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A New Join of Two Fragments of 4QcryptA Serekh haEdah and Its Implications

Asaf Gayer

University of Haifa

asafgayer@gmail.com

Daniel Stökl Ben Ezra

École Pratique des Hautes Études (EPHE), Paris, UMR 8167 Orient
et Méditerranée

daniel.stoekl@ephe.sorbonne.fr

Jonathan Ben-Dov

University of Haifa

jonbendov@gmail.com

Abstract

Two cryptic A fragments of Serekh haEdah from cave 4 are hereby physically joined, and a third one constitutes a distant join. The composite text parallels 1QSa 1: 8–12 albeit with significant variants. The join is proven here in terms of the continuity of papyrus fibers and partial letters, as well as by the coherent composite text. The join requires separating a fragment that had been assembled by Milik. Substantially, although the joined fragments had been assigned in DJD 36 to different copies, they evidently constitute one and the same fragment. This join thus calls into question the classification of 8–9 different copies of the Serekh in cryptic script.

Keywords

Serekh haEdah – 1QSa – Cryptic script – Material reconstruction – Papyrus

The present article is part of a larger project on the cryptic texts from cave 4, presenting an intermediate result with interesting implications for

future work.¹ Work on the cryptic texts takes into account the achievements of previous research: the decipherment of the script and initial classification of the copies by J. T. Milik,² and especially the major editing work achieved by S. Pfann during the 1990s.³ We shall concentrate here on the papyrus scrolls bearing cryptic A script, and more specifically on those fragments which constitute a copy or copies of Serekh haEdah.

About 200 fragments are extant from the poorly preserved cryptic papyri. The basic distinction in this inventory is between 4Q249 and 4Q250, with the fragments of the latter written on the verso side of the papyrus, i.e. on vertical fibers. The fragments written on the recto, i.e. on horizontal fibers, contain more than one composition, and probably also more than one scroll. Pfann has divided these fragments into various scrolls: apart from 4Q249 'Midrash Sepher Moshe' he has identified and named the distinct scrolls 4Q249a–z.⁴ Of this roster of scrolls, he identified the fragment groups 4Q249a–h as copies of Serekh haEdah, in addition to a ninth group which he called '4Q249i Serekh ha-Edah?'. This literary text is otherwise only known from a single copy, 1QSa.⁵ Altogether he identified 23 fragments of Serekh haEdah and assigned

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- 1 The study is supported by the Israel Science Foundation, Grant no. 1330/14. The authors would like to thank the staff of the IAA Dead Sea Scrolls Laboratory for their outstanding help and support through all stages of the study. All photos are courtesy of the Leon Levy Dead Sea Scrolls Digital Library; Photographer: Shay Halevi. The Cryptic A font was designed by Nir Yenni, based on an earlier design by Kris J. Udd. The Authors wish to thank Kris Udd for his kind assistance.
 - 2 Milik never published his work on the cryptic papyri, except for short remarks on 'Midrash Sepher Moshe'. The outcomes of his work on that text can be found on PAM 43.408. The rest of the 4Q249 and 4Q250 fragments were arranged by Milik according to material and paleographical considerations, with several implied connections between fragments. Milik's final ideas for 4Q249 are preserved on PAM photographs 43.409–43.412, and those for 4Q250 are preserved on PAM 43.413. Milik's classification of the various scrolls is indicated in his own hand writing at the bottom of each PAM photo.
 - 3 Stephen J. Pfann, "The Character of the Early Essene Movement in the Light of the Manuscripts Written in Esoteric Script from Qumran" (PhD Diss., The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 2001); idem, "4Q249 Midrash Sepher Moshe," in *Qumran Cave 4 XXV. Halakhic Texts* (ed. J. Baumgarten et al.; DJD 35; Oxford: Clarendon, 1999), 1–24; idem, "Cryptic Texts," in *Qumran Cave 4 XXVI: Cryptic Texts and Miscellanea, Part 1* (ed. S. J. Pfann et al.; DJD 36; Oxford: Clarendon, 2000), 515–702.
 - 4 For 4Q249a–z and 4Q250 see Pfann, DJD 36, 515–696.
 - 5 Dominique Barthélemy, "Règle de la Congrégation," in *Qumran Cave I* (ed. D. Barthélemy and J. T. Milik; DJD 1; Oxford: Clarendon, 1953), 108–118.

them to 8–9 copies.⁶ We shall not deal here with Pfann's method of identifying literary texts in the papyri remains, which we basically accept.⁷ We will take issue, however, with his mode of assigning the fragments into discrete copies: nine copies of Serekh haEdah, and as much as 36 or even more discrete papyrus scrolls written in cryptic A script.⁸

This study presents new readings as well as a new configuration and join of two fragments, which were assigned by Pfann to two distinct copies of Serekh haEdah (Henceforth, SE): 4Q249e 2 and 4Q249a 1. The former (249e 2) comprises two pieces assembled by Milik. We contest that join, and shall therefore designate these two pieces 4Q249e 2a (for the large right part) and 4Q249e 2b (for the small left part). The study will show that 4Q249a 1 and 4Q249e 2a can be joined into a single fragment with actual reconstructable physical joins at the contact points. Furthermore, the separate piece 4Q249e 2b should be located on the same column to the right to the join. It constitutes a distant join. Further to the right stands the fragment 4Q249e 3. This constellation preserves a total of ten lines of SE. This join and others like it shed doubt on Pfann's multiple divisions of papyrus fragments and opens the way for a reconstruction of 4QCryptA SE using a more moderate approach. Our working hypothesis is that the fragments represent a single cryptic copy of SE from cave 4.⁹

For the present edition we made use of the new multispectral images supplied by the Leon Levy Dead Sea Scrolls Digital Library, in addition to checking

6 Twenty-one of these fragments were identified based on their contents, while two additional fragments (4Q249a 2, 4Q249i 2) were added based on material resemblance. See Pfann, DJD 36, 549.

7 See Pfann, Dissertation, Appendix D, 213–225.

8 Pfann claims for a unique diversity among the 180 or so miscellaneous fragments assigned to 4Q249z, claiming that “a rather large number of manuscripts are represented on these plates.” He claims that the total number of cryptic A papyrus manuscripts exceeds the 36 manuscripts recorded in DJD 35–36, and may reach up to 100 manuscripts; see Stephen J. Pfann, “Historical Implications of the Early Second Century Dating of the 4Q249–250 Cryptic A Corpus,” in *Things Revealed: Studies in Early Jewish and Christian Literature in Honor of Michael E. Stone* (eds. E. G. Chazon, D. Satran, R. A. Clements, and J. J. Collins; JSJSup 89; Leiden: Brill, 2004), 171–186, 171; idem, DJD 36, 517. The radical division of discrete scrolls in DJD was received with some suspicion, and no scholar has endorsed it yet. See for example the prudent review by Charlotte Hempel, “Review: Stephen J. Pfann et al., eds., *Qumran Cave 4. XXVI: Cryptic Texts and Miscellanea*, Part I,” *JSS* 49/1 (2004): 161–163.

9 A more detailed elucidation of our methodology for identifying fragments of SE will be presented in a separate study. The present note focuses on the reading and reconstruction of the pertinent fragments only. The complete edition will also offer new numbers for the fragments according to the new reconstruction. In the present note, however, we follow the numbering in DJD.

the older PAM photographs—which captured the fragments at an earlier stage of their deterioration.

Over the years, some parts of the papyri fragments moved slightly from their original place, and thus the papyrus fibers are occasionally not as directly aligned as they were originally. In these cases, the original configuration is hard to restore on the actual plate but it is possible to produce corrected images of the fragments using image manipulation software. We have cautiously carried out and documented these manipulations in order to produce a ‘corrected’ fragment. These corrections yield important results for specific readings, and enable a new outlook on possible joins. The corrections are reported below.

The fragments 4Q249a 1 and 4Q249e 2 were edited and published in DJD 36 as belonging to separate copies of Serekh haEdah.¹⁰ The grounds for this specific division were not indicated, although Pfann has declared his general policy in this regard in the introduction to the DJD edition, based on a variety of material considerations.¹¹ In contrast, we think that these two fragments can be joined on both material and textual grounds. The joint fragment shows full continuity and flow, specifically with regard to the individual papyrus fibers on the verso, as shown in detail below (fig. 3). In addition, the composite text flows smoothly in a reconstructed column at the beginning of SE.

4Q249a 1 (fig. 1)

Mus. Inv. 598, fragment 1.

PAM 40.633, 41.990, 43.410. B-478544



FIGURE 1

4Q249a 1.

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ANTIQUITIES AUTHORITY;
PHOTOGRAPHER: SHAY HALEVI

¹⁰ Pfann, DJD 36, 547–48; 556–57.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 516–17.

The fragment 4Q249a 1 is 3.25 cm in width and 3.4 cm high. It preserves remains of six lines of text, which parallel the text of 1QSa 1: 4–7. A crack is running across the middle of the fragment from top to bottom, forming a significant lacuna at the center of lines 4 (1.08cm wide) and 5 (0.95cm wide). The lacuna would have contained 1–2 letters in each line.

The image presented here contains corrections (executed using GIMP software) effected on the IAA image. The corrections took place in the lower left square-like part of the fragment. The fibers at the left and right parts of the fragment are not exactly parallel, as the right-hand side is slightly pulled upwards. This is a result of the diagonal crack at the bottom left, which is larger than it had originally been. We have digitally copied the bottom right part of this ‘square’ and rotated it ca 10° clockwise. As a result, the right-hand side of the ‘square’ is now aligned with the papyrus fragments on its left.

4Q249e 2 (fig. 2)

Mus. Inv. 598, fragment 8.

PAM 40.633, 41.990, 43.410. B-482577



FIGURE 2
4Q249e 2.
COURTESY OF THE LEON LEVI
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SHAY HALEVI

IAA plate 598 displays fragment 4Q249e 2 as a join of two smaller pieces, with the line of contact running vertically at the left third of the fragment. The pieces can be seen separately in PAM 40.633 (right part), 40.974 (left part) and 41.990 (both right and left parts separately). Milik joined the two pieces for the first time on PAM 43.410 (taken April 1960). The fact that both pieces preserve interlinear writing has prompted this join.

However, close scrutiny of the line of contact between the two pieces refutes the join. The horizontal fibers do not match across the join, as can be seen in an enlarged image. The fiber direction suddenly changes. This inconsistency results also in a change of angle of the written lines. Furthermore, what seems like letters spread across the two pieces is in fact misleading. Take, for example, the horizontal stroke of the large *nun* (𐤅) at the center of the left fragment. Although this stroke seems to continue on the right fragment, a closer look reveals that the two horizontal strokes cannot be aligned. The right hand stroke is not at the same height as the *nun*, and slightly thinner. We have found that Pfann's reading of the composite fragment does not correspond with the actual preserved marks, possibly due to the wish to fit the fragment into his composite text of SE according to 4Q249e.¹² We therefore consider each of the pieces separately in the detailed discussion below.

4Q249e 2a (right part of 4Q249e 2. fig. 3)

Mus. Inv. 598, fragment 8.

PAM 40.633, 41.990, 43.410. B-482577¹³



FIGURE 3

4Q249e 2a (right part of 4Q249e 2).

- 12 For example, Pfann disregards the very clear *nun* (𐤅) at the center of the left piece. In line 5a of the fragment Pfann reads 𐤇]𐤁𐤍, a most problematic reading. No trace of *lamed* (𐤌) appears on the fragment, and the other letters are ambiguous. The word 𐤏𐤇 does not exist in the parallel lines of 1QSa, having been explained (DJD 36, 559) as an addition in order to modify the term 𐤏𐤇𐤏𐤇.
- 13 The image represented here is a slightly improved version of the original IAA image, using computer image manipulation. See below for a detailed report on the changes that have been applied.



FIGURE 4 Recto and verso of the composite fragment. The blue dotted line between lines 4–6 indicates the dividing line between the fragments.

Transcription

*Outlined letters indicate scant remains of a letter which can no longer be identified. These letters are read here according to the suggested reconstruction of SE.

]צ[←]ת[	ש[י]מ[	1
]טצטפ ת[	ית ולהב[	2
]פ vacat צט[	]י vacat יהם[	3
]פזט{○}ס[	]ל{○}הזר[	4
]פצפ[	]והו בס[	5
]←פפ[	]בחוקי[	6
]○ תז[	]ר שנה[	7a
]ד רפצ[	]מ ובנ ע[	7
]פצפ[	]ורל בתו[	8
]פצמס[	]ל אשה ל[	9a
]פמ[	]ש ועש[	9
]פ[	]ת[	10

Notes on Readings

Line 1. Remains of the top right angle of *šin* (𐤑) can be seen before the lacuna. The ink marks after the lacuna show the bottom part of both arms of *mem* (𐤌) or a *qof* (𐤑). The former is preferable because the two arms do not reach each other.

Line 2. The edge of the spike of the first letter precedes *taw* (𐤕) to the right. This sign conforms with the shape of quite a few letters, among which is *yod* (𐤊), preferred here on the basis of the reconstruction of SE. At the end of the line following *he* (𐤅), remnants of a top round edge of a letter and a spot of ink at the bottom of the line can only fit a *bet* (𐤁).

Line 3. The right edge of *yod* (𐤊) can be seen preceding *he* (𐤅) at the beginning of the line. Note that the possessive suffix is spelled in the short form 𐤇𐤇 rather than 𐤇𐤇𐤅. This fact will be used for the reconstruction below. The top diagonal stroke after the *vacat* indicates a *waw* (𐤅). *Vacat* length: 1.1 cm.

Line 4. This line is particularly difficult to read. The only extant part of the *lamed* (𐤌) is the left end of a bottom diagonal stroke. After the *lamed* (𐤌) one can see erasure signs or a faded letter: either the text of an original layer from previous use (palimpsest) or an erased letter from the text of SE. A number of other fragments of 4QcryptA SE also show traces of the erasure of several letters.¹⁵ The only letter in this line that seems relatively clear is *zayin* (𐤆) to the left of the central lacuna. If this reading is correct, this *zayin* is the only exemplar of that letter on any cryptic A papyrus.¹⁶ Note the resemblance of this letter to the formal *zayin* on a parchment scroll in Cryptic A, 4Q298 1–2 i 1.

Line 5. The two fragments joined together yield a clear reading of all letters. Of the *samekh* (𐤓) only the right part is extant but the reading is unequivocal.

Line 6. The letters coalesce with the smaller letters of the interlinear insertion below them and with the letters of line 5. Of the *bet* (𐤁) only the left curl remains. The ink remnants could also correspond to *het* (𐤅), *tet* (𐤕), *kaf* (𐤌) or *reš* (𐤕) but the placement of the fragment in SE identifies the letter. The right side of *qof* (𐤑) is discerned on the joining line with the upper part

15 See Jonathan Ben-Dov and Daniel Stökl Ben Ezra "4Q249 Midrash Moshe: A New Reading and Some Implications," *DSD* 21 (2014): 131–49.

16 The reading of *zayin* in 4Q249e1 i 1 (DJD 36, 555) is doubtful, as we hope to prove in the edition of that fragment.

of the fragment. The *yod* (↵) is slightly irregular, as the left-hand side of the horizontal stroke is pulled downwards.

Line 7a.¹⁷ This is an interlinear correction and thus difficult to read. Before the clear *šin* (𐤑) one can spot a stroke underneath the horizontal roof of *het* (𐤇) from line 6. This sign seems to indicate the digit 10 (↷), in the shape known from elsewhere at Qumran.¹⁸ Further to the right at the edge of the fragment, the dot below the adhesive tape is not a trace of ink, as verified under IR-microscopy. The letter after *šin* (𐤑), of which only a right angle survived, can either be a *nun* (𐤍) or a *taw* (𐤐) with a preference for the former since an oblique line may be seen forming a triangle with the strokes of *šin*; that line either belongs to the interlinear addition or protrudes from the line above. Pfann reads *reš* (𐤓), but no trace of the left loop can be seen here.

The third letter is almost certainly a *he* (𐤅). The remaining traces are a long horizontal stroke and a short vertical line in its center. The downstroke is not connected to the horizontal line, probably due to a protruding fiber. Both strokes together form a probable *he* (𐤅). A very slim downstroke between the right end of a horizontal stroke from the line above and the left end of the horizontal stroke from the interlinear addition might seem like *yod* (↵). However, this very small hook could also have been caused by the scribe's movement when he finished the *yod* in the main text line.

After an empty space, at the edge of the fragment, another sign can be seen beginning the next word. Although the reconstruction requires *yod* (↵), the sign preserves something like the right angle of *šin* (𐤑) or *het* (𐤇). It may be that the interlinear addition did not supply a full quotation of the missing text (see below).

Line 7. Once again letters coalesce with those of the interlinear insertion. The *mem* (𐤌) is incomplete but clear. *Ayin* (𐤀) is clear on PAM 40.633.

Line 8. Of the first *waw* (𐤅) only the lower end of the downstroke survived, in what seems at first glance a letter in the interlinear addition below. Of the last *waw* (𐤅) only the right end of the oblique top line remains.

17 The interlinear writing was identified by Pfann (DJD 36, 558–59). The significance of the interlinear writing and its implications for the literary development of SE will be discussed in a separate publication.

18 This sign looks angular rather than round. Angular shapes of the digits 10 and 20 can be seen for example in 4Q554 New Jerusalem^a ar.

Line 9a. All letters of this interlinear addition are clear. There does not seem to be a space between the *lamed* (𐤌) and the *alef* (𐤀). *Alef* is not in its usual shape but rather inverted, with the loop at the top and the two arms protruding right and left. Such a shape appears also in line 3a of frag. 249e 2b (below).

Line 10. Remnants of a horizontal stroke can be seen right below the interword space in the preceding line. It may correspond to the top line of *tav* (𐤕), consistent with the text of 1QSa.

4Q249e 2b (left part of 4Q249e 2, fig. 5)

Mus. Inv. 598, fragment no. 8

PAM 40.974, 41.990, 43.410. B-482577



FIGURE 5
4Q249e 2b (left part of 4Q249e 2).

Fragment 4Q249e 2b is 1.17 cm wide and 1.96 cm high. It preserves remnants of four lines of text plus a single interlinear line above line 3. Each of the lines contains between one to two fragmentary letters. This fragment, still independent on PAM 40.974 and 41.990, was mistakenly joined by Milik to the left of 4Q249e 2, as explained above. Milik recognized the interlinear writing and assumed the fragment should be joined with the other piece of 4Q249e 2.

Reading this fragment alone does not reveal much about its content and does not indicate whether it preserves parts of SE or not. However, once the reading of the composite fragment (4Q249a 1+ 4Q249e 2a) was determined and a reconstruction of that column of 4QcryptA SE text was made possible, it turns out that the letters on the little piece 4Q249e 2b fit perfectly in this reconstruction. We first present a separate reading of this fragment, followed by a reconstruction of all fragments belonging to this reconstructed column.

4Q249e 2b—Transcription

	]◦[	]◦[	1
	]𐤁𐤏[	]𐤏[	2
]𐤁𐤏𐤏[	]𐤏[	]𐤏[	3a
	]𐤏[	]𐤏[	3
]𐤏[	]𐤏[	]𐤏[	4

Notes on Readings

Line 3a. A tiny remnant of the bottom diagonal stroke of the *lamed* (𐤏) can be spotted in PAMS 40.974 and 41.990. This spot is hidden behind the miscalculated join in later PAM and IAA photos. Subsequently, *alef* (𐤁) is rather clear although somewhat skewed due to the cursory interlinear writing. The space between *alef* (𐤁) and *yod* (𐤏) is narrow for the average gap between words, possibly due to the squeezed interlinear mode of writing. The right vertical stroke on the edge of the fragment indicates a *gimel* (𐤂) or *het* (𐤅).

Line 4. The triangular shape with an edge of a vertical stroke crossing it on its left indicate a *taw* (𐤐). It is preceded by faint remains of a vertical downstroke on the right side. The context suggests *waw* (𐤅).

A Reconstructed Column of Serekh haEdah

4Q249e 2b stands to the right of the composite larger fragment. Further to the right one may add the fragment 4Q249e 3, which was placed there already by Pfann.¹⁹ Together these three fragments form a coherent column, which we reconstruct below. For 4Q249e 3²⁰ we endorse Pfann's reading, adding to it an uncertain letter, perhaps a *he* (𐤅), probably in a fourth line at the bottom. This letter can only be observed on the old photo PAM 41.990. It consists of a stroke of the width of a *qof* (𐤑) or *waw* (𐤅) in the direction of the fibers on an almost disjointed piece of about two papyrus fibers below the *yod* (𐤏). The exact place of this piece is hard to establish, as the fibers of this fragment are slightly oblique about 10° descending to the right.

19 DJD 36, 557–58.

20 Mus. Inv. 598, frg. 12; PAM 41.990, 43.410. B-482593.



FIGURE 6
4Q249e 3.
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AUTHORITY; PHOTOGRAPHER: SHAY HALEVI

In addition, there is a long oblique stroke between lines 1 and 2 touching the right upper corner of *qof* (פ). It is too long to belong to the *taw* (ת) that presumably stood before *qof* (פ) in line 2. It is therefore not improbable to see here the remains of a letter belonging to yet another interlinear addition, possibly part of the same interlinear line as in the other fragments.²¹

The reading of this fragment is thus:

]וֹדִים[	1
]ו[	2a
ת[קוד]ש	2
]יס[	3
]ו[	4

The reconstructed text of lines 8–11 of the composite fragment runs as follows (parallel 1QSa 1: 8–13):

[שנה יעבור על הפק]וֹדִים[לב]וא [בג]ורל בתו[ד]	8
]ו[ו]לא יג[ש] ל אשה ל[דעתה]	9a
[משפחתו ליחד בעד]ת קוד[ש וב]ו [חמ]ש ועש[רים]	9
[שנה יבוא להתיצב ב]יס[וד]וּת[עד]ת[הקודש]	10
[לעבוד את עבודת העד]ה[ובן שלושים שנה]	11

21 The exact reading of this letter is hard to determine. The horizontal stroke pulling downwards fits a *lamed* (ל) best, but can also be *dalet* (ד) or *aleph* (א). At the moment we do not offer a reconstruction for that possible word.

The surviving text on 4Q249e fragments 2b and 3 fits with these lines. The extant letters of lines 8, 9 and 10 are located quite neatly one above the other in the reconstruction, and even the interlinear line 9a aligns with line 9a of the composite fragment to its left. It might be that the interlinear insertion started even further to the right as it seems to be attested on the right hand fragment 3.

We offer below (fig. 7) a reconstruction of a block of continuous text in cryptA font. However, it should be remembered that no computer reconstruction can fit the idiosyncrasies of a given human hand, and thus some irregular spaces sporadically appear.

One correction of earlier editions of 1QSa enables a smooth flow of the interlinear line. According to 1QSa 1: 9–10, the text of line 9a should be *ולא יקרבו אל אשה לדעתה*.²² The word *יקרב* is located at the end of line 9 of 1QSa 1. In that line the *yod* is visible but the rest of the word is reconstructed, following the biblical idiom *אל אשה קרב* (cf. Lev 18:6, 14, 18; 20:16; Prov 5:8) denoting a sexual act.²³ Although this reconstruction was widely accepted, fragment 4Q249e 2b might indicate otherwise. As noted above ('Notes on Readings') the vertical stroke following *yod* (𐤎) at the end of line 3a of 4Q249e 2b can indicate only either *gimel* (𐤂) or *het* (𐤅). *Qof* (𐤑) is impossible since the ink remnants do not show any sign to the right of the vertical line. We suggest that line 9a of the joint fragment, should read: *[ו]לֹא יִגְשׁוּ [ש] לְאִשָּׁה לְדַעְתָּהּ* (cf. the same verb *נגש* in the immediately subsequent line). The parallel text in 1QSa 1 should be corrected accordingly. The verb *יגש* follows the usage in Exod 19:15 and is based on the extant *gimel* (𐤂) in the cryptic copy. The sexual connotation of the root *ngš* is also documented twice in CD (CD 8: 7, 19: 19): *ויגשו לזימה*, and is therefore not unexpected here. Resolving the issue of line 3a allows the integration of fragment 4Q249e 2b into the reconstructed column of SE text.

22 For the reconstruction, see Barthélemy, DJD 1, 113. Qimron endorses the same reading: Elisha Qimron, *The Dead Sea Scrolls—The Hebrew Writings* (Jerusalem: Yad Ben-Zvi, 2010), 1:235.

23 For the sexual connotation of *qrb* see Roy E. Gane and Jacob Milgrom, "קרבו qarab", *TDOT* XIII:138.

Full Reconstruction

- 1 [יקהילו את כול הבאים מטף עד נ]שׁ[י]ם[וקראו]
- 2 [באוזניהם את כול חוקי הבר]ת ולה[בינם]
- 3 [בכול משפטיהם פן ישגו במשגות]יהם vacat ו[זה]
- 4 [הסרד לכול צבאות העדה לכו]ל {ה}הזר[ח]
- 5 [בישראל ומן נעוריו ילמד]והו²⁴בס[פר]
- 6 [ההגי וכפי יומיו ישכיליהו]בחוקי[הברית]
- 7א ר שנה²⁵ו [בוא בטפ]
- 7 [ולפי שכלו ליסרו במשפטיה]ם²⁵ובן ע[שרים]
- 8 [שנה יעבור על הפק]ודים[לב]זא [בג]ורל בת[ד]
- 9א []ו לא יג[ש] ל אשה ל[דעתה]
- 9 [משפחתו ליחד בעד]ת קוד[ש וב]ן [חמ]ש ועש[רים]
- 10 [שנה יבוא להתיצב ב]יס[וד]ות[עד]ת [הקודש]
- 11 [לעבוד את עבודת העד]ת [ובן שלושים שנה]

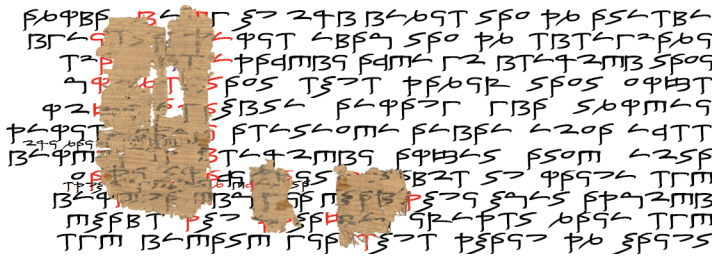


FIGURE 7 Reconstruction in cryptic font of the column containing the composite fragment. Letters attested on the fragments are marked red.

24 Note that 1QSa 1:7 uses a shorter orthography of this word, as the broken letter preceding the *he* cannot be *waw*. The *plene* spelling is attested immediately below, however, in the word ליהו(ו?) ישכילי in 1QSa 1: 7 (not attested in 4QSE).

25 We adopted Qimron's reading here (Qimron, *The Dead Sea Scrolls*, 235). Barthélemy (DJD 1, 199) read מו[ן]קחת מו[ן]סרו, involving also a slightly different syntax of the sentence; Charlesworth and Stuckenbruck read מו[ן]סרו יי[שכילי]; Dimant and Parry read מו[ן]סרו]ו[. See James H. Charlesworth and Loren T. Stuckenbruck "Rule of the Congregation," in *The Dead Sea Scrolls: Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek Texts with English Translations*. Volume 1: Rule of the Community and Related Documents (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1994), 110; Devorah Dimant and Donald W. Parry, "1QSa (1Q28a)," in *Dead Sea Scrolls Handbook* (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 53.

Conclusions

Based on textual and material indicators, fragments 4Q249a 1 and 4Q249e 2a are two parts of the same fragment. Based on this join the reconstructed text of SE fits the newly suggested placement of fragment 4Q249e 2b. This latter piece nearly touches the join, and indicates the same interlinear corrections as the indicated in it. Fragment 4Q249e 3 stands to the right of this constellation.

The composite text presented here carries important implications regarding the cryptic Serekh haEdah manuscripts. First and foremost, it suggests that at least part of the classification into nine different SE manuscripts may be exaggerated. In the present case, Pfann has characterized the script of 4Q249a as 'formal to semiformal' and dated it to the first half of the second century B.C.E., while in 4Q249e he detected a semi-cursive hand, and dated it to the early-to-mid-second century B.C.E. The join disproves this typology and demonstrates that it is probably too precise on the basis of such a meager find.

On a prospective note, the fragments chart the basic outline for a single 4Q copy of SE. The extant lines suggest a line width of between 30–40 spaces, with the extant letters anchored one above the other in a specific arrangement, leaving relatively little space for adjustments. This outline should be taken into account for the rest of the 4QSE fragments, which we hope to publish shortly. A salient part of this future work would be a deeper analysis of the textual (possibly redactional) variant between 1QSa 1: 8–12 and the cryptic fragment edited here.