AN AUTOGRAPH OF SA’ID BEN FARJOJI OF
THE NINTH CENTURY*

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A. INTRODUCTION

Scholars have questioned the existence of Cairo Geniza material prior to the tenth century.1 Their reasoning is as follows: the provenance of the Geniza is from the Ezra Synagogue in Fostat, and the Synagogue had served as a Coptic church up to the year 882 when it was sold to the Jewish Community in Cairo;2 it is difficult to assume that the Geniza contained material earlier than the tenth century.3 Other scholars compared the attic of the Synagogue to a repository for the community’s documents. They are, therefore, of the opinion that about one generation at least has to be added to the above date, before the documents were withdrawn from use and transferred to the repository.

The truth of the matter, however, is that the Ezra Synagogue in Fostat is not the only source of the Geniza treasures, which now are dispersed in many libraries all over the world.4 Hence one cannot compare the attic of the Synagogue to a repository, and thus the conclusions based on that hypothesis become void. It can, therefore, cause no surprise that there were found in the Cairo Geniza documents dated in the eighth or ninth centuries, or even earlier.

In the present paper, the author publishes a document which cannot be dated later than the ninth century, as will be proved.

* The following special abbreviations are employed in the present paper:
CG — P. Kahle, Cairo Geniza2 (Oxford 1959)
HB — id., Der hebräische Bibeltext seit Franz Delitzsch (Stuttgart 1961)
HU — M. Steinschneider, Die hebräischen Übersetzungen des Mittelalters (Berlin 1893)
ZMG — K. Levy, Zur masoretischen Grammatik (Stuttgart 1936)
1 See J. L. Teicher, JJS 1 (1948) 156–158; see also note 3.
2 See CG, 3–4; J. Sapor, תָּמִי יִשְׂרָאֵל (Lyck 1866) 20a–21b; A. M. Habermann, יִשְׂרַיִל (Jerusalem 1944) 10–11; M. Zulai, לעת הלא, תִּהְוָא (1950) 110–111.
3 L. Abrahams published a document which is dated in the eighth century (751): “An Eighth Century Genizah Document”, JQR 17 (1904–5) 426–430. Teicher, however, took objection to this date; see note 1.
4 See N. Alony, נְעֹו תֶּהָרָא יִשְׂרָאֵל, in Ḥeresh 3 (1961) 412.
B. DESCRIPTION OF MS CAMBRIDGE T–S. ARAB. 35–394

Vellum, one folio, size 13 × 10 cm., defective at the bottom and on the right; written space 6 × 6 cm., lacking on the bottom and on the right. It seems that the writing was in the center of the folio, which served as the first page of the MS. On the right side there is a margin of 8 cm. which is still defective breadthwise. If we assume that the left margin was as wide as the right, it is fair to surmise that the width of the folio was 30 cm. Its length cannot be determined because of lack of sufficient data. It was possibly less than its breadth.

Page 1 contains the beginning of the colophon of the MS, the autograph signature of סמסר בן מרים. On the right the letter א is twice written in inverse direction, and also the remnant of a second letter can be seen. These letters constituted parts of two words which I am unable to complete (אשל ואבל).

Page 2. In its center is found writing in Arabic Naskhi script, executed by an expert hand. Round about it and on all sides to the end of the page, in right order and in reverse in Hebrew and Arabic Naskhi script are written words and sentences which will be quoted later. The entire page is written in reverse direction to page 1.

The folio is a remnant of a Bible MS, as can be ascertained from the penny-try-outs on page 2.

The Hebrew script is Oriental square, and a small part in Oriental half-square script by the same hand, as can be inferred on the basis of comparing the script on both sides of the folio. We may assume that the Hebrew script found on the margin of page 2 was written by Sa‘īd ben Farjo. It seems to me that this is the earliest Naskhi script by the hand of a Jew known to us.

The date of the MS is the ninth century. This is evident from the letter forms. An even stronger proof is the name of the writer of the colophon who is known to us from other sources which will be adduced in the next paragraph.

C. Sa‘īd ben Farjo

This is the text of page 1.

5 See below, paragraph G.
6 = דַּעַר הַבְּרִי. The lacuna could also be completed דַּעַר. I chose because of the Budapest fragment referred to in note 53.
7 Only remnants are left of the ב. The two letters cannot be taken as the initials of וַנֶּדֶנָּה because they are not written in the middle of the line and they do not have dots which normally indicate initials.
The name Sa’id ben Farjoi is mentioned twice: once in the colophon of a Bible MS, and once in a Massoretic note on the margin of the Bible text written by a different hand. This is the reading of the colophon in the Pentateuch MS Çufut Kale 36 (Crimea).8

In that same MS there is a second colophon which resembles the former. In both are mentioned the identical personal and family names of the men for whom the work was done. It is therefore logical to assume that it was written about the same time, and that the man named in the second colophon was a member of the family (perhaps the brother) of the Shelomo ben Buyā’a who is referred to in the former colophon. This is its text:10

From the latter colophon we learn that the two scribes were relatives and that they lived in the first half of the tenth century. Their teacher, therefore, must have flourished in the second half of the ninth century.

9 This name is known to me only from the two sources mentioned above, and from the colophon of the Aleppo Codex quoted in *Textus* 1 (1960) 13; HB, 84–86. It seems that this is an endearing form of the name βαρνά, with the addition of ε in the middle, and the omission of the τ at the end. I am unable to identify it with any other Hebrew name. The name רנבא was usual among the Karaites in that period. See e.g. the colophon of MS A mentioned above; *Jews*, 214–215.
10 See *Dis.* p. XXXVII; *Textus* 1 (1960) 4; Hebrew section, 3.
11 *I.e.* 930.
The name סדר ד' פטיריט המסרת הנהバル קיפר is composed of four languages — Hebrew, Aramaic, Persian and Arabic.

Sa'id is an Arabic name. It may be assumed that it became current in Hebrew in the seventh century, or, at the latest, in the first half of the eighth century. The head of the Ben Asher family was called אשר חכם — Sa'id, with Sa'id standing for חכם.

Farjoi can be explained as a Persian name, like בר כוכב, באברג, אברהם, איסקר, זכרי, מסים, and with an interchange of מסיק, מקר, מקר יד,鼠标, 마 debido to a transcribed Pirquoi-Pirgoi). Both names have the meaning Salvation, Redemption (מקר, מקר, מקר). The name also may be composed of Arabic Faraj = Salvation with the Persian suffix “ii” (=Hebrew: ידוהה).

An allusion to this name is found in each one of the above mentioned colophons. Colophon A:

סער סער סער סער
...ירושע סער
ולסער סער
סער סער

Colophon B:

סער
סער סער סער
לשרעם סער
לשרעם סער
לשרעם סער
לשרעם סער
לשרעם סער

12 תקופת המגמה והמרד (Jerusalem 1955) 32/7.
13 See S. Asaf, op. cit. (note 12), p. 31/17.
15 A distinctly Persian name. See B. M. Lewin, אוצרי הפרסים, index.
17 This also is the title of the seventh chapter of חסידאיה הדרשות by Saadia Gaon, which was written in 933. See H. Malter, Saadia Gaon, His Life and Works (Philadelphia 1921) 193; 363–367; N. Allony, Ktirath Sepher 36 (1961) 521 note 43. As to the name see Jews, I, 266 and note 2; II, 287. For the Persian see S. D. Goitein, Ktirath Sepher 41 (1966) 273–274. It is not clear to me what prompted Kahle, MdW, I, 58 to propose the correction: Fargai (לף רגאי).
18 As to the personal names in the period of the Babylonian Exile see מגמה (Jerusalem 1956) 196–198.
The surname Belqūq is mentioned in Colophon A, and in the Massoretic note in MS Čufut Kale 10, in which it is debated whether the name Rab-Shakeh (Is. 36: 4) should be written as one word, as Ben Buyāʿa, the disciple of Qūq, used to write it, or whether in two words: בֶּלֶקְעִק בֶּנְ בֵּית אֲדָמִיר. In this quotation it is not mentioned whether the personal name of Ben Buyāʿa is Ephraim or Shelomo, referred to above, or some third name. It may however be assumed that “Ben Buyāʿa, the disciple of Qūq” is “Shelomo ben Buyāʿa, the disciple of Saʿid ben Farjo, called Belqūq.” In the colophon and in the Massoretic note the three words קַיָּם, הָעָשָׁה, and בֵּית אֲדָמִיר are identical. We may add that both men are mentioned as Bible scribes — Colophon A: יִבִּית אֲדָמִיר חַגָּר קַיָּם מְשַׁמַּה. Massoretic note: יִבִּית אֲדָמִיר חַגָּר קַיָּם מְשַׁמַּה.

The surname Belqūq is composed of the Arabic prefix Bel and Hebrew Qūq or Qīq.21 “Rabbi Judah said: ‘Kvayma (Lev. 11: 18): בֵּית אֲדָמִיר מְשַׁמַּה.’”22 Ibn Jannāh in his Dictionary defines it thus:23 “They explain קַיָּם הָעָשָׁה and בֵּית אֲדָמִיר as one of the long-necked waterfowl, but I do not think that it is so, because of the verse מְשַׁמַּה (Ps. 102: 7), hence it is not בֵּית אֲדָמִיר.” The Karaite lexicographers, however, accepted this identification.24

D. Place

The place of Saʿid ben Farjo is nowhere clearly mentioned. However, since the Massoretes who were his disciples lived in Tiberias and/or in Jerusalem, we may assume that their teacher also lived in one of these two cities, or in both at different periods of his life. The following are the Massoretes who were associated with him and with his work in the ninth and tenth centuries:

Moses ben Asher – Tiberias;25 Ephraim ben Buyāʿa – Tiberias or Jerusalem;26 Shelomo ben Buyāʿa – Tiberias or Jerusalem;26 Eli ben Yehuda ha-Nazir –

20 See Diq., XXXVII.
21 See Kimhi, תֵּקַע מִשְׁמַר הָעַשָּׁה s.v. קַיָּם; also Saadia’s Bible translation in all the verses in which the root is mentioned (Zeph. 2: 14 is not extant); Ibn Jannāḥ, אֲדָמִיא s.v. קַיָּם (in Ibn Tibbōn’s translation); Ben Yehudah, מִשְׁמַר הָעַשָּׁה s.v. קַיָּם. Ibn Maimonides, תֵּקַע מִשְׁמַר הָעַשָּׁה s.v. קַיָּם.
22 Hulín 63a; Jer. Tal. Sabbath II, 1, 4c: Rabbi Ishma’el expounded קַיָּם מְשַׁמַּה.
23 As translated from the Arabic; see note 21.
24 David b. Abraham Alfasi, Kitāb Jāmiʿ al-ʿAlfāz (New Haven 1945) s.v. 알קליק; אֲדָמִיא s.v. קַיָּם; and following him alsoUAL-AL-TALHI, A, שְׁמַר הָעַשָּׁה s.v. קַיָּם.
25 See N. Allony, מִשְׁמַר הָעַשָּׁה (text with translation), Leshonenu 29 (1965) 9–23; 136–159; idem., מִשְׁמַר הָעַשָּׁה (text with translation), סְפָר מֵעַלְמָא (ירושלים 1965) 271–291.
26 See I. Ben-Zvi, Textus 1 (1960) 5.
Tiberias; 27 Aaron ben Moses ben Asher – Tiberias or Jerusalem or both; 28 Pinehas Rosh ha-Yeshiva of Kifra – near Tiberias; 29 Author of Seder ha-Simanim – Tiberias or Jerusalem; 30 Author of the work on the Shewa – Tiberias or Jerusalem; 31 David ben Abraham Alfasai – Tiberias or Jerusalem or both. 32

Of the Massoretic mentioned here the relationship between Sa`id ben Farjo and Shelomo ben Buya`a is most clearly evident, both being inhabitants of Tiberias or Jerusalem.

E. THE HEBREW SCRIBBLINGS

On page 2 there are Hebrew scribblings. All have been identified, except two. Those identified are from Kings, Isaiah, Psalms, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes and Esther.

line 11: אָמָה הָסָּבָכָה. 33 — square script
line 12: הָמָּסְכֶּר הַמַּסֵּכֶּתֶל. 35 — the first in Rabbinic script, the second in square
line 13: אָמָה הָסָּבָכָה. 37 — square script

On the right: 1. 14: בָּלָּכֶּל עַמָּלָל [תְּפָלֵּלָה]. 39
1. 15: בָּלָּכֶּל [תְּפָלֵּלָה]. 40

27 Here explicit (MS): “I dwelt long in the markets of Tiberias and in its streets”.
29 See M. Zulai, Diq. p. 41, paragraph 49: כל תְּפָלֵּלָה. מַגְּלַּת מַגְּלַּת. וּבָּלָּכֶּל בָּלָּכֶּל. מַגְּלַּת מַגְּלַּת. מַגְּלַּת מַגְּלַּת. מַגְּלַּת מַגְּלַּת.
30 See N. Allony, HUCA 5 (1964) 3 (Hebrew).
31 See ZMG, 40.
33 אָמָה הָסָּבָכָה. i.e. the word אָמָה does not appear in the entire Bible in the gem conjugation, past tense, with a qamaq. See Diq. p. 41, paragraph 49: כל תְּפָלֵּלָה. מַגְּלַּת מַגְּלַּת. וּבָּלָּכֶּל בָּלָּכֶּל. מַגְּלַּת מַגְּלַּת. מַגְּלַּת מַגְּלַּת. מַגְּלַּת מַגְּלַּת.
34 The M.P. ad loc. indeed specifies בָּלָּכֶּל.
35 Not found in the Bible. There are three possible explanations of this reference: (1) the word אָמָה does not appear in the entire Bible in the gem conjugation, past tense, with a qamaq referring to Ps. 40: 11; see Diq. p. 41, paragraph 49: כל תְּפָלֵּלָה. מַגְּלַּת מַגְּלַּת. וּבָּלָּכֶּל בָּלָּכֶּל. מַגְּלַּת מַגְּלַּת. מַגְּלַּת מַגְּלַּת. מַגְּלַּת מַגְּלַּת.
36 See note 33.
37 See J. Schirmann, Shirim ve-Derekhenu Min Ha-No`arayim (Jerusalem 1966) 69/7: הבשלתית. an anonymous piyyut in MS Sassoon, facsimile 22/5: הבשלתית. As to the meaning, see Mish. Ta`anith 4, 6: הבשלתית. הבשלתית.
38 See note 33.
39 See note 33.
40 Lam. 5: 6. I am not sure of the proposed reconstruction which is based on the reading of the adjacent verse.

Ib. v. 11.
Above: 1. 7: [בֵּית אָחָשֶׁר] — square script
1. 8: [אֲחָשֶׁר] — square script
Above, in reverse: 1. 9: [אֲחָשֶׁר] — square script

The similarity of the script on page 2 with that of page 1 proves that both were written by the same hand. Worthy of attention is the Massoretic note which shows our Sa‘id ben Farjoi to have been both a Biblical scribe and a Massorete. We learn, moreover, that Sa‘id ben Farjoi was accustomed to write also half-square script, and his writing thus presents us with an example of this script from the ninth century. More important is his beautiful square script, as an example of this script in the ninth century. For the purpose of comparison we list here facsimiles which are close to his script:43

MSS of the ninth (second half) and tenth centuries (850–950):
1. Sa‘id ben Farjoi, Camb. T–S. Arab. 35/394 (our autograph) — ca. 875.
2. MS Sassoon 507 (Letchworth) — ca. 850.44
3. Brit. Museum Or. 4445 — ca. 850.45
4. Moses ben Asher, Codex Cairo, 895.46
5. Shelomo ben Buya‘a and Aaron ben Asher, Codex Aleppo — ca. 915.47
6. Cod. Petropolitansus (Leningrad) — 916.48
7. MS Firk II 17–930.49
8. MS Firk II 195–943.50
9. MS Firk II 10–946.51
10. MS Firk II 124–946.52

F. THE ALPHABET OF SA‘ID BEN FARJOI

In the following we shall describe the fifteen letters from among the twenty-seven contained in the alphabet, including the final letters חנש, which are extant in the fragment:

41 Esther 1:1.
42 1 Kings 18:7, 12, אָלִיל וַדָּד.
43 For a detailed description of a non-Biblical MS close to this time, see M. Lutzki,光照 (New York 1957) Introduction, p. 74–77.
44 S. D. Sassoon, אֲלִיל וַדָּד, I (Oxford 1932), plate 2.
45 See the facsimile in Margoliouth Catalogue I, plate 1; A. Tisserand, Specimina Codicum Orientalium (Bonn 1914) plate 3. F. Kenyon, Our Bible and the ancient Manuscripts, plate (following p. 44).
46 Facsimiles HB, plates 1–18; CG, plates 7–8; plate 8.
47 Textus 1 (1960) 12, facsimiles of the extant folios of the Pent. from MS A.
49 P. Kahle, MdW, I, plate 17/1.
50 Ib. plate 18/2.
51 Ib. plate 19/3.
52 Ib. plate 20/4.
I. \( \aleph \) (7 times): a very wide lower half, about twice the width of the upper half. It is composed of three parts: (1) The lower half is written with one penstroke from left to right: there is a base-line at the left, from it a line in the form of a bow is drawn to the right, and upon it are built the two upper parts of the letter. (2) The wedge on the right extends to the middle of the lower half, as though stabbing its hump and issuing on the other side. (3) The left wedge extends to the apex of the hump. Cp. facsimile 2. No parallel form could be found in the other MSS. Fairly close to it is the aleph of facsimiles 3, 5, 7, 9.\(^{53}\)

II. \( \beth \) (2 times): narrow and elongated, like a resh with the base added. A triangular wedge is attached on the left side of its top. The base is in the form of a rectangle, protruding on the right, but ending on the left in a straight line with the top. Cp. facsimiles 2, 5, 6.

III. \( \daleth \) (once): like a mun with a short base and a wedge pointed toward the bottom at the right of the base: It is formed of three parts: (1) its top is an inclined rectangle; (2) the backstroke with two points in opposite directions, fused above with the top, thus creating a thin neck; (3) a base in the form of a rectangle, one-third wider than the top. Cp. facsimiles 5, 8, 9.

IV. \( \nun \) (2 times): elongated like the beth and resembling a heth. The vertical left line is long, reaching almost to the top. except that it turns somewhat inside under the top. unlike the heth, in which letter the two lines connect. Cp. facsimiles 2, 3, 5.

V. \( \resh \) (3 times): like a resh, with a much smaller top. Its head is large. The vertical stroke falls short of the bottom line of the other letters, and ends in a point. Cp. facsimiles 2, 5, 7, 9.

VI. \( \swarsh \) (6 times): resembles a shortened resh. It is big and heavy at the top with two points on both sides, cleaving like a hump to the adjacent letter. Cp. facsimiles 2, 3, 5, 7–10.

VII. \( \zayin \) (2 times, once fragmentary): resembles a resh with a base, with rounded corners at the outer side of the wall. It is written in two parts: (1) the top and the wall with one penstroke, and a wedge at the left end of the top; (2) the base is drawn from left to right. Cp. facsimiles 2, 5, 7.

VIII. \( \nasr \) (once): the upper part is two-thirds its height. It is written in two strokes: (1) the vertical upper line together with the top of the letter forming a triangle at the top and ending at the right with a protrusion like in a daleth; (2) a backline, vertical to half its length and then turning diagonally to the left. Nothing like it is found in the facsimiles. For some resemblance cp. facsimiles 2, 3, 5, 7.

\(^{53}\) A similar \( \aleph \) is found in a Geniza fragment of the tenth cent. (945?) in the Kaufmann Collection at Budapest. See Tarbiz 28 (1959) 49.
IX. ב (2 times): a kettle-shaped wide body onto which is attached a tap-like neck. It is written in two strokes: (1) the base as in the letters beth, kaph and mun; (2) a bow stretched above the base, slightly open at the left and closed at the right. A wedge with a break at its top is attached to the left side of the bow. Cp. facsimiles 2, 3, 7, 9.

X. ג (3 times): resembles a beth with an inclined top, or a gimel without the point under its base. It is composed of three parts: (1) the top — an inclined rectangle; (2) a wall — inclining diagonally toward the bottom, thin at the upper end and thick at its lower end; (2) a long base as in the beth at an angle of 90° or less. Cp. facsimiles 3, 6, 7.

XI. ̀ (once): resembles a zayin. It is composed of two parts: (1) the top — a rectangle, less inclined than in the medial nun; (2) a wall like in the medial nun, ending at its upper point under the right third of the rectangle. Cp. facsimiles 2, 3, 7, 9.

XII. כ (2 times): like a circle with a wedge above its left side. It is written in two strokes: (1) the top together with the bow and base; (2) the right bow which begins at the left of the base. The wedge at the top as in the resh. Cp. facsimiles 2, 4, 5.

XIII. מ (once): wide and thick as the medial mem or samekh, with a trunk-like center line. It is written in four strokes: (1) the top and right wall; (2) an appended inverted yod; (3) a base from left to right joined to the right wall; (4) a small wedge on the left of the top. Cp. facsimiles 2, 3, 7–9.

XIV. י (2 times): resembles a kaph without the base; a pointed wedge to the left of the top and a less pointed one to the right which, however, is unlike the usual wedge. Cp. facsimiles 3, 9.

XV. נ (once): almost a combination of resh and nun. It is composed of two parts: (1) the top and the right wall are written with one stroke of the pen: the top does not have a wedge to its left unlike the resh, but it still is somewhat elevated on the left side; (2) the left wall together with the bottom line resemble a nun without the top. Cp. facsimiles 2–5, 8–9.

G. The Arabic Scribblings

The Arabic scribblings in Naskhi script are more numerous than the Hebrew. These also are of two kinds: the bookhand of an expert scribe and cursive script. Besides these there is also present a careless cursive script, possibly executed by a tyro. In the following we give the text, part of which has not yet been deciphered:

line 15: Testifies Hasan ibn Muhammed ibn Ahmad... 15
line 16: The man, the guarantor 16

line 15: يشهد أحمد بن محمد بن أحمد... 15
line 16: الرجل المسن ما فيه رقبان (؟) عن
On the basis of these scribblings we may state:
1. With these scribblings were written words that are sacred to the Muslims (line 27), or a Muslim document (line 17–19) as evidenced by the names Muhammad and Ahmad.
2. Also Jews used two Arabic scripts: a bookhand and a cursive script.
3. The executor of these scribblings is Sa‘îd ben Farjoi, since the Hebrew scribblings written round the Arabic in the center of the page are also by him.

H. THE MS AND ITS HISTORY

If we are to judge the contents of the MS on the basis of the scribblings, almost all of which are culled from the Prophets and the Hagiographa, it may be assumed that this was a Codex of Prophets and Hagiographa, ordinarily called Migra.54 Or we may say that these scribblings cannot testify as to the contents of the MS.

It seems that our folio opens the MS, so that the scribblings were written on its very first page. The beginning of the colophon, however, appears on page two and it continues to the lower part of the page or to another column of this folio,55 or to an adjacent folio. In my opinion our fragment cannot be of the last folio of the MS, because there would not have been room to continue the colophon, and the scribblings, probably pen tryouts, are more in place on the first page of a MS than on the last.

The MS passed from Palestine to Egypt; but no date can be set for this transfer. It might have been transferred after the Seljuk pillage in the year 1071,56 together with the MS written by the pupil of Sa‘îd, Shelomo ben Buyâ‘â, with its Massorah by Aaron ben Asher.

54 See L. Blau, Zur Einleitung in die heilige Schrift (Budapest 1894) 30, 42.
55 Like the colophon of Moses ben Asher. See HB facsimile 17.
I. THE KARAISM OF SA’ID BEN FARJOI

Sa’id ben Farjoj is not mentioned in the entire Rabbinic literature. We thus learn that he did not occupy himself with halakhic issues, nor was he creative in this field. According to the general principle that one who occupies himself exclusively with Bible is assumed to be a Karaite, one may relate also Sa’id ben Farjoj to the Karaites. His pupil Shelomo ben Buyâ’ā is associated with the Bible Codex which was dedicated by the Karaites to the Karaite synagogue57 — “To Jerusalem, the city holy to the seed of Israel, the Assembly of Jacob, the Karaite Congregation Jeshurun, the treasure of the Karaites... on condition that it go not out from under the hand... of the Nasi Josiah and the Nasi Hezekiah, the sons of the Nasi Shelomo, son of the Nasi David, son of the Nasi Bo’az”, who are mentioned in the colophon of the Aleppo Codex.

In addition to these men who are definitely called Karaites there is also mentioned58 “Mar Rav Aaron ben Mar Rav Asher” who was a Karaite and belonged to a family of Karaites who boasted a lineage of five generations.59

From this single folio of the work of Sa’id we may conclude that he made Bible the field of his literary activity, and that he occupied himself with copying the Biblical books and Masoretic notes. On this basis he may be regarded a Karaite.

On the other hand there are found in the scribblings the two words נוֹרִים כְּבִישָׁל which possibly derive from a Rabbinic piyyut on the destruction of the Temple. כְּבִישָׁל, a verb in the past tense with the prefix ב,60 is a grammatical form which the Karaites avoided in their piyyutim. We may indeed assume that from the eighth to the tenth centuries the Karaites did not entirely disregard the Mishnah and piyyut language.

J. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The Geniza fragment T–S. Ar. 35/394 is an autograph of Sa’id ben Farjoj called Belqûq.61 It served as the title-page of a complete Bible Codex, or of

57 See HB, 85/10–15.
58 Ib. 84/5.
60 See above and note 35. See Dûnash ben Labrât, ⴱ𣴿 (Jerusalem 1947) 67/5 and the notes on p. 130; A. Mirsky, Kirjath Sepher 41 (1966) 16, col. 1.
61 It seems to me that no conclusions can be arrived at from the use of the surname Ḥוֹנִי.
a codex of Prophets and Hagiographa only. The beginning of the colophon was on the inner page of the first folio (י-כ ת) of the MS. On the outer page (י-כ ת) are found Hebrew-Arabic scribblings.

Sa'id ben Farjo lived in Palestine, in Tiberias or Jerusalem. He was the teacher of the Massoretes Shelomo, Ephraim, and possibly a third member of the family of Buya'a. Of these Shelomo ben Buya'a is definitely known to us.

The names in the colophon are composed of four languages: Hebrew, Aramaic, Arabic and Persian. This proves the dictum in “The Ancient List of Technical Terms”62 that an erudite man had to know Hebrew, Aramaic, Arabic, Persian and Greek,63 or, according to a much later version, only Hebrew, Arabic and Aramaic.64

Sa'id ben Farjo knew not only Hebrew and Aramaic but also Arabic, and he was able to write in two scripts: a Naskhi bookhand and a cursive Naskhi. We thus have evidence of the manner in which Jews wrote Arabic, either in Arabic or Hebrew letters, an issue which is still debated by scholars in our generation,65 and which, however, cannot be resolved with the aid of the material present here. Even as Moses ben Asher, before him, Sa'id ben Farjo was a scribe of Bible codices as well as a Massoretic, while his pupils were copyists only, as Shelomo ben Buya'a, or Massoretes only, as Ephraim ben Buya'a and Aaron ben Asher.

The remains of the colophon and the scribblings represent the autograph of this Massorete, and at the same time give evidence to the Hebrew script of the Massoretes of the ninth century. This will prove a great help in dating Biblical MSS, and a most important aid in determining the date of the Aleppo Codex, which was chosen as the basis of the new edition of the Hebrew University Bible Project.

62 See Moshe Krakauer (Tel Aviv 1964) 341; also ib. 345; 347; 349.
63 Ib. 341/31.
64 Ib. 345/30; 347/30; 349/25.
65 See J. Blau, The Emergence and Linguistic Background of Judaeo-Arabic (Oxford 1965) 39 (with a detailed bibliography); 44 note 1; 46 note 1; N. Allony, המורים הדרשים 14 (1964), 103-104. Especially important is the problem of Saadia’s method of writing in his Arabic Bible translation, and Abraham ibn Ezra’s remarks concerning Saadia’s script (cp. Blau, op. cit., 39 note 1).