

CONVENTIONS

We give here a few pieces of information that are relevant to the whole of this work and which are collected here so as to make them more easily accessible.

All the halachah obtained from the study of the sources is set out in the *Summary of Halachot* in the first part of the Conclusions. As this is set out in detail and in a systematic order, it is a subject index; and as complete references to the halachic sources are given in the notes to this section, it is an index to these sources. See also p. 285.

The name of the founder of one major group of Dositheans has been given as Sakta (i.e. سكتة) throughout. This is the reading of all mss. of Abu 'l-Faḥ except Ms. C, and is the form in Chronicle Adler and the two chronicles described below on pp. 46-47. Ms. C of Abu 'l-Faḥ has سليه. No ms. of Abu 'l-Faḥ seen by me has the form شليه given by Vilmar in his edition. As Ms. C is not particularly reliable, I have had no hesitation in following the unanimous testimony of the other text-witnesses.

The Hebrew and Aramaic are transcribed according to Ben-Ḥayyim's system. For technical reasons the form *sh* was used instead of *š*. Stress has not been marked.

Quotations of the Torah have been translated literally into English. Most of the existing English translations were unsuitable because they are not precise enough in their rendering of the halachah. In a halachic context, this deficiency would make such translations useless or misleading. Hirsch's translation was found to be a good model, which has been used with profit. I have not copied Hirsch's translation directly, first because greater precision was needed, and second, and more importantly, because the translation had to be neutral as far as possible, so as to make it clear how, in cases of disagreement, Samaritans, Karaites, and Rabbanites could all support their opinion from the text of Scripture. When it was not possible to be neutral, I had to give a translation that reflected the Samaritan understanding of the passage.

It is to be noticed that often, and particularly in editing the Kāshif al-Ghayāhib, I have translated from an Arabic translation given in the original text, and these Arabic translations are themselves not always entirely literal or neutral.

References to the Kāfi are always to chapter XI if the chapter is not specified. References to the Khilāf are always to chapter XV if the chapter is not specified.

All references to the Rabbanite halachah are to the Mishneh Torah, unless otherwise stated. Thus Mikva'ot I:1 means Mishneh Torah, Mikva'ot I:1. References to other sources will take the form Mishnah Mikva'ot I:1, Tosefta Mikva'ot I:1, and so on.

For technical reasons there are a few instances of minor divergence between the line-numbering of the Arabic text and the English translation. In such cases, the numbering in the translation has been used when making references in the Commentary and Conclusions. There are a very small number of instances of minor discrepancy between the division of the lines in the critical apparatus and the corresponding divisions in the text. These discrepancies are a result of the history of the printing of the text and were beyond the author's control.