The Leviticus and Joshua Codex
from the Schøyen Collection
A Closer Look at the Text Divisions

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In this contribution, I will first briefly describe the two codices.¹ Next, I will describe the sort of divisions that I see in the Joshua and Leviticus Codices of the Schøyen collection. Then, I will reflect on the limited divisions found in these codices by putting them back into their historical and textual history.

1 Some Data Regarding the Joshua and Leviticus Codex of the Schøyen Collection

In December 1998, Mr. Martin Schøyen from Oslo, Norway, bought two important Greek papyri. Both papyri have been part of a codex, probably of two different codices: MS 2648 and MS 2649. The scribe is the same for Joshua and Leviticus. The papyri probably come from the Oxyrhynchus area, Egypt.

Manuscript 2648 has six leaves, written recto and verso, hence twelve pages. It contains part of the Biblical Greek book of Joshua, namely 9:27 to 11:3. The second papyrus has eight leaves, also written recto and verso, hence sixteen pages. It contains parts of the following chapters of Leviticus: 10, 11, 23 and 25.

The leaves of both codices were already separated from one another before the process of decomposition started. Much of the text is readable; some parts, though, better than others.

The leaves of Joshua are ca. 20 cm (8 inches) high and ca. 11 cm (4.5 inches) wide. The ink is black. However, in places where the scribe changed calamus and ink, it is brown (see 10:34). The text is written in one column, leaving margins on all the sides of the page. A column, or in other words, the inscribed surface, measures ca. 15.5 cm (6.25 inches) high and ca. 8.5 to 9 cm (3.5 inches) wide. Each page contains between 19 and 23 lines, and has between 17-18

and 32 characters per line. With regard to Leviticus, the leaves are ca. 21 cm (8.25 inches) high and ca. 10.5 cm (4.25 inches) wide. The text is written in one column, leaving margins on all the sides of the page. A column, or in other words, the inscribed surface, measures ca. 15.5 cm (6.125 inches) high and ca. 7 to 8.3 cm (3 inches) wide. Each page contains between 21 and 24 lines, and has between 16 and 23 characters per line.

The text is written in irregular lines. The distance between the lines as well as the length of the lines is irregular. It looks like the manuscripts were not ruled horizontally. More specifically with regard to Joshua, the vertical ruling, on leaf 2 \textit{recto}, seems to be a left margin. There might be a right rule on leaf 2 \textit{verso}, since the last letter of the first line and the last letter of the last line can be aligned; the other lines, though, are not closely aligned. Leaves 5 and 6, both \textit{recto} and \textit{verso}, do not seem to follow a right or left alignment. The scribe sometimes crammed a couple of letters onto the line, so he or she seems to have had a minimal idea of a right margin (see also below 3.4.2.). The words, however, are often split between the lines. The manuscript pages are numbered. The numbers, however, are not always preserved. On leaf 2 \textit{recto} one can read \textit{mq} with a line on top of it, hence the numeral \textit{mq}, indicating 49; on leaf 2 \textit{verso}, \textit{n}, indicating 50; on leaf 5 \textit{recto}, \textit{ne}, indicating 55; and, finally, on leaf 5 \textit{verso}, \textit{ne}, indicating 56.

The Leviticus papyrus also displays the irregular lines and distances. Moreover, the Leviticus papyrus also contains two page numbers: \textit{xf}, indicating 63 and \textit{xa} indicating 64. Note, however that there are no supralinear strokes on the page numbers of the Leviticus codex.

After calculation of the length of the text of the Joshua papyrus, I conclude that the codex started with the book of Joshua. Most probably the codex was a Joshua codex.\footnote{This is important, for we do not have evidence of codices that start with or only contain Joshua. In most codices, Joshua is part of a Hexateuch or Octateuch. With thanks to Detlef Fraenkel.} The entire codex might have been ca. 72 pages. The entire Leviticus codex on the other hand must have been ca. 73 leaves, ca. 146 pages long.

The script of the Leviticus papyrus is similar to the one of the Joshua papyrus. It is large and with some round curved letters.