

**OUR MAN  
IN HAIFA  
CARL ALPERT**



*Handwriting  
Reveals Pregnancy*

HAIFA -- Graphology is the science (or art or fraud) which claims to ascertain a person's character from a study of his handwriting. But whatever its status, graphology is today very much the "in" thing in Israel.

Whereas the yellow pages in the New York classified telephone directory list only six Handwriting Analysts, the yellow pages of the Tel Aviv directory list sixteen. More and more of the "Help Wanted" ads in the Israel press clearly stipulate that candidates should submit their applications in their own handwriting, for obvious reasons.

Large industrial plants, banks, and public institutions employ the services of graphologists to advise not only in matters of employment but also in promotion, and in suitability for positions of trust. Very often the graphologists render their judgments without ever meeting their "victims" face to face.

Not long ago a sturdy young farmer with all the obvious qualifications who sought to join an agricultural moshav, was turned down on the basis of his handwiring. Indignant, he submitted his script to another graphologist, who rendered a verdict completely opposite to the one that had blackballed him.

Admittedly handwriting may reveal whether the writer is a child, or perhaps suffers from palsy. It may indicate haste, tensions, precision or other characteristics, but in Israel today the fate and destiny of many people, their careers, their futures and of course their personal happiness in life are being determined by men and women who call themselves graphologists. In this country there is no law, no licensing, no requirements, no registration of

qualified graphologists. Anyone who wishes can hang out a shingle, set himself up as a professional, and if he has a glib manner and a good sense of salesmanship, can make a comfortable living at the expense of the gullible public, no matter how much of a charlatan he may be. A small number of practitioners have set up the Israel Association of Scientific Graphology, to protect themselves, against quacks, they say.

In a popular radio program, one well known graphologist delineates the character of persons, who, unknown to her, may be leading politicians, artists, criminals or others. It makes for good entertainment, and sometimes humor as when she hesitatingly identified the occupation of one writer as one who molds, shapes perhaps a sculptor? He turned out to be a mohel!

Another self-styled graphologist in Jerusalem has come up with a new angle. He claims that he can detect physical ailments from handwriting. He is careful to avoid prescribing cures, but he does diagnose. Thus far he has to his credit two cases of cancer and three cases of pregnancy.

If a court of law will give credence to the testimony of graphologists, their evidence can be quite valuable. In one case, a plaintiff seeking to nullify a will brought in his "expert" to testify that the signature of the deceased clearly revealed that not only was he of unsound mind when he signed the testament, but he was also physically unable to climb the flight of stairs to his lawyer's office to execute the document.

Knesset member Shulamit Aloni has come out fighting against the use of graphology as an invasion of the rights of a citizen when the science (quackery?) is used, frequently without his knowledge, to help make decisions affecting his future.

Not long ago psychologists and sociologists challenged graphologists in Jerusalem to a confrontation in which the latter would be put to a true scientific test. It was proposed that they study the handwiring of prison inmates who had been jailed for violent crimes, together with the script of ordinary, non-criminal citizens. They were to determine unequivocally which was which. The graphologists declined the test on the grounds that even "ordinary" citizens might be prone to violence which had not yet asserted itself; or perhaps they had not yet been apprehended. My own handwiring in English indicates one

set of characteristics even to my own untrained eye. But my handwriting in Hebrew is that of an entirely different person. Am I a Jekyll and Hyde?

I like the conclusion of the skeptic who said that if handwriting is indeed an indication of character, then it should be no more and no less than a reflection of the character of the school teacher who first drilled into us the manner of properly making the squiggly marks on paper that we call handwriting.

JERUSALEM (WNS) -- Religious Affairs Minister Aharon Abu-Hatzeira and three codefendants pleaded not guilty recently to charges of giving and receiving bribes. The 42-year-old minister and his senior aide, Moshe Gabbai, are accused of accepting bribes and diverting Ministry funds to certain religious institutions. The two other defendants, Rabbi Amram Korach and Shmuel Daskal, both of B'nei B'rak, are charged with giving bribes to Abu-Hatzeira through Gabbai.

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