

The recent revelations about and dismissal of the chief editor of the Dead Sea Scrolls should give us pause in considering this topic. At the end of January, 1989, I attempted to explain the kinds of matters that led to this dismissal to the newly-appointed Dept. of Antiquities Head, Amir Drori, when I discussed the problem of access to the Scrolls with him. At the time Mr. Drori informed me that he was on the verge of signing a 'contract' with Mr. Strugnell and the team he represented.

For me, such a contract spelled disaster, as it implied official recognition of the present situation, in particular, the barring of large numbers of researchers from access to the remaining Scroll materials, the filtering of such material through the veil of 'official' theories, and more of the cajoling and blackmailing we have experienced up until that time. In addition, I pointed out to Mr. Drori the worrisome aspects of allowing someone like Mr. Strugnell and his colleagues at the École Biblique full control over the central core of Qumran texts, the 'sectarian' texts. These fears have been fully realized and the public at large has finally come to appreciate the reasons behind them.

It was upon leaving my talk with Mr. Drori that I hit upon the idea of a request to the Israel High Court of Justice to gain access for all scholars without qualification. Several years before in May, 1986, Magen Broshi, Curator of the Shrine of the Book, had told Philip Davies of Sheffield University in England and myself that we would not 'see the Scrolls in our lifetimes.' This angered us quite a bit and led to the letter by Prof. Davies and myself in March, 1989 to John Strugnell to see the Qumran versions of the famous Zadokite Fragments ( these fragments have since been re-assigned to Joseph Baumgarten of Baltimore, side-stepping our request ).

I had been informed by counsel that in order to pursue the case in the Israel Supreme Court, we needed actual documentation of being refused access. Our previous contacts with members of the International Committee had all been verbal. As per his usual habit, Strugnell responded dismissively, claiming we had our plate numbers wrong, but this was impossible because sometime prior to that a copy of the official Israel Government print-out catalogue had come into our possession, a catalogue we later supplied to BAR editor Hershel Shanks triggering his renewed campaign on behalf of these documents in spring/summer, 1989.

In my response to Mr. Strugnell of June 15, 1989, I wrote: "I will not take this from you ( referring to a toast he had made to Kurt Waldheim as "the greatest living man of the latter part of the twentieth century" in my presence and a consonant insult to Orde Wingate as "a traitor"; Time, 12/24 ), even if other Jews and my Israeli colleagues will. Nor, if the decision were mine, would I leave someone with such a distorted view of world history in control of this precious national and international heritage."

Since his dismissal, the issue still remains, i. e. what effect

has the warped historical view of persons like Mr. Strugnell ( there is quite a long history of such centering on the École Biblique in Jerusalem, where such a view would appear to have been pervasive in the past ) had on research on the Scrolls? Magen Broshi, who last year launched a completely unprovoked attack on me in your pages, has made it clear that he knew of "Strugnell's antisemitism for twenty years" ( The Independent, 12/12/90 ). He has also cited on other occasions similar opinions held by the first editor Roland De Vaux, a Dominican priest, and yet how pleasant it was to work with such persons and seems to see no problem with people with such attitudes working on materials of this kind. Avi Katzman, whose interview in Ha-Aretz originally broke the story, tells us that in spite of these attitudes, Strugnell was a pleasant person or something of the kind.

I categorically reject this position. The issue is not whether people like Strugnell have opened up research to Israeli scholars or not, nor quid pro quo agreements allowing Israeli scholars access, but opening up the field to all scholars regardless of point-of-view. Where the École Biblique in Jerusalem is concerned, I was one of the first to focus attention on it, pointing out that a coterie of scholars connected to it have always controlled the key new texts, i. e., the non-Biblical or 'sectarian' ones never seen before. I also pointed out in The New York Times article last year, how such scholars have used this control to promote their own theories regarding the meaning and origins of the documents, not to mention, placing their own students in key positions around the world -- this is still going on. As I have repeatedly summed up the position to journalists ( AP, February, 1990 ): "control over the unpublished manuscripts has always meant control over the field."

In the Introduction to my book: Maccabees, Zadokites, Christians and Qumran: A New Hypothesis of Qumran Origins, E. J. Brill, Leiden, 1983, I put the position somewhat differently: "Various preconceptions have dominated Qumran research. A small group of specialists, largely working together, developed a consensus which was used to press the provenance of the most important Qumran sectarian texts back into the first ( and sometimes even the second ) century B. C. Primarily these stemmed from an animus towards and derogation of the Maccabean family and the additional underlying motive ( albeit at times unconscious ) of trying to distance the materials in question as far as possible from Christianity's formative years in Palestine."

Last year my position was represented in your pages as meaning that hostility towards Pharisaic cum Rabbinic Judaism in the Scrolls has been a factor inhibiting Israeli authorities from publishing them. This is completely untrue. I have never said this, nor do I believe this. Officials in Israel like Magen Broshi used this to divert public attention away from the real problem, i. e., that of the École Biblique and their own questionable relations and lack of sophistication in dealing with it. I don't think the Israeli authorities, whom I have only

accused of naivete and ineptitude, not chicanery, were even aware that this hostility existed -- otherwise why would they have put these documents in the Shrine of the Book? In any event, the Israelis published the documents that early on fell under their control almost immediately and did not, until more recently, attempt to make scholarly capital out of them. On the other hand, this hostility in the Scrolls to Phariseeism cum Rabbinic Judaism may be one of the factors explaining why many Israeli scholars never showed much interest in them, and as a consequence neither did the Israeli public, again until recently.

But where the *École Biblique* in Jerusalem is concerned, the situation was always more worrisome. The *École* is an institution founded under Vatican auspices. It has always been headed by a Dominican monk, the order known in the Middle Ages as "the hounds of the inquisition," and where Qumran is concerned, this is not an inappropriate simile. Whatever may be said of it, it is not an objective player, nor is its activity free of the warrant of its original founders, i. e., to render the results of modern archaeology palatable to its constituency. The *École* was well placed in 1948 and afterwards to do just what it was created to do. The 'Essene hypothesis' and the almost complete lack of publication of key Qumran texts ( largely thanks to people like John Strugnell who were familiar with documents like the so-called "MMT" as early as 1955 ) has been the result. With the new editorial committee and the way Qumran assignments are parceled out, though slightly alleviated, these concerns continue.

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But what is so potentially disconcerting as to have been only let out in drips and dribbles over the last forty years? I do not say that anyone has intentionally suppressed the Scrolls, but what I insist on and can prove is that there has been a 'go-slow' policy in effect at the *Ecole* and as a consequence the editorial committee as a whole going all the way back to the fifties, when people like Strugnell, Milik, and De Vaux gained control of the non-Biblical documents. And this has not simply been due to scholarly sloth. If nothing else, it can be shown that documents talked about and waiting to be published almost thirty years ago are still being talked about and waiting to be published today. Such a monopoly for academic reasons is criminal; for the purposes of management of information it is worse.

As I have put it in Maccabees..., those responsible for the publication of the inner core of Qumran documents texts have simply bored people to death, with the underlying motive, unconscious or otherwise, to make people think there was nothing interesting there and to go away and follow other endeavors and lines of research. In this, I think, they have largely succeeded until recently. Put in another way, since in the early years of Scroll research there was a lot of wild speculation that upset 'orthodox' theologians, the point was to diffuse interest in the Scrolls, to send, as it were, "the crazies" elsewhere. This,

weirdly as it may seem, Israelis in their naivete, lack of sophistication about the true import of the Scrolls, and ineptitude have abetted, and to a certain extent still do.

But what is in the Scrolls that could be potentially so disconcerting? In my view, the Scrolls are what for all intents and purposes and lack of a better name should be called "Palestinian Christianity" -- I use the term advisedly. 'Christianity,' as we know it, had not yet come into existence, certainly not in Palestine. "Christianity", as the Book of Acts tells us, was first called "Christianity" overseas in Antioch, i. e., in the Hellenistic world, and this in the framework of a Pauline community. It was never called "Christianity" at this time in Palestine, but rather something else, 'Essenism', 'Zealotism', 'Zadokite' or 'Nazoraean' or what have you. There are as many names as there are commentators and circumstances.

In Palestine or Eretz-Israel as the case may be, we are dealing rather with Jewish Messianism. The movement -- and it is a movement, as the ideological consistency of the new documents testify -- is probably best called "Messianism" pure and simple, or "Palestinian Messianism." For these purposes, it matters little whether the material was actually penned in a so-called 'scriptorium' at Qumran or came from libraries in Jerusalem ( as Golb would have it ). The effect is the same. It is this Messianic strain in the Qumran literature which has always been under-appreciated by scholarly accounts to the general public, and confused by reports of two messiahs and the like. It is this, too, that dominates the ethos of the unpublished materials, where, I am apprised, we have reference to the Messianic king over and over again, not to mention to things like the resurrection of the dead, the Poor rising from the dust, the Garden of Eden, making the nations his footstool, and the like.

But what kind of Messianism is this? It is not Christianity as we know it, which for all intents and purposes was overseas Christianity, Pauline Christianity, or that which those in the field know as "Gentile Christianity." This latter is antinomian, pacifistic, cosmopolitan, and Hellenistic, i. e., one of many competing Hellenistic mystery religions, where the main emphasis is certain ritualistic ceremonies that provide salvation from death. But in Palestine it was something quite different. 'Palestinian Christianity' ( one always uses the word advisedly ), or Jewish Messianism in Palestine in the first century was not this. It was vengeful, xenophobic, nationalistic, 'zealot,' radically Law-oriented, apocalyptic, and the like.

This is the literature at Qumran. Whether it is to be considered sectarian at this point is a matter of opinion. Golb is right about this, that it is very likely the popular Judaism of its time before the Pharisaic/Rabbinic takeover. But Golb is wrong in not appreciating that the literature, at least the new so-called 'sectarian' texts, is homogeneous and provides a consistent approach, i. e., it is not part of general helter-skelter

literature, but that of a given orientation, and this orientation is largely what I have termed, for lack of a better term, 'Palestinian Christian' -- Jewish Messianic will do just as well; for those knowledgeable about Jamesian 'Christianity', so will "the Jerusalem Community", "The Poor" or Ebionim, a term generously used in the Qumran vocabulary and well known in early Christian heresiology, and as good an appellation as anything else.

What is not generally appreciated by many scholars, and as a result, the knowledgeable lay public dependent on them, is that the Pharisees were not 'Messianic' according to the meaning of the term in the 1st century. Perhaps their 'Rabbinic' heirs are now, but they were not then. The approach of R. Yohanan B. Zacchai, the proverbial founder of Rabbinic Judaism ( and for that matter the parallel one of the Pharisee Josephus ) is instructive in this regard. He rejects the Messianic prophecy. So do the Pharisaic opponents of another Messianic revolutionary of a later era, Bar Kochba. Both, in a facile and opportunistic subversion of Palestinian Messianism, were in the final analysis prepared to apply 'the Star Prophecy' of Num 24:17, to Vespasian, the destroyer of Jerusalem and the Temple.

But this is the prophecy Josephus identifies in a much overlooked passage at the end of The Jewish War as the moving force behind the Jewish revolt against Rome, i. e., that "a world ruler would come out of Palestine" ( Nu 24:18 ). It is also clearly the moving force behind the Bar Kochba revolt. Its pivotal importance to these events is recognized as well by Roman historians like Tacitus, Seutonius, and others probably drawing on Josephus. This prophecy is probably parodied in New Testament versions of these events and for that matter by R. Yohanan and Josephus in their attempts to disassociate themselves from the Messianic movement and save their own skins.

This is the Prophecy that pervades the published texts from Qumran, and can be identified in at least three key junctures there, the War Scroll, the Damascus Document or Zadokite Fragments, and the Messianic proof texts. Who knows, where the unpublished texts are at issue? It is according to parameters such as these, i. e., the internal data or textual criticism, not on the basis of palaeography and the rather superficial archaeology conducted by Roland De Vaux of the Ecole Biblique, that in Maccabees... I have placed the larger part of the sectarian corpus at Qumran in the first century C. E.

The results of palaeography, in particular, used by the Ecole's American beneficiary, Frank Moore Cross at Harvard, an imprecise science at best, must take second position to textual analysis. It is for this reason that I called for AMS C-14 text dating of key Qumran texts, to attempt to get a more precise yardstick for measuring such matters, even though the process is not precise and fraught with pitfalls. The Antiquities Authority accepted my suggestion. They did not reject it, as was incorrectly reported

in your pages as well last year. What they did do, however, is co-opt our suggestion without attribution, then froze us, the scholars who had originally felt the need for it most acutely and at whose suggestion it was undertaken, out of the process.

The Qumran literature is permeated, too, with a host of allusions, well-known in early Christianity, sectarian or orthodox, like the "way in the wilderness." Applied to John the Baptist in the Gospels and referred to twice in the Community Rule, this is tied in the latter to the Law and used there to refer rather to the activities of the community in the wilderness. In the Community Rule we, also, have allusion to baptism and the "two ways" of early sectarian Christianity, not to mention "the Holy Spirit," even possibly baptism with the Holy Spirit, and spiritualized Temple imagery, another well-known feature of early Christian theology.

In the War Scroll, as well, in a highly underestimated section the interpretation of "the Star Prophecy" is tied to "the standing up of the Messiah" (possibly resurrection) and the "coming of the Son of Man upon the clouds" from Daniel 7, a favorite of early Christian exegesis, and there is much more of this kind of material in the unpublished texts, Daniel being a favorite prophet for the Qumran sectarians, as he is their modern 'Christian' counterparts.

But, whereas Christian exegesis is always spiritualized and other-worldly, Qumran is apocalyptic, this-worldly, here and now. Here, too, those promulgating the widely disseminated 'Essene hypothesis' follow the same 'spiritualized' allegorical approach to documents such as this and those like the probable Temple treasure list in the Copper Scroll. This is a mainstay of their tendentious interpretation of texts and the axis about which contemporary debates on these problems turn. It also bears heavily on the problem of having people with the spiritual preconceptions and warped historical perspective of John Strugnell and his confreres at the Ecole in quasi-monopolistic control of the texts for so long.

It doesn't matter if they are "nice guys" or "pleasant to work with", as Israeli officials and scholars like Broshi and the recently appointed co-editor, Emmanuel Tov, would have it, though how this can be is beyond my comprehension. They may be adept at piecing together texts or constructing palaeographic sequences, but with preconceptions such as these, they don't have the slightest idea what the texts are about, and never have. As such, they have drawn a whole generation of younger scholars (dependent on their analyses) away, into, as it were, 'false leads in the desert.'

What I have repeatedly pointed out over the last decade is that given the historical preconceptions they bring to bear on the data, no sense whatsoever can be made out of the texts or the internal data they contain, and none ever has. The internal data

and the external yardsticks, like the palaeographic sequences and archaeological evidence are self-destroying; the issue is just self-defeating, which suits our consensus scholars just fine. It is this we have always tried to signal by pleading with the Israelis to introduce 'opposition' scholars into the process, not only the process of AMS C-14 dating, but also that of oversight and editing the manuscripts. This is the only properly scientific approach to doing things. But they have ignored us, now clearly to their own detriment, and continue to do so.

It is not that Qumran is a precursor to or influences the birth of Christianity, and therefore can easily be assigned to indistinct period of time like second or even third century B. C., which these 'consensus' scholars try to argue, at the same time identifying one or the other of the Maccabees as the 'Wicked Priest' in the Qumran documents. This is a typical position in scholarship, and hardly startling. Qumran is something a little more than this, and this is the rub. It is actually what Christianity was in Palestine in the first century! As such it is totally unrecognizable to the contemporary eye, including many of our finest and most well-known scholars. To recognize this, one must be very familiar with the texts and arguments of early Christianity, and in particular have a critical view of them -- what few of them have. Cross and De Vaux, for instance, who with De Vaux's assistant, the father J. T. Milik, were most responsible for the present 'consensus', were Old Testament scholars, and as such, their expertise ended about the 7c. B. C.!

It is for this reason that I have stressed the community of James the Just, i. e., Ya'acov ha-Zaddik, a hitherto little known individual, but known in the extant texts as 'the brother of Jesus' -- whatever this means. The very mention of such an individual throws quivers through orthodox religious hierarchies, but I doubt if Cross, or the majority of Qumran scholars have heard of him, nor are able even to say anything of a critical nature about him. His community was known as "the Poor", a terminology that pervades the literature at Qumran, including this all-important 'Star Prophecy' exegesis in the War Scroll ( not to mention the key Habakkuk Pesher I shall refer to below ), an exegesis with strong parallels to a letter attributed to the name of James in scripture, which Churchmen from Eusebius ( 300's ) to Luther ( 1500's ) tried to have excluded from the canon as 'unchristian.' They were right. It is Qumranic.

In one of the key documents of the Qumran corpus, the Habakkuk Pesher from Cave 1, the principal document on display in the Shrine of the Book, whose contents have been known from the beginning, one of the key passages in Christian theology, Hab 2:4, "the Righteous shall live by his faith," also discussed in the Pauline corpus in three places ( another chronological pointer as to sitz im leben ), is subjected to exegesis. For me this is the raison d'etre of the whole Pesher, and its spiritual and ideological climax, but it has always been missed by my contemporaries, including Israeli scholars. The exegesis is, what

I would term, 'Jamesian,' not Pauline. As if very much aware of the Pauline anti-Mosaic ( and as a result anti-Jewish -- the original source of the peculiar contemporary anti-Judaic ideas of people like Strugnell ), it sets down ab initio that this particular biblical passage is not applicable to those Paul would use it to describe, i. e., Gentiles who do not observe the Law -- the focus of the proverbial 'Gentile Mission.' It even does not apply to Jews not observing the Law! Rather, the thrust of its exegesis is to "Law-Doers in the House of Judah," i. e., Torah-doing Jews only!

Is it possible that this exegesis has been totally missed by my colleagues? It is and it has. As unfamiliar as it may be to my fellow Jews ( including many knowledgeable academics ), familiar as it were primarily with Rabbinic polemic, this is purely and simply the 'Jamesian' position as opposed to the 'Pauline.' Put in another way, the native 'Palestinian' as opposed to the 'overseas,' the 'zealot' opposed to the 'antinomian,' the 'xenophobic' to the 'cosmopolitan.' It is the 'third way,' which through a variety of sectarian offshoots in the East beyond the scope of this presentation, was largely co-opted by Islam.

What, then, is so frightening, consciously or subconsciously, to orthodox Christianity in these documents? In the Qumran corpus we have consistent allusions to a Righteous Teacher, Wicked Priest, and Liar or Lying Spouter/Jester/Joker/'Comedian.' This is part of the infuriating code at Qumran, which cuts across most sectarian documents and gives them inter alia their homogeneous ( or 'sectarian' ) sheen. We can apply these appellations in a one-to-one fashion to characters known from these little emphasized episodes in early Christianity, particularly having to do with the infighting in the early Church between the Righteous leader, James, and the obstreperous opponent, following his own antinomian ideas, Paul.

What was so frightening is that they gave an alternative presentation of events in the first century, what I would call the native presentation, unadulterated, as it were, by overseas redaction processes and retrospective theological impulses. They give, as it were, the 'Palestinian' perspective without the intercession of a long redaction process ( except in the imagination of my peers ). And this perspective shows the events recorded in the Gospels and the early part of Acts to be highly mythologized -- in fact, almost pure fiction. So much so that I have referred to the Zadokite Document as an 'opposition' Acts. This is, also, why the Church insisted on such tight control over the documents from their initial appearances, as far as was possible in the circumstances -- under Jordan the circumstances were favorable; unfortunately until now, under Israel, the circumstances have continued to be favorable, that is until John Strugnell fortuitously self-destructed in public.

This conclusion, fraught, as it is, with so many frightening implications for the present to the orthodox mind or conservative



scholar and hitherto only suspected by avant garde scholars over the last century, finds its ultimate verification in these documents, which is why their untampered-with publication is so important, particularly for Jews. Put in another way, what happened in Palestine and the ethos of the movement out of which Christianity later developed overseas was nothing like that depicted in the Gospels. What happened is in the Qumran corpus. As a rule of thumb we can hypothesize, that as real contemporary eye-witness accounts, if it is not in the Qumran corpus, then it did not happen.

Events, orientations, ideological presentations as we have them in the New Testament are simply retrospective historical recreations, highly Hellenized or 'Paulinized' ( which is the same thing ) from an overseas viewpoint and highly mystery-religion orientated. There is no evidence of anything of this kind at Qumran, including the incipient anti-Semitism we get in these documents, betraying their overseas or Hellenized origins, and, as a direct consequence of which, that of their modern heirs. In fact, Qumran is philo-Semitic in the extreme. It is rampant, Jewish apocalyptic nationalism gone wild, and this, all the more so in the unpublished texts. There is nothing pacifist, other-wordly, or allegorical about these texts, and the 'Essene' theory must go by the boards. That is why it is impossible to have people with the mindset of a scholar like Strugnell exercising quasi-monopolistic control for so long over such documents without its having a deleterious affect.

Take for example the long-delayed and hopefully soon-to-appear "MMT." This document bears the stamp of a 'Jamesian' turn-of-mind on almost every column, particularly in its emphasis on "works" and opposition to 'foreign' and/or polluted gifts in the Temple. But to know this, one must first of all know what a "Jamesian" stamp might look like, and I doubt if scholars like Cross, Strugnell, Qimron ( even Broshi who calls me "minor" ), have the slightest idea of what this is, and yet they are the ones given monopolistic editorial control over this document. In Maccabees..., I have already set down the sitz-im-leben for considering the "us" vs. "you" perspective of the invective of this document in the split within the native "Zadokite"/"Sadducee" movement as opposed to the Herodian establishment, calling the one 'Opposition'/Messianic/Purist Sadducees ( also known variously as 'Essenes', 'Zealots', 'Jewish Christians', 'Ebionites,' and the like ), as opposed to 'Establishment' or Herodian Sadducees after the Roman take-over.

People like Strugnell and his campfollowers both abroad and in Israel ( of course what they are really following is Harvard University, not clear historical insight ), with their weird mindset and distorted historical preconceptions, haven't got a clue about ideas such as these. Nor in Israel are they disseminated to the general public because of the attitudes and loyalties of some of the responsible people there. Where the newly appointed co-editors of the Scrolls are concerned, Tov and

co-editors are concerned, Tov and Eugene Ulrich were both students of Cross and Strugnell and Emile Puech is the 'crown prince' of the Ecole -- so where is the objectivity to come from there?

This is the true orientation of the Messianism represented in the published and unpublished texts from Qumran in Palestine. As such it is intrinsically involved in the uprisings against Rome, the destruction of the Temple, and the birth of Christianity. It is this I have tried to put together in my theories, but these same theories have been distorted and misrepresented in Israel beyond recognition.