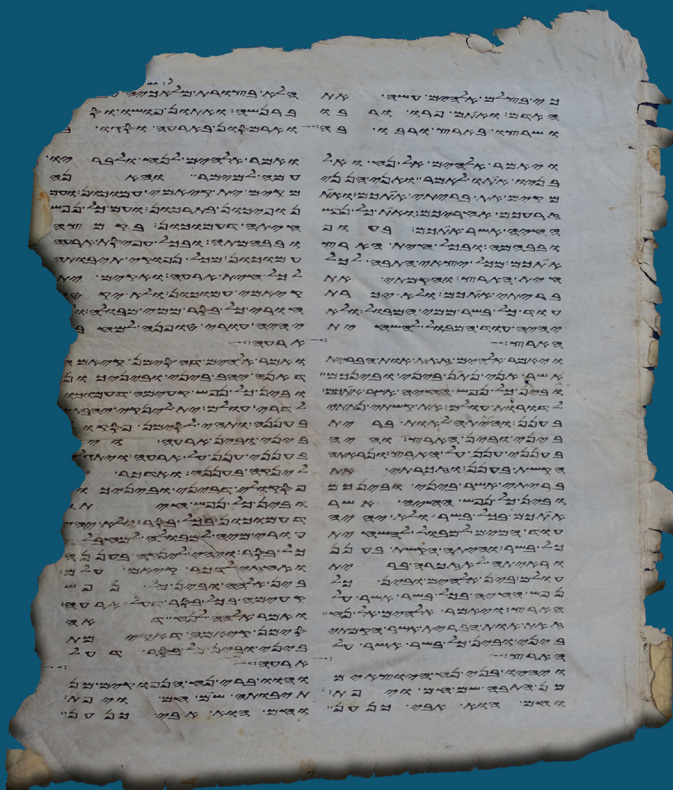


The Samaritan Pentateuch

An English Translation with a Parallel Annotated Hebrew Text

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INTRODUCTION: THE PENTATEUCH ACCORDING TO THE SAMARITAN TRADITION AND ITS ENGLISH TRANSLATION

1.0. The History of the Study of the Samaritan Tradition

1.1. Two Distinct Pentateuchal Traditions

In ancient times, the followers of the Law of Moses separated into two camps. Though both clung zealously to the same Pentateuch, the lines of its transmission also diverged, resulting in two versions, one venerated by Jews and one by Samaritans, differing from one another in thousands of details.¹ A few of these differences concern the traditions and beliefs of the two religious communities; some have to do with the development of different literary sensibilities or the grammar and syntax of the Hebrew language; but most of them, by far, stem from the different transmission traditions that had also developed with the passing of the generations. At the end of this process, Jews and Samaritans ended up with two different versions of the same Pentateuch.

1.2. Ancient Recognition of Differences

Already in antiquity, Jews and Christians knew that the Samaritan Pentateuch (SP) differed from the Jewish Pentateuchal tradition. The rabbis of antiquity criticise it in their writings, occasionally ironically. The Sifre to Deuteronomy (§56) quotes the 3rd-century Rabbi Eliezer ben Jose's scornful criticism of the Samaritans for adding the words 'opposite Shechem' to Deut. 11.30, since Mount Gerizim's proximity to Shechem is already established elsewhere in the Pentateuch:

¹ For a discussion of the number of these variants, see below §2.1.

I told the scribes of the Cutheans (Samaritans), “You falsified the Torah while not improving it at all in writing ‘by the Oaks of Moreh [opposite] Shechem’.” We already learn that it is Mount Gerizim and Mount Ebal, which are among the Cutheans, since it is written “Are they not beyond the Jordan... beside the Oaks of Moreh?”

Rabbi Eliezer goes on to quote Gen. 12.6: “Abram passed through the land to the place at Shechem, to the Oak of Moreh,” and then he adds: “What is said below concerning the Oak of Moreh [which is opposite] Shechem, is true also here with regard to the Oak of Moreh [which is opposite] Shechem.”

The Jerusalem Talmud (Sota 7.3; Venice ed. 21c) puts nearly the same words in the mouth of the 2nd-century Eleazar ben Simeon:

I told the scribes of the Cutheans, “You falsified your Torah, but (in doing so) did yourself no good, when writing in your Torah ‘by the Oaks of Moreh [opposite] Shechem’. For it is known that it is Shechem. But you do not expound according to analogy (גזירה שוה), while we do expound according to analogy. It says here ‘the Oaks of Moreh’ and it says below ‘the Oaks of Moreh’. What is said below concerning ‘the Oaks of Moreh’ [which is opposite] Shechem, is true also here concerning ‘the Oaks of Moreh’.”

Elsewhere in the Jerusalem Talmud (Yevamot 1.4; Venice ed. 3a), Rabbi Simeon ben Eleazar is quoted as criticising the Samaritans for misunderstanding the directional *he* suffix and erroneously interpreting the החוצה in Deut. 25.5 as an adjective החיצונה ‘external’ and not as an adverb ‘outside’.²

² Indeed, the Samaritan Targum (ST) in most manuscripts translates the word as בראיתה ‘external’, but the ancient Ms. J aligns with MT, translating instead ברא ‘outside’. Rabbi Simon ben Eleazar’s accusation seems to be only partially warranted according to the manuscript before us. In many places the directional *he* is absent, e.g., השמים ‘to heaven’ (Gen. 15.5; 28.12), בית בתואל ‘house of Aftuwwel’ (Gen. 28.2), and ארץ בני קדם ‘land of the children of the east’ (Gen. 29.1). But in many other places in SP it is used, as in ההרה ‘to the mountain’ (Gen. 14.10), חרנה ‘to Arran’ (Gen. 27.43), ימה וקדמה וצפונה ונגבה ‘to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south’ (Gen. 28.14), ביתה ‘into the house’ (Exod. 8.20), and הביתה ‘home’ (Exod. 9.19). It is true that some of these cases are proper names and, therefore, may be instances of the adverbial marker being absorbed into the name, as is the case in יתבתה Yetibta (Num. 33.33, 34), etc. It should also be noted that SP also includes a directional *he* in 13 words where it is absent in MT, such as in בית/ביתה ‘to the house’

1.3. The Middle Ages: Jewish Opinions

The 12th-century Rabbi Abraham ibn Ezra, who travelled widely, also knew something of the SP. In the introduction to his commentary on Esther, he wrote with regard to the absence of the divine name in the book: “And they (the Persians) were idolaters and would write, instead of the honourable and terrible name, the name of their abomination, as the Cutheans had done when replacing ‘In the beginning God created’ with ‘*Ašima* created’.”³

This passage shows that Ibn Ezra knew that the Samaritans avoided pronouncing the Tetragrammaton in their reading of the Pentateuch and instead read *šēmā*, the Aramaic equivalent to the Hebrew השם ‘the name’ used by Jews. Both communities used ‘the name’ as a substitute for uttering the ineffable divine name (Ben-Hayyim 1954, 147–54). Ibn Ezra tied this Samaritan practice to the verses: ‘But every nation still made gods of its own and put them in the shrines of the high places that the Samaritans had made, every nation in the cities in which they lived. The men of Babylon made Succoth-benoth, the men of Cuth made Nergal, the men of Hamath made Ashima’ (2 Kgs 17.29–30).

Other medieval Jews also mentioned the Samaritans, but not their version of the Pentateuch, e.g., Benjamin of Tudela, the 12th-century author of *The Travels of Benjamin*; Ishtori Haparchi, the 14th-century author of *Kaftor va-Ferach*; and Obadiah of Bertinoro (Bartenora) in the 15th century. Especially interesting is the statement made by Nachmanides in the 13th century in one of his letters:

(Gen. 43.18), and צפון/צפונה ‘the north’ (Exod. 38.11). A footnote has been provided in every instance in which the Masoretic Text (MT) and SP vary from one another in the use of the directional *he*.

³ Of course, Ibn Ezra was mistaken in his statement, since the Samaritans in fact read the first verse of Genesis exactly as it is read by Jews, pronouncing *ēluwwam* ‘God’, equivalent to MT אֱלֹהִים.

God has blessed me up to now that I have been granted the right to see Acre, and have found there in the hands of the elders of the land a silver coin engraved like the engravings of a signet. On one side there is a sort of almond branch and on the other a kind of phial and on both sides around clear writing is engraved. And the writing was shown to the Cutheans, who read it immediately, because it was written in the Hebrew script that remained current among the Cutheans, as related in Tractate Sanhedrin.⁴

The matter of the Samaritan script was discussed by Azariah dei Rossi, author of *Me'or 'Enayim* (first printed in Mantua, 1575). In this book, the author deals with many aspects of Judaism and Jewish studies, among these the Samaritan script. This book was the first in Hebrew printed with Samaritan letters. Dei Rossi even compared SP with the LXX, writing in the third section (*Imre Bina*) of the book, ch. 56:

We will begin by learning the shape of the letters, and not in our script, but in that which our sages called in the third chapter of Tractate Megillah (8b) and in the 2nd chapter of Tractate Sanhedrin (21b) 'Hebrew script', that is that of the people of 'Across the River', which was designated Libona'a script, and Rashi expounded as meaning "large letters like those used to write amulets and *mezuzas*, which is current among the Cutheans, who are the Samaritans." Maimonides, of blessed memory, too in his commentary on the 4th chapter of Tractate Yadayim wrote about it that it is used by the people called *Al-Samirah*, that is Shomron. And here is what I saw in the booklet *Beliefs from the Beautiful Land*, which he wrote in his own hand to Pethahiya Yada of Spoleto, teaching him also the Arabic language, and Rabbi Moses the Doctor, his son, showed it to me in the city of Ferrara and also according to what was shown to me later in the city of Mantua by the scholar Rabbi Samuel of Arley in the itinerary of the travels of the exalted Rabbi Moses of Bassola, of blessed memory, to the Holy Land and the innovations he saw written in the hand of the abovementioned exalted rabbi and before that what was shown me there in Mantua by the scholar Rabbi Reuben of Perugia in a text handed to him by a Christian scholar in the city of Bologna as he had discovered in an ancient and reliable book of theirs: the Samaritan alphabet, this is its shape... (dei Rossi, 1866, 449)

⁴ This section appears in most manuscripts and early printed editions as an addendum that Nachmanides added to his commentary on the Pentateuch after arriving in Palestine; see Kahana (1969). For further information on the subject, see Kirchheim (1851, 33ff).

1.4. The Samaritan Perspective

Conversely, Samaritan scholars accused Jews of possessing a false Torah. A medieval Samaritan composition written in Arabic entitled *The Book of Joshua* describes a debate held before Nebuchadnezzar, pitting Sanballat, representative of the Samaritans, and Zerubbabel, representative of the Jews, against one another. According to the narrative, Sanballat convinced the king that the Jews falsified their Torah in order to obscure the sanctity of Mount Gerizim (Juynboll 1848, ch. 45; the Latin translation appears on pp. 181–84).⁵

The Samaritans were very interested in comparing and contrasting the two versions of the Pentateuch and dealt with these matters frequently in their writings. They did not shy away from placing their version of the Pentateuch alongside the Jewish version, presented side by side,⁶ and even composed essays dealing with the differences between them and lists of changes as they understood them (Ben-Ḥayyim 1957, 57–64).

1.5. Early Christian Views

The Christian scholars of antiquity also knew the Samaritan Pentateuch and it is mentioned in Patristic literature. In the 2nd century, Origen mentions in the Hexapla the Samaritan additions to the Pentateuch (Num. 13.33; 21.11), designating them τὸ τῶν Σαμαρειτῶν Ἑβραϊκόν.⁷ In the 3rd to 4th centuries, Eusebius of Caesarea mentions the script in which the Samaritan version is written in his commentary (1 Chron. 16.7–11), lavishing it with praise for its great antiquity. He also mentions the difference between the Jewish and Samaritan versions of the Pentateuch with regard to the number of years that elapsed

⁵ Flavius Josephus provides the reverse story, in which he describes a disputation between Jews and Samaritans on the location of the holy place held before Ptolemy VI Philometor. According to Josephus, the disputation ended with a Jewish victory (*Antiquities of the Jews* 13.74–79).

⁶ An example of a comparison of this kind is provided by Gaster (1925, 136–37). It is a page copied for him from an ancient manuscript in Nablus, whose exact date is unknown. A number of pages of a similar manuscript are held in the Garrett Collection of the Princeton University Library.

⁷ As opposed to their Greek translation, which he terms τὸ Σαμαρειτῶν; see Pummer (1998, 358–69). In these places, as in many others, SP copies sections according to their order from Deut. 1.2 and 2.18 and adds them to the text in Numbers in order to complete the narrative as the editor saw fit (see below).

after Adam and Eve were expelled from the Garden of Eden and notes that SP is close to the *Vorlage* of the LXX.⁸ Jerome in the 4th century mentions the uniqueness of the script used to write SP.⁹ In the 4th to 5th centuries, Procopius of Gaza relates in his commentary to Deuteronomy that the Samaritans copied biblical passages and inserted them elsewhere in the Pentateuch.¹⁰

1.6. Later Christian Scholarship

Over time, SP was forgotten by Christian scholarship. It remained unmentioned in Christian writings until the 16th century, when it was rediscovered (de Robert 1988). During his short stay in the Ottoman capital, Guillaume Postel, an emissary of the French Embassy in Istanbul in 1536–1537, met a number of local Samaritans who showed him a manuscript of their Torah. They even sold him a grammatical work written in Arabic and a Samaritan translation of the Pentateuch into Arabic. He returned with these to Paris, where he published a book on the Samaritan script comparing it with the square script used by Jews. He also described the Samaritan sect, contrasting it with Rabbinic and Karaite Judaism. Postel wrote that the Samaritans venerated the Pentateuch alone and that their version had no vowels, which led them to read it “in an utterly corrupt manner” (Postel 1538, 20–24). In a letter he wrote to a friend while visiting Nablus in 1549, he mentioned a Torah scroll that he had seen there in a Samaritan synagogue. When he returned to Paris, he met with the famous orientalist Joseph Scaliger and discussed with

⁸ See citations in Pummer (2002, 19–98).

⁹ From the preface to his translation of the book of Kings: *Samaritani etiam Pentateuchum Moysis totidem literis scriptitant figuris tamen et apicibus discrepantes* ‘The Samaritans do indeed write the Pentateuch in the same number of letters, yet they differ in their shape and serifs’.

¹⁰ Such as the section concerning Mount Gerizim in Deut. 27.2–7 (MT: Mount Ebal), which was inserted in Exod. 20.14 in order to associate the mountain with the Ten Commandments and the giving of the Torah. See below and Migne (1865, 894–85).

him Samaritan religion. During this conversation, Scaliger (1583, 208) mentioned his intention to purchase a copy of SP and research it, but the plan never came to fruition.¹¹

Scaliger, however, did manage to interest his friend Achille de Harlay de Sancy, the French ambassador to Istanbul, in purchasing a copy of a Samaritan Torah. De Harlay de Sancy entrusted the Italian traveller Pietro della Valle with the task, and he purchased a manuscript in Damascus in 1616. Della Valle (1664, III:175–77) also purchased an Aramaic translation of the Pentateuch, which he kept for himself. When de Harlay de Sancy returned to Paris, he joined the Oratoire de Paris and donated the manuscript he had purchased to the scholarly institution. It was there that Jean Morin, a Protestant-raised Catholic convert from Blois, became acquainted with SP. Morin had been entrusted with typesetting a new edition of the LXX. In the introduction to this edition, which was published in 1628, he claimed that the LXX was superior to the MT (Morin 1628), and supported his claim with reference to SP, which, he wrote, was similar to it in many details. Later he was asked to prepare SP for publication as part of the Paris Polyglot Bible (1629–1645). He also borrowed Della Valle's Samaritan Aramaic translation of the Pentateuch and published it in 1632 in the Paris Polyglot.¹² While Morin was working on the publication of SP, he published articles with examples from it, in which he attacked MT, claiming SP was superior to it. Just as Morin had used the similarity between the LXX and SP to prove that the LXX was superior to MT, he now claimed that SP was superior to MT on the basis of its similarity to the LXX and SP's clarity and fluent style.¹³ Morin went so far as to accuse Jews of corrupting the Pentateuch and adding vowel signs that fixed a particular reading of the text, while in fact, he claimed, it was God's will that the text be

¹¹ In Scaliger's second edition (Leiden, 1598) he published a calendar he had received from Samaritans in Cairo and quoted Benjamin of Tudela's description of the traditions of the Samaritans he had met in Nablus. Scaliger criticised Benjamin's statement concerning the Samaritans' inability to pronounce gutturals, calling it *calomnie juive* 'Jewish slander' (621).

¹² Published by G. M. Le Jay. Both texts were later republished in the London Polyglot Bible, the *Biblia Sacra Polyglotta* edited by Brian Walton, which appeared several years later (1655–1657).

¹³ In *Exercitationes ecclesiasticae in utrumque Samaritanorum Pentateuchum* (1631), and more vigorously in the posthumous *Exercitationes biblicae de hebraei graecique textus sinceritat* (1660). The latter he gave the Hebrew title מסורת הברית.

plain, so that the public would adhere to the Church's pronouncements regarding the correct reading and, therefore, interpretation of the text.

What began as an innocent academic discussion on the virtue of the two versions became a bludgeon in the religious war raging in Europe at the time. The supporters of the Reformation advocated that only Scripture, not human authority, should decide matters of faith: *sola scriptura* 'by scripture alone' was their motto. They encouraged the study of the Bible in its original Hebrew in order to reach a full understanding of God's latent word in the text, rejecting papal exegesis, which constituted the exclusive authority for Catholics. The discovery of a new version of the Pentateuch served the supporters of Catholicism as a counterargument. If there was no single version of the Pentateuch on which all could agree, how could matters of faith be derived from Scripture alone? Clearly, they argued, what was required was authoritative interpretation of Scripture.

Morin's claims touting the superiority of SP over MT were immediately met with strong opposition among scholars of the day. Siméon de Muis, a professor at the Collège du Roi (later the Collège de France), came out with a strong attack against his claims.¹⁴ Other scholars followed in his wake, with the most widely circulated of these attacks levied by the Protestant scholar J. H. Hottinger (1644).

Particularly attractive was Morin's claim that the similarity of the Samaritan script to the ancient Canaanite script proved that SP was of greater antiquity. Among the similarities pointed out by Morin was the use of dots to separate words, which was reminiscent of the ancient Canaanite (Phoenician) inscriptions uncovered in Byblos, Tyre, and Sidon. Another aspect that the Samaritan script had in common with the script used in these ancient inscriptions was the lack of special final forms of letters, as opposed to the script used by Jews, in which the letters *kaf*, *mem*, *nun*, *pe*, and *ṣadi* all assumed a different form when placed at the end of a word. Not much was known during the 16th century about the distribution of these two scripts in the final centuries before the rise of Christianity. An interesting story on the change in script is recounted in the Babylonian Talmud:

¹⁴ *Assertio veritatis hebraicae*, which even received the Hebrew title אמרי אמת. The work enjoyed two editions, both in Paris, the first in 1631 and the second three years later.

Rav Chisda said Mar Ukva said “At first the Torah was given to Israel in Hebrew script (another version: tongue) and holy tongue. When the exiles returned in the days of Ezra it was given to them in Assyrian script and Aramaic tongue. Israel chose the Assyrian script and the holy tongue and left for the simple folk the Hebrew script and the Aramaic tongue.” Who are the simple folk? Rav Chisda said “the Cutheans.” What is Hebrew script? Rav Chisda said “Libona’a (i.e., Old Hebrew) script” (Sanhedrin 21b).

The Talmud declares that the so-called square ‘Assyrian’ script was chosen for the transmission of the Torah by a group that saw itself as superior to an inferior group, the Samaritans, who continued to use the ‘Hebrew’ script. This is a late legend, but it contains a kernel of truth—the Jews did in fact switch from the Palaeo-Hebrew script to the ‘square’ Hebrew script (more precisely, Jewish Aramaic script) used to this day. Modern research has found that this did not take place at any one point in history, but was rather a gradual process that extended over centuries, as the two scripts competed with one another. Joseph Naveh (1982, 112–24) has shown, based on inscriptions from the Persian and Hellenistic periods, that as time went by the Jewish Aramaic script won the upper hand, though the Palaeo-Hebrew script continued to be used even during Hasmonean times. It is possible that the Hasmonean kings preferred the latter in order to tie their rule to pre-exilic times and so lend it an air of antiquity and legitimacy. A similar process may be observed also among the Samaritans, though for different reasons. Yitzhak Magen’s excavations at Mount Gerizim have uncovered a plethora of inscriptions and ostraca from the Persian and Hellenistic periods, some of which were written using the Palaeo-Hebrew script, others the Jewish Aramaic script (Magen and Naveh 1997, 37–56; Magen, Tsfania, and Misgav 2001, 125–32; 2004). Since Jews frequently expressed their distaste for the Mount Gerizim cult, it is unlikely that the inscriptions discovered at the site written in the Jewish Aramaic script were left by them. Eventually the Samaritans settled on the Palaeo-Hebrew script, possibly to set themselves apart from the Jews. Thus, it should be said that the Samaritan use of Palaeo-Hebrew script is no proof of the greater antiquity of SP vs MT.

1.7. Wilhelm Gesenius and Modern Research

It was the German scholar Wilhelm Gesenius who put an end to the debate over the nature of SP and its relative antiquity vis-à-vis MT. In his *De Pentateuchi samaritani origine, indole et auctoritate, commentatio philologico-critica* (Halle: Rengerianae, 1815), Gesenius analysed the differences between the two and sorted them into eight categories (ibid., 46). This analysis led him to the conclusion that SP is based on a popular version of the Pentateuch, which was embellished and adapted to meet the needs and beliefs of the Samaritans.¹⁵ According to his assessment, the result of this activity was a text in which difficult words and phrases were removed, grammatical mistakes corrected, and special concerns of the community inserted. Gesenius's work put the study of SP on unbiased, critical, philological grounds despite errors that resulted from the limited knowledge of SP in the early 19th century and complete unawareness of the biblical texts from Qumran, which would not be discovered until the mid-20th century.

Though Gesenius's contribution to the study of SP is universally acknowledged, there have nonetheless been a few critics who have challenged his findings, i.e., that SP was secondary to MT. One of the most prominent of these was Abraham Geiger. Geiger accepted a great deal of Gesenius's findings and admitted that many changes were made to the text, but rejected Gesenius's conclusion regarding the historical status of SP. Based on similarities shared by SP and the LXX as well as a number of comments found in Talmudic literature, Geiger concluded that SP was of great antiquity and in some cases older than MT. He also claimed that it was for a time in general circulation.¹⁶

About a century after Gesenius published his study, Paul Kahle returned to the subject and quickly came to the conclusion that the extant versions, MT and SP, developed out of two versions of the Pentateuch, both of which had circulated in antiquity. One of

¹⁵ This version was in his opinion also the *Vorlage* of the LXX, which he termed the *recensio alexandrino-samaritana*. In this he was preceded by many scholars who had noted the similarity between SP and LXX, e.g., Johann M. Hassencamp (1765), who presented some two thousand examples of similarities between SP and the LXX as compared to MT. See also the end of n. 17 below.

¹⁶ The theory was presented and justified in a chapter devoted to the matter in a posthumous collection of his essays in Geiger (1876, III:255–67); see also Geiger (1857, 99–100).

these, MT, learned in character, was polished and carefully edited, and preserved a great number of archaisms and obscure forms. The other was the version of the Pentateuch adopted by the Samaritans. This second version preserved some ancient textual versions similar to the *Vorlage* of the LXX, the book of Jubilees, the book of Enoch, and the biblical quotes found in the New Testament, though at the same time it was simpler than the version that gave rise to MT. Yet, it is clearer than MT because of intentional changes and additions. These, Kahle asserted, made SP a *Vulgärtext*, a popular edition. Besides the ideological changes made to it by the Samaritans, the text seems to be a popular simplification of an ancient religious text. This is especially apparent in its “less complex” grammar and its vocabulary, both of which exhibit a distancing from infrequent and rare phenomena (Kahle 1915, 339–439; reprinted in Kahle 1956, 3–37). This theory aroused considerable opposition, but did manage to convince many (known as the ‘Kahle school’).

The discovery of sections from the Pentateuch among the Dead Sea Scrolls led scholars to re-examine SP. Frank M. Cross came to the conclusion that three “local” versions of the Pentateuch circulated contemporaneously: (1) the LXX, which represented a type that developed in Egypt; (2) the Samaritan version, which represented the Palestinian Pentateuchal tradition; and (3) MT, which developed in Babylonia.¹⁷ Bruce K. Waltke also tended towards identifying three types of Pentateuchal texts, like Cross before him, but tried to be more precise: “The Samaritan version underwent modernization of the text, replacing archaic Hebrew forms and constructions with the forms and constructions of a

¹⁷ In a number of publications, such as Cross (1964). To date, no solid evidence confirming the notion that MT is derived from a ‘Babylonian version’ has been put forth. Kyung-Rae Kim (1994, 2–12) has criticised the methods scholars have used in comparing SP and the LXX. He shows that the number of supposed similarities between the two versions, numbering some two thousand throughout the Pentateuch, is highly exaggerated and includes details that have nothing to do with the versions themselves, but rather reflect similar interpretations stemming from beliefs and opinions that were common in later periods. According to Kim’s count, there are fewer than a thousand similarities between SP and the LXX as compared with MT. Of these, only half actually reflect a different version of the Pentateuch. Most result from harmonisation that does not necessarily indicate a common *Urtext*, but could rather have come about separately as a result of the work of different editors in each tradition.

later period” (Waltke 1970, 212–39; see further below). The theory of modernisation explained why the Samaritans did not compose Aramaic translations of the Pentateuch in the first centuries of the Common Era, as had Jews. The Samaritans did not require a translation, since their version of the Pentateuch was adapted to the language of their time and they could thus understand it without the aid of translation. The Jews, on the other hand, continued to use the same ancient version of the Pentateuch handed down to them from bygone generations with its elevated language, archaisms, and antiquated grammar, which was no longer in use during the Second Temple period. Since updating the text was out of the question due to its sanctity, Aramaic translations were made to bridge the gap between the ancient language and the language of the period in which they lived (Tal 2001).

Indeed, a number of biblical fragments discovered at Qumran bear similarities to the text of SP. One of them, a fragment containing Exod. 32, was even written in the Palaeo-Hebrew script and drew much attention. P. W. Skehan, the first to publish the fragment, went so far as to call it “Exodus in the Samaritan Recension,” despite admitting that it had no obvious Samaritan features (Skehan 1955). This fragment, like others, is textually similar to SP, containing a text that is absent in MT. Most striking is the appearance of insertions from other sections of the Pentateuch that serve to clarify, complement, or harmonise the text—insertions of the kind that are common in SP. The scribe of this fragment inserted after Exod. 32.10 a section from Deut. 9.20. In MT we find “and I may consume them, in order that I may make a great nation of you” (ESV), while SP reads “and I may consume them, and I will make of you a great nation. And Shema was very angry with Ārron wanting to destroy him, and Mushi prayed for Ārron.” The pericope from Qumran reads: “[and I may consume them, and will make] of y[ou] a great nation. [And YH]WH [was] very [angry with Aaron] wanting to destroy him, and Moses [p]rayed for Aa[ron].”

While the similarity of this Qumranic pericope to SP cannot be denied, it does not—and neither do any other biblical sections found in Qumran—contain any signs of Samaritan religious precepts as exemplified in SP. For this reason, researchers of the Dead Sea Scrolls have generally avoided calling the texts ‘Samaritan’, preferring the more neutral term ‘pre-Samaritan’, i.e., “texts with striking similarity with the Samaritan version. The ancient texts are not Samaritan, since they are devoid of Samaritan markers” (Tov 1991, 144).¹⁸ Some researchers have opted to designate them “texts that underwent harmonistic

¹⁸ Tov opposes Baillet’s (1971) radical theory that the fragments do in fact contain a Samaritan version. A subsequent monograph published on the subject was Sanderson (1986). For literature, see Tov (1991). Z. Ben-Ḥayyim (1992a) rejected the attribution of these fragments to the Samaritan tradition. Esther and Hanan Eshel (2002) raised the subject of the harmonising character of certain biblical pericopes found at Qumran and saw in them the beginning of the process by which SP developed. They believed that a text of this kind was adopted by the Samaritans and underwent editing in their temple at Mount Gerizim before it was destroyed by the Hasmonean John Hyrcanus I in the 2nd century BCE (see the following note). Despite the fact that the epigraphic evidence that they present is very weak, since it is based on their own restoration of the text, it is not out of the question to suppose that the development of a Samaritan Pentateuch began during this period. On the other hand, the manuscript evidence shows that the process ended at a much later period. It is unlikely that SP with all its salient features crystallised before the Middle Ages. The matter is discussed in §3.0 below.

A salient phenomenon common to the SP and the ‘Proto-Samaritan’ versions is the spelling of Mount Gerizim as a single word. Thus, for example, *hargriz[im]* in a fragment discovered at Masada (Talmon 1997). The spelling of the mountain’s name as a single word is apparently a very ancient practice among Samaritans, as attested by the 2nd- or 3rd-century CE writings discovered in the (Samaritan?) synagogue on the island of Delos (Bruneau 1982). These inscriptions were set up in the synagogue by “The Israelites who give offerings to the Temple at Argarizin.” It should be noted also that the spelling בהרגריזים is reflected in one of the manuscripts of the LXX, which renders the mountain’s name as a single word: ἀργαριζίμ; however, scholars doubt whether it reflects the LXX or the Samaritan Greek translation of the Pentateuch, known as the Samareitikon, which, as mentioned above, Origen quoted from in the Hexapla, calling it τὸ Σαμαρειτικόν (see fn. 7 above). The same spelling as a single word may also be found in one manuscript of the Vetus Latina, which is based on the LXX. The matter was discussed in McCarthy (2007, 122*–23*). On the character of these sources, see Schenker (2008). A name with a similar spelling is found in the New Testament:

editing” that are the precursor of the text that the Samaritans adopted for their Pentateuch (Eshel and Eshel 2002; Talshir 2009, 122–26).

2.0. The Character of the Samaritan Pentateuch

2.1. Variants between the Samaritan and Tiberian Pentateuchs:

Estimated Number and Classification

Scholars have studied the differences between SP and MT, but have differed in their presentation of the variants. The most recent study by Emanuel Tov claims 7,000 variants (Tov 2012, 79, fn. 126). This number, however, includes many spelling variations which vary in the different manuscripts of SP. Furthermore, they are usually presented without describing their nature. After examining every word in the text (and, when required, comparing multiple SP manuscripts) and analysing their pronunciation according to the Samaritan oral tradition and their translations in Aramaic and Arabic, we have come up with 4,200 variants vis-à-vis MT that we consider to be ‘substantial’, i.e., differences in the text that affect its content and structure, and not merely orthographic and grammatical variations that have little or no effect on the meaning of the text (on the distinction between these two types of differences, see §2.2 below). We counted 1,300 instances of the latter, the ‘non-substantial’ differences. All of the variants, substantial and non-substantial, are analysed in footnotes (see §§4.3.2.2–3). To these two numbers must be added

Ἀρμαγεδών (Rev. 16.16). In the manuscript that we have used as the basis for the Hebrew text of SP, we find two instances of the unusual spelling of Mount Gerizim as two separate words with a dot between them: (1) in Exod. 20.14 at the end of the Ten Commandments, a pericope copied from Deut. 27.4—yet in Deuteronomy the word is spelled as usual as a single word; and (2) in Deut. 11.29 the name of the holy site is also spelled as two words separated by a dot: “you shall set the blessing on Ar garizem (על הר גריזים).” However, when the same blessing is mentioned a second time, the mountain’s name is spelled as a single word: “These shall stand to bless the people on [Mount] Ārgarizem (הרגריזים)” (Deut. 27.12). Most SP manuscripts spell the name the same in all its occurrences, with most of them presenting it as a single word and only a minority of them separating it into two words, as in MT.