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The Literature of the Second Temple Period

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Abstract and Keywords

Strictly speaking, the Second Temple period extends from the construction of the temple at the end of the sixth century BCE to its destruction by the Romans in 70 CE. Some scholars would now argue that the entire biblical corpus belongs in this period. Even if one accepts the more traditional dating of biblical sources, the final edition of the Torah must be placed after the Exile. This article deals with this literature. The literature may be divided into three categories, based on provenance more than on literary genre, although each category has its own characteristics. These are the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha; the Dead Sea scrolls; and the literature of the Greek-speaking diaspora. The first and third categories were preserved by Christians, the second was only recently recovered from the caves by the Dead Sea.

Keywords: Apocrypha, Pseudepigrapha, Dead Sea Scrolls, diaspora Judaism, Second Temple, Torah

STRICTLY speaking, the Second Temple period extends from the construction of the temple at the end of the sixth century BCE to its destruction by the Romans in 70 CE. Some scholars would now argue that the entire biblical corpus belongs in this period. Even if one accepts the more traditional dating of biblical sources, the final edition of the Torah must be placed after the Exile. Several prophetic books (Zechariah, Haggai, Malachi, Joel) and parts of others (Isaiah 24–7, 56–66) date from the Persian period. Extensive portions of the Writings were also composed in the Second Temple period. Older biblical scholarship often tended to look on this period as a dark age, a kind of epilogue to the Bible. It is now recognized that this was a period of great literary productivity, which included the composition and editing of much of the Hebrew Bible.

Nonetheless, the distinction between ‘Bible’ and ‘Second Temple’ remains commonplace, and Second Temple literature is commonly taken to refer to the literature between the Bible and the Mishnah, including some that was composed after the destruction by the

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Romans. We will follow that convention here. It is important to bear in mind that some of the later books of the Bible share a common literary (p. 54) context with this literature, and that the canon has in some cases created artificial distinctions within the literary genres of the Second Temple period.

The literature that concerns us here may be divided into three categories, based on provenance more than on literary genre, although each category has its own characteristics. These are (1) the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha; (2) the Dead Sea scrolls; and (3) the literature of the Greek-speaking diaspora. None of this literature was transmitted by rabbinic Judaism. The first and third categories were preserved by Christians, the second was only recently recovered from the caves by the Dead Sea. Consequently, the significance of this literature for Jewish studies has sometimes been controversial. The shifting status of the material is reflected in the changing nomenclature used to designate it over the last Century. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, this period was called *Spätjudentum*, a term that often had pejorative connotations. In the middle part of the Century, the label 'intertestamental literature' was common, an indication that this material was primarily of interest to Christians. With the publication of the Dead Sea scrolls, however, more Jewish scholars entered this field of study. 'Early Judaism' was proposed as a corrective to *Spätdtjudentum*, but this term raised the difficult question of when Judaism might be said to have begun. Finally, by the last decades of the Century 'Second Temple' was accepted as a chronological term without ideological overtones (e.g. Stone 1984), even though the distinction between late-biblical and early post-biblical literature remains problematic.

The changing names reflect changing views of the material. The introduction to Schürer's classic history, which is retained in the revised edition, declared that 'the chief characteristic of this period was the growing importance of Pharisaism', arising out of 'the legalistic orientation introduced by Ezra' (Schürer 1973–87: i. 1). For R. H. Charles, in contrast, the Pseudepigrapha provided an alternative to Pharisaism, and illustrated the kind of Judaism from which Christianity arose. Christian scholarship on the Dead Sea scrolls also found strong lines of continuity with Christianity. In contrast, Jewish scholarship at the end of the Century focused rather on the affinities of the Scrolls with rabbinic Judaism (Schirfman). One of the major contributions of the last decade or so is the work of James Kugel (1998), who shows the pervasive interest in biblical interpretation across all genres of literature in this period. This interest is clearly related to the rise of midrash, but Kugel draws widely on Christian sources as well as Jewish to establish his thesis.

Even though the last decades of the twentieth century have seen a growing appreciation of the similarities between Second Temple and rabbinic Judaism, few would deny that the differences remain substantial. The Judaism (or Judaisms, as Jacob Neusner would have it; see Neusner in Avery-Peck, Neusner, and Chilton 2001: 3–21) that Second Temple literature portrays is often quite different from that of the rabbis, and it has wide-ranging implications for understanding the literary heritage of Judaism.

(p. 55) The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha

The Apocrypha

'Apocrypha' ('hidden books') is the name given by Protestant Christians to those books that were transmitted with the Greek and Latin bibles but were not found in the Hebrew. Most of these books are accepted as canonical scripture by Roman Catholics: 1–2 Maccabees, Ben Sira ('Ecclesiasticus'), Wisdom of Solomon, Baruch (including the Letter of Jeremiah), Tobit, Judith, and additional passages in the books of Esther and Daniel (including the stories of Susanna and Bel and the Dragon). A few others are included in the scriptures of the Eastern Orthodox churches (3 and 4 Maccabees, Psalm 151). Some are not regarded as canonical by any church (1–2 Esdras, Prayer of Manasseh). Two other books, the Odes and Psalms of Solomon, which are normally assigned to the Pseudepigrapha rather than the Apocrypha, are also included in manuscripts of the Greek Bible. With the exceptions of the Odes of Solomon and of parts of 2 Esdras, all these books are clearly Jewish in origin. While a few (Wisdom of Solomon, 2 Maccabees, 3 and 4 Maccabees) were composed in Greek, most are likely to have been written in Hebrew or Aramaic. Only in the cases of Ben Sira, Tobit, and Psalm 151, however, have parts of the Semitic originals been preserved.

It is clear enough that the status of these books in the Christian churches derives from the fact that they were transmitted in collections of Jewish scriptures in antiquity. The scriptures taken over by the Christians were in Greek. So it was thought at one time that Alexandrian Jewry had a larger canon of scriptures than their brethren in the land of Israel. The idea of an Alexandrian canon, however, was decisively refuted by Sundberg (1964). It is now clear that there was no such canon in the sense of a fixed list of books. Throughout the later Second Temple period, the Torah and the Prophets were the common scriptures of all Jews, but there was also an undefined category of writings, which varied from one group to another, as can be seen from the Dead Sea scrolls (see Barton 1986; Collins 1997a: 3–21). It has been suggested that the smaller canon of Hebrew scriptures adopted by the rabbis corresponded to that of the Pharisees before 70 CE (Cross 1998: 219–29).

The group of writings that became the Apocrypha did not by any means contain all the writings that enjoyed popularity in the Second Temple period. Apocalyptic writings are conspicuous by their absence, as they also are in rabbinic Judaism. Neither is there anything here of a halachic nature. Wisdom texts are well represented, as are historical books (Maccabees), pious tales, and prayers. These presumably were books that won the approval of church authorities and gave no offence to Christians. Even the militant nationalism of 1 Maccabees could be endorsed by Christians as part of their own heritage. It is striking that very few of these books are found at Qumran. This is not surprising in the case of books that were written in (p. 56) Greek, but the absence of such

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books as 1 Maccabees and Judith is noteworthy. The people who preserved the Dead Sea scrolls had a quarrel with the Hasmoneans, and were unlikely to preserve anything that served their propaganda, but these books were not preserved by rabbinic Judaism either.

The books of the Apocrypha are indicative of some important trends in Second Temple Judaism. Ben Sira famously identified Wisdom with the book of the law of Moses (Sira 24), and appended to his wisdom teaching a review of biblical history in the form of a eulogy of biblical heroes. The Wisdom of Solomon contains a retelling of biblical history down to the Exodus. The Torah of Moses had evidently become part of the curriculum of wisdom teachers in the Hellenistic period, and this reflects its growing stature as a normative book. The main debate on this issue in recent scholarship has concerned the significance of identifying Wisdom with the Book of the Torah. On one interpretation, the identification represented a rejection of alien, specifically Hellenistic, wisdom, and an affirmation of Jewish particularism (Sanders 1977:331). Alternatively, it was an affirmation that all wisdom was one, and so that genuine wisdom from any source could be correlated with the Torah and used to interpret it (Collins 1997b: 54–6). The latter interpretation finds some support in the scattered allusions to Greek literature and philosophy in Ben Sira's book. Later, we find the particularistic equation of Wisdom and Law in the Book of Baruch, while Hellenistic Jewish writers such as Philo take the identification in its universalistic sense.

The Pseudepigrapha

The selectivity of the traditional Apocrypha becomes clear in comparison with the much larger corpus known as the Pseudepigrapha. These writings are so called because they are typically attributed to famous biblical figures—Enoch, Abraham, Moses, and so on. (Some pseudepigraphic writings from the Hellenistic diaspora are attributed to non-biblical figures, such as Phocylides or the Sibyl.) Only a few of these pseudepigrapha, such as the Psalms of Solomon and the Sibylline Oracles, were known continuously throughout western history. Many of them were preserved by Eastern Christians, in Ethiopic, Syriac, or Old Church Slavonic. Some Pseudepigrapha that were written in Greek or Latin were long forgotten, and only rediscovered by researchers in the nineteenth Century. The modern study of this literature began with the edition of 1 Enoch by Richard Laurence in 1821, and this was followed by a series of editions in the latter half of the nineteenth Century (Jubilees, 2 and 3 Baruch, 2 Enoch, the Apocalypse of Abraham, the Testament of Abraham). At the beginning of the twentieth Century there were landmark editions of the collected Pseudepigrapha in German (Kautzsch 1900) and English (Charles 1913). Thereafter, interest in this literature lapsed until the discovery of the Dead Sea (p. 57) scrolls. The most comprehensive collection available is that edited by Charlesworth (1983/1985).

These writings have given rise to two main issues in the context of Jewish studies. The first concerns their authenticity as witnesses to ancient Judaism. All these texts have been preserved by Christians, not by Jews. Some scholars have argued that they should

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first be understood as documents of late antique Christianity, and only secondarily, if at all, as Jewish documents (see e.g. Satran 1995). This debate has been especially acute in the case of texts that include explicit Christian references. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth Centuries scholars tended to postulate source documents, and regarded the Christian elements in the Pseudepigrapha as interpolations (for numerous examples see Charles 1913). This tendency went hand in hand with the kind of source criticism then in vogue in biblical studies, which tended to impose modern ideas of clarity and consistency on the ancient texts. In the latter part of the twentieth Century the pendulum swung in the opposite direction, and scholars were more inclined to give primacy to the text in its received form.

The case for Christian authorship of pseudepigrapha that are attributed to figures drawn from the Hebrew Bible differs from case to case. In 1 Enoch there are no indisputable Christian references. Debate has centred mainly on the section of the text called the Similitudes or Parables (1 Enoch 37–71). In part, the suspicion of Christian origin has arisen from the fact that this is the only section of 1 Enoch that is not attested in the Dead Sea scrolls. In part it arises from the prominence of a figure called ‘that Son of Man’. This figure is clearly derived from the ‘one like a son of man’ in Daniel 7, but the title ‘Son of Man’ was appropriated by the early Christians and applied to Jesus in the Gospels. The argument for (late) Christian origins was made above all by the Polish Catholic scholar J. T. Milik (1976: 89–98), but it has not been widely persuasive. Not only is there no explicit reference to Jesus in this book, but at the end of the book (71:14) an angel tells Enoch that ‘you are the Son of Man who has righteousness’. The meaning of this verse has been disputed at length (see Collins 1998a: 187–91). Nowhere else in the Similitudes is there any hint that the figure whom Enoch sees in his visions is none other than himself, and the preceding chapter (70:1) seems to make a clear distinction between Enoch and the Son of Man. It may be that the passage intended to affirm the similarity of Enoch and the Son of Man rather than their identity, or that it was added secondarily. Nonetheless, the passage lends itself easily to the assumption that the Son of Man is Enoch, and this is in line with a later Jewish tradition that Enoch was elevated to become Metatron, the little YHWH (3 Enoch or *Sepher Hekalot*; see Alexander in Charlesworth 1983: 223–315; Davila in Newman, Davila, and Lewis 1999: 3–18). It is unthinkable that a Christian author would have allowed any ambiguity as to the identity of the Son of Man. The Similitudes, like the rest of 1 Enoch, are Jewish, even though the kind of Judaism they reflect is more similar in some respects to early Christianity than to the religion of the rabbis.

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A much more difficult case is presented by the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs, which are preserved in Greek and in Armenian. The Testaments are clearly Christian in their present form. One of their distinctive features is the expectation of a messiah from Levi and Judah who is evidently identified as Christ. According to the Testament of Simeon (7: 2), he will be priest and king, God and man. T. Joseph refers to him as ‘the lamb of God’ (19: 6). T. Judah 24 speaks of a man from the tribe of Judah. The heavens

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will be opened for him and no sin will be found in him. Scholars have argued that each of these references can be justified in a Jewish context, or alternatively that they are Christian insertions in a text that is basically Jewish (Charles 1913: 291). The cumulative evidence, however, is far more easily explained on the assumption of Christian authorship (de Jonge 1953).

Nonetheless, there are good reasons to think that the Testaments draw heavily on Jewish traditions. It is not clear why a Christian author should want to associate Christ with both Levi and Judah. The fact that the Jewish authors of the Dead Sea scrolls expected two messiahs, one priestly and one royal, cannot be coincidental. Moreover, partial parallels to the Testament of Levi, in Aramaic, and to the Testament of Naphtali, in Hebrew, have been found among the Dead Sea scrolls. It is possible, however, that these were source documents used by the later authors of the Testaments (de Jonge 2000). The crucial issue here is whether these traditions were already given the form of Testaments by a Jewish author, or whether the work as we know it is essentially the work of Christians. Besides their messianic passages, the Testaments contain lengthy ethical sermons. The ethical teachings can be explained in the context of Hellenistic Judaism, but they can be explained equally well in the context of Christianity. The early Christians took over much of the ethical teaching of the Jewish diaspora, and this already had much in common with the teachings of popular Hellenistic philosophers. In light of this situation, it is often difficult to identify specific passages as either Jewish or Christian.

The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs represent an exceptionally difficult case. It is now granted that Christians as well as Jews could compose texts in the name of figures from the Hebrew Bible. The Ascension of Isaiah is a case in point. Attempts to reconstruct an underlying Jewish composition in some of these texts are dubious. At the other end of the spectrum, several texts (1 Enoch, 2 Baruch, 4 Ezra, Psalms of Solomon) have scarcely anything that would suggest Christian authorship at all. (The attempt of J. Efron 1987: 219–86 to deny that the Psalms of Solomon are Jewish strikes most scholars as quixotic.) In other cases, it may be possible to distinguish Jewish and Christian layers, where the distinct emphases of each are still visible in the composite documents (3 Baruch; 1–2 Sibylline Oracles; see Harlow 1996; Collins in Charlesworth 1983: 330–53). While the origin of some material is uncertain and will continue to be debated, there is much material in the Pseudepigrapha that is undeniably Jewish, and that enables us to recover aspects of Jewish literature and religion that were lost to rabbinic tradition.

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A second set of issues arising from the Pseudepigrapha concerns the place of apocalypticism in Judaism. Only one fully fledged apocalyptic writing, the Book of Daniel, was included in the Hebrew Bible. Daniel is a composite book, containing tales about Daniel and his companions at the Babylonian court as well as apocalyptic visions. The apocalyptic visions that make up the second half of the book (Daniel 7–12) have much in common with the books of the prophets, especially Ezekiel and Zechariah. In contrast, the book of Enoch presents a view of the world that is remote from either the classical

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prophets or rabbinic Judaism. It tells of fallen angels and their demonic offspring, and of mythical places at the edges of the earth, where places of judgement are prepared and where the souls of the dead await punishment. Other parts of the collection that makes up 1 Enoch describe the movements of the stars, or narrate the entire course of history, divided into periods. Enoch shares certain crucial features with Daniel, such as the claim of extraordinary revelation, interest in the angelic world, and belief in the judgement of the dead. But these are the very features that make the Book of Daniel exceptional in the Hebrew scriptures. Moreover, apocalyptic literature has figured much more prominently in Christian than in Jewish history, although Christians too have often looked on it with suspicion.

Scholars have tried to deal with the strangeness of apocalyptic literature in various ways. One way was to try to assimilate it to more familiar types of literature. So it was argued that 'apocalyptic' was a child of prophecy (Rowley 1944) or a late form of wisdom literature (von Rad 1965: ii. 315–30). Only in the last quarter of the twentieth century has apocalyptic literature been recognized as a phenomenon in its own right, a new kind of literature developed in Judaism in the Hellenistic and Roman periods. Rowley and von Rad were biblical scholars, whose primary interest was in the Hebrew Scriptures. These scholars, naturally enough, approached the material with biblical categories in mind. From the 1970s onward, however, apocalyptic literature was studied in the context of the Pseudepigrapha or Dead Sea scrolls. Also salutary was a change in focus from 'apocalyptic' as a kind of theology, often with a view to its relevance for the New Testament, to the study of apocalypse as a literary genre, with a more balanced appreciation of the defining features of apocalyptic literature in both Judaism and Christianity (Collins 1979).

Two results of the study of the genre merit special notice. First, apocalypses are not concerned only with cosmic eschatology of the kind familiar from the books of Daniel and Revelation. They are also, even primarily, revelations of heavenly mysteries (see also Rowland 1982). Much of the study of apocalyptic literature in the last decades of the twentieth Century has been concerned with ascents to heaven and descents to the netherworld, and with the continuities between this literature and later Jewish mysticism (Himmelfarb 1983, 1993). Second, the genre is not peculiar to Judaism and Christianity, but has parallels throughout the Graeco-Roman world. (For the wider cultural context, see Hellholm 1983; Collins 1998b.) The relationship between Jewish and Persian apocalypticism is especially intriguing, (p. 60) but remains obscure, in large part because of the difficulty of dating the Persian sources.

A perennial question, of basic importance to Jewish studies, concerns the relation of the apocalyptic literature to the law of Moses. The oldest parts of the Enoch literature do not refer to Moses at all. Enoch, after all, was supposed to have lived before the Flood, so overt reference to Moses would be anachronistic. The authors of the Enoch literature were evidently acquainted with the Torah of Moses and allude to it at many points. These allusions usually concern narratives (e.g. the story of Adam and Eve, or the 'sons of God' in Genesis 6) rather than legal material. There is nothing to suggest that these authors

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rejected the Torah. But the distinctive wisdom that they impart is something over and above the revelation of Moses, and was allegedly derived by Enoch from the tablets of heaven long before the revelation at Sinai (Nickelsburg 2001; Bedenbender 2000).

One strand of scholarship on ancient Judaism has held that the covenantal theology of the rabbis was normative throughout the later Second Temple period, and was presupposed in the apocalyptic literature. George Foot Moore, in his great description of normative Judaism, integrated the apocalypses into his synthesis (Moore 1927, repr. 1971). More recently, E. P. Sanders has argued that apocalyptic literature such as 1 Enoch fits the pattern of 'covenantal nomism', with the single exception of 4 Ezra, which Sanders viewed as atypically legalistic (Sanders 1977). More recently still, Mark Elliott has made a similar argument that the primacy of the Mosaic covenant is presupposed in all the Second Temple literature (Elliott 2000; Elliott does not recognize apocalyptic literature as a distinct category). In contrast, the Italian scholar Paolo Sacchi and his students (especially Gabriele Boccaccini) distinguish Enochic Judaism as a distinct movement in the Hellenistic period (Sacchi 1997; Boccaccini 1998). The formative ideas of this movement concerned the explanation of the origin of evil, in accordance with the myth of the Fallen Angels in 1 Enoch 6–11. Enochic Judaism was the parent movement of the Dead Sea sect, but it effected a rapprochement with Mosaic Judaism, as can be seen in the Dead Sea scrolls. Other scholars are less sanguine about attempts to reconstruct a movement of Enochic Judaism. Nonetheless, George Nickelsburg has written of Enochic wisdom in its early phases as an alternative to Mosaic religion (Nickelsburg 1998). This does not mean that it was anti-Mosaic, but that it reflects a kind of Judaism in which the idea of covenant and the law of Moses were not Central categories.

What is true of the Enoch literature, however, is not necessarily true of all the Pseudepigrapha, or even of all apocalyptic literature. The book of Jubilees is closely related to the Enoch literature by its interest in the myth of the fallen angels and in the solar (364-day) calendar, which is also found in the Astronomical Book of Enoch (1 Enoch 72–82). Jubilees can be viewed as an example of the quasi-genre 'rewritten bible', or biblical paraphrase, and is a gold-mine for the study of early (p. 61) *biblical interpretation* (Kugel 1998 *passim*). *Jubilees is also an apocalypse*, in the sense that it is a revelation given to Moses by an angel. But the recipient is none other than Moses, and the content is a paraphrase of the book of Genesis. Moreover, this paraphrase is informed throughout by a keen interest in halachic issues. One of the objectives of the book is to show that even the patriarchs before Moses actually observed the laws that were only later revealed explicitly in the Torah. Jubilees, then, represents a form of Judaism that was very much centered on the Torah and the covenant. Nonetheless, even here something is added to the traditional Torah. The angel draws on heavenly tablets that contain the division of the years from creation to the day when heaven and earth are renewed.

The relationship between apocalyptic literature and the Mosaic Torah is illustrated most vividly in 4 Ezra (= 2 Esdras 3–14), which dates from the end of the first Century Ce, after the fall of Jerusalem. 4 Ezra and the closely related apocalypse of 2 (Syriac) Baruch is greatly preoccupied with the Torah and with the apparent failure of the covenant. In

this respect, it is closer to Jubilees than to 1 Enoch, although it does not have as strong an interest as Jubilees in halachic issues. At the end of the book (chap. 14), Ezra is commissioned to replace the books of the law that have been burned. He is given a fiery liquid to drink, and inspired to dictate the books to five men who write them down in characters that they do not know. The dictation lasts for forty days. In all ninety-four books are written. Of these twentyfour are made public so that the worthy and unworthy may read them. But the seventy others are kept secret, in order that they may be given to the wise among the people. Moses too, had been told many wondrous things over and above what was contained in the public Torah, including the secrets of the times and knowledge of the end. According to 4 Ezra, the extra or hidden books contain 'the spring of understanding, the fountain of wisdom, and the river of knowledge'. 4 Ezra is not in any way critical of the Torah or opposed to it. But it claims to have further revelation, which discloses the larger context within which the Torah must be understood. This claim of higher revelation is one of the essential characteristics of apocalyptic literature. In contrast, rabbinic Judaism affirmed the Deuteronomic principle that the essential revelation was not in heaven, 'that you should say, "Who will go up to heaven for us, and get it for us so that we may hear it and observe it?"' but was readily at hand on earth (Deut. 30:11-14).

Of course there is also much conventional Jewish piety to be found in the Pseudepigrapha (see e.g. the Psalms of Solomon, or the Biblical Antiquities of Pseudo-Philo). The most distinctive contribution of the Pseudepigrapha to the understanding of Judaism in the Second Temple period, however, lies in the prominence of the apocalyptic literature. While this period was known primarily from the Apocrypha, the dominant genres seemed to be wisdom and narrative, with increasing influence of the Torah. This picture was altered significantly by the recovery of the Pseudepigrapha.

(p. 62) The Dead Sea Scrolls

Much new light has been shed on the literature of Second Temple Judaism by the discovery of the Dead Sea scrolls, beginning in 1947. The scrolls were found in proximity to a ruined settlement at Khirbet Qumran, south of Jericho. Cave 4, where the greatest number of scrolls was discovered, is merely a stone's throw from the settlement. It is commonly assumed that the scrolls constituted the library of a sectarian community that lived at Qumran, most probably a settlement of the Essene sect. There are some vociferous dissenters from this view, who hold that the scrolls originated in Jerusalem and had no connection with the settlement (Golb 1995). Whatever their relation to the site of Qumran, however, two things can be said with some confidence about the corpus of scrolls. First, it includes a range of literature, which was not all composed in a single sectarian community. This literature includes the biblical texts, which were obviously not sectarian, but also books such as Enoch and Jubilees that evidently enjoyed wider circulation. (The corpus includes fragments of some 800 texts and more than 100 distinct

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compositions, not including the biblical books.) If this was a sectarian library, it included writings that had originated outside the sect. Second, the scrolls cannot be taken as a random sampling of Second Temple literature. On the one hand, they include a disproportionately large number of explicitly sectarian books, including rule-books for sectarian communities. On the other hand, some well-known Second Temple literature is conspicuous by its absence. This includes 1 Maccabees, the propagandistic history of the Hasmonean house, and such books as the Psalms of Solomon and Judith, which have often been suspected of Pharisaic ideology. Nothing in the Dead Sea scrolls can be identified as Pharisaic, and only one text (4Q448, the Prayer for King Jonathan) can be read as supportive of the Hasmoneans. The corpus of the scrolls, then, is not narrowly sectarian, in the sense of containing only explicitly sectarian literature, but it is nonetheless selective, and excludes some literature for ideological reasons.

The Study of the Scrolls

The study of the scrolls can be divided into three phases. The first lasted from the early 1950s to the Arab-Israeli war of 1967. The second lasted until all the scrolls became available to all qualified scholars in 1991. The first phase saw the publication of the major, well-preserved sectarian scrolls from Cave 1, and some important pieces from the other caves. Some of these texts were not only previously unknown but represented literary genres hitherto unattested in ancient Judaism, such as the *serek*, or rule-book, and the *peshar*, or commentary. Much of the early research, (p. 63) however, was concerned with introductory questions such as the identification of the sectarian community and its history. A classic summing-up of the scholarship of this period can be found in Cross 1995.

For the first twenty years after the discovery in 1947 study of the scrolls was dominated by Christian scholars (with some notable exceptions). During this period most of the scrolls were under Jordanian control, and there were no Jewish scholars on the official international editorial team. Christian scholars, naturally enough, were especially interested in those aspects of the scrolls that illuminated the origin of Christianity, such as messianic expectation or the possible practice of baptism at Qumran. Other important issues included the significance of the scrolls for the history of the biblical text and for the formation of the canon. As regards the history of the text, the scrolls provide ample evidence of the antiquity of the Masoretic text (MT) that forms the basis of the Hebrew Bible. But some Hebrew manuscripts found at Qumran agree with the Greek Septuagint (LXX) against the MT, and others preserve a form of the text that is related to the Samaritan tradition. F. M. Cross formulated an influential theory that there were three local forms of the text, which developed in Babylon, Egypt, and Palestine respectively (Cross 1995: 121–42). The controversy regarding the canon centered on the Psalms Scroll from Cave 11, which contains psalms in an order different from the traditional Psalter and also includes additional psalms. The editor, J. A. Sanders, argued that the scroll shows that the canon was not yet finalized (Sanders 1965). Other scholars have countered that the Psalms Scroll was not a biblical manuscript but a liturgical collection (e.g. Talmon 1989: 244–72). It is doubtful, however, whether such a distinction can be maintained in this period. The point is that psalms were arranged differently in different manuscripts. A definitive order and number had not yet been established (Flint 1997). Moreover, there is no indication in the scrolls that a book such as Proverbs was more authoritative than Jubilees, for example. The Torah, Prophets, and Psalms were evidently authoritative at Qumran, but beyond these there was no distinction between canonical and non-canonical writings.

A new phase of scholarship was ushered in by the Arab-Israeli war in 1967. One of the by-products of the war was the appropriation of the Temple Scroll by Yigael Yadin, and its subsequent publication (Yadin 1977, 1983). This is a rewriting of biblical laws, and its interest is primarily in halachic issues. Its publication aroused new interest in the aspects of the scrolls that were continuous with rabbinic rather than with Christian interests.

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Even more revolutionary was the disclosure in 1984 of the so-called Halachic Letter, 4QMMT (Qimron and Strugnell 1985; cf. id. 1994). This document (which is a manifesto rather than a letter) is apparently addressed to a leader of Israel, and it outlines the reasons for the separation of a sectarian group (presumably the Dead Sea sect) from the rest of Judaism. These reasons were entirely halachic in nature, involving disagreements on the calendar and on various purity laws. It was now evident that halachic concerns were of quite fundamental interest in the Dead Sea scrolls. The positions taken on these issues in the scrolls (p. 64) were typically at odds with the Pharisaic halacha found later in the rabbinic writings. On some points it was in agreement with that of the Sadducees. But the scrolls showed beyond any doubt that these issues were being debated already in the first century BCE, and possibly earlier. The tradition recorded in the Mishnah and the Talmud, then, had its roots already in pre-Christian times.

Christian scholarship in the early period of research on the scrolls has often been accused of distorting this literature by exaggerating its similarity with Christianity and ignoring its halachic interests (Schiffman 1994). This charge has some justification. 4QMMT was known already in the mid-1950s, when it was classified as a 'proto-Mishnaic' text, but its significance only became apparent thirty years later when Jewish scholars were included in the research. But the aspects of the scrolls that had been highlighted by the Christian scholars were also there. Messianic expectation is prominent in many texts. The community described in the Community Rule has a quasi-monastic character, and anticipates later Christian monasticism in remarkable ways. Neither the Dead Sea scrolls nor Second Temple Judaism in general were simply an early form of rabbinic Judaism. This was also the soil from which early Christianity sprang, and the continuities with both traditions must be appreciated. In the context of Jewish studies, however, the Centrality of halachic issues in the sectarian scrolls is extremely significant.

The third phase in the study of the scrolls began when the texts were made generally available in the early 1990s. As editor-in-chief, Emanuel Tov greatly expanded the editorial team and achieved an impressively rapid rate of publication. The fragmentary scrolls published over the following decade threw new light on all aspects of the study of ancient Judaism. Up-to-date summaries of the full range of scholarship on the scrolls are available in the volumes edited by Flint and VanderKam (1998-9) and Schiffman and VanderKam (2000). Here we will comment only on a few of the more controversial issues.

The Torah and the Prophets

The Dead Sea scrolls testify massively to the pervasive authority and influence of the Mosaic Torah in the Hellenistic and early Roman period. As noted earlier, there is some variation in the forms of the text that are preserved. Recent scholarship has questioned whether the variety can be adequately explained by Cross's theory of local texts (Tov 1992: 116-17). It is also now clear that the majority of the textual witnesses are close to the MT, although there were other text forms in circulation.

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Many of the writings found at Qumran can be described as para-biblical, because they are generated by rewriting parts of the Torah and the Prophets. The Genesis Apocryphon is a colourful example of expansionistic biblical paraphrase, analogous to the book of Jubilees but quite different in its emphases. In other cases, however, it (p. 65) is difficult to know whether the text is intended as an interpretation of the biblical text or as an interpretation. The Temple Scroll reinterprets the legal traditions of Leviticus and Deuteronomy by presenting them in rewritten form in the guise of a revelation to Moses. In this way the writer's interpretation of the biblical laws is invested with the authority of the revelation at Sinai. Some scholars have argued that this scroll was intended as the most authoritative formulation of the Torah for the sect at the end of days (Wacholder 1983; Wise 1990:184). It is more likely, however, to be a composition analogous to Jubilees, which was not intended to replace the biblical text but to be a guide to its interpretation.

A different kind of problem arises in the interpretation of the pesharim, or biblical commentaries, which are the most distinctive form of biblical interpretation in the Dead Sea scrolls. These date from the first century BCE, and are the oldest extant formal biblical commentaries. (A quite separate tradition of allegorical interpretation was developing in Alexandria at about the same time.) They are based on texts that were understood as prophetic, including the Psalms. They proceed on the assumption that all prophecy was addressed to the time of the commentator, which was viewed as the end of the age, but that the prophets themselves were unaware of this reference. Typically, the prophecies were interpreted with respect to events in the history of the sect or to events that were still to come in the end-time. Early scholarship on the scrolls mined these commentaries in an attempt to reconstruct the history of the sect (Cross 1995: 88–120). More recent scholarship has tended to view the pesharim rather as exegetical documents, and to focus on their understanding of the biblical text (Brooke 1994). These approaches, however, are not necessarily incompatible, as the texts were evidently interpreted in light of the history of the community.

In addition to the pesharim and the biblical paraphrases, still other forms of biblical interpretation are found in the scrolls (see Bernstein in Schiffman and VanderKam 2000: i. 377–83). The so-called Pesher on Genesis (4Q252) is especially interesting, as it combines a paraphrase of the Flood story with a pesher-style interpretation of the blessings of Jacob. The full significance of the scrolls for the history of biblical interpretation is difficult to judge because of the fragmentary character of many of the texts. This is an area where study can continue profitably for many years.

Since so many writings from Qumran are evidently dependent on biblical texts, there is a strong temptation to assume derivation from biblical prototypes, even when this is not necessarily the case. Perhaps the most egregious example of this tendency concerns the text known as 'proto-Esther' (4Q550; Milik 1992). This is a very fragmentary Aramaic story which resembles that of Esther insofar as it is set at the Persian court. It has scarcely anything else in common with the biblical book, despite attempts to find in it the name of Haman. This text is neither an adaptation of the book of Esther, nor a source for

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it. It is simply another Aramaic story of similar genre. We do not know how many such stories may have circulated in (p. 66) antiquity. There are fragments of prophetic or apocalyptic texts that mention the name of Daniel. Here again there is no clear evidence that they depend on the biblical book. They are simply other compositions in the name of Daniel, which may be quite close to biblical Daniel in time of composition. A different kind of relationship to a biblical text is illustrated by the Prayer of Nabonidus (4QPrNab). Scholars have long recognized that the story of Nebuchadnezzar's madness in Daniel 4 was based on traditions about another Babylonian king, Nabonidus, who spent several years in Teima, in the Arabian desert. The Prayer of Nabonidus mentions the names of both the king and Teima, and tells how the king was smitten by a disease and how a Jewish exorcist played some part in his cure. We cannot be sure that this text was the specific source on which the author of Daniel 4 drew, but at least it illustrates the underlying tradition. In all these cases, however, understanding is complicated by the fragmentary nature of the texts. Much depends on how the lacunae are restored. J. T. Milik restored the 'proto-Esther' text so as to maximize its affinities with the biblical Esther (e.g. he restored a reference to Haman). F. M. Cross restored a comparison to a beast in 4QPrNab, with a view to explaining the transformation of the king into a beast in Daniel 4 (Cross 1984). No mention of a beast is preserved in the extant fragments of the text. Such restorations, however ingenious, must be considered hazardous.

Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha at Qumran

These fragments of pseudo-Daniel, the tale from the Persian court, and 4QPrNab are all samples of an extensive corpus of Aramaic literature found at Qumran (see Dimant 1994; Flint in Flint and VanderKam 1999: 24–66). The most important texts in this corpus are undoubtedly the fragments of 1 Enoch. All parts of that composite work except the Similitudes (1 Enoch 37–71) have been found among the scrolls. Some fragments are dated by paleography to the middle of the second century BCE. The Qumran finds, then, have removed any doubt that may have existed about the antiquity or Jewish authenticity of the Enoch literature.

Another important Aramaic text contains fragments of an Aramaic Levi apocryphon. This text is clearly related to the Testament of Levi in the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs. In this case, however, the discovery at Qumran has not resolved the debate over the Jewish or Christian origin of the Testaments. The extant fragments are not in the form of a Testament, and the current consensus is that they represent a source of the Greek Testaments. The origin of the latter remains in dispute.

Apocalyptic literature figured prominently in the corpus of Pseudepigrapha that was known before the discovery of the Dead Sea scrolls. The discovery of the Aramaic Enoch fragments gave an important impetus to the recent study of (p. 67) the genre. The scrolls, however, have not enlarged our corpus of Jewish apocalypses by very much. In part, the problem here lies in the fragmentary nature of the texts. The beginnings and endings are often lost, and so it is impossible to determine literary genre in many instances. Possible

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apocalypses found at Qumran include the 'Visions of Amram' (which envisions opposing, dualistic, angelic-demonic powers, the so-called 'Aramaic Apocalypse' (4Q246, 'the Son of God text'), the New Jerusalem text (a vision in the tradition of Ezekiel 40–8), and a 'four kingdoms' prophecy, where the four kingdoms are symbolized by four trees (4Q552–3). If all of these texts were composed as apocalypses they would represent a significant enlargement of the corpus. All are very fragmentary, however, and so their significance remains uncertain.

Two other points should be noted about the corpus of Aramaic literature found at Qumran. First, none of these texts contains any clear reference to community structures, and so they are not thought to be products of the Qumran sect. Rather, they are part of the wider literature preserved by the sect, but probably not peculiar to it. Second, with the exception of para-biblical texts such as the Genesis Apocryphon and the Levi Apocryphon, these texts are not especially Torah-centred. Some, such as the tales from the Persian court and the Prayer of Nabonidus, are not concerned with the Torah at all. Despite the prominence, even dominance, of the Torah in sectarian compositions, the scrolls add significantly to our knowledge of Jewish literature that was neither para-biblical nor Torah-centred in the Second Temple period. Significantly, the apocalyptic writing from the second century BCE that is most extensively concerned with the Torah and halachic issues, the Book of Jubilees, is found in Hebrew rather than in Aramaic.

The scrolls also expand significantly our corpus of non-biblical Hebrew literature. Several wisdom texts were found at Qumran, in addition to the biblical books and fragments of Ben Sira. The most extensive of these (4QInstruction, see Strugnell, Harrington, and Elgvin 1999) consists largely of traditional wisdom advice on family matters and the like, but also refers frequently to 'the mystery that is to be', which evidently concerns God's plan for the world, past, present, and future. The category of 'mystery' was hitherto characteristic of apocalyptic rather than sapiential literature. 4QInstruction is also the first Hebrew wisdom text to endorse the hope for reward and punishment in the hereafter. It contains several allusions to passages in the Torah, and evidently regards it as a source of wisdom. Yet it never thematizes the Torah in the manner of Ben Sira, or suggests that wisdom should be identified with the law of Moses. That identification is found, however, in another wisdom text from Qumran, 4Q525 (4QBeatitudes). A kind of wisdom teaching similar to 4QInstruction is found in 4QMysteries. These texts throw important light on the development of Hebrew wisdom after Ben Sira, and the expansion of the range of traditions on which the wisdom writers drew. Since these texts have only been published in the last years of the twentieth century, their study is still in its infancy.

(p. 68) The Distinctively Sectarian Literature

The most distinctive literature in the Dead Sea scrolls has no parallels in the Apocrypha or Pseudepigrapha. This includes rule-books (the Community Rule, the Damascus Rule, the Messianic Rule, the War Rule). The Community Rule and Damascus Rule are designed to regulate the lives of communities, and have important parallels in Greek rules for

private organizations (Weinfeld 1986), although they also show the influence of traditional Jewish covenantal patterns. The War Rule also bears some analogy to Greek military manuals (Duhaime 1988), but is also dependent on priestly Pentateuchal traditions about the Israelite camp in the wilderness. Other distinctively sectarian literature that we have already noted includes the biblical commentaries or pesharim and the thanksgiving hymns, or *hodayot*.

The place of the distinctively sectarian literature in the study of Judaism is controversial in some respects. This literature was not preserved by the rabbis, and was presumably rejected for ideological reasons. The sectarian literature has many clear points of contact with apocalyptic literature. The books of Enoch and Daniel were preserved in multiple copies at Qumran, and as we have seen there was also a more extensive literature that was apocalyptic in a broad sense of the word. The Qumran settlement has been dubbed 'an apocalyptic community' with considerable justification (Cross 1995; Collins 1997c). The sectarian scrolls share key elements of the apocalyptic world-view. They attribute great influence on human affairs to angelic and demonic spirits, and they expect both a final judgement at the end of history and the reward and punishment of individuals after death. Yet the sectarian writers do not appear to have used the literary genre apocalypse. In part this choice may reflect the great authority attributed to the Torah of Moses at Qumran. It may also reflect the status of the Teacher of Righteousness as the supreme interpreter and mediator of divine revelation for the community. What need had the sectarians of revelations in the name of Enoch or Daniel when everything was revealed to them by their own Teacher?

The affinities of the sectarian scrolls with apocalyptic literature are evident in the War Rule and in the Instruction on the Two Spirits in the Community Rule. These were among the first Dead Sea scrolls to be published, and to a great degree they formed a lasting impression of the kind of community that produced these scrolls. In contrast, halachic concerns were not so prominent in these documents, although they receive a great deal of attention in the Damascus Document, which had been recovered from the Cairo Genizah at the end of the nineteenth century and which was also found in multiple copies at Qumran. It is now clear that halachic interests were central in the scrolls, and that this form of Judaism found no tension between apocalypticism and devotion to the Torah. It still claimed to enjoy a special revelation, but this lay in the inspired interpretation of the Torah, and was not an alternative to it.

(p. 69) Diaspora Judaism

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A quite different form of Second Temple Judaism is attested in the literature written in Greek in the Hellenistic diaspora, primarily in Egypt. Much of this literature is known to us only from excerpts and summaries made by the Roman freedman Alexander Polyhistor, who wrote before the middle of the first century BCE. Alexander's work was cited at length by the Church Father Eusebius in his *Praeparatio Evangelica*. Some fragments are also preserved by Clement of Alexandria and by Josephus (for texts and translations of these fragments, see Holladay 1983–96). Other Hellenistic Jewish writings were preserved more fully, including the voluminous works of Philo of Alexandria. All of these works owe their preservation to the interest of Christians. Only in rare cases, however, is the Jewish origin of the material in doubt. The most controversial case is that of the romance of Joseph and Aseneth (Kraemer 1998). This text is known from Christian manuscripts of the Byzantine period, and some scholars have suspected that it is a Christian composition. There are formulaic references to the bread of life and the cup of immortality, and Aseneth has an encounter with a man from heaven, who gives her to eat from a honeycomb, which is the food of angels and gives immortality. All of this brings to mind the Christian Eucharist. Yet the basic problem around which the story revolves is distinctively Jewish: the problem of intermarriage between a Jew and an idolatrous Egyptian. While the story may have been embellished by Christians in the course of transmission, there can be little doubt that it originated in the Jewish diaspora.

The first and most foundational literary work of the Hellenistic diaspora was the translation of the Bible into Greek. The Torah had been translated by the middle of the third century BCE. The Prophets and Writings followed gradually, down to the early first century BCE. The claim of the Letter of Aristeas that this translation was done at the request of the Ptolemy has little credibility. It was presumably intended to meet the needs of Jewish communities in Egypt. There has been a long-standing debate as to whether, or how far, the translators engaged in deliberate reinterpretation of the biblical text. The evidence of the Dead Sea scrolls lends support to the view that they were generally faithful to the text that lay before them, insofar as they understood it. The Septuagint, then, provided the great common ground that united Jews in the diaspora with their compatriots in Judea.

One of the primary emphases of recent scholarship on Second Temple literature has been the appreciation of the generative role of biblical interpretation across the spectrum of Judaism in this period (Kugel 1998). We have noted how many of the texts found at Qumran can be described as para-biblical, in the sense that they are generated in some way by the biblical text. This is also true of the Greek writings of the diaspora. Many of the works excerpted by Alexander Polyhistor were rewritings of the Torah in various forms. These range from faithful chronicles that (p. 70) attempt to resolve problems in the biblical text (Demetrius), to fanciful romance (Artapanus, who credited Moses with founding the Egyptian animal cults). Some are cast in distinctively Greek forms, such as epic poetry (Philo the Epic Poet) or tragedy (Ezekiel, on the Exodus). All of these works can be read as exercises in biblical interpretation, but there are also other influences at work. In view of the fanciful character of Artapanus' account, we may wonder whether his work was based on the biblical text at all. He was evidently aware of the main lines of the

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biblical tradition, but it is difficult to know in what form he was acquainted with them. Some Jewish Hellenistic authors, such as Eupolemus, who probably lived in Jerusalem, were more faithful to the biblical prototype, but others attempted to correlate the early biblical story with Greek mythology (so 'Pseudo-Eupolemus', a fragment attributed to Eupolemus which may have been composed by a Samaritan).

Alexandrian Judaism also developed a tradition of formal biblical interpretation. In the second century BCE Aristobulus wrote a work which he dedicated to Ptolemy, seeking to refute interpretations of the Torah that would make it seem crude or unsophisticated. Anthropomorphic expressions, such as references to the hands or feet of God, must be interpreted allegorically, to refer to spiritual realities. Allegorical interpretation had been developed by Greek scholars in Alexandria to deal with the scandalous behaviour of the gods in Homer. In Aristobulus it has an apologetic function, and this is also the case in the Letter of Aristeas. Aristobulus claimed that Judaism was a philosophical school, and that Plato had borrowed from Moses. In the first century CE, however, Philo of Alexandria wrote an extensive corpus of commentaries on the Torah, informed consistently by a form of Platonic philosophy. Philo does not appear to have had any significant knowledge of Hebrew, but he preserves some exegetical traditions that are paralleled in Hebrew sources. The degree to which Jewish writers in the Hellenistic diaspora were acquainted with exegetical traditions from the land of Israel remains an intriguing question that has not been fully explored.

The greatest figure in Hellenistic Jewish literature is undoubtedly Philo of Alexandria. In the middle of the twentieth century controversy had centered on the thesis of E. R. Goodenough (1935), that Philo's work reflected a Jewish mystery religion. This thesis has long been abandoned, although scholars recognize a mystical dimension in Philo's Platonic philosophy (Winston 1985). The great alternative to Goodenough's interpretation was provided by Wolfson (1947), who emphasized the philosophical aspect of Philo's work and his affinities with rabbinic Judaism. Recent work on Philo has focused more on clarifying his philosophical background in Middle Platonism (Runia 1986) and on exploring his use of Jewish exegetical traditions (Tobin 1983; Borgen 1997).

The corpus of Hellenistic Jewish literature also included several works that made only incidental use of the Torah. Several of these were attributed to pagan authors. The Letter of Aristeas was ostensibly written by one Greek to another in praise of Judaism. The Sibylline Oracles were put in the mouth of the ancient sibyl, and (p. 71) mingled praise of Judaism with denunciations of other peoples, especially the Romans. The Sayings of Pseudo-Phocylides represent an especially interesting case of Jewish pseudepigraphy, as they contain no explicit reference to Judaism, and are only recognized as Jewish because of correspondences with biblical laws. Scholars have disagreed as to whether such a composition was intended primarily to reinforce the Torah, by presenting it in the name of a Greek teacher (van der Horst 1990), or to inculcate ethical monotheism regardless of its Jewish associations (Collins 2000:168–74).

Apologetic Literature?

In contrast to the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha, the Greek literature of the diaspora attracted the attention of Jewish scholars already in the nineteenth century. The Wissenschaft des Judentums movement found in Jewish reception of Hellenistic culture in ancient Alexandria an apt analogy for their own encounter with European culture in Germany (see Shavit 1997: 306–36). The primary interest here was in the history and political status of Alexandrian Jewry, and this interest continued to dominate the study of diaspora Judaism in the twentieth century (e.g. Tcherikover 1999). But Jewish scholars also contributed some fundamental studies of the literature, notably Freudenthal's study of the fragmentary historical works preserved by Alexander Polyhistor (Freudenthal 1874–5) and Friedlander's study of the apologetic literature (Friedlander 1903). The philosophical work of Philo commanded a lion's share of the attention, culminating in the classic work of Wolfson (1947). The analogy between ancient and modern diasporas still plays a heuristic role in recent scholarship, as Erich Gruen cheerfully admits (Gruen 1998: p. ix).

Older scholarship regarded virtually all Graeco-Jewish literature as either apologetic or missionary, on the assumption that it was intended primarily for Gentile readers. That assumption was debunked by Victor Tcherikover in a famous article in 1956. It is now agreed that there was no organized Jewish mission to the Gentiles in the Hellenistic Diaspora (Goodman 1994). Whether the literature has an apologetic purpose remains in dispute. Erich Gruen (1998) has emphasized its self-confident character, and argued that it should be viewed as the self-expression of Jews who were fully at home in the Hellenistic world. Yet the frequency with which praise of Judaism is put on the lips of fictitious Gentile characters shows that the authors felt a need for Gentile approval and respect. Much of this literature can be read as an attempt to forestall or respond to Gentile criticism, by showing that Judaism deserved the respect of right-thinking Greeks.

Much of the recent literature on diaspora Judaism has focused on the question of Jewish identity, and the tension between Jewish tradition and Hellenistic culture (p. 72) (Feldman 1993; Barclay 1996; Gruen 1998; Collins 2000). The authors of this literature were Certainly at home in the Hellenistic world, in the sense that Greek was their language and they were most comfortable with Greek forms of expression. There were always some points of tension, however. Chief of these was the omnipresent worship of pagan deities, and the importance of that worship in civic life. The Jews also objected consistently to some Gentile practices, such as abortion, the exposure of infants, and homosexuality. The literature from the diaspora witnesses to an attempt to appropriate Hellenistic culture in a selective way. Jews could embrace Greek literary forms, rhetoric, and philosophy, but they refused to compromise in matters of religious worship or ethical practices. Many of the Jewish texts include sharp polemics against the religious practices of the Gentiles, Greek and Roman as well as the reviled Egyptians (see e.g. the Sibylline Oracles, the Wisdom of Solomon, Joseph and Aseneth, but also Philo). This has sometimes been taken to reflect antagonism towards Hellenistic culture (Barclay 1996: 181–228).

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But all of these texts are written in Greek and are themselves expressions of a thoroughly Hellenized Judaism. Diaspora Jews, in short, attempted to distinguish between religion and culture in a way that had no precedent in the pagan world. They affirmed all aspects of Hellenistic culture except those that required idolatry or were offensive on ethical grounds.

In sharp contrast to the Dead Sea scrolls, the Hellenistic Jewish writings display minimal interest in halachic issues and avoid controversy over matters of purity. When the laws of *kashrut* are discussed in the Letter of Aristeas, it is only to explain them allegorically and give them a spiritual meaning. Gentile writers who comment on Judaism in this period typically focus on the distinctive practices of Jews—observance of the sabbath, abstinence from pork, refusal to worship the gods of the city, reluctance to mingle with Gentiles (see Stern 1974–84). The Jewish literature, in contrast, emphasizes those things that Jews and Gentiles had in common. Aristobulus and the Letter of Aristeas suggested that Zeus and the God of Israel were one and the same. The Jewish writers in particular sought to make common cause with Greek philosophers, who were often critical of polytheistic mythology and even shared the ethical concerns of the Jews on some occasions. We should not assume that halachic issues and ritual practices were not of concern to the authors of this literature. Philo, at least, insisted on the literal observance of the law as well as on its symbolic significance, and recent scholarship has tended to emphasize the distinctively Jewish character of most of these texts. The primary concern of this literature, however, is to show that Judaism was a tradition worthy of respect in the Hellenistic world, and to downplay its strangeness. It may be that this literature is representative only of the upper classes of Egyptian Judaism. We know that Philo belonged to a very wealthy family. Whether the lower classes shared the cosmopolitan aspirations of this literature we do not know.

The apologetic character of the Hellenistic Jewish literature of the diaspora is also in evidence in the writings of Josephus, a native of Jerusalem who wrote in Rome after (p. 73) the failure of the Jewish revolt. Josephus is our main source for the history of Judaism in this period, and modern scholarship has mined him repeatedly (and critically) as a historical source, especially for the war against Rome, but also for religious movements in Judaism, such as the Pharisees. Studies of his writings as literature have been of two kinds. On the one hand, the *Antiquities* has been studied as an example of biblical interpretation. L. H. Feldman has written most copiously on this subject (Feldman 1998 a and b). On the other hand, there have been important studies of his technique and *Tendenz* as an historian. In his account of the Jewish War, the *Tendenz* is political: Josephus lays the blame on the rebels and exculpates his Roman patrons. But Josephus has been shown to have modelled his works on those of Greek historians, Polybius in the *War* and Dionysius of Halicarnassus in the *Antiquities* (Lindner 1972; Attridge 1976). He also reflects the common rhetorical tendency of Hellenistic historiography to appeal to the reader's emotions. He stands in a Hellenistic tradition of didactic, rhetorical historiography, which he adapts for defence and praise of the Jewish people. Josephus

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also composed an explicitly apologetic work, *Against Apion*, which is our major source for the polemics between Greeks and Jews around the turn of the era.

Conclusion

The story of scholarship on Second Temple Judaism in modern times is a story of retrieval. None of this literature was preserved by rabbinic Judaism, except for scattered verses of Ben Sira. The Greek literature of the diaspora may not have been accessible to the rabbis, and much of it perished in the demise of the Jewish community in Egypt. Much of the apocalyptic literature, and of the distinctive material in the Dead Sea scrolls, was rejected for ideological reasons. The rejection of sectarian literature facilitated the unity of Judaism after the revolts, and may well have contributed to the survival of the religious tradition. From the viewpoint of modern scholarship, however, the loss of the literature of Second Temple Judaism was an impoverishment. The recovery of this literature over the last two Centuries has been a remarkable contribution to modern Jewish studies.

It should be clear from the preceding account that modern scholarship on Second Temple literature has been primarily interested in religious history. (There is also a significant body of scholarship on political and social history that falls outside the scope of this essay.) This is also true of biblical studies, and reflects the fact that most scholars approach this literature with religious rather than aesthetic interests. In recent years, however, there has been a considerable amount of purely literary criticism of biblical texts, while there has been very little literary study of the (p. 74) post-biblical Second Temple literature. There have, of course, been exceptions. As recent examples, one might mention Lawrence Wills's study of the Jewish novel (Wills 1995), E. J. Murphy's attempt to discuss the *Biblical Antiquities* of Pseudo-Philo as narrative (Murphy 1993) or Carol Newsom's analysis of the rhetoric of some Qumran texts (Newsom 1990). Feminist criticism in this period has been social rather than literary, but again there are notable exceptions; see, for example, the literary study of Jubilees by Halpern-Amaru (Halpern-Amaru 1999) or the essays in Levine (1991).

Various explanations for this situation might be proposed, although none are very compelling. Recent work on the Dead Sea scrolls has been preoccupied with the editing of texts and philological considerations. In the case of the Pseudepigrapha too, the production of texts and commentaries is still a major undertaking. Literary studies may come later. To some degree, the relative lack of literary studies might be taken as a reflection of the nature of the material. There are few examples of great narrative or great poetry in these corpora. Nonetheless, there are some very interesting narratives (the Genesis Apocryphon, the Testament of Abraham) that have received very little attention, from a specifically literary perspective, while the poetry of the *hodayoth* surely deserves more extensive analysis than it has hitherto received. In fact, however, the literary appeal of this material has been overshadowed by its importance for the history of religion, whether it is taken to illustrate the soil from which Christianity grew, or to support the counter-claims for the antiquity of Judaism as the rabbis understood it. It is also true that this material remains to a great degree in the shadow of the Bible. Most people who teach Second Temple literature still make their primary living by teaching the

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Bible, especially in Christian contexts. The Dead Sea scrolls are increasingly taught in the context of rabbinic Judaism. Hellenistic Judaism is often studied under the rubric of ancient history. It is still the case that relatively few scholars have the literature between the bible and the Mishnah as their primary focus.

Be that as it may, the achievements of Second Temple scholarship hitherto are very substantial. The primary achievement has surely been the publication and philological explanation of the texts. If scholars of the next generation want to explore new methodologies, they have now a solid textual basis on which to do this.

Suggested Reading

For the primary texts, in translation, see Charlesworth (1983/1985) and Vermes (1997). The most comprehensive introduction to this literature can be found in Schürer (1973–87). A less technical introduction is provided by Nickelsburg (1981). See now also Alexander (2001).

On the Apocrypha see Harrington (1999); on the apocalyptic literature, Collins (1998a); on the Dead Sea scrolls, Schiffmann (1994); on the Hellenistic Jewish literature, Collins (2000).

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