

# A New Fragment of Plato's *Parmenides* on Parchment

*William H. Willis*

IN AUTUMN 1969 Perkins Library of Duke University acquired among a group of unrelated texts on papyrus a small palimpsest fragment from an ancient parchment codex containing Plato's *Parmenides* (PDuk. inv. G 5). Purchased from a dealer, neither its ancient nor its modern provenience could be ascertained, but we may confidently assume that it was found in Egypt. Measuring 7.6×7.9 cm., the parchment was originally very thin and of high quality, but when acquired was extremely brittle and crinkled. Moreover the lower writing in Greek had been so thoroughly expunged in antiquity as to be almost invisible in ordinary light; but the occasional traces of large round majuscule letters could be observed from the impression of the pen in the surface of the parchment. When fluoresced by ultra-violet light, each face of the fragment readily yielded its text (see PLATE 6).

On each side the fragment bears eleven lines of the *Parmenides*—on the *recto* (flesh side) p.152B Stephanus, on the *verso* (hair side) the end of 152c and beginning of 152d. It brings the number of known ancient texts of Plato to 50,<sup>1</sup> of which 44 are from papyrus rolls, 6 from codices (3 of papyrus, 3 of parchment). The Duke fragment is the only ancient text of the *Parmenides* yet recovered, and is the earliest appearance of any of Plato's works in a codex or on parch-

<sup>1</sup> So far as I have encountered them. R. A. Pack, *The Greek and Latin Literary Texts from Greco-Roman Egypt*<sup>2</sup> (Ann Arbor 1965) [hereafter cited PACK<sup>2</sup>], recorded 44 published prior to April 1964—40 from rolls, 2 from III-cent. papyrus codices, 2 from later parchment (see n.2 *infra*). To this list may now be added (all from papyrus rolls unless otherwise noted): POxy. 2662 (*Meno*, I-cent. v.c./I-cent.); POxy. 2663 (*Cratylus*, later II-cent.); POxy. 2751 (*Republic*, probably late II-cent., possibly early III); PLeid. inv. 22 (*Phaedo*, I-cent.: in *Mnemosyne* 29 [1966] 231–40, 269, and cf. *Cd'E* 42 [1967] 213f); and PAntin. 181 (*Minos*, early III-cent., papyrus codex). POxy. 24 (Pack<sup>2</sup> 1422) has been republished as PYale 21; of PSI 1200 (*Gorgias*, Pack<sup>2</sup> 1414) a fourth fragment is published in *Nuovi papiri letterari Fiorentini* (Pisa 1971) no.9; and of the Rainer codex of *Gorgias* (PVindob. G 26001=Pack<sup>2</sup> 1415) a new fragment (G 39880) is published in *WS* 78 (1965) 40–44, now redated II/III-cent. Even so, the new finds do not change the relative frequency of Plato papyri from Egypt (see *GRBS* 9 [1968] 211ff): Plato remains sixth after Homer, Demosthenes, Euripides, Hesiod and Callimachus, but increases his lead over Isocrates, in seventh place.

## PDUK. INV. G 5

PLATO, *Parmenides* 152B-DFLESH SIDE (*recto*)

	-----	... οὐ-]
1	ΤΩ	τω.
2	ΝΑΙ	Ναί.
3	ΕΣΤΙΝ ΔΕ ΠΡΕΣΒΥΤΕΡΟ-	* <i>Ἔστι{ν} δὲ πρεσβύτερον</i>
4	ΑΡΟΥΧΟΤΑΝΚΑΤΑΤ[Ο]	<i>ἀρ' οὐχ ὅταν κατὰ τ[ὸν]</i>
5	ΝΥΝΧΡΟΝΟΝΗΙΓΙ	<i>νῦν χρόνον ἦι γι-</i>
6	ΓΝΟΜΕΝΟΝΤΟΝΜΕ	<i>γνόμενον τὸν με-</i>
7	ΤΑΞΥΤΟΥΗΝΤΕΚΑΙ	<i>ταξὺ τοῦ ἦν τε καὶ</i>
8	ΕΣΤΑΙΟΥΓΑΡΠΟΥΠΟ	<i>ἔσται; οὐ γάρ που πο-</i>
9	ΡΕΥΟΜΕΝΟΝΓΕΕΚΤ[ΟΥ]	<i>ρευόμενόν γε ἐκ τ[οῦ]</i>
10	ΠΟΤΕΕΙΣΤΟΕΠΕΙΤΑ	<i>ποτὲ εἰς τὸ ἔπειτα</i>
11	ΥΠΕΡΒΗΣΕΤΑΙΤΟΝ[ΥΝ]	<i>ὑπερβήσεται τὸ ν[ῦν].</i>
	-----	

3 ἔστι B *et om.*, *εστιν* PDuk.  
 5-6 γινόμενον z. 7 ἦν] νῦν z.  
 10 τὸ] τοῦ II D R. 11 τὸ]  
 τὸν D.

HAIR SIDE (*verso*)

	-----	... γιγνό-]
1	ΜΕΝΟΝ[Τ]ΟΥΤΕΕΠΕΙ	<i>μενον, [τ]οῦ τε ἔπει-</i>
2	ΤΑΚΑΙΤΟΥΝΥΝ	<i>τα καὶ τοῦ νῦν.</i>
3	ΑΛΗΘΗ·	* <i>Ἀληθῆ.</i>
4	[Ε]Ι ΔΕ ΓΕ ΑΝΑΓΚΗΜΗ	<i>Εἰ δέ γε ἀνάγκη μὴ</i>
5	ΠΑΡΕΛΘΕΙΝΤΟΝΥΝ	<i>παρελθεῖν τὸ νῦν</i>
6	ΠΑΝΤΟΓΙΓΝΟΜΕΝΟ-	<i>πᾶν τὸ γιγνόμενον,</i>
7	ΕΠΕΙΔΑΝΚΑΤΑΤΟΥ	<i>ἐπειδὴν κατὰ τοῦ-</i>
8	ΤΟΗΙΕΠΙΣΧΕΙΑΕΙΤΟΥ	<i>το ἦι, ἐπίσχει αἰεὶ τοῦ</i>
9	ΓΙΓΝΕΣΘΑΙΕΣΤΙ-	<i>γίγνεσθαι καὶ ἔστι{ν}</i>
10	ΤΟΤΕΤΟΥΤΟῚΤΙΑΝ	<i>τότε τοῦτο ὅτι ἂν</i>
11	[Τ]ΥΧΗΙΓΙΓΝΟΜΕΝΟ-	<i>[τ]ύχηι γιγνόμενον.</i>
	-----	

7 ἐπεὶ δὴν z. 7-11 *om.* Θ1.  
 9 ἔστιν PDuk. *et* B. 10 ὅτι  
 ἂν] ὁ ἂν D R. 11 τύχηι] τύχοι  
 E W1 V β Heindorf.

ment.<sup>2</sup> Its nearest mediaeval successors are the IX-century Paris MS *grec* 1807 (Burnet's **A**) and Codex Clarkeianus 39 (Burnet's **B**).

The text of the Duke fragment is in virtually complete agreement with the Clarkeianus, on which modern editions are chiefly based. The only variant is a superfluous *nu*-movable in *recto* line 3, ECTIN ΔΕ, for a second superfluous *nu*-movable—a bar-*nu* at the end of *verso* line 9—is retained by **B**. Such *nus* before consonants are so common in papyri that we may wonder whether our Byzantine rule against them may have been too strictly drawn. Opposite are set forth in parallel columns a diplomatic transcription and an edited text; disagreements with the later MSS are recorded from the collation of Brumbaugh.<sup>3</sup> In all other readings the Duke fragment stands correctly with **B** against the later MSS; significantly at *verso* line 11 it has *τύχη* against *τύχοι* of the important XII-century Vienna codex (Burnet's **W**) and others. Offering no surprises, our text stands in welcome confirmation of the textual tradition.

Except for one error, where in *recto* line 3 he omitted *τε* in ΠΡΕCΒΥ'ΤΕ'ΠΟΝ, corrected above the line in a similar hand presumably by the *διορθωτής*, our scribe appears to have been meticulous. *Iota*-adscripts are written correctly and uniformly. Particularly interesting is his consistency in the use of accents and breathings. Acute accents occur twice in *recto* line 9 and once in *verso* line 4 to mark ensuing enclitics, and once each in *recto* 3 and *verso* 8 to forestall ambiguity in position or form of the verb. Similarly, the circumflex is used twice as an aid to the reader (*recto* 5, *verso* 8), in both cases to mark the subjunctive of *εἰμί*. A rough breathing (Turner's 'form 1')<sup>4</sup>

<sup>2</sup> For an even smaller IV-century parchment fragment of Ps.-Plato, containing the end of *Eryxias* and the beginning of *Demodocus* (Pack<sup>2</sup> 1429), see H. Hunger, "Pseudo-Platonica in einer Ausgabe des 4. Jahrhunderts," *WS* (1961) 40–42; it is written in 'Biblical uncial' in the style of Codex Sinaiticus. Professor Hunger was the first to remark that the hand of the Duke Plato is not this, but "gehört jener Gruppe der frühen 'römischen Unziale' an, die durch den Papyrus Hawara (Homer) und den Pap. Oxy. 20 repräsentiert wird, und könnte daher nach unseren bisherigen Kenntnissen ins 2. Jahrhundert gesetzt werden" (*per litt.* 25 October 1969); judging from a photograph, he estimated the hand of the Duke parchment as "eleganter und ästhetisch höher stehend" than that of the Vienna (Nationalbibliothek G 39846). The third parchment fragment is *PAntin.* 78, *Theaetetus* (Pack<sup>2</sup> 1394), assigned by its editor to the VI century.

<sup>3</sup> Robert S. Brumbaugh, *Plato on the One* (New Haven 1961) 305–06. To Professor Brumbaugh I am indebted for discussing the text with me *per litteras*.

<sup>4</sup> Eric G. Turner, *Greek Manuscripts of the Ancient World* (Oxford and Princeton 1971) 14 [hereafter cited TURNER]; on the use of this and other signs employed by the Plato scribe see Turner pp.10–14, and on the bar-*nu* p.17. All features noted are paralleled in papyri of the second and third centuries.

appears once (*verso* 10), with accompanying acute accent, to distinguish two adjacent *omicrons*; and the uncertain mark over the ensuing *alpha* may be a smooth breathing. These signs are sparingly but consistently employed, therefore, in every case only where they are needed to prevent a reader's misunderstanding, according to the Alexandrian principle *πρὸς διαστολὴν τῆς ἀμφιβόλου λέξεως*. The only instance of elision (*recto* 4 AP') is marked with an apostrophe; the *trema* appears over *upsilon* in ὕΠΙΕΡ (*recto* 11). Whether the scribe used punctuation on the *recto* remains uncertain, but on the more legible hairside we can be fairly sure of three single points: two, in middle position (τελεία στιγμαί), as full-stops closing speeches in lines 3 and 11; and one, on the line (ὑποστιγμαί), for a half-stop closing line 6. Angular spacefillers complete short lines at *verso* 4 and 10. At the end of long lines, *nu* is written as a supralinear bar, after *omicron* (*verso* 6 and 11, and presumably in lacuna at *recto* 3) and after ECTI (*verso* 9). Altogether, then, our text was carefully inscribed.

A striking feature of format is *ekthesis*,<sup>5</sup> projection into the left margin of the first letter to mark the beginning of each new speech in the dialogue. Each speech thus begins on a new line, even when its predecessor consisted of only one word, e.g. NAI (*recto* 2) and ΑΛΗΘΗ (*verso* 3): there was no economy of parchment. This is not the format characteristic of the dramatic papyri nor of other papyri of Plato, which regularly use the *paragraphus* and double dots to mark a change of speaker.

By calculating the length of the lacuna between *recto* and *verso* we may estimate the dimensions of the leaf from which our fragment derived and gain some idea of the original appearance of the codex. Between the carefully regulated right and left margins each line is 6.8 cm. in length (not counting *ekthesis*), accommodating from 13 to 17 letters, usually 14–16, at an average of 15 letters to the line. The letters, virtually circular or square, are approximately 4 mm. high, the interlinear space 2.5 mm.; vertical height of line and interlinear space is thus 0.65 cm. The text lost in the lacuna would therefore have occupied 18 lines which, when added to the 11 preserved lines of the

<sup>5</sup> Turner, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.3) 9. *Ekthesis* is a frequent feature of commentaries; an example showing projection by precisely one letter into the left margin is POxy. 853, a Thucydides commentary of the mid-second century, discussed by Colin H. Roberts, *Greek Literary Hands 350 B.C.–A.D. 400* (Oxford 1956) no.17a [hereafter cited ROBERTS]. The same plate shows the use of angular space-fillers of the same type found in the Duke Plato.

*recto*, filled a column of 29 lines measuring 19 cm. in height by 6.8 cm. in width.<sup>6</sup> Since such a column is too tall and narrow for a single-column page, we may assume that the codex was written in double column, and that the Duke fragment derives from the outer column of its leaf.<sup>7</sup>

How generous were the outer and intercolumnar margins we can only guess. The surviving centimeter of margin at the left of the *recto* and at the right of the *verso* is presumably intercolumnar, which may have been wider still. Were this space no wider, the written area would have measured *ca.* 19 × 15 cm. Allowing modest margins of 2 cm. inner, top and outer and 3 at bottom would yield a perhaps minimal leaf size of 24 cm. high by 19 wide—a page very slightly higher and 4 cm. wider than that on which these words are printed. The margins may of course have been more gracious, but the relative proportion is likely to have remained the same, approximately 5 : 4. This is just the proportion exemplified by the two earliest Greek parchment codices which have yet come to light, though both are somewhat smaller: the British Museum fragment of Demosthenes, *De Falsa Legatione* (19.5 × 16.5 cm.), also written in double column, as one would expect of prose; and the Berlin fragment of Euripides' *Cretans* (14.5 × 11.5 cm.), in single column.<sup>8</sup> Both are dated to the second century. Among papyrus codices are several of approximately similar size and proportion, ranging in date from the second

<sup>6</sup> The text lost between *recto* and *verso* comprises 255 letters in Burnet's text (*OCT*); divided by the 15-letter average, it would require 17 $\frac{1}{3}$  lines. In the format of our text, the words immediately following our *recto*, οὐ γάρ (5 letters, one-third of a line), are spoken by the interlocutor; the rest of the line would have been vacant.

<sup>7</sup> Our fragment could not have come from the inner of two columns, for the 18-line lacuna would thus have been divided between two intervening outer columns of only 9 lines each, shorter than the preserved 11 lines on each face. A three-column format (as in the *Codex Vaticanus*) would have yielded a written page 19 × 22 cm. and, with margins, a leaf wider than high (*ca.* 24 × 27). While such dimensions may have been possible, the great majority of ancient codices were taller than wide, even those that were virtually square.

<sup>8</sup> Demosthenes: *PLit.Lond.* 127 = Pack<sup>2</sup> 293, illustrated in *New Palaeographical Society, Facsimiles of Ancient Manuscripts* SER.1 pt.1, pl.2; its hand is small, practiced but somewhat irregular and not calligraphic; columns of 36 lines measure 14 by 5.5 cm.; top margin 2 cm., bottom 2.7, intercolumnar 1. Euripides: *BKT* 5.2.73–79 = Pack<sup>2</sup> 437, illustrated in W. Schubart, *PGB* tab.30a, and *NPS* SER.2 pt.2, pl.28; though different from that of the Demosthenes, its hand too is small, regular but not calligraphic; top and bottom margins 2 cm., left margin 1.5.

to the fifth century;<sup>9</sup> but so different are the methods and requirements of manufacturing a codex from papyrus that comparison in size cannot be trusted to suggest the date of a parchment codex.

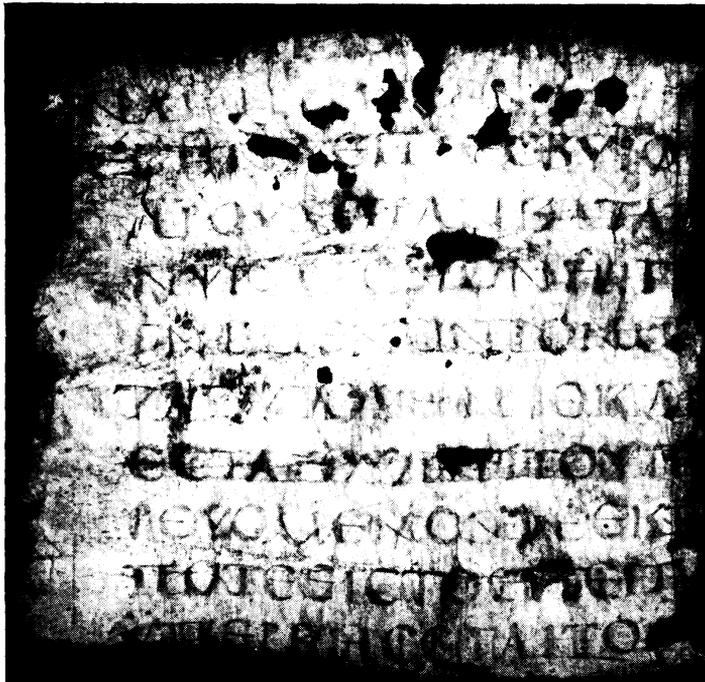
At the scale of our fragment, the complete text of the *Parmenides* would have required 87 pages or 44 leaves.<sup>10</sup> To judge by our limited experience of other early codices, a codex of 44 leaves would seem too thin to stand alone, and we may guess that it contained another work (or more) as well—not necessarily Platonic, for many early codices had strangely assorted contents. Dercyllides' and Thrasyllus' arrangement of Plato's dialogues into tetralogies was known already by the first century, a sequence to become standard in the Middle Ages. If our codex had contained the entire Third Tetralogy, comprising *Parmenides*, *Philebus*, *Symposium* and *Phaedrus*, 231 leaves would have been required—a content too ambitious to expect before the fourth century. Of course, other groupings of the dialogues, as in trilogies by Aristophanes of Byzantium, were known in the Alexandrian and early Roman centuries.<sup>11</sup>

The most remarkable feature of the Duke fragment is the style of the bookhand in which it is written, the large round majuscule of which the most celebrated example is the Hawara Homer (PLATE 7),

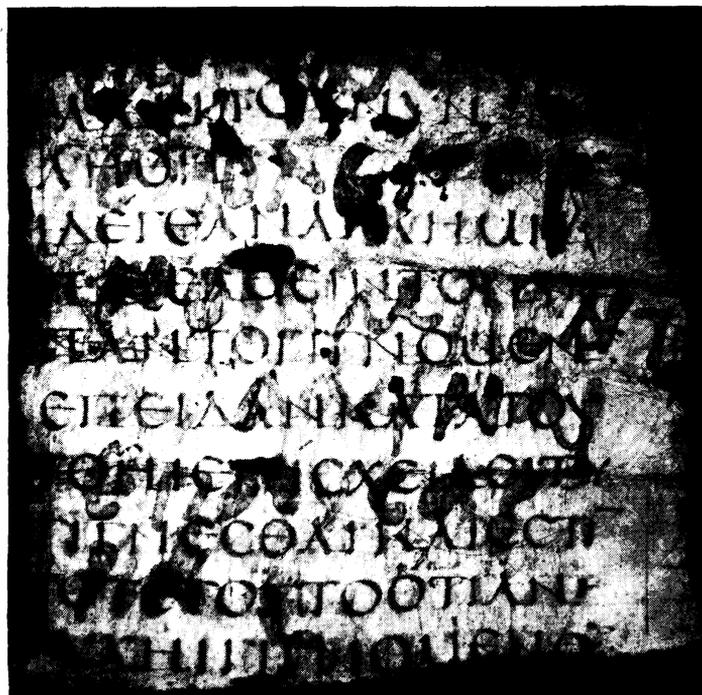
<sup>9</sup> In a paper entitled "Questions concerning the Typology of the Early Codex" offered to the XIII International Congress of Papyrology in Marburg 2 August 1971 and soon to appear in the *Acta*, Professor E. G. Turner classified papyrus codices in twelve groups according to size and proportion. Among these the Duke Plato most nearly approximates Turner's Group 4, especially the Chester Beatty *Gospels* (PBeatty I=P<sup>45</sup>) of the third century and the Vienna Homer (PRainer 3.4=Pack<sup>2</sup> 933) of the fifth, both single-column. But Turner deliberately and properly excluded parchment codices from his typological study, since they rarely conform to papyrus codex patterns. Meantime the publication of Professor Turner's 1971 Rosenbach Lectures on the typology of the codex is eagerly awaited.

<sup>10</sup> Calculations are projected from Burnet's OCT edition, 13 lines of which would require 40 lines in the parchment codex. Thus the 1623 OCT lines=4994 codex lines; with space allowed for a colophon, these conform to 172½ columns, or 87 double-column pages. In the unlikely event that each page bore three columns, 58 pages or 29 leaves would have been required.

<sup>11</sup> Calculated from Burnet's OCT edition, *Philebus* would require 146 double-column pages in the format of the Duke Plato, *Symposium* 113 and *Phaedrus* 116, for a total of 462 pages. The complete Platonic corpus as we have it would have filled seven such codices; but there is no evidence from antiquity for uniform multi-codex sets. For the various groupings of the dialogues, see Diog.Laert. 3.61f; A.-H. Chroust, "The Organization of the Corpus Platonicum in Antiquity," *Hermes* 93 (1965) 34ff; and R. Pfeiffer, *History of Classical Scholarship* (Oxford 1968) 196f.



*PDuk. inv. G 5, recto: Parmenides 152b*



*PDuk. inv. G 5, verso: Parmenides 152c-d*

PLATE 7 WILLIS



THE HAWARA HOMER, BODL. MS. GR. CLASS. a. 1(P) [PACK<sup>2</sup> 616]

(Excerpt, approximately actual size)

NCUNENCTHI  
ΔΕΓΙΓΝΕΤΑΙΘ  
ΦΙΑΗΤΗCΟΤΙΑ  
ΤΗΦΙΑΗCΙ  
CΥΝΕ  
ΚΑΙ  
CΥΝΚΕ ΑΤΗΡ  
ΚΑΙΘΑΝΑΙCΚ  
ΖΑΙΝΟΙΔΕCΙC  
ΑΠΙCΤΑCΙC  
CΥΝΚΕΤΗC  
CΥΝΚΕΤΗC  
ΑΤΟΚΙΖΕC  
ΑΙCΥΝΙC  
ΑΤΟΙC ΑΘΑΝΑ

Fragment of Hellanicus, Atlantis (POxy. 1084=PACK<sup>2</sup> 459)

ΝΑΕCΥΝΑΙΚΩ  
CΟΖΑΙCΙC  
ΑΤΡΑCΑCΑΝC  
CΥΝΑΙCΑΡC  
ΑΤΟΚΙΖΕC  
ΑΙCΥΝΙC  
ΑΤΟΙC ΑΘΑΝΑ

Fragment of Hesiod, Catalogue (POxy. 2354=PACK<sup>2</sup> 508)

PLATE 9 WILLIS



THE AMBROSIAN ILIAD, BIBL. AMBR. MEDIOL. COD. F 205 P. INF.

(Excerpt from f.21<sup>F</sup>, approximately actual size)

which is assigned to the period *ca.* A.D. 150.<sup>12</sup> Turner calls the style 'formal round capitals', to avoid the misleading implications inherent in its prevalent designation 'Roman uncial'.<sup>13</sup> In its finest examples it is perhaps the stateliest and most elegant of the Greek literary hands developed in antiquity, found chiefly in spacious and *de luxe* papyrus rolls of the principal classics of Greek literature—Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, Hesiod's *Works and Days* and *Catalogue*, lyric poetry and tragedy, Cratinus and Eupolis, Hellanicus, Isocrates, Plato, Demosthenes, Theocritus and Polybius. Collecting more than twenty examples, Professor Cavallo recently traced the rise of the style in the late first century, its flowering under Hadrian and the Antonines and its decline and disappearance at the end of the second century.<sup>14</sup> While the sequence of development is disputed and the approximate dates of individual specimens are estimated variously within the period, all examples of the hand on papyrus are assigned by their editors within the span of little more than a century, from the late first to the end of the second. Although no literary roll bears a date, a document from the Fayum dated A.D. 88 (*PLond.* 141) is written in a hand closely related to the literary rolls.<sup>15</sup> External evidence for its career may be seen in two Attic inscriptions, the first, bearing the date A.D. 61/2, by its rudeness suggesting that a new style had not yet been acclimated to epigraphical use, the second, dated A.D. 217/8,

<sup>12</sup> Bodl. MS. Gr. Class. a. 1(P)=Pack<sup>2</sup> 616 (*Iliad* 2); for the most recent discussion and illustration see Turner pp.1, 3, 25, 27, 38 and pl.13.

<sup>13</sup> Actually, Turner calls it the "first type" of 'Formal round' (see Turner p.25), which he identifies by reference to the Hawara Homer but to which he assigns no specific name; his other two types of 'Formal round' are 'Biblical Majuscule' (Cavallo's term, *vice* Grenfell and Hunt's 'Biblical Uncial': G. Cavallo, *Ricerche sulla maiuscola biblica* [Florence 1967]) and 'Coptic Uncial'. The term 'Roman uncial' was coined by Daniel Serruys, "Contribution à l'étude des 'canons' de l'onziale grecque," *Mélanges Chatelain* (Paris 1910) 494f, and reluctantly retained by Cavallo (see *infra* n.14). (Serruys attributed the term to F. G. Kenyon, who often used 'uncial' for 'majuscule', and 'Roman hand' and 'Roman style' of all the first and second-century hands, but never the term 'Roman uncial' so far as I can determine.) Properly speaking, 'uncial' is a term with meaning specific only to Latin palaeography; and 'Roman', if it suggests a period, is too broad, but if it suggests Rome itself as origin of the hand, is without foundation. Yet a specific term is needed. Until a better is devised, I suggest 'Homeric majuscule', since it is best known from the Hawara Homer and is found most frequently in Homer mss, e.g. *POxy.* 20, *PTebt.* 265, *PSI* 8, not to mention the *Ambrosian Iliad*. At least it will serve as a counterpoise to 'Biblical majuscule', and with as much validity.

<sup>14</sup> G. Cavallo, "Osservazioni paleografiche sul canone e la cronologia della cosiddetta 'Onciale Romana'," *AnnPisa* SER.II 36 (1967) 209–20 with 12 plates.

<sup>15</sup> Roberts pl.12a with description.

by its perfunctory regularity and compression suggesting the end of the style.<sup>16</sup> These stones will testify that the style had currency outside of Egypt, and may have been practiced not only in Athens but also in other cultural centers of the Roman Empire. We cannot of course know where the manuscripts found in Egypt were written, but it has been suspected that particularly those on parchment may have been imported from elsewhere.<sup>17</sup>

Characteristic of this style are the capital form of the *alpha* with horizontal cross-bar, the lunate forms of *epsilon* and *sigma* which with *theta* and *omicron* are virtually circular, the *mu* with deep rounded saddle, the unusual *xi* (found chiefly in this hand) with the lower members in the form of the arabic numeral 2 ( $\bar{2}$ ), the strictly bilinear *iota*, *rho*, *tau* and *upsilon* whose vertical hastae rest on the lower line, and the extremities of straight strokes finished with serifs. All these characteristics the Duke Plato shares with the examples on papyrus—with the letter-forms of the Hawara Homer, but particularly with *POxy.* 1084, a fragment of Hellanicus' *Atlantis* dated to the second century, and *POxy.* 2354, a fragment of Hesiod's *Catalogue* dated to the first half of the same century (see *PLATE 8*). In the Hawara Homer and the Hesiod the letters are of the same size (4 mm. high) as the Plato (those of the Hellanicus being slightly smaller, 3.5 mm.); and while the average interlinear space of the Hawara Homer and the Hellanicus is slightly less (2 mm. vs. 2.5), that of the Hesiod is precisely the same as in the Plato. Moreover, the Hesiod exemplifies the same forms and sparing use of accents, rough breathing and apostrophe.

Certain features of the Plato hand, however, are rarely found in these models, and have been associated rather with hands considered either earlier or later than the second century. One of these is the divided *kappa* (*K*); but this feature is found (occasionally to frequently) in *PLond.* 141 (A.D. 88), *PFay.* 110 (a letter of A.D. 94, Roberts pl.11*b*), *POxy.* 659 (Pindar, *Parthenia*, Turner no.21), and in the following second-century papyri: *POxy.* 841 (Pindar, Roberts pl.14, the second hand), 844 (Isocrates), 1083 + 2453 (Sophocles, Turner no.28), 1084 (the Hellanicus), 1090 (Hesiod), and *PRyl.* 60 (Polybius). Scribal devices

<sup>16</sup> (1) *IG II/III*<sup>2</sup> 1990=Joh. Kirchner/G. Klaffenbach, *Imagines Inscriptionum Atticarum*<sup>2</sup> (Berlin 1948) no.127. (2) *IG II/III*<sup>2</sup> 3764=*IIA* no.145.

<sup>17</sup> Turner p.21: "Are all parchment codices found in Egypt to be regarded as written at centres outside Egypt? The assumption is commonly made that in Egypt, the home of the papyrus industry, papyrus not parchment would be used. But it is a guess only." See also Turner, *Greek Papyri, an Introduction* (Oxford/Princeton 1968) 50f.

to extend a short line or curtail a long one in order to maintain an even right margin are naturally not found in verse, where irregular line-length is usual, and three-fourths of our examples of this hand are in verse. Of the book-roll fragments of prose, only three preserve their right margins. These (*POxy.* 844, 2260 and *PRyl.* 60) share with the Duke Plato both the wedge-shaped line-filler and the tiny *omicron* under the overhang of a preceding or following letter; examples of the latter in other second-century hands may be seen in a wax tablet at the British Museum (Pack<sup>2</sup> 2713, see Turner no.4), *POxy.* 2751 (Plato, *Republic*), *PLit.Lond.* 127 (the parchment Demosthenes) and *PLit.Lond.* 132 (Hypereides, Roberts pl.13*b*)—also in the first-century Ninus Romance at Berlin (*PBerol.* 6926, Roberts pl.11*a*). Another line-shortening device, the final *nu* written as a supralinear bar, is found also in *POxy.* 2751 (the *Republic*), *POxy.* 842 (*Hellenica Oxyrhynchia*, Roberts pl.17*b*), *POxy.* 843 (Plato, *Symposium*), *PBodmer* 2 (the *Gospel of John*) and Chester Beatty Codex I (*Gospels*, see n.9), all of the second century or early third. No doubt we should find the bar-*nu* frequently enough in the ‘formal round capital’ hand of the same period if we had other examples in prose of which the right margins were preserved. In any case, all these less common features of the Duke Plato are substantially paralleled in second-century manuscripts.

Of all the characteristics of the Plato parchment, one may be thought to point to a date later than the second century, since it is best known as a feature of the fourth-century ‘Biblical majuscule’ and its derivatives. That is the contrast between thick and thin strokes of the pen. Vertical strokes and those slanting from upper left to lower right (except in *nu*) are thicker, horizontal strokes and those drawn from lower left to upper right are thinner; and curved letters show subtle transitions from thin to thick at their upper left and lower right quadrants. Some observers have seen no such distinction in the strokes of the Hawara Homer or in some other examples, and even in cases where contrast is inescapable, have minimized its significance.<sup>18</sup> In fact, I find no specimens of the hand which do not reveal

<sup>18</sup> Serruys, for example, says (*op.cit.* [*supra* n.13] 495): “Ce type d’écriture ne comporte ni pleins ni déliés. Certes les conditions du *ductus* provoquaient parfois des pesées différentes de la main, pesées qui influaient sur l’épaisseur des traits, mais l’opposition des traits minces et des traits pleins n’est point un des buts du calligraphe.” Cavallo adds (*op.cit.* [*supra* n.14] 210–11): “Il tratteggio si presenta talvolta sottilissimo, piú spesso tenuemente

some degree of distinction between thick and thin: even in the Hawara Homer (PLATE 7), witness the thin cap of *pi* and *tau*, tongue of *epsilon*, cross-bar of *eta* and *theta*, left leg of *alpha* and *lambda*, rising arm of *kappa*, base of *delta*, in contrast to vertical and right-oblique strokes. In many other examples (e.g. *POxy.* 1084 and 2354 [PLATE 8]) the contrast is still more marked; and in *PSI* 8, 1212 and 1213, *POxy.* 20, 844 and 1090 there is obvious gradation between the quadrants of curved strokes—as in the Duke Plato. In some specimens the 'chiaroscuro' is more pronounced, in others less, but it seems present in all. This is a feature which most distinguishes what we may call the 'Homeric majuscule' from its predecessors and prototypes, the round majuscule of the first century B.C. and the first century.<sup>19</sup> And this is a feature, become stylized and more mechanical, which is bequeathed to the 'Biblical majuscule' in the later third and fourth centuries.

In the Plato parchment the distinction between thick strokes and thin and the smooth transitions in curves are scarcely more prominent than, say, in *PSI* 8 and *POxy.* 1084, but they are more precise and more consistent. The thick strokes are no thicker, but the thin strokes are slenderer. This precision, I suggest, is not a function of a later stage of development, but of the interaction of the same cut of reed pen upon the smooth, hard surface of parchment, rather than upon the grainy, rough and more absorptive surface of papyrus. Writing on parchment is capable of greater regularity of style and more elegant finesse, and these are precisely the qualities by which the Plato may seem distinguishable from examples of the same hand on papyrus. Except for its consistent precision, I find no stylistic features in the Plato fragment which are not paralleled in other second-century exemplars. There seems to be no reason, therefore, not to assign it too to the second century.

Since the Duke fragment is a palimpsest, from which the original ink was thoroughly cleansed to make way for a later text, we might hope that the later writing faintly visible on one surface could provide some clue to the history of the codex, or at least a *terminus ante quem* for the original text. On the *recto*, the smoother flesh side has preserved

---

contrastato; a tal proposito va detto subito che un ben determinato chiaroscuro nello spessore dei tratti non rientra tra le regole del canone . . . Anche in questo caso tuttavia resta escluso, come si è detto, un accentuato chiaroscuro."

<sup>19</sup> Of numerous examples may be cited Turner nos. 15, 21, 37, 39, 41 and 56 (which he denominates 'Informal round hands'), and Roberts plates 8*a*, 9*b*, 9*c*, 10*a*, 11*a* and 12*a*.

no evidence of later ink; presumably it was never reused. On the *verso* there are traces of six lines of large rude letters written in brown ink, in coarse and irregular letter-forms that may be paralleled as early as the fourth century and as late as the sixth; with diffidence I should place them in the fifth century. The fragment of text appears to be written in Coptic, if **εβολ** is correctly read in line 2 and a *phai* in line 4: another characteristic Coptic letter may appear in the doubtful *hori* beginning line 1, but here a *sigma* is possible. Since the left edge of our fragment must be quite close to the left edge of the original leaf (the outer margin of perhaps 1 to 2 cm. stood to the left of the text), we have the beginnings of the six lines. The writing is so large that the complete text would presumably have covered the entire leaf; in any case lines 1 and 3 run off the fragment at its right edge (the center margin of the original Greek text). From the ultra-violet photograph reproduced in PLATE 6, which is much clearer than the parchment itself, I have in great uncertainty extracted the following tentative transcription:<sup>20</sup>

-----  
 1 Ϻαρμλλλγσετ[  
 2 εβολ ενερ . [  
 3 νοτεμπεντ[  
 4 αγλαφ ναι [  
 5 εποογσαρ [  
 6 ρινε [  
 -----

I take the text to be a fragment of a private letter in Sahidic. The presence of Sahidic suggests that the codex of Plato may eventually have found its way to a monastic library in middle or upper Egypt.

<sup>20</sup> To Mrs Elinor M. Husselman and to my colleague Professor Orval Wintermute I am indebted for their study of the photograph, patient consultation and advice; neither is wholly persuaded of the transcription I present here, but both agree that the text is Coptic. We cannot be sure what dialect is employed, but there is no indication that it is not Sahidic. Broken texts in Coptic are notoriously difficult to interpret since the agglutinating syllables have different meanings in different combinations. I have therefore spaced words only in lines 2, 4 and 5 where other combinations do not seem feasible: line 4 would thus mean "They made (*or* did) it for me," and **εποογ** in line 5 would mean "today." In line 1 Ϻ (so Wintermute) could be read **ϸ**, and λ could be read **ν**. For the second **ε** in line 3 Wintermute would read **ϸ**. The unwritten spaces at the ends of lines 4 and 5 and the spaces of line 6 remain unexplained.

There, worn out or discarded when perhaps three centuries old, it yielded one of its leaves at least to be expunged and appropriated for private use. Our fragment from this leaf is, so far as we know, the sole surviving evidence of this once beautiful manuscript.

The discovery of a specimen of the 'Homeric majuscule' on parchment cannot fail to invite comparison with the only other extant example of this hand on parchment, the famous *Iliad* in the Ambrosian Library in Milan. Of this once magnificent codex containing the entire *Iliad* in approximately 380 leaves illuminated with perhaps 180 paintings, large excerpts from 52 leaves survive, bearing 58 of the miniatures cut from the codex probably in the XIII century.<sup>21</sup> Only so much of the text survives as happened to stand inscribed on the reverse of the excerpted miniatures. This text is written in the style I have called 'Homeric majuscule' (see PLATE 9), although with certain embellishments of the hand.

So long as the *Ilias Ambrosiana* remained unique, various scholars have assigned it to a variety of dates from the third to the sixth century, variously interpreting the features of its hand or the style and repertory of its miniatures.<sup>22</sup> It is said to be written on thick parchment in a brownish ink, which first came into use late in the third century.<sup>23</sup> Its equally round letters are larger than those of the Plato (5 mm. high vs. 4), the interlinear space is somewhat wider (3 mm. vs. 2.5), and the individual letters are more widely spaced in a rather mechanical regularity. The letter-forms of the *Ilias* are uniformly those of the 'Homeric majuscule', but with certain notable differences. One of these is the suspension of a prominent rounded

<sup>21</sup> For a handsome facsimile edition in color see *Ilias Ambrosiana, Cod. F. 205 P. inf. Bibliothecae Ambrosianae Mediolanensis* (U. Graf, Bern 1953). A facsimile in monochrome was published by A. M. Ceriani and A. Raffi, *Homeri Iliadis pictae fragmenta Ambrosiana, phototypice edita* (Milan 1905).

<sup>22</sup> From palaeographical considerations Cardinal Mai and Ceriani judged it III century, Wilamowitz III/IV, Kenyon considerably earlier than V, E. M. Thompson (on different occasions) possibly III, IV or V, Bartoletti later than III, Gerstinger late V, Cavallo (*op.cit.* [supra n.13] 112) early VI. Similarly, on the basis of style and content of the miniatures, defenders of every date from III to VI century can be found among art historians. The views of many are summarized by R. Bianchi-Bandinelli, *Hellenistic-Byzantine Miniatures of the Iliad (Ilias Ambrosiana)* (Olten 1955) 45ff, though from the point of view of one who strongly advocates the early VI century on art-historical grounds.

<sup>23</sup> The use of brown iron-compound ink, which was to replace the earlier lampblack carbon ink in the fourth century and after, is first attested in a dated document by POxy. 2269, in A.D. 269. The ink of the Plato cannot be compared, since it was expunged.

finial from the tongue of *epsilon*, which appears in no second-century example but is paralleled in *POxy.* 2334 (Aeschylus' *Septem*), assigned by Turner to the III/IV century;<sup>24</sup> it is quite different, however, from the heavier angular finials found on *epsilon* in the fifth-century *Codex Alexandrinus* and the sixth-century Vienna Dioscorides (dated A.D. 512) and Vienna *Genesis*, with which it has sometimes been compared. The tongue of *epsilon* and cross-bar of *theta* are below center. Thin strokes are hardly more than hairlines, and the contrast between thick and thin strokes, while analogous in disposition to that of *POxy.* 1084, 2260, *PSI* 8 and the Plato, has become stylized and stiffly mechanical. It is this severity, more than any other feature, which seems to separate the *Ilias* from the Plato and the second-century papyri.

On palaeographical grounds, then, there is no feature of the hand of the *Ilias Ambrosiana* which compels us to assign it to a date later than the late third or early fourth century. But it is clearly later than the Duke Plato, which belongs rather with the second-century examples on papyrus and provides us for the first time with a prototype on parchment for the *Ilias*. Already the Plato illustrates the effect of applying to parchment a calligraphic formal hand, one characteristic feature of which was regularity of contrast between thick and thin strokes. This feature *per se* should no longer be adduced as evidence of a late date.

If these comparisons are convincing, the Duke Plato joins the rare company of the Berlin leaves from Euripides' *Cretans*, the London leaf of Demosthenes, and possibly the fragment in Florence of Hesiod's *Catalogue* (*PSI* 1383) as sole survivors of the earliest Greek codices on parchment. Only the Plato is written in 'Homeric majuscule', but there is no logical reason why this most splendid bookhand should not have appeared early on parchment. Meantime the Duke Plato becomes the first ancient fragment of the *Parmenides* to come to light, the earliest manuscript of Plato on parchment, and the earliest

<sup>24</sup> Turner no.26; Roberts, its original editor, assigned it to the second century, Cavallo (*op.cit.* [*supra* n.14] 50 n.3) to the fourth. All other finials and serifs of the *Ilias* can be paralleled in one or another second-century papyrus, including the much maligned *delta*, which most commonly has a long untipped horizontal base like that of the Hawara Homer, but rarely a slight thickening at one or both ends like that of second-century *POxy.* 2260 (*pace* H. Gerstinger, *Die Wiener Genesis* [Vienna 1931] 54ff, who takes the *delta* as chief evidence for the late fifth century).

Plato in codex form. In pristine state, it must have been a prime specimen of those most beautiful books which Lucian praised in *Adversus Indoctum* 2, ὅσα ὁ Καλλίνος εἰς κάλλος ἢ ὁ ἀοίδιμος Ἀττικὸς σὺν ἐπιμελείᾳ τῇ πάσῃ ἔγραψαν.<sup>25</sup>

DUKE UNIVERSITY  
September, 1971

<sup>25</sup> Earlier versions of several parts of this discussion were presented at the meeting of the Southern Section, Classical Association of the Middle West and South, on 7 November 1970 in Miami Beach; to the Columbia University Seminar on Classical Civilization, 18 March 1971; and to the XIII International Congress of Papyrology at Marburg on 3 August 1971; the Marburg paper, to appear in the forthcoming *Acta*, is concerned less with the Plato and more with the *Ilias Ambrosiana*. I gratefully acknowledge a grant of funds from the Duke University Council on Research in support of this study.