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THE DEAD SEA SCROLLS AS TREATED IN A RECENTLY PUBLISHED CATALOGUE

Esthetically speaking, *Dead Sea Scrolls*, the recently published San Diego exhibition catalogue, is a delight to behold: beautiful color photographs of twenty fragmentary texts, including some of the most historically interesting ones, accompanied by descriptions laudably designed to encourage the wider public's appreciative admiration. To make matters even better, the catalogue has been supplemented by similarly colorful photographs of pages from six ancient and valuable Bible codices in the collection of St. Petersburg's National Library of Russia, corresponding to the exhibit of those manuscripts simultaneously with the Scrolls. Judging by the obvious care with which these photographs have been produced and presented, one may infer that a major concern of the exhibitors was to develop a lavishly produced volume serving to enhance the exhibit itself. There can be little doubt that its purchasers will cherish what they have acquired.*

General Plan of the Catalogue

The *cover* of the volume contains a photograph of one of the so-called "scroll jars," beneath which appears the title "Dead Sea Scrolls" and, further down, the words "San Diego Natural History Museum." On the *title page* indicating authorship, however, fuller information appears: First, boldly, "Dead Sea Scrolls" followed by the words "Presented by Joan and Irwin Jacobs," and then, in smaller print, "From Scroll to Codex:

* The principal contributors to the catalogue are: as author, Dr. Rissa Levitt Kohn (cf. title page, bottom); as editor, Margaret Dykens; and as editorial board, H. Polkinhorn, M. L. Morreal, H. Shere, and D. Willett. Insofar as it is impossible to determine in certain cases precisely whose hand has been responsible for what, and although fully recognizing the author of the catalogue as the author, I am occasionally obliged to refer in the following pages to the above collectively as "the editors." — There are also prefaces by Dr. Stephen L. Weber, President of San Diego State University, and Dr. Michael W. Hager, President and CEO of the San Diego Natural History Museum. The copyright page of the SD catalogue states at the bottom that the catalogue "was developed in partnership with San Diego State University Press, made possible with a generous grant from President Stephen Weber's President's Leadership Fund." The next (and last) paragraph is to the effect that the exhibit is "a joint production of the Israel Antiquities Authority, the Dead Sea Scrolls Foundation and the San Diego Natural History Museum and is supported by an indemnity from the Federal Council on the Arts and the Humanities." — In the following pages, all uses of italics in quoted passages are mine. A brief bibliography appears at the article's conclusion.

Ancient Bibles of the Near East.” These statements indicate a somewhat different purpose than that usually associated with exhibitions of the Dead Sea Scrolls, which in the past have as a rule been designed to highlight the Scroll discoveries in and of themselves, without particular emphasis on the Biblical texts — a policy developing naturally from the fact that approximately two-thirds of the Scrolls are non-Biblical.

The unusual emphasis of the present exhibit is also shown by the list (p. 5) of the twenty manuscripts displayed or to be displayed, where eight are Biblical texts per se and another two are ancient commentaries on those texts. The addition to the exhibit of the six St. Petersburg Biblical codices, including two full Pentateuch manuscripts and a text of the Prophets containing 156 folios, results in a catalogue with twenty illustrated pages of these latter texts in addition to the twenty-eight pages given over to the Biblical scrolls and commentaries thereon, viz. the sum of 48 pages, out of a total of 79 pages given over to a presentation of the texts in the exhibit.

In that sense the major emphasis of the exhibit as a whole is on the Bible — rather than on the Dead Sea Scrolls as representative of the thinking and culture of the Jews of Palestine during the intertestamental period in which they were mostly composed, and to which past Scroll exhibits have, successfully or not, been devoted. The conflicting claims of the catalogue’s cover and title page appear to reflect an underlying ambiguity with respect to the exhibitors’ main purpose.

The Biblical Scrolls from the Caves

We may now consider whether the catalogue presentation succeeds in either of its two ambiguously implied goals, turning first to its treatment of the Dead Sea Scrolls *Biblical* fragments (pp. 12-30 and 50-53). The editors, as they indicate (p. 94), have in the first eight cases (pp. 12-30) based the English translations on a widely used 1985 Bible translation produced under Jewish auspices, with certain changes introduced by Dr. Martin Abegg Jr. to account for the variant readings found in the manuscripts. In the last two cases (pp. 50-53) the translations are based on the Revised Standard Version, a work produced under Christian auspices, with the variant readings introduced by Dr. Russell Fuller. Altogether, this part of the publishing project has been done in a most conscientious manner, with almost no typographical or other errors.

One observes, however, that each page of the catalogue preserves much white space, often 50% or more of it. The editors invite viewers (younger viewers, one may assume) to concentrate on these manuscripts with a continually repeated request, i.e.: “Look at the scroll.” Nowhere, however, do they guide those viewers toward understanding that the often obtusely translated Bible passages used in the catalogue represent *only the translators’ particular interpretations* of the ancient Hebrew texts.

To cite but one example, in the catalogue’s version of the Davidic poem in 2 Samuel 22, a typical verse (44) is translated in the past tense, as though describing a former historic event: “You delivered me from strife with the peoples, you kept me as the head of nations.” Other versions, however, more reasonably construe the passage as describing King David’s present glory; see for example the Cambridge/Oxford *Revised*

English Bible, 1989, p.280: “You set me free from the people who challenge me, and make me master of nations.”

Similar contrasts or contradictions could be demonstrated for virtually each of the English Bible translations presented in the catalogue (as for countless other passages of Biblical writings generally speaking) — a fact of life that impacts on beginning students of ancient Hebrew literature soon enough. In the San Diego catalogue translations, where Biblical passages at times start or end in mid-sentence (cf. pp. 15, 17, 19, and 51), surely at least some of the white space could have been used to offer contrasting interpretations of at least some of the Biblical passages on display. This might have provided viewers, particularly those bidden to look, with an inkling of the challenges faced by translators of Biblical texts, and of the uncertainties blocking the way to a categorical interpretation of their contents.

It is important to emphasize this feature of the catalogue as it now exists, particularly in view of the fact that, as we shall observe below, the *descriptions* accompanying each of the individual Biblical fragments seem to suffer from a similar characteristic.

Paleo-Leviticus (pp. 11-15): The script of the important palaeo-Hebrew Leviticus scroll is explained (p. 12) as being motivated by ancient scribes who, according to the catalogue’s author, “thought” that palaeo-Hebrew was the original script both of the Torah (which was “literally dictated by the God of Israel to Moses”), and of the Book of Job (of which palaeo-Hebrew fragments have likewise been found in Cave 11). This intensely spiritualizing view is hardly warranted by the nature of the evidence. Since palaeo-Hebrew was regularly used for ancient inscriptions and also is not confined to specifically Pentateuchal Dead Sea Scrolls, its presence among the Scrolls would appear simply to indicate a continuation — diminished and unknown until those texts were discovered — of literary use of this script among Jews of the Second Temple period, in the same way that other systems of writing, whether Semitic or not, have often survived for hundreds of years or more.

Deuteronomy Scroll 1 (pp. 16-17): In introducing the first of two fragmentary texts of Deuteronomy, the author states that 32 copies of this book “were discovered in *the caves of the Judaeen desert [,]...29... at Qumran, one at Masada, one at Murabba’at and one at Hever or Seelim....*” The italicized passage represents a disorienting conflation of diverse facts and concepts:

a) The Hebrew manuscripts discovered at Masada, including the Deuteronomy text, were *not* found in caves.

b) Manuscript discoveries in the Judaeen Wilderness were indeed made at the sites listed in the catalogue. However, the catalogue puts them all in a single bundle, while it nowhere signals the different time-periods distinguishing the manuscripts found in Murabba’at and Nahal Hever (of the Bar Kokhba period, *circa* 132-135 CE) from those found at Masada and in the eleven caves of the northern region of the wilderness (all prior to 70 CE). Without the chronological underpinnings, many readers are bound to become confused with respect to the actual meaning of

the phrase “The Dead Sea Scrolls,” which has consistently been used, for good reason, to designate the discoveries of earlier date from those of the Bar Kokhba period.

c) Thirdly, Khirbet Qumran is the desert fortress site claimed by various authors to have been eventually inhabited by a Jewish sect whose members supposedly wrote, copied, and/or possessed Dead Sea Scrolls there. “The caves of the Judaeen desert,” on the other hand, originally designated those eleven caves in which the Dead Sea Scrolls were discovered, stretching northward from the vicinity of Khirbet Qumran a distance of three kilometers to the area near where the Wadi Mukallik empties into the Dead Sea. The idea that this entire area could somehow be designated as “Qumran” is unknown prior to creation of the theory, *circa* 1949/1950, that the 11 caves housed manuscripts ostensibly hidden by the inhabitants of Kh. Qumran.

As this belief gained almost universal acceptance in the 1950s, the claimed connection of the eleven manuscript caves with Kh. Qumran gradually resulted in the creation and subsequent popularity of the phrase “at Qumran” to imply an *organic bond* between the caves and Kh. Qumran itself. This has, in the case of the present catalogue, led effortlessly, as it were, to the added assertion (same description, p. 16) that Deuteronomy emphasizes a “covenant” theme which is “*reiterated in many of the Qumran community’s writings as well.*” The Deuteronomy manuscript on display is thus employed as a device enabling the editors to make a pitch for the old claim that the Dead Sea Scrolls were possessed by a religious community living at Kh. Qumran.

Even though it is by now well established that no specific textual or archaeological evidence demonstrates the correctness of this claim, the catalogue’s statement is, once again, presented in the form of a categorical assertion. Not only does this initiative have the effect of portraying the editors as zealously partisan in favor of an unproven theory, but — what is more serious — it also in effect denigrates the role of Second Temple Palestinian Judaism as a whole in the development of religious and social ideas created during that period. A perusal of the descriptions of the Biblical fragments that follow reveals a studied intensification of the aforesaid effort:

Deuteronomy Scroll 2 (pp. 18-19): This scroll, according to the catalogue, “is the best-preserved of all the Deuteronomy manuscripts *discovered at Qumran.*” Categorical assertions to the contrary, why do the editors not caution readers up front that no Dead Sea Scrolls have ever been discovered within Kh. Qumran? If this fact is not frankly divulged to unsuspecting readers, how can one expect them to be aware of it? (Traditional Qumranologists, it should be noted, as a rule tend to shy away from specifically addressing this problem, while their opponents emphasize it.)

Isaiah Scroll (pp. 20-21): The author states that twenty copies of this writing “have been *discovered at Qumran....* making it the third most popular text in *the Dead Sea Scrolls library.*” The original hypothesis (early 1950s), subsequently modified in various ways by traditional Qumranologists as anomalies appeared in the original theory, held that the texts found in the caves were from an Essene library maintained at Kh. Qumran. The catalogue’s wording, although here not including the term *Essene*, encourages viewers to agree to the belief that a *sect* supposedly living at Kh. Qumran maintained a *library* there. No palpable trace of such a library, however, has ever been discovered within that site. Some authors assert or imply that they can imagine its having

been there by virtue of the fact that a few inkwells have been discovered in the ruins, but this hardly constitutes reasonable grounds for the additional categorical assertion in the catalogue. The fact that the Scrolls were found in nearby caves is emphasized by all traditional Qumranologists, but given the dire circumstances of Jerusalem during the First Revolt, and the known flight of its refugees, the fact that the Scrolls were found in caves near Kh. Qumran hardly constitutes a proof that the scrolls originated there.

In the same description, we read that predictions of the end of days by the Isaian prophets represent “a theme *prevalent at Qumran and also among other Judaic groups* in the Second Temple period.” (By “other Judaic groups,” the author apparently means what are normally referred to as other Palestinian Jewish groups of that period.) Instead of this characteristic proclamation, the author might perhaps with a bit more caution have suggested that many writings found in the eleven caves have varieties of apocalyptic descriptions, often conflicting with one another. It cannot be proven, however, that any single author of such texts ever set foot in Kh. Qumran. The “other Judaic groups,” mentioned here in a rare concession, are never named or described in the catalogue.

Psalms (pp. 22-25): The catalogue states that the publication of this scroll, which includes Biblical as well as extra-Biblical psalms, resulted in “discussions about the date of the final canon of scripture in ancient Judaism, and about *the influence* on the community at Qumran and on Judaism generally at the time.” Despite amply available white space, the catalogue offers no explanation as to the meaning of this obscure statement — while quoting at length the verbatim description of personal emotions of the Qumranologist assigned the task of publishing this scroll in the 1950s.

Job Targum (pp. 26-29): The author explains the presence in the caves of two Aramaic translations of Job by stating, categorically and without explanation, that Aramaic was “the predominant language of Judaea after the Babylonian Exile.” It is well known that many scholars once believed in this idea, basing themselves primarily on several New Testament citations in that tongue. However, approximately *eighty percent* of the Scrolls found in the caves were composed not in Aramaic but in *Hebrew*, a fact never acknowledged in the catalogue. While Aramaic was certainly used among Palestinian Jews, the question of when it became predominant among them is now, precisely because of the discovery of the Scrolls, clearly a matter of debate.

Minor Prophets in Greek (pp. 30-31): The Nahal Hever cave where the fragments of this scroll were discovered is located inland from En Gedi and was found to contain artifacts and textual materials of the Bar Kokhba period. That cave is approximately *30 miles south* of the area of the Judaeian Wilderness where the eleven Dead Sea Scroll caves are found. Yet among the fragments of the (six) Minor Prophets preserved in the Greek Hever text are some of Habakkuk, thus apparently inspiring the catalogue’s helpful explanation that “Habakkuk *was well-known at Qumran*, where a lengthy commentary on this book was unearthed.” As though to encourage assent to this piece of associative reasoning, with its ubiquitous Qumran link, the date given in the catalogue for the Greek manuscript is, categorically, “1st century BCE” — whereas in the official edition of the text (*Discoveries in the Judaeian Desert* VIII, 1990, p. 26), three

palaeographers give varying dates in both the 1st century BCE and the 1st CE for the production of this text.

The editors further observe that the “presence of Greek biblical texts illustrates that many Jews of the Second Temple period ... were more fluent in Greek than in Hebrew.” Coming after the earlier claim about the dominance of Aramaic, one might think that Hebrew was hardly used, were it not for the fact that the preponderance of Palestinian literary evidence preserved between the 3rd century BCE and the early 3rd century CE was written in Hebrew. A more balanced formulation for a museum catalogue would be that Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek, in that order, were evidently the main languages of Jewish Palestine in Second Temple times.

Samuel (pp. 50-51): A more reserved form of the categorical assertion that this (undated) manuscript “*was copied in the mid-1st century BCE*” would be that the copying, on palaeographical grounds, *may have occurred* as early as that time.

The additional rapid-fire assertions that five scrolls of Samuel “were discovered at Qumran” and that the fragments displayed derive from “one of the largest biblical scrolls discovered at Qumran” does nothing to disprove the (apparently unmentionable) fact that no scroll has ever been discovered within Kh. Qumran. If the San Diego museum, in taking on this exhibit, has been concerned with scientific accuracy, why does the catalogue refrain from ever stating that the Scrolls were found near wadis in caves stretching northward from Qumran for a distance of three kilometers?

Zephaniah-Haggai (pp. 52-53): The description of this interesting Scroll fragment has been written in its entirety by Dr. Russell Fuller of the University of San Diego, and is notable for its clarity and lack of partisan bias.

With respect to the Biblical fragments as a whole, the catalogue includes a glossary (pp. 92-93) that defines various pertinent terms. While many of the terms are satisfactorily defined, others are not.

(a) A **Masorite** (or Masorete, but not “Masorate” as alternatively given in the catalogue) is defined as a “scribe responsible for inserting the vowels and accents onto a Hebrew Bible text.” An expert of this kind, however, is termed a *punctator*, Heb. *naqdan*. The **Masorettes** were those who, over a period of several centuries, contributed to the creation of systems of vowel points and ecphonetic musical notations, and who wrote marginal notes in Biblical codices (i.e. in book form) on technicalities of the Biblical text. Three main groups of Masoretic codices are known— the Old Palestinian, the Babylonian, and the Tiberian. Of these, the Tiberian codices, and printed texts modeled after them, are the ones in virtually universal use today. By defining the **Masoretic text** as “the Hebrew text of the Jewish Bible....,” the catalogue overlooks the fact that Biblical Hebrew *scrolls* (as opposed to codices) contain no Masoretic notations, and also misleads readers into thinking that there was only one type of Masoretic tradition in Jewish history.

(b) A **genizah** is not only a depository “for *Jewish books* ... no longer usable,” but for individual documents, personal and business correspondence, and any other written items that might contain holy writ or the Tetragrammaton and are no longer in use, usually because of the death of an owner.

(c) **Cantillation** (not “Cantilation”) can hardly be defined as the “special signs or marks ... indicating how the [Biblical] text should be sung or chanted,” but means rather the *performance* of those signs. The appropriate term for the signs and marks themselves is not “cantillation,” but *ecphonic notation*.

(d) The Hebrew term **hazzan** in modern times does refer to a synagogue “singer,” but historically speaking had the more general sense of *sexton*, cf. the Ben Yehudah dictionary, vol. II, s.v. *hazzan*.

(e) The catalogue defines the term **Mishnah** in a religiously traditional manner (“legal opinions ... by sages from the 2nd century BCE to the 2nd ... CE compiled by Judah ha-Nasi... circa 200 CE....”). According to the ordinary criteria of historical study of texts, however, the Mishnah, together with its sister-text the **Tosefta** (unmentioned in the catalogue) are more properly described as collections of views of the Palestinian Tannaitic (= early rabbinic) masters, and some of their predecessors, on Jewish law and related matters, expressed during the first two and a half centuries CE.

(f) The catalogue states that the term **Torah** “generally [speaking] ... means instructions from God,” whereas generally speaking it means simply “teaching” or “instruction,” with only the Biblical context indicating whether human or divine teaching is meant.

(g) The catalogue defines **Septuagint** as the ‘oldest extant Greek translation of Hebrew scripture made during the rule of Ptolemy II (reign: 285-246 BCE),” continuing with the statement that it “contains a number of books not included in today’s Jewish or Protestant canons...” etc. This combination of assertions could mislead readers into believing that the Septuagint was fully completed during that early time, whereas no evidence exists that anything other than the **Five Books of Moses** was translated during Ptolemy II’s reign.

Other Scrolls from the Caves

In addition to the eight Biblical scrolls, twelve non-Biblical texts discovered in the eleven original scroll caves are described in the San Diego catalogue, nine of them now in the possession of the State of Israel and three held by the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan.

The scrolls possessed by Israel include the following:

Nahum Commentary (pp. 32-33): The catalogue's description of this scroll (as of those that follow) is based on a fundamental assumption that a religious sect actually lived at Kh. Qumran and was responsible for the ideas expressed in the manuscripts. The basic theory which gave rise to this assumption was created by Père Roland de Vaux and his team of colleagues in the early 1950s. Discoveries made in the years and decades following creation of the original theory have cast considerable doubt on it, pointing instead to groups in Jerusalem as the possessors and hidiers of the Scrolls in reaction to the impending Roman siege on Jerusalem of 70 CE. As a result, scholars are today divided over the fundamental question of the origin and significance of the Scrolls.

While support for the Jerusalem theory has grown considerably during the past few decades, there are still various scholars who uphold, at least in some form, the original theory of Père de Vaux. Extrapolating from this fact, the San Diego Natural History Museum web site statement of 5/30/07 heralding the exhibit emphasized that "*most scholars believe the scrolls were copied and composed by a group that broke away from mainstream Judaism to live a communal life at Qumran*" — in this way ostensibly justifying their plans for an exhibit based on the adduced belief.

Surprisingly, the wording of this salient assertion has been twice modified in the catalogue's introduction and glossary, viz.:

"*Many, though not all, scholars believe the scrolls were copied and composed by a group that broke away...*" etc. (as above) (p. 10). Cf. glossary, s.v. Essene: "...The Essenes have been linked to the documents found at Qumran, and *some scholars* believe the Essenes composed the scroll."

These modified assertions appear to harmonize with additional wording in the introduction: "*Many scholars believe that when the Romans invaded..., the Qumran community may have taken steps to hide their manuscripts in nearby caves...*" (p. 10). This, however, is followed by a curious concession: "There are those scholars who reject the Qumran community theory in favor of other possibilities, but *there is a broad consensus within the academic world that these scrolls present a spiritual map of the Judaea of 2,000 years ago...*"

This last passage appears to amount to a tacit recognition that even traditional Qumranologists, let alone others, have been moving towards the view of spiritual and social pluralism in the Scrolls expressed precisely by "those scholars who reject the Qumran community theory in favor of other possibilities." (See, e.g., my 1995 book *Who Wrote the Dead Sea Scrolls?*, where I suggested that the manuscripts "are the heritage of the Palestinian Jews of that time as a whole, according to various parties, sects and divisions that served as the creative source...of a multitude of spiritual and social ideas" [p. 383].)

Unfortunately, the catalogue's ensuing pages abandon the spirit of the introduction's final few paragraphs. The treatment of the Nahum Commentary itself exemplifies this contradiction. Here the author asserts that the members of "the community of Qumran" had unique ways of interpreting the Bible, proposing that it was they who believed "that the Bible contained hidden messages," and urging still other claims about "the community" to the same effect. At the same time, with this entry efforts at careful editing appear to slacken. Demetrius III is loosely described as actually being "a Greek king" (he is referred to in this manner in this scroll, but he was in fact a Seleucid ruler of Syria), and by the last several lines of the translated text passage, virtually all efforts at careful punctuation seem to be abandoned.

The translated passages are taken from F. Garcia Martinez and E. Tigchelaar, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Study Edition*, 2 vols., 1997 and 1998 (referred to below as G/T). While in that edition the translations have been diligently punctuated and are thus in this respect understandable to readers, the translations themselves are often enigmatic and foreign to normal English usage. The beginning of the translated passage (compare Nahum 2.12) of the Nahum Commentary, for example, reads: “Where a lion went to go into it, a lion club [without anyone confining him],” which obscures the meaning of the Biblical passage rather than clarifying it; contrast the far better earlier rendering by J. Allegro (*DJD* V, p. 39), “Whither the lion, the lioness went, the lion’s cub [and none to terrify....].”

Songs of the Sage (pp. 38-39): The particular hymns that generally known by this title are contained in two Cave 4 fragments, 4Q510 (not in the catalogue) and the displayed 4Q511. While the first set of fragments speaks of various wicked and demonic beings, with entreaties for the Lord’s protection against them, the longer second fragment consists of psalmodic raptures on the Deity’s glory and saving power, and its allusions to evil forces are minimal and in no way remarkably idiosyncratic. The catalogue’s lurid descriptions of 4Q511 as “Psalms for the protection against demons” and as “prayers or incantations of exorcism ...recited as protection against evil spirits” (p. 38) are thus not an appropriate way to describe these latter fragments; see, for example, precisely the 10-line excerpt given on p. 39 — lavish throughout in praise of the divine while referring only in a single brief passage to the banishment of a master of evil. (Unhappily, whereas the original English translation from which the catalogue’s excerpt is borrowed has, for this brief passage, the satisfactory “[He has re]moved the chief of dominio[ns],” the catalogue has “[He has re]moved the chief dominio[ns],” which is gibberish.)

It may be noted that the G/T English translation used by the catalogue’s editors introduces the first line of the reproduced passage with the words “*Of the Sage*” rather than the catalogue’s “*Of the maskil*,” for which latter an explanation is obscurely provided only within the following entry (p. 38). The catalogue does state from time to time that other parties supplied alternative readings for certain words or passages but, as printed, the catalogue is not consistent in identifying them. Along with the various typographical errors and other *faux pas* that appear in it, the impression is gained that the catalogue did not undergo a final critical reading prior to its publication.

Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice (pp. 40-41): Focusing once again on the unproven belief that a religious sect lived at Kh. Qumran, the editors assert that nine fragments of this unique liturgical work “were discovered at Qumran,” with the work’s variegated mystical contents “*all facilitating the community’s sense of engaging in a common worship with angels.*”

What the catalogue refrains from stating is that important additional fragments of this same work were discovered at **Masadah**, where Jewish refugees from the Roman siege and conquest of Jerusalem (70 CE) fled, holding out against their powerful enemy for approximately three more years. Masadah is, by foot, over 35 miles south of Jerusalem and virtually the same distance below Kh. Qumran. Pere de Vaux created his theory of a sect at Kh. Qumran a full decade before the Masadah discovery, and can

hardly be blamed for not foreseeing that event. Given all the blank space on p. 40, however, there is no reasonable excuse for the catalogue's failure to indicate that, for those scholars who reject the traditional Qumran-Essene view, the Masadah discovery provides fundamental material evidence for the theory of Jerusalem origin of the Dead Sea Scrolls, and cannot be made to indicate more than that they were composed by one or more priestly circles whose thinking was characterized by mystical tendencies.

The failure to acknowledge these Masadah fragments goes hand in hand with the catalogue's "sect at Qumran" mantra, while also facilitating a heightened level of categorical indoctrination that now begins to appear. For careful readers, this will hardly be helped by characteristic errors of wording. The catalogue states, for example, that the opening formula of each of the "Songs" includes the words "Praise be the most high." In this sentence the first word is not a typographical error for "praised." Instead, the word "be" is an editorial intrusion, due to someone's failure to understand that the Hebrew requires the translation "Praise the most high" (i.e., in the imperative). Similarly, in a passage describing the angelic beings who serve the Lord, the G/T translation which the editors rely on correctly renders "the servants of the Presence," whereas the catalogue has "the servants of his presence," arbitrarily changing the sense of the original Hebrew and the G/T translation.

Book of War (pp. 42-43): The catalogue entry begins with a reasonably accurate description of this Cave 11 fragment describing abundant blessings to be delivered in apocalyptic times, and it also fairly characterizes a related group of Cave 4 fragments (not shown) whose author imagines a stunning victory over the evil forces known as Kittim. These latter appear in similar, but variegated, capacities in other Dead Sea Scrolls. One of these is the well-known "War of the Sons of Light against the Sons of Darkness," which contains 19 columns of apocalyptic descriptions, some of which evoke ideas also found in the "Book of War" fragments.

The great brevity of the latter reasonably allows no more than the inference that the above-mentioned texts appear to be thematically related and together constitute a few samples (among many more discovered in the caves) that dwell upon eschatological themes. Such themes evidently attracted the creative interest of a considerable number of Palestinian Jewish authors during the late Second Temple period.

The catalogue, however, contains a notably different treatment: it moves from the pictured text, in which nothing obviously eschatological or otherwise lurid appears, to the other Cave 4 fragments where that theme does emerge, and thence to the unqualified assertion that these various fragments were *once part* of the 19-column "War of the Sons of Light." I am unaware of any work of scholarship that successfully demonstrates such a tight identification.

However, the identification does provide an ostensible reason for the catalogue's focus on the latter work, and for its proclamation that the "Sons of Light" are "*presumably, the members of the Qumran community.*" On the other hand, also according to the catalogue, the "Sons of Darkness" depicted in the same scroll "are called Kittim, a term that seems to apply to the Romans *but also includes those in Israel who did not belong to the community.*"

Regrettably, neither of the italicized assertions has ever been confirmed by factual evidence. Professional archaeologists active in the investigation of Kh. Qumran during the past few decades have been increasingly stating, on the basis of their specific findings, that the site, originally a Hasmonaean fortress, did not serve as a sectarian center during the Roman period or beforehand. If those responsible for the catalogue presume otherwise, then they at least owe their readers a description of the opposing view and an explanation for their own stance which would not conflict with the statements made in the Introduction. While “many scholars” do still believe in the original Qumran-Essene theory, many others do not, and it behooves the responsible parties and, all the more, the appropriate officials of the sponsoring museum and its academic partner, to explain why such a dogmatically one-sided position has been taken in the catalogue presented by them.

Focusing on the condition of the English rendering of this fragment, one may observe once again characteristic editorial irregularities. The publication on which the translation is based adequately translates lines 7-8 “may he open for you his good treasure which is in the heavens,” but in the catalogue the key word “treasure” is pluralized as “treasures,” skewing the original author’s meaning. (More accurately, the crucial phrase should be rendered “His treasury,” see Deuteronomy 28.12.) Other errors are also found in the original translation, and should have been corrected by the editors’ advisors. “There will be no miscarriage” (line 13) should be “no woman shall miscarry” (see Exodus 23.26), while the single Hebrew word *‘adatkhem* is first rendered as “your congregation” (line 13) and two lines later as “your community” (which at least has the merit of dropping the capitalized form of the noun appearing in the original publication).

War Scroll (pp. 44-45): Continuing the theme of apocalyptic warfare, the catalogue offers a remarkably reasonable description of these fragmentary portions of the “War of the Sons of Light Against the Sons of Darkness” not originally part of the 19-column scroll discovered in Cave I. (The pictured and translated manuscript is fragment 11 of Cave 4 text no. 491.) If not for the absence of punctuation throughout lines 20 and 21, readers untrained in Semitic languages would be quite able to understand the ideas presented there. The five copied lines of text describe an episode in the imagined warfare, referring twice to the slain enemy Kittim. The catalogue indicates that some authors have characterized the described battle as “highly choreographed,” and then abruptly proceeds with the observation is that the “Judaeans did wage war against the Romans in 66 CE, resulting in a terrible defeat and the destruction of the Jerusalem Temple in 70 CE.”

This statement, highly enigmatic given its place of appearance, seems to be the only observation in the catalogue of a genuine historic nature. One finds nothing about the political figures in Judaea during the time that the Scrolls were being written, the various parties, sects, and charismatic figures described by Josephus and the early Rabbinic figures, the influence of Hellenism upon the Palestinian Jews during late Second Temple times, or any other of the major historical topics and events germane to that period in Jewish history. The lack of any reasonable explanation for this puzzling omission is an embarrassment, particularly in light of the large amount of empty space in the catalogue. At the same time, we must certainly thank the author for choosing, as the

single historical detail to divulge to the catalogue's readers, the supremely important fact that the Palestinian Jews (not "Judeans") were defeated in the First Revolt.

Damascus Document (pp. 46-47): The initial statement of provenance of this Cave 4 fragment carelessly fails to divulge its classification number (4Q271, frag. 3). Below the translation itself, there appear the words: "M. Broshi, 'The Damascus Document Reconsidered' (IEJ: Jerusalem, 1992), 54" — as though the editors have taken their translation from the cited page of that book. The cited page is instead part of an article by J. Baumgarten on the general topic of the Damascus Document; moreover, it contains no translation or discussion of the lines printed in the San Diego catalogue. (Baumgarten's edition and translation of the Cave 4 fragments of this writing appear in *DJD XVIII* [1996], whereas the text used in the San Diego catalogue is, as throughout most of the catalogue, basically that of G/T with characteristic printing errors.)

The Damascus Document was first discovered as pages of two codices (not, as the catalogue's author states, "scrolls") in the Cairo Genizah Collection of Cambridge University Library, which Solomon Schechter, who later published the text, had been responsible for bringing to that university in 1896. The catalogue does not inform readers that the Genizah passage concerning the migration to the "Land of Damascus" is not found among the Cave 4 fragments discovered in 1952, including the one pictured in the catalogue along with a translation. Without even mentioning this problem, the catalogue states: "Scholars posit that 'Damascus' in the text could refer to the Syrian city *or could simply symbolize exile in general (or could be Qumran).*"

The italicized words might well be a puzzle for many readers unaware of the circumstances behind these claims. The theory that an Essene sect had come to, and settled at, Kh. Qumran was first created and widely propagated *before* early Scroll scholars began dealing with the Cave 4 fragments associated with the Damascus Covenant. Assuming on quite reasonable grounds that the fragments were part of or closely related to that work, and faced with a contradiction between (a) the Genizah text's statement about a migration to *Damascus* and (b) their by then profound belief in the theory of an Essenic migration to *Kh. Qumran*, several of those scholars created a new theory on the back of the old one — namely, that "the Land of Damascus" did not really mean the Damascus region but had to imply something else, i.e.: either Kh. Qumran itself or at least "exile in general," by which they hoped to suggest that "Damascus" could be construed as a metaphor for the Judean wilderness.

A question here obviously presents itself: Despite all the blank space on these pages, why does the catalogue fail to give even a hint of this background, or to point to any *proof* by a scholar that the term Damascus was, during the long history of the city of that name, ever treated as a metaphor for something else? The seeming objectivity implied in simply describing different scholars' views on the identification of "the Land of Damascus" casts dust in the eyes of readers by evading the problem that the described migration of a sect to the "Land of Damascus" poses for the believability of the claim that the same sect engaged in a migration to Kh. Qumran. What is more, the fact that the catalogue's feigned objectivity at this point clashes with its one-sided treatment of most

of the other manuscripts, raises a question as to the candor and fundamental purpose of the catalogue's producers.

Community Rule (pp. 48-49): The larger part of the catalogue's introductory statement on the significance of this work, known also by the more neutral term *Manual of Discipline*, in relatively few words describes the main socioreligious characteristics of the brotherhood group described in that text. One notices, however, that the catalogue here first connects this work simply with a "community," and then segues into the statement that "the overall impression ... from this text in particular ... has led many scholars to equate the *Qumran community* with the Essenes described in Josephus's and Philo's histories."

The purpose of this assertion is clear, but not its logic. The Manual certainly describes a brotherhood group — with characteristics (as the catalogue refrains from stating) similar to those of other brotherhood groups of Hellenistic times — but no passage in it proves that this particular group, or any other Jewish religious sect, actually lived at Kh. Qumran.

The catalogue's explanation, of course, reflects the identification by many scholars of the people described in the Manual (who designate themselves as the "men of the *Yahad*," or Unity) with the Essenes. However, what no scholar has ever been able to prove, for lack of evidence, is that the *Yahad* group lived at Kh. Qumran. In a well-known line, the authors of the Manual describe certain rules of study and piety that are to be followed "in any place where ten men of the council of the *Yahad* are to be found" (cf. Manual of Discipline col. VI, lines 3-8). On the other hand, they never describe any one particular place which is to be their central headquarters such as the "Laura of Qumran" creatively imagined by Father de Vaux, nor do they even once stipulate that the members are obliged to live in desert communities. The fact that none of this is ever stated in the catalogue would appear to be indicative of a lack of curatorial concern with objectivity in the presentation of this exhibit.

As for the technical aspects of the "Community Rule" presentation, it should be noted that a translation of only the first column of the two-column fragment is given but, inconsistent with the practice followed earlier in the catalogue of clearly marking off in rubrics (red outline) the portion of the fragment used, this is inexplicably not done in the present case. In addition to the characteristic typographical errors (cf. lines 4, 5, and 7), the manuscript identity of the fragment is erroneously described; while the English translation is once again that of G/T, the text is not from a "Column VII" as asserted on p. 49 of the catalogue, it is (as specifically stated by G/T) fragment 2, column II of this manuscript from Cave 4.

Genesis Commentary (pp. 54-55): Of this commentary, the first extant fragment (among several that were discovered) is pictured in the catalogue along with a translation of its first 6½ lines (once again without rubrics delineating the translated Hebrew text-portion). As observed in the catalogue, these lines and the ones following concern Noah and the flood, with the eventual claim by the commentator that it lasted exactly 364 days — his implicit argument for the canonicity of the solar year.

The catalogue, however, goes on to state: “*scholars know* from other scrolls that *the Qumran community* followed a solar calendar.” Such “knowledge” (which by no means extends to all or even most scholars studying these texts) is regrettably no more than a mental construct based on the combination of (a) the prior *belief* in a sect living there and (b) disregard of the actual variety of the calendrical texts found in the caves. While some of the texts do argue in favor of observance of a solar year, others, as various scholars have shown, attempt to *harmonize* the lunar and solar calendars. Contrary to what is urged in the catalogue, no uniformity of calendrical observance is reflected in the Scrolls as a whole, and there is also no evidence that any particular one of these calendars was ever used by individuals living at Kh. Qumran.

Further statements in the catalogue also reflect a misunderstanding of the admittedly challenging subject of ancient Jewish calendars. The assertion is made, for example, that for “the community, keeping the correct calendar was ... an important sign of obedience and righteousness...” whereas other Jews “... at the time used the moon in their calendrical reckonings.”

This doubly misstates the facts. From the spectrum of evidence now available, it is clear that other Jews besides brotherhood groups considered proper calendrical observance to be an important spiritual duty. What is more, the use of both lunar *and* solar calendars is clearly reflected in the Hebrew Bible; and during the late Second Temple period, as beforehand, priestly circles as well as other Jewish groups had an obvious need to harmonize the calendar of lunar months with the yearly solar calendar that delineated the agricultural seasons and the pilgrimage festivals associated with them. If there were also one or more Jewish groups who believed the old lunar calendar to be superfluous or outdated and tried to live solely according to a solar calendar, this proves neither that they inhabited Kh. Qumran nor that their spiritual zeal was greater than that of other Jewish groups of that time.

As for the seven translated lines of this scroll fragment, the editors faithfully copy G/T. It is surprising, however, that the project’s advisors have not proposed a correction to the first line of this translation, which reads: “[In] the year four hundred and eighty of Noah’s life, Noah *reached the end of them.*” — where a problem of meaning clearly exists in the italicized words although the official edition of this text (*DJD* vol. 22, pp. 185) does not make note of any difficulty. Within the Scrolls, emphatic consonants are not infrequently interchanged with their non-emphatic counterparts (see, for example, *yaqdilu* for *yagdilu* in 4Q403, frag. 1, line 31). If one construes the second consonant (hard *s*) of the next to last Hebrew word as a variant for non-emphatic form *s*, the translation becomes “a vision (Heb. *qesem*, cf. Prov. 16.10) came to Noah,” reasonably followed by the extant words “the Lord said ‘My spirit will not abide in man forever...’.”

Messianic Apocalypse (pp. 56-57)): This manuscript elicited much discussion among Qumranologists after its publication because of the apparent mention of a messianic figure in the final word of its first line, where a Hebrew term meaning “anointed” or “Messiah” appears; hence the author’s suggestion that the manuscript “appears to present a list of events that would take place with the arrival of the Messiah.” There follows a remark emphasizing the text’s importance due to its reflecting messianic

ideas at a time “when Roman domination led some communities to believe that the end of times and the coming of a savior were imminent.” This theme is then pursued by reference to messianic passages in the New Testament, and with the assertion that the Messiah’s arrival, according to the manuscript, will be signaled by the traditional miracles described in its lines.

This treatment of the text, however, is not borne out by a careful consideration of its wording. As is made clear by the photograph in the catalogue (once again lacking the earlier rubrics used to delineate translated portion of the manuscripts), the first three lines of the column appear to form the finale of a sermonic composition that had begun in a previous (no longer extant) column; the last of the three lines is the shortest, as properly indicated by an appended “*Blank*” in the G/T translation (the “*Blank*,” however, is missing in the catalogue). It is only in the first of these three lines that the crucial term meaning “anointed” appears. The last of the three lines serving as a coda: “Take strength, seekers of the Lord, in His service!”

After these three lines, the manuscript does not at all refer or allude to an anointed figure, but only to *godly* actions resulting in the miracles to which the editors refer. This part of the text shows no thematic connection with the earlier three lines.

Moreover, a problem exists in the first three lines that the original translators have apparently not considered. The Hebrew manuscript shows the first two of the three top lines in typically Biblical poetic parallelism, with line 1 stating that heaven and earth will hearken to “His anointed,” and line 2 stating that all within heaven and earth “will not turn away from the precept(s) of holy ones.” The second line, as is typical in biblicalizing poetic rhetoric, affirms the first line, by which token “His anointed” should clearly be construed not in the singular but in the *plural*, i.e. “His anointed ones” (see the same plural usage of the term in Psalm 105.15).

The translators do not use the plural, however, because the suffix of the word meaning “his anointed” does not include the consonant (*yod*) which would definitively show “His anointed” to connote the plural. In the Scrolls generally speaking, however, there are well over *twenty such occurrences* of this same orthographic deviation (cf. for example 4Q403, frag. 1, line 31, and also Manual of Discipline I.17 and VI.3). Thus, no objections on orthographic grounds militate against construing the expression “His anointed” in the plural. The rhetorical construction of the first two lines, on the other hand, *favors* that interpretation. In this reading there is no single “Messiah” mentioned anywhere in the text, but rather blessedly anointed individuals portrayed in the first two lines as the Lord’s favored beings.

At the most, one might legitimately claim a 50/50 chance that the first line of text mentions a single messianic figure, but this is hardly enough for the above-cited categorical statements concerning a messiah (delivered with a full dozen misprints in the translation of the text). The catalogue’s claims deriving from this possibility are no more than possible imaginative constructions. One is obliged to ask whether the catalogue of a

public science museum is an appropriate place for the arbitrary encouragement of mystical yearnings such as those reaching their climax on these two pages.

Enoch (pp. 58-59): The Enoch literature is admittedly difficult to describe concisely, but readers of the San Diego catalogue at all events should have had the opportunity to understand that there are several ancient writings (1 Enoch, 2 Enoch, etc.) portraying the Biblical Enoch as their main character. This is hinted at in the catalogue by an initial reference to “1 Enoch,” but the ensuing treatment obscures the bibliographical complexities. The further statement that copies “of the book of Enoch *dating to the beginning of the 20th century* and written in Ge’ez ... were known before the discovery of the Enoch scrolls at Qumran” compounds the confusion: before the discovery of the Scrolls, extant Ethiopic Ge’ez texts of 1 Enoch dating to the *15th century* were known.

Adding still further to the confusion is the fact that the English translation of the fragment omits many necessary punctuation marks, while changing words of the Garcia/Tigchelaar text which is supposed to be its source — so that the results are often only vaguely understandable. Where G/T has “These are the chiefs of the chi[ef]-of-t[e]ns,” the catalogue has “These are the chiefs of the chieftains.” G/C’s “incantations and the cutting of roots” becomes “inclinations and the cutting of roots.” G/C’s “[The giants] plotted to kill the men and [to consume them]” becomes “.... plotted to kill the men [to consume them.....].” The lines translated are the final nine of the second column of the manuscript, but once again no rubrics delineate them.

The Two Bar Kokhba Sharecropping Deeds

Two additional texts — legal deeds of the Bar Kokhba period (pp. 34-37) — are included in the catalogue’s category of Israeli “Dead Sea Scrolls,” which is misleading. The Israel Antiquities Authority and other bodies properly designate them as items among the *Nahal Hever Papyri*, in reference to the wadi of that name, inland from En Gedi, where they were discovered. None of the manuscripts found in the eleven caves spreading north from the vicinity of Kh. Qumran, internationally recognized by the designation “The Dead Sea Scrolls,” have ever been demonstrated to be from a period later than 69 or 70 AD. The Nahal Hever papyri, however, as well as virtually every other documentary text found in the Bar Kokhba caves generally speaking, date from the first third of the 2nd century CE. — a period in Jewish history that, according to the totality of evidence now available, was radically different from that prevailing before the destruction of the Second Temple in 70 AD. No publication of the Scrolls, nor of the Bar Kokhba papyri, has ever conjoined these two separate categories of manuscripts, and their intermingling in the present catalogue under the single category of “Dead Sea Scrolls” is bound to confuse readers.

No less puzzling is the description regarding the first of these two documents (**Papyrus Bar Kokhba 44**), to the effect that “it describes a transaction for land *previously owned* by the government of ... Bar Kokhba.” Rather than this, it is a contract under whose terms individuals who had obtained farm properties *in leasehold* “from the Nasi Bar Kokhba” agreed to sublet the properties to other parties. As numerous

documents from the Bar Kokhba period make clear, during the years of the Second Revolt the governmental administrators asserted Bar Kokhba's title to all Palestinian lands under his control, granting leaseholds on them, under certain contractually specified conditions, to those legitimately seeking such arrangements. (A similar conception of land possession prevailed, and *de jure* still prevails, in England and Wales, as well as elsewhere.)

The catalogue calls this interesting autograph deed "The 'Alma' Scroll," offering the curious, but hardly scientific, explanation that it is of special interest to Mormons because one of the names mentioned in it is "Alma son of Judah," which is "*the oldest-known occurrence of this name that is also found in the Book of Mormon.*" While Yigael Yadin spelled the name this way in a 1962 publication, the scientific edition of the Nahal Hever papyri (Jerusalem 2002, p. 45) transcribes the term as *Allima*, indicating (p. 47) that while the vocalization is uncertain, the name may reflect the Aramaic term meaning "the strong one." Indeed, the catalogue's author *used* the 2002 publication for the translation of the *second* text (**Papyrus Bar Kokhba 46**, pp. 36-37), and could thus hardly have avoided noticing how the same work's translation of the *first* papyrus differed from Yadin's pioneering, but only tentative, effort of forty years earlier. Instead of the misleading no-holds-barred method by which the Mormon-Alma theme is introduced, the author could surely have found a reasonable way, particularly given the sumptuous amount of blank space, to inform readers of the difference of opinion.

Also regrettable is the fact that the catalogue does not simply reprint the 2002 translation of the second deed as promised, but rather manages to introduce confusion through erroneous or arbitrary copying, viz.:

- Where, in dealing with a difficult verb (line 6), the 2002 edition has "I will pick (or prune) the date palms," the catalogue excludes the words in parentheses.

- In both deeds, the two distinctly separate personal names Eli'ezer and El'azar, correctly given in the 2002 edition, emerge as "Eleazar" and "Eliezer," and looking at the scrolls will hardly enable viewers to perceive that two distinct names are meant.

- The name transcribed consistently as Hayyata in the 2002 edition of the second deed is in the catalogue first transcribed as Hitta (Yadin's rendering) and several lines later as Hayyata, confusing the family relations explicated in the deed.

- "All that Hananiah ... held prior to this" of line 5 in the 2002 publication becomes an unintelligible "all the Hannaniah ... held prior to this."

Scrolls Held by Jordan

4QTestimonia (pp. 64-65): This Cave 4 fragment, first published by John Allegro in 1956, attracted great scholarly interest because its quotations of several Biblical passages and paraphrases, separated into four distinct paragraphs, appear to have the purpose of arousing messianic hopes. At the same time, it must be indicated that, unlike

with the so-called Messianic Apocalypse scroll, none of this manuscript's citations contain the Hebrew word *mashuah* or *mashiah* ("anointed one" or "messiah").

Instead, one passage encourages fear of the Deity, another speaks of raising up a prophet, another describes a "star ... and scepter that will arise from Jacob," and still another is the blessing of Moses upon the tribe of Levi, including the well-known passage about crushing "the loins of His adversaries." (In Christian tradition, the "star...and scepter" passage, has long been held to have messianic implications, but in antiquity and medieval times rabbinic scholars debated whether the allusion was to King David or to a messianic figure descended from him.)

Since the so-called "Testimonia" passages are followed by a non-Biblical text (the last passage in the fragment, not translated in the catalogue) which foretells the rise of an evildoer who will defy Joshua's warning (Joshua 6.26) not to rebuild Jericho, the fragment as a whole reads more like a sermonic compilation intended to encourage the idea that a great prophetic figure will arise capable of challenging and defeating all of Israel's enemies and miscreants. While some passages in the Scrolls do mention or describe messianic figures — in ways that show mutually conflicting ideas among the writers of those texts — no solid basis exists for asserting that the 4Q Testimonia text is one of them. It is only because the text was published and studied widely during the height of Qumran fever in the 1950s, when connections of these texts with earliest Christianity were avidly sought, that so many scholars have, without sufficient reflection, claimed otherwise.

The catalogue does appear to reflect some awareness of the debatable nature of this text, stating only that "Scholars believe that the Testimonia served as a source of texts for the community's views concerning the end of times." Yet even this more moderate stance is, despite what the scholars in question may believe, not borne out by the wording of the fragment. It includes neither a single Prophetic passage expressing the "End of Days" theme, nor any characteristic phrases that may be associated with the rhetoric of the brotherhood group that various scholars continue, in the face of growing evidence to the contrary, to believe were living at Kh. Qumran.

Moreover, the editors' mangling of the G/T translation of this text does little to enhance the catalogue. They fail once again to block off in rubrics the eleven lines of the manuscript whose translation is presented; virtually no punctuation is provided throughout the eleven lines of text used by them; and other signs of careless editing prevail, resulting in passages such as "You have heard the sound of the words of this people what they said to you all they have said is right" (lines 1-2), or again "I would raise up for them a prophet from among their brothers like you and place my words in his mouth and he would tell them all that I command them all that I command him"). Is this an appropriate way for a science museum to treat the presentation of such precious manuscript fragments?

Isaiah Commentary (pp. 66-67): As the catalogue correctly indicates, this fragment is but one of several scrolls containing interpretations of passages in the Book of Isaiah. Several of these *peshet* texts express pejorative attitudes towards certain individuals who are termed "the scoffers who are in Jerusalem," and warn them of dire

punishment in what the Book of Isaiah calls “the end of days.” This should be contrasted, however, with other scrolls that describe eventual punishment of all Israelites for their sins.

In any event, one need not assume that the authors of these texts necessarily lived away from Jerusalem. With the exception of the Copper Scroll (see below), it is difficult to pin down where the original author of any one of the Dead Sea Scrolls actually lived. The writings are so diverse in nature that one may legitimately infer that many of the original authors had their homes elsewhere in Palestine than in Jerusalem itself; the evidence available today is only to the effect that inhabitants of Jerusalem, obviously including the Priestly class, *possessed* large numbers of the various extant writings. Wherever they made their homes, however, it is clear from the texts that a considerable number of the authors resented the domination and ostensible corruption of the Priestly class in power in the capital. The accumulated anger, reflected in a considerable number of the Scrolls, does not at all imply that those making the accusations, and predicting an ultimate dire end for their opponents, had refrained en masse from inhabiting the capital. Josephus explicitly describes not only the quarrels and strife among the Palestinian Jews during the century of time leading up to the First Revolt, but also the mutually opposing factions in the city itself before and during the Roman siege.

Disregarding these facts, however, the San Diego editors only intensify their one-sided pitch, asserting without any of the qualifications made in the catalogue’s introduction that “The community at Qumran believed that the Bible contained hidden messages and secrets” about future times....” No words or phrases whatsoever in the Isaiah Commentary, or indeed in any of the other Scrolls, state or imply that the authors of the *peshet* texts lived exclusively in any single place in Palestine, let alone a desert fortress. The words “in any place where ten men of the council of the Yahad are to be found” in Column VI of the brotherhood-inspired Manual of Discipline are very much to the opposite effect.

The catalogue states that the *peshet* under discussion “interprets Isaiah’s description of impending disaster as applying to *the current inhabitants* of Jerusalem...”; but no more can legitimately be squeezed out of the interpreter’s Hebrew words *hiy adat anshe halatzon asher birushalayim* (“this [refers to] the gathering of men of scorn who are in Jerusalem”) than a warning directed against those Jerusalem enemies of the interpreter’s circle whom he terms “the men of scorn” or “lying deceit.” (Other such passages in the *peshet* texts refer, for example, to such opponents as the “latest priests of Jerusalem,” described as wicked plunderers, or to a “disseminator of lies.”)

The lack of careful reflection spills over, once again, into defective proofreading of the *peshet*’s translation.

The Copper Scroll (pp. 62-63): This scroll, discovered in 1952 in two sections within Cave 3, has the distinction, among all the manuscripts discovered in the eleven caves stretching out northward from the Kh. Qumran area, of being the only one that has a notably documentary character. Its twelve columns of text, describing the hiding places

of various precious metals as well as vessels, and scrolls, had to be cut vertically into strips before its contents could be fully read. A number of years before the Six-Day War, it was taken from Jerusalem's Rockefeller Museum and placed along with some other Scroll-related items in Amman's National Archaeological Museum. Although a copper facsimile of the scroll hangs in the Ecole Biblique in Jerusalem, no portion of the original has, to the best of my knowledge, ever before been put on display outside of Amman.

The presentation in San Diego of the original Column 10 of this scroll is thus a most noteworthy event, and those responsible for the catalogue have done their best to supply not only a color facsimile of the original but also a careful technical description of its physical self.

Only if one ponders the description of this scroll's significance (p. 62, last column) do questions begin to arise concerning the claims being made. Perhaps it is merely an oversight when the catalogue states that the Hebrew used is unlike that of "any of the other [Dead Sea Scroll]... texts," providing "a valuable linguistic link between late biblical Hebrew and [that of] ... the Mishnah." For, after all, another important scroll, the so-called *MMT* or *Acts of Torah* — extensive fragments of which were discovered in Cave 4 — shows many similar linguistic traits, and has also been described by scholars as forming an intermediary link of the same kind. This became crystal clear during the past few decades with gradual publication of the *MMT* text — which when it occurred diluted the claim of various traditional Qumranologists that the Copper Scroll was a linguistically anomalous document that could be of later date than the other Scrolls or whose actual authenticity could be denied or questioned. The catalogue, however, says nothing about the origin of this latter claim that the Copper Scroll was a falsification or forgery.

In brief, this claim originated in the fact that the first complete transcription of the scroll's text, by John Allegro in 1956, was revealed to Father de Vaux and his colleagues in the same year — which was four full years after the latter had begun to assert in internationally acclaimed writings that the Scrolls were the products of a pious and wealth-eschewing Essene sect living at Kh. Qumran. The Hebrew contents of the Copper Scroll, with its descriptions of hidden caches of gold, silver, Temple artifacts, and even scrolls, read far more as a great accumulation of treasures such as only the Jerusalem Temple could have accumulated in the years before the Roman siege of 70 CE. Not only did these mundane descriptions point to a Jerusalem origin of this text but, being found in the company of other scrolls, it encouraged the view that the Scrolls as a whole could be conceived of as having a Jerusalem origin — and thus that the theory being proclaimed with ever-increasing vigor by de Vaux and his team was subject to doubt.

Quite inevitably, Father de Vaux's instinctive reaction to this newly-transcribed document was to declare it, without any semblance of scientific proof, a forgery or the fantasy of a deranged Essene; and thereafter, by simply disregarding this manuscript, to continue on with his claim that the Dead Sea Scrolls were written by an Essene sect living at Qumran. For a few decades, he was blindly followed in this tactic by virtually all traditional Qumranologists, but independent investigations by scholars beginning approximately in the late 1970s (see references in my *Who Wrote the Dead Sea Scrolls?*,

pp. 417-18, notes 20 and 22) have decisively come to support the authenticity and historical importance of this text. This is the origin of the acknowledgement by various traditional Qumranologists, beginning in those same years, that many of the Scrolls might well have originally come from Jerusalem.

Approximately 90% of the Hebrew words in the Copper Scroll are now understood, clarifying that it describes the hiding away of most of the described items in the northern area of the Judean Wilderness — where the eleven scroll-bearing caves are also located. While some traditional Qumranologists who now accept the authenticity of this scroll still insist that it is nevertheless connected with the Essenes, the view that it describes sequestered Jerusalem Temple treasures is today the dominant one, opening the way to a new understanding of the origin of the Scrolls themselves. The actual wording of this text, now available in several editions and English translations, shows no evidence of forgery or lack of authenticity. Its only basic difference with the parchment and papyrus texts found in the caves is that, unlike them, it is a text of mundane documentary character written in good bookkeeping style whose contents are basically of an historical rather than literary nature.

Yet the San Diego catalogue treats this unique manuscript in a studiously different manner, stating that it “has *mystified* many scholars,” that its contents are “*puzzling*,” and that there are “many theories as to [its] ... *mysterious content*....” With this categorical insistence that the scroll is a mystery, the catalogue offers a value judgment that not only is bound to mislead readers, but also necessarily raises a question regarding the nature of the influences that were put into play in the creation of the San Diego exhibit.

While the catalogue’s translation of Column 10 may indeed at first seem difficult or even mysterious for lay readers, this is mostly due to editorial sloppiness. Although based on the G/T translation, the catalogue’s version leaves out much of G/T’s punctuation and even some of its words, while also offering arbitrary and unexplained changes of wording. Although the use of the word “*Blank*” to indicate extra spaces in the manuscripts is at times disregarded by the editors earlier on (as we have seen), in this case each occurrence inserted in the original G/T translation is slavishly repeated in the San Diego version, making the comprehension of the passage all the more difficult.

Thus we have, for example, the rendition (lines 15-16): “In the basin of the water reserve of Rachel, beneath the water outlet: *Blank*,” the passage ending there; whereas after these words the G/T translation correctly has the phrase “17 talents,” i.e., at the place indicated seventeen talents (either of gold or silver) have been hidden. In line 5, where the location of a silver-bearing cistern is mentioned, the catalogue gives the place as an otherwise unknown and hence mysterious “Beth ha-Keren,” repeating a typographical error of the G/T translation; whereas the Hebrew text itself (including the G/T Hebrew rendering) has an unequivocal Beth Hakerem — the genuine name of more than one ancient location in southern Palestine; and it is hardly helpful that the two lines following this passage are peppered with occurrences of the word “*Blank*,” which for ordinary readers simply complicates the understanding of the lines. “In Zadok’s courtyard” of line 17 is a conjecture (not in G/T) as to what may have been said in the missing portion of that line, and should have been at least bracketed. Lines 9 and 10 are rendered “there is a black stone, two cubits it is the entrance: three hundred talents” where the editors should at

least have checked the punctuation and indicated that the “black stone” phrase is entirely different than the G/T translation.

All in all, there are some difficult words and phrases in the actual Column 10, but nothing like the “mysteries” portended in the editors’ introduction. Without the various editorial errors and stumbling-blocks, what any reasonable non-specialist reader would be able to see in this column is the effort of Palestinian Jews resident in Jerusalem to hide various items precious to them. If the catalogue had but been enlarged by a brief paragraph or two (as was done, for example, in the case of the discussion of the Psalms scroll on p. 22 and elsewhere), readers could have been made to understand that various other passages of the Copper Scroll reflect an obviously genuine undertaking.

There are, for example, the descriptions of various known places in the northern Judaeian Wilderness, such as the Qidron Valley, the Valley of Achor, or localities in the vicinity of Jericho, where many of the hidings are described as taking place — in other words, the same general area of the Judaeian Wilderness in which the eleven scroll-bearing caves are located. Then there is the fact that the scroll was found in Cave 3, one of the eleven scroll-bearing caves, along with fourteen other (fragmentary) texts. The scroll also includes statements about the actual burial of *scrolls and other writings* — not only the “treasures” acknowledged in the San Diego catalogue. Moreover, the names in the scroll that designate various hidden vessels are known from other ancient texts (both the Mishnah and Tosefta) as the names of vessels and containers used by the Temple priests. In addition, the scroll’s final paragraph explains where “a copy of this writing” — i.e. of the Copper Scroll itself — could be found.

The above features are among those clearly pointing to the authentic historical quality of this scroll, but regrettably, despite the abundant space available, the catalogue divulges none of these obviously relevant facts.

These features must be taken into consideration along with the fact that, in descriptions of the other scrolls, every conceivable effort appears to have been made to convince readers of the truth or verisimilitude of the Qumran-sectarian theory. One can thus not avoid inferring that the catalogue’s descriptions have been designed to oppose the view of growing numbers of scholars, based on the present totality of actual evidence, that the Scrolls are of Jerusalem origin and have nothing to do with a claimed sect living at Kh. Qumran. As though reasoned debate on controversial issues were somehow anathema — rather than a pillar of democratic life — the evidence leading to these present conclusions is thoroughly suppressed from the catalogue. (See bibliographic note *infra*.)

From what has been described above, the conclusion cannot be avoided that the San Diego *Dead Sea Scrolls* catalogue contains a great many factual errors and unprovable assertions presented as truths. Those ultimately responsible for the wording of the catalogue, whether in Jerusalem, San Diego, or both, have thus sanctioned, wittingly or not, a misleading and one-sided presentation of the Scrolls — in defiance of ordinary museum standards of scientific probity and fair play.

Moreover, the San Diego exhibit must be seen within the wider context of other recent exhibitions of the Dead Sea Scrolls. In 2004 a major team of archaeologists concurred in the finding that Khirbet Qumran was built as a fortress and shows no signs of subsequent habitation by a religious sect — and that, by the evidence, the Scrolls themselves can only be of Jerusalem origin. Since then, despite those conclusions and other recent scholarship to the same effect, there has been a virtually unparalleled intensity of efforts by various parties to convince the public, through museum exhibits and other means, that the sanctity of the original Qumran-sectarian theory must prevail.

Given this theory's perseverance in public exhibitions in the face of salient evidence against it, even to the extent of possibly imperiling the scientific reputation of the exhibiting museums, a question arises as to the fundamental motive of the various parties who have acquiesced in the development and marketing of such exhibitions. If the exhibitors were to come forward with scientific evidence to justify this course of conduct, well and good. Otherwise, one must consider the possibility of other motives, particularly financial gain to the museums regardless of the truth or falsehood of the curatorial claims.

(Some American museums have been implicated in matters of this very nature during the past two decades. Cf. for example the *New York Times* report of 31 Oct. 1999 involving the Brooklyn Museum, where “ethically problematic” actions involving a donor were alleged. In the case of the Enola Gay exhibit at the Smithsonian, the complaints of bias and one-sidedness obliged the museum to withdraw the exhibit in favor of one that presented both sides of the controversy. Other prestigious American museums, as documented in various print and on-line media, have also been criticized for hosting ethically problematic exhibits.)

With regard to exhibits of the Scrolls generally speaking, whether in this country, in Israel, or elsewhere, there has never been a clear accounting of this matter. In the case of the San Diego Natural History Museum, total contributions have amounted to *six million dollars* even without counting entrance and other fees. Some foundations, rather than taking a neutral stance, have over the years apparently been supporting initiatives whose goal is to defend the old Qumran-sectarian theory as well as the scholarly reputations of those main figures who fostered it long ago. The San Diego museum officials would obviously be performing a service, both to scholarship and to the general public, by coming forth with a complete list of the names of the donors, both individuals and foundations, who have contributed to the current exhibition, together with an accounting of any special oral or written conditions that may have been imposed on the museum in return. My obvious goal in this publication is to encourage the transparency and balance in museum exhibitions of the Scrolls that might result from a measure of courageous openness on the part of exhibiting institutions.

Nota bene: On the archaeological evidence for the secular nature of the Khirbet Qumran site, see most recently Y. Magen and Y. Peleg, “Back to Qumran: Ten Years of Excavation and Research, 1993-2004,” in K. Galor et al., *Qumran — The Site of the Dead Sea Scrolls: Archaeological Interpretations and Debates*, Leiden/Boston, 2006, pp. 55-113;

and Rachel Bar-Nathan, “Qumran and the Hasmonaean and Herodian Winter Palaces of Jericho: The Implication of the Pottery Finds on the Interpretation of the Settlement at Qumran, *ibid.* pp. 263-277. Cf. the earlier findings by R. Donceel and P. Donceel-Voûte, “The Archaeology of Khirbet Qumran,” in M. Wise *et al.*, *Methods of Investigation of the Dead Sea Scrolls and the Khirbet Qumran Site*, New York 1994, pp. 1-38; and Y. Hirschfeld, *Qumran in Context*, Peabody, MA 2004. See further J. Zangenberg, “Opening Up Our View: Khirbet Qumran in a Regional Perspective,” in D. R. Edwards (ed.), *Religion and Society in Roman Palestine: Old Questions, New Proposals*, New York/London, 2004. (Cf. also the ample bibliography cited in the above mentioned volume edited by K. Galor *et al.*, pp. 285-297.

On priestly origins of various Dead Sea Scrolls, cf. R. Eilior, *The Three Temples*, Littman Library 2004/2005.

On the topographical, literary, and palaeographical evidence for the Jerusalem origin of the Scrolls, cf. my *Who Wrote the Dead Sea Scrolls?*, New York 1995/1996), pp. 3 ff (strategic position of Kh. Qumran, military character of site); 51 ff (scribal, non-documentary nature of scrolls); 56 f, 97 ff, 151 f (approx. 500 or more scribal handwritings in Scrolls); 117 ff (Copper Scroll discovery pointing to Jerusalem); 129 (claimed Roman movements from Jericho to Qumran clashing with theory of Essene movement northward to hide Scrolls); 129 ff (subsequent discovery of same types of Scrolls at Masada); 141 ff (mutually contradictory claims by Qumranologists in defense of Qumran-Essene theory); pp. 175 ff and *passim* (freeing of scrolls revealing large variety of trends in social and religious thought; p. 351 (discovery of various phylacteries in caves revealing disparate practices of wearers).

Cf. further, on some of the above topics, L. Cansdale, *Qumran and the Essenes: A Re-Evaluation of the Evidence*, (Texte und Studien zum Antike Judentum 60), Tuebingen 1997).

Readers of French may wish to consult Bruno Bioul’s *Qumran et les manuscrits de la mer Morte — Les hypothèses, le débat* (Paris 2004), in which the author has posed, to proponents of both salient theories, various questions germane to the problem of Scroll origins, and juxtaposed the responses offered by them in appropriate order.