to the extent of becoming right-angled (scripts 20A, B, C, 21, Pl. 4). In script 22 we see the ductus of *hē* very clearly and it is quite apparent that the spinal fulcrum has become decorative rather than serving a scribal purpose. The end of the spine, once also a fulcrum, is clearly now a leg. In script 23 we see the development of two spinal knots, the first one a thin looping to allow the pen to change direction, the second one not being at all functional. In the nineteenth century (script 24) the four legs are not only well established, but progress is being made towards developing a fifth leg by extending the spine. At the end of that century the two central legs of *hē* are detached from the spine (25) and this continues into the twentieth (script 27A and 27B).

Vav. A stable letter which falls into two basic types. In the earlier forms, except for 1B where *vav* and *hē* are almost indistinguishable from each other (as demonstrated by the row of *hēs* at the end of the table), the ductus remains the same even if the shape of the letter differs. The scribe's hand begins at the left side of the letter, moves to the right, forms a triangular fulcrum to change direction, and then continues to the left obliquely. The final result is rather like a cross with the arms offset. From the beginning of the sixteenth century the scribe tended to write so that the crossed strokes joined to become one continuous oblique stroke, as in script 15. With this change the ductus began to change so that the scribe had to take his pen from the paper to make two separate lines, as in script 23. The *vav* in Pl. 6 appears to be written as though the scribe lifted his pen once, though one cannot be sure of this.

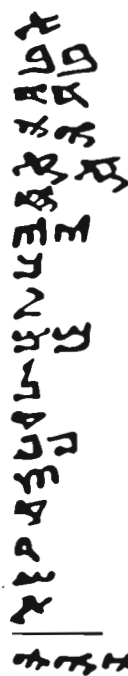
ALPHABET TABLES AND PLATES

1A



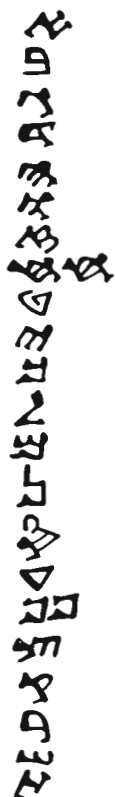
Cambridge Add. 1846
 Before A.D. 1149
 Palestinian genre

1B



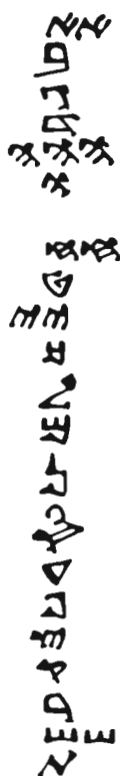
Cambridge Add. 1846
 The legal hand of
 A.D. 1149

2A



Cambridge Add. 713
 A.D. 1165-1185
 Coastal genre

2B



Cambridge Add. 713
 A.D. 1213
 Coastal genre

2C



Damascus genre
 13th century?

3
人止五古多又五止

Rylands Sam. MS. 1
A.D. 1211
Coastal genre

754237547

Barberini Triglot
A.D. 1226-1227
Damascus genre

[illegible]

5

BL Or. 6461
A.D. 1339-1340
Damascus

[illegible]

Bodley Or. 140
A.D. 1340
Damascus

7

BL Or. 1443
A.D. 1349
Damascus

五、六、七、八、九、十、十一、十二、十三、十四、十五、十六、十七、十八、十九、二十、二十一、二十二、二十三、二十四、二十五、二十六、二十七、二十八、二十九、三十、三十一、三十二、三十三、三十四、三十五、三十六、三十七、三十八、三十九、四十、四十一、四十二、四十三、四十四、四十五、四十六、四十七、四十八、四十九、五十、五十一、五十二、五十三、五十四、五十五、五十六、五十七、五十八、五十九、六十、六十一、六十二、六十三、六十四、六十五、六十六、六十七、六十八、六十九、七十、七十一、七十二、七十三、七十四、七十五、七十六、七十七、七十八、七十九、八十、八十一、八十二、八十三、八十四、八十五、八十六、八十七、八十八、八十九、九十、九十一、九十二、九十三、九十四、九十五、九十六、九十七、九十八、九十九、一百。

THE DOLL

9

BL Or. 2683
A.D. 1356

子方氏文公之印

THE
LAW
OF
THE
LAND

11

BL Cotton Claud.
B. VIII, A.D. 1362
Damascus genre

10

[illegible]

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय

BL Add. 22369
A.D. 1359-1360
Coastal genre

12

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥

Leiden Or. 6
A.D. 1414
Damascus genre

13
 BL Add. 21581
 A.D. 1434
 Nablus?

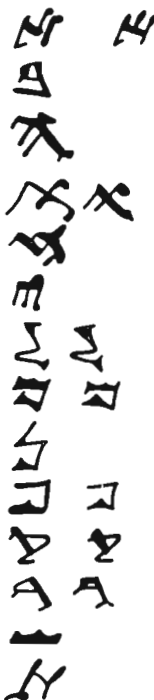
14
 BL Or. 10271
 A.D. 1509
 Nablus

15
 BL Or. 4446
 A.D. 1495
 Damascus

16
 Keble College 83
 A.D. 1518
 Nablus


17
 Bodley Or. 139
 A.D. 1524
 Damascus

21




BL Add. 19017
A.D. 1683-1685
Nablus

22



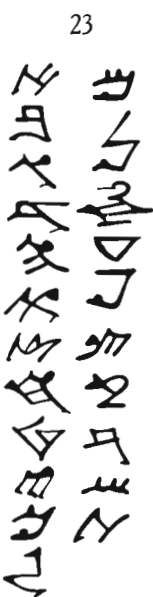
Bodley Or. 656
A.D. 1767
Nablus

25



BL Or. 1381
A.D. 1875
Nablus

23



BL Add. 19012
A.D. 1767
Nablus

24



Liverpool MS.
12005
A.D. 1824-1847
Nablus

[illegible]

27	A	B	C
	N	N	N
	E	G	G
	Z	Z	Z
	H	F	A
	X	T	D
	K	M	X
	L	H	S
	R	O	H
	V	G	G
	M	M	E
	J	T	U
	I	Z	Z
	Q	Y	W
	L	L	E
	W	E	P
	V	V	V
	J	T	J
	M	M	S
	P	T	P
	G	A	A
	W	W	W
	N	N	S

Modern fists. 19th-
20th centuries

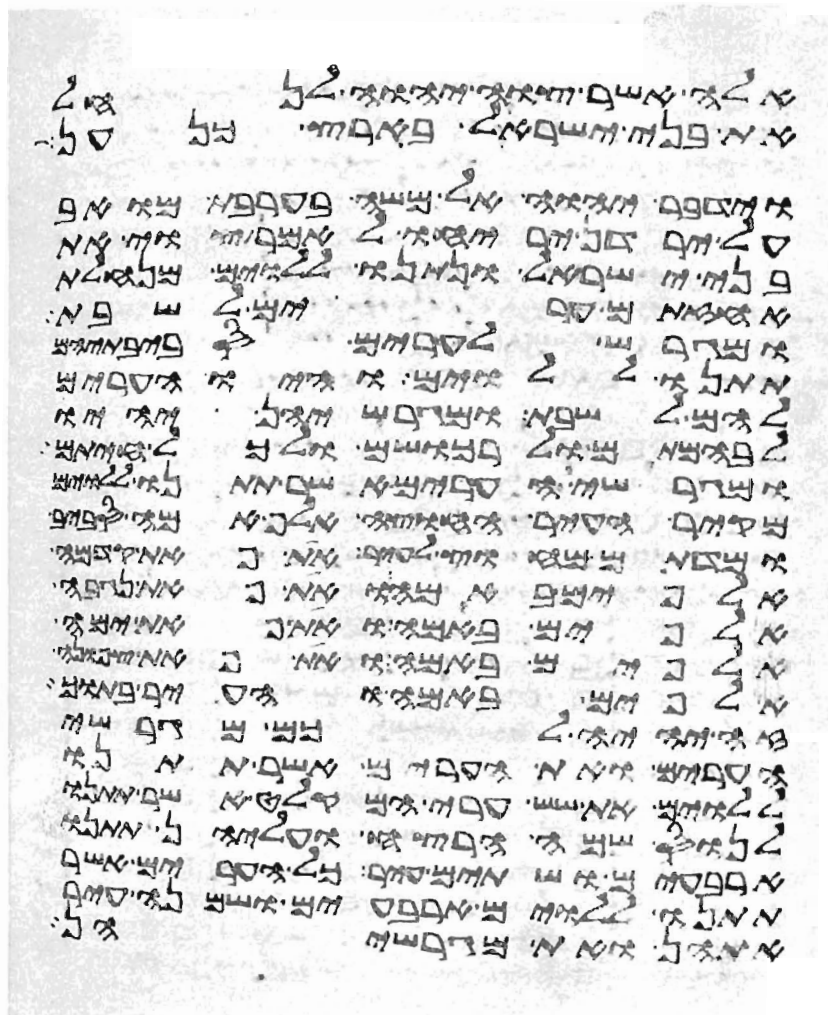


Plate I. Rylands Samaritan MS. 1 (fol. 502 verso), A.D. 1211. Coastal genre.

Τὰ δεκά ρυμάτα.

[illegible]

ירושלים 6. Juli 1859.

on cloth. Jerusalem, 1859.

Zayin. A very useful indicator of age and provenance. Although the letter appears, at first sight, to be remarkably stable, the appearance is deceptive. The basic factor in the description of *zayin* is that it is drawn on the pattern of *aleph*, with a foot on the left side, an oblique transversal, two upper intercepts which are joined, to form a trapezium and a right-hand leg. In earlier forms of *zayin* the parallelism with *aleph* is close. In later forms the relationship to *aleph* becomes increasingly remote until it is lost. We find no exceptions to this principle in our sequence. When the parallelism is lacking, the form is late. The approximate date we would choose for the demarcation between "earlier" and "later" forms is c. A.D. 1520, i.e., close to scripts 15 and 16. It must be remembered that this date marks only the beginning of the process of separation between *aleph* and *zayin*, a process which takes three centuries to complete. In the earlier period there is another useful chronological indicator. The oblique transversal in the earlier forms is thicker than the other strokes. The approximate period of the narrowing of this stroke is between scripts 11 and 12, i.e., c. A.D. 1400. There is also an indicator of provenance. In the Damascus genre the right leg bends under the letter and projects beyond the oblique transversal. In the Palestinian scripts the leg is shorter than the oblique transversal or reaches only to a point directly beneath its projection. We are able to draw some closer chronological conclusions for the scripts of the later period. In the seventeenth century there is a tendency for the trapezium to be doubled (scripts 20A and 20B). In the eighteenth century we find that the *aleph* parallelism has now become so remote that it is lost completely.

Het. An unstable letter, but one which appears not to yield its chronological secrets too easily. In general the letter looks not unlike *hē* except that the three legs are connected by an oblique stroke. This oblique stroke is where the scribe's pen appears to have begun its movement, starting at the lower right side of the stroke and traversing to the left to a knot, whence the pen moved upwards, as though drawing *hē*. The ductus of *het* of the scribes of Zerifin seems to have differed from that of the other earlier Palestinian forms, for it began, apparently, with the

top of the third leg, and then followed the path described before. The left-hand fulcrum where the pen changed direction is quite wide and angular—almost triangular in the Zerifin style (see Pl. 1). In the Damascus genre, the left fulcrum becomes long and elegantly shaped, the loop being slightly “bird’s-headed” (script 4, 5) and the ductus also seems to include the third leg with the oblique stroke. The fourth “leg” in the Damascus genre becomes a long and extended tail. In the fourteenth century there is a tendency for the letter to shift its orientation. If, in scripts 1A, 1B, 2A, 2B and 3, the legs which separated the transversal and the spine were projected to meet the scored line beneath, they would make an angle of between 60° and 65° to the horizontal. From the fourteenth century to the seventeenth that angle decreases to about 40° , and in the seventeenth century itself diminished so much that in script 20A the legs are parallel to the horizontal, so that the letter appears harp-shaped. From the late seventeenth century onwards the comments that were made about the ductus and shape of *hē* apply also to *het*, so long as one bears in mind the fact that the third leg and the oblique transversal are connected and the left fulcrum now has a decorative rather than a functional purpose, e.g., script 23.

Tet. A comparatively stable letter, but nevertheless one which provides us with some chronological data. In the earlier forms of *tet* we see that it looks rather like an open triangle in which there are parallel top strokes, the upper one open at the right-hand side, and the lower one turning down at the left-hand side. In these earlier forms the upper stroke breaks off in the middle of the letter, either above the point where the lower stroke turns down, or a little to the right of it (1A, 2A, 2B, 3). The upper stroke is either “undecorated” or else is swollen slightly at the right-hand side. An alternative form is seen in Pl. 2, and its existence as a recognized alternative is supported by 2C and 8A, even though the latter two manuscripts are of a different provenance; this internal triangulation is not again attested until the eighteenth century. In script 5 (mid-fourteenth century) the upper and the lower strokes begin to overlap and this overlap increases steadily (scripts 6–13). We must also note that in the Damascus genre the turned-down end of the lower stroke

is substantially thickened at the point of turning, appearing almost like a hook. At the end of the fifteenth century (scripts 14 and 15, etc.) the upper stroke ends in an upturned serif, a form which persists until the return of internal triangulation in the eighteenth century. This triangulation persists into the twentieth century, but the internal triangle becomes progressively smaller. Note that the archaizing form in Pl. 6 is very well done and could be read as a *ʔet* from the thirteenth century.

Yad. On *yad* see the general description above.

Kaph. On the proportions of the upper crown of *kaph* see the general notes above. *Kaph* is an illuminating letter, for it allows us to see changes in the scribal understanding of the way in which parts of the letter relate to each other. The serif on the left-hand side of the basal horizontal stroke of *kaph* was noted above in our discussion of Purvis's survey. The evolution of this serif is a fair guide to the chronology of the letter. The scripts 1A, 2A, 2B, also Pl. 1, show one form of the serif. (In 1B it is absent, as we have learned to expect in a deed of transfer of sale.) In script 3, Pl. 1, and script 2C, Pl. 2, we find a second form in which the barbed shape is the equivalent of the upturned single stroke on the inscriptions. The "barb" rises to half the distance between the basal stroke and the upper stroke. In scripts 4, 5 and 6 the serif is lower or is changing its shape to an ornamental form. In script 7 the change is evident in both shape and size. In scripts 10 and 11 the serif is ornamental and in 13 the ornamentation reflects that of the crown. In 12, 15, 16, 17, 18, one can still see the relationship of the serif to the original form but the peak of the serif is moving away from the left side of the basal stroke. In 19 the serif has disappeared, quite a significant factor in a script which is rather conservative, otherwise. Strangely enough, in Pl. 4 the serif reappears, but this is a rare case of a temporary reversion to an older form, for thereafter it disappears except as an ornament alone (22, 23). In Pl. 6, where the scribe has attempted to archaize, the attempt fails because he does not understand the true role or proportion of this part of the letter. *Kaph*, then, is one of the better chronological indicators in the alphabet.

Lamed. A remarkably stable letter, but one which neverthe-

less shows long-term changes which make for reliable chronological indications in the broadest sense. *Lamed* is essentially an arrowhead on its side, pointing towards the left, with its top stroke thickened and upturned to make a head which is wedge-shaped with the broader part uppermost. Until the middle of the thirteenth century the basal stroke of the *lamed* falls from right to left, so that the point of the arrow-head is slightly hooked (scripts 1-3). From the middle of the thirteenth century to the early fifteenth the basal stroke rises from right to left, though some traces of the hook remain. When this movement reverses itself again (scripts 12-14), the arrow-head is foreshortened and the sides begin to move apart as the angle at the point increases. As they move apart, the head on the top stroke begins to curve so as to become a flowing extension of that stroke (scripts 17, 18, 20A). The lower stroke now becomes thicker (scripts 15-20). The thickening migrates (script 20B) to the right side of the lower stroke and begins to extend downwards (scripts 21, 22, Pl. 4) until it becomes symmetrical with the upper head wedge (scripts 25, 27B, C). The changes in the position of *lamed* in comparison with other letters on the line have been discussed above.

Mem. Follows the pattern of *kaph* very closely. See the discussion of *kaph*.

Nun. A letter which has two apparently conflicting elements. It gives the appearance of remarkable stability and in many ways does in fact have a stability that makes for restricted chronological value. At the same time the serif on the basal stroke relates closely to the pattern of *mem* and *kaph*, and the patterns described for *kaph* should be applied.

In general, the following features should be noted. *Nun* consists of an upper head stroke attached to two strokes approximately parallel, which are, themselves, connected by a transversal which tends to be parallel to the head stroke. The general appearance is of a parallelogram in which one of the four sides (the left) has been hinged upwards to form a head stroke. The angles at all the corners give some clues to the evolution of the letter. In the Palestinian scripts of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, the right-hand stroke which connects the base and its

parallel tends to be vertical, whereas in the Damascus genre of the same period the stroke slopes from the bottom up to the right. Similarly, the head slopes to the right in the Damascus genre and the point of junction between the head and the upper parallel tends to be an elongated wedge. There tends to be a varying proportion between the length of the head and the length of the transversal between the parallels. In the earlier Palestinian and in the Damascus scripts it tends to be in the proportion of three to four, respectively. In the scripts of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries the head and the transversal tend to be of the same length, and in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries the head may be longer than the transversal. Although we have written of parallel strokes, in fact these strokes are rarely parallel. If they are projected so that the angle between them can be measured, they vary from between 0° to 20° (script 9). In general the older scripts have a smaller angle ($1A = 10^\circ$, $1B = 0^\circ$, $2A = 0^\circ$, $2B = 1^\circ$, $3 = 20^\circ$, $4 = 18^\circ$, $5 = 0^\circ$, $6 = 12^\circ$), whereas more recent scripts may have a greater divergence between these lines ($18 = 25^\circ$, $19 = 18^\circ$, $22 = 30^\circ$). In each case the projection of these "parallels" meets on the left-hand side, whereas in all the scripts of the fifteenth century it meets at the right of the letter. There are two factors which help to identify the later scripts with some clarity. Where the upper "parallel" meets the transversal there may be a projection to the right of the upper parallel as a small wedge (scripts 16, 19, 20C, Pl. 4, scripts 23, 26, 27B). Also, from the middle of the sixteenth century the transversal begins to slope backwards, i.e. to the right, as in the Damascus genre in the fourteenth century.

Samech. One of the letters which reflects scribal idiosyncracies very easily. Too much should not be made of the different forms because of this inherent instability in a rather complex shape. There are, nevertheless, factors which allow for judgements of both chronology and provenance.

Samech in script 1A has three parallel strokes which are almost vertical. These three strokes in this, our earliest specimen, are apparently related to the three strokes of *samech* in palaeo-Hebrew. They do not reappear in our sequence. In the Palestinian, especially the Zerifin scripts, the upper of the

three strokes is represented as a half-stroke extending from the semi-circular head on the oblique right shoulder (script 2B). The ductus of the letter is seen in script 10. The letter is formed in one flowing stroke and the knot on the left side is the fulcrum for the pen. In the Damascus genre (script 5) the half stroke extension of the head is usually missing and the ductus changes so that the letter is written in two strokes.

Until the fifteenth century the parallel strokes are formed at an angle of 45° to the line of writing and separate the two sides of the letter with long thin lines. In the fifteenth century (script 13) we see a shortening of these lines (scripts 14 onwards). In the later forms the ductus changes yet again and we see that the letter is written in three strokes or more. In the eighteenth century the semi-circular head increases in size and proportion, adding a "lip" which takes the form of a small left-facing hook on a longer, thinner line. At the end of the nineteenth century we see the loss of one of the parallels; *samech* in Pl. 6 shows a three-stroke ductus which betrays its lateness.

'Ayin. A very stable letter indeed with some broad chronological indicators. *'Ayin* is essentially a triangle which is never quite equilateral. In its earlier forms (scripts 1 and 2) the left hand stroke is slightly longer than the left. In the Damascus genre the left stroke is curved rather than straight, as in Palestinian manuscripts. In scripts 6, 7, 8A, B, C, 11 and 13, which represent the period from the late fourteenth century, to the end of the fifteenth century, the left-hand stroke becomes thicker still, but asymmetrical, so that the top of the stroke is broader than the bottom. From the end of the fifteenth century the left stroke becomes thinner again and tends to remain that way (though not consistently) until the nineteenth century when the form of the letter destabilizes. Pl. 6 shows an *'ayin* of post-fifteenth century type.

Pe. An extremely stable letter. However, the lower serif varies in form and proportion according to the serifs of *kaph* and *mem*.

Ṣade. A very stable letter which does not provide us with much chronological data. There are two distinct shapes for this letter, but this difference does not depend upon either

provenance or chronology, as can be seen from the sequence. In general, the left serif of *šade* reflects the forms of the serif on *ḵaph*, *mem* and the left fulcrum knot of *ḥet*, but this does not always apply.

Quph. A most useful chronological indicator, for the ductus of *quph* varies with the age of the script. In the earlier manuscripts it is written as one stroke, beginning at the bottom of the oblique which forms the spine of the letter (script 1A) or else with the left-turning serif which forms the foot of the oblique (script 1B). The stroke continues up and to the left to the apex, where the scribe reverses the direction of his pen to make a shape that is triangular, returning to meet the spine some way up from its foot. In later scripts the ductus changes to take two strokes. In the early forms the triangle is somewhat asymmetrical, with the top stroke (i.e. that part which is approximately parallel to the line of writing) somewhat longer than the lower stroke. The longer, top stroke has a tendency to be curved, whereas the shorter line has a tendency to be straight (scripts 1A, 1B, 2A). In the scripts of the thirteenth century this triangle is orientated on the spine so that it is closer to the top of the letter than to the bottom. Also, the spine has an appearance rather like a classic "dog's bone". In the Damascus genre of the fourteenth century the spine becomes distinctly wedge-shaped, with a much thinner lower portion, whereas the contemporary Palestinian scripts retain their "dog's bone"-shaped spines. In the fifteenth century the triangle begins to migrate down the spine of *quph*, and in the process of migration the length of the sides become more equal. In the work of one scribe we see considerable movement in the form of *quph*. Script 15 shows us the precursor of a process in which the ductus changes so that the lower stroke of the triangle intercepts the spine and crosses it. The lower side of the triangle is now the lowest part of *quph* and the foot of the letter is now a hook-shaped extension of the triangle, replacing the foot which previously was the base of the spine. In script 16 we see a ductus in which *quph* is written as two strokes. Both forms 15 and 16 recur from the end of the sixteenth century, being well established by the seventeenth century. In the eighteenth and nineteenth

centuries the projection of the side of the triangle beyond the intercept increases in length and may even become a dominant feature (scripts 24 and 25).

Resh. A useful indicator of both genre and chronology. However, the upper portion of *resh* tends to vary in a direct relationship with *beth*, which it resembles. On the lower portion of *resh* see the general notes.

Shin. A very useful indicator of genre and chronology. The letter *shin* is essentially a three-pronged crown, the prongs extending upwards from a base which is either straight or curved. In considering the changing nature of *shin* one must take cognizance of ductus, the proportional size of the crown and the total shape. In scripts 1-2B, the scribe's pen began its movement at the lower right-hand side and the letter was formed in one continuous movement.

In the Damascus genre the *shin* was also written in one continuous movement, but the scribe's hand reversed its direction. The motion seems to have begun at the lower left-hand side with the writing of the crown first and the base being added with a reversal of direction (cf. the forms in 8B and 8C). Script 15 (from the beginning of the sixteenth century) shows us a ductus in which there were at least two separate strokes in the letter and, possibly, three. At the end of the sixteenth century we see a similar ductus in script 19.

The thickness of the base varies in the different genres contemporaneously as well as differing from era to era. In the Palestinian genre the base of the early scripts in our series is a single line made of two adjacent and continuous strokes. (The three prongs of the crown are, in reality, three fine loops and the flattening of the base is caused by an angular movement of the pen from loop to loop. In the Zerifin group of Palestinian scripts this flattening is apparent. In the other early Palestinian scripts the loop is continued in a slight curve, so that the base consists of two adjacent curves rather than one straight line.) In the Damascus genre the base is a double line. From the mid-fourteenth century in the Palestinian genres the base is a double thickness and the crown reduces its height above the base as the base thickens. Until the end of the sixteenth century the process

of basal thickening continues. Scripts 14, 15 and 16 are interesting in that they show a common feature of their era with the base elongated beyond the spread of the prongs of the crown. In the seventeenth century the size of the crown begins to take precedence over the size of the base, the curving movement of the scribe's hand being plainly shown. In the nineteenth century the base again becomes thicker and the crown almost disappears. The ductus of *shin* in Pl. 6 is clearly that of the period when the crown of *shin* took precedence over the base (the seventeenth century).

Tav. This letter reacts in parallel to *aleph* and does not need any independent discussion.

We may conclude this study by suggesting that we have been able to demonstrate that the Samaritan script responds to palaeographic treatment provided that one is conscious of the problems caused by provenance.¹ The period of greatest stability in the script is the period from the beginning of our manuscript evidence until the beginning of the sixteenth century. From the sixteenth century the script becomes much easier to describe as differences between hands are more substantial. If our sequence is supplemented by additional resources, especially by photographic plates of texts of known authorship, date and provenance, it should be possible to make a reasonable assessment of the age of any manuscript or fragment of the Samaritan Pentateuch in majuscule script from its palaeography alone.

¹ Since writing this article I have noted J. D. Purvis, "The Palaeography of the Samaritan Inscription from Thessalonica", *BASOR*, no. 221, 1976. Purvis's additional study ends with words which emphasize our own conclusions about provenance, since he says, "the script may have developed within their community along lines different from those characteristic of Palestine...". Thus we may also look for a "Thessalonica genre".