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History (?) in the Damascus Document

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Abstract

While the Damascus Document, like other writings found among the Dead Sea Scrolls, has been mined for historical information, with which to reconstruct the history of the Yaḥad, including the process and conditions of its formation and development over time, the present study is interested in discerning the text's own understanding of the place in history occupied by its community of auditors and learners. Particular attention will be given to the text's recurring reference to its beginnings ("first ones") and ends ("last ones") and to its sense of living in a truncated time-between. Through the close reading of two hortatory sections of the text, the question of how the Yaḥad's collective social memory informs its self-understanding and practices as it faces both backward and forward in time.

Keywords

Damascus Document – eschatology – history – identity – memory – origins – time – rhetoric

1 Introduction: *Zakhor*

In 1982 the Jewish historian Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi published a short but seminal book, *Zakhor: Jewish History and Jewish Memory*, based on his Stroum Lectures of two years earlier at the University of Washington.[1] In that book, Yerushalmi sought to trace the history of Jewish historiography from ancient

1 Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi, *Zakhor: Jewish History and Jewish Memory*, The Samuel and Althea Stroum Lectures in Jewish Studies (Seattle: University of Washington Press; Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1982).

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through modern times. He gave particular attention to the tension between the historian's search for historical truth, that is, the past as it actually happened, and the cultural and social memory of the past as it has both informed and preserved Jewish self-understanding and identity over the same historical arc. Where does the Jewish historian (that is, the historian whose both own identity and historical subjects are Jewish) stand, and how does he address this tension?

Yerushalmi's first chapter (1–26), titled, "Biblical and Rabbinic Foundations: Meaning in History, Memory, and the Writing of History," addresses his theme by focusing on the dual canons of (Hebrew) biblical and rabbinic literatures. Interestingly, what comes between these two ancient canonical corpora, that is, the Jewish writings of the late Second Temple period, receives barely any mention at all. Josephus is briefly referred to (16), but primarily to mark a "watershed," when "after the close of the biblical canon the Jews virtually stopped writing history … It is as though, abruptly, the impulse to historiography had ceased." Josephus as a historian does not merit discussion, since "in retrospect we know that within Jewry the future belonged to the rabbis, and not Josephus." In this context, the Books of Maccabees are ignored (but see 13), and, not surprisingly, the Dead Sea Scrolls receive no mention at all (some thirty years after their discovery in caves adjacent to Khirbet Qumran, and some eighty years after the publication of the Cairo Genizah manuscripts of the Damascus Document). Needless to say, nascent Christian writings (of Jewish provenance to begin with) find no place between "biblical and rabbinic foundations."

Notwithstanding the negative implications of these omissions, for which Yerushalmi asks advance forgiveness in general, given the schematic nature ("tentative probes") of his book,[2] there is much to be gained by applying his model of history as furnishing collective memory as social reality to the Second Temple texts that he bypasses. The Damascus Document, I hope to demonstrate, is of particular interest in this regard. That text (or assembly of texts), like the Dead Sea Scrolls in general, has precious little in the way of historical narrative, that is, not just historical allusions, but sustained historical narration. Similarly, but usually not recognized, the Dead Sea Scrolls overall contain precious little extended narrative of any sort, but in particular in the sense of storytelling, whether about the biblical past or the community's (or communities') more recent past.[3] For example, we have no account in the non-biblical

2 See the preface, xiii–xvii, with this citation from xvi.

3 There has been much scholarly discussion of late as to how best to refer to the collectivity of readers (or auditors) of the Dead Sea Scrolls, including those of the Damascus Document.

scrolls of the revelation at Mt. Sinai, notwithstanding the importance of that event for the community's self-understanding.[4]

This is all the more sharply noticeable if we compare the important role of storytelling (including "biographies") in the Hebrew Bible (as much within the "historical" books as without), Philo, Josephus, the Gospels, or early rabbinic literature, both halakhic (legal) and aggadic (narrative), regardless of how we might assess their strictly historical value.[5] Although the Damascus Document is commonly divided between its framing "admonitions" and body of laws (like the Book of Deuteronomy from which it draws), the contrast is not quite the same as between "law and narrative," since the admonitions are full of historical (mainly biblical) allusions, but short on sustained narratives (storytelling).[6] Where we do find sustained narratives in the scrolls, they are in texts of "rewritten scriptures," in which biblical narratives are expanded, as in the Hebrew fragments of Jubilees or in the Aramaic fragments of the Genesis Apocryphon and Aramaic Levi, none of which are usually thought of as sectarian products per se, but the works of fellow (or prior) travelers.

Yerushalmi's overarching argument is that even as Jewish historiography, in the sense of a linear chronicling the Jewish past, might be foregone after Josephus (and already before him, in some circles), Jews and Judaism are no less absorbed with the meaning of history and the memory of the past, both of which are no less literally inscribed in texts and performatively implanted

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I have taken the somewhat neutral position of referring to them as the "community," by which I do not mean to limit them to one geographic (or chronological) location, but mean to signify "communities" as well. On this question, see, most recently and extensively, John J. Collins, *Beyond the Qumran Community: The Sectarian Movement in the Dead Sea Scrolls* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2010).

4 For a fuller development of this argument, see Steven D. Fraade, "Looking for Narrative Midrash at Qumran," in *Rabbinic Perspectives: Rabbinic Literature and the Dead Sea Scrolls. Proceedings of the Eighth International Symposium of the Orion Center for the Study of the Dead Sea Scrolls and Associated Literature, 7–9 January, 2003*, ed. Steven D. Fraade, Aharon Shemesh, and Ruth A. Clements, STDJ 62 (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 43–66 (=S.D. Fraade, *Legal Fictions: Studies of Law and Narrative in the Discursive Worlds of Ancient Jewish Sectarians and Sages*, JJSSup 147 [Leiden: Brill, 2011], 169–92). On the absence of narration of the revelation at Mt. Sinai, see ibid., 55–62 (=Fraade, *Legal Fictions*, 182–88).

5 For a comparison of the telling of a similar story in Pesher Habakkuk and the Mishnah, see Steven D. Fraade, "Theory, Practice, and Polemic in Ancient Jewish Calendars," *Diné Israel: Studies in Halakhah and Jewish Law* 26–27 (2009–2010): 147*–81* (=Fraade, *Legal Fictions*, 255–83).

6 On the interplay of law and narrative in the Damascus Document, see Steven D. Fraade, "Ancient Jewish Law and Narrative in Comparative Perspective: The Damascus Document and the Mishnah," *Diné Israel: Studies in Halakhah and Jewish Law* 24 (2007): 65*–99* (=Fraade, *Legal Fictions*, 227–54); idem, "Law, History, and Narrative in the Damascus Document," *Meghillot* 5–6 (2008): *35–*55; the former being an expansion of the latter.

in hearts and minds. The absence of historiography, in the conventional sense, is not the product of a disengagement with the meaning of history (or historiosophy), albeit non-systematic, which is to say, an acute awareness of the place of the present in suspension between origins and ends, firsts and lasts. If what falls between is very selectively and fragmentally recounted, that is in the very nature of the selectivity of memory (and historiography) itself. Note George Brooke's response to Philip Davies ("there is no real historiography at Qumran"):

> To my mind, Davies seems to make one kind of historiography normative; the texts from the Qumran caves actually present several different kinds of ways of doing history, though it is true that none of them are akin to the sort of annalistic chronicling of events that characterize much of the historiography that became canonical.[7]

My aim is to argue that the Damascus Document (and by extension, other "sectarian" scrolls discovered at Qumran), fits Yerushalmi's characterization that "while memory of the past was always a central component of Jewish experience, the historian was not its primary custodian" (xiv). How does the Damascus Document in particular, and the writings of the community more broadly, "blur the crucial distinction between historical writing and various genres of Jewish literature that may reflect a deep concern with history without displaying the least interest in recording historical events" (xiv–xv)? In short, how does the memory of the past and the finding of meaning therein suffuse texts such as the Damascus Document that are not formally historiographic, but deeply infused and engaged with the social navigation of memory and expectation?[8]

7 George J. Brooke, "Memory, Cultural Memory and Rewriting Scripture," in *Rewritten Bible after Fifty Years: Texts, Terms, or Techniques? A Last Dialogue with Geza Vermes*, ed. József Zsengellér, JSJSup 166 (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 119–36 (127). The quote of Davies is from Philip R. Davies, "What History Can We Get from the Scrolls, and How?" in *The Dead Sea Scrolls: Texts and Contexts*, ed. Charlotte Hempel, STDJ 99 (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 31–46 (31), to which reference Brooke (127 n. 42) comments: "this depends on how 'real historiography' is defined." Virtually the same appears as George J. Brooke, "Memory, Cultural Memory, and Rewriting Scripture," in *Reading the Dead Sea Scrolls: Essays in Method*, SBLEJL 39 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2013), 51–65 (60).

8 There are all sorts of ways that the Damascus Document can be studied for other kinds of historical knowledge, such as the history of ancient Jewish law, or the history of the Hebrew language and terminology, but those will not draw our attention in what follows, as we look from the inside out. Consonant with this approach to the historicity of the performative rhetoric of the scrolls, and the Damascus Document in particular, is that of

2 Beginnings, Ends, and In Betweens

Among the many words and concepts that recur throughout the Damascus Document, are those for “first” (ראשון) and “last” (אחרון), and variants thereof, as denoting periods of time and their associations. Those who are referred to as the “first ones” (ראשונים) can be the biblical patriarchs or biblical Israel entering into the covenant at Mt. Sinai, or it can refer to the founders of the community.[9] Some occurrences (e.g., CD 8:17) can be construed in either way. Perhaps the ambiguity between the two “firsts” might be meaningful (intentional?) in itself, as it blends the history of Israel with that of the community. The expression originates in Lev 26:45 (with which compare Lev 26:42), where the context, as in many of the CD occurrences, is with God’s remembering of the covenant with the first ones (ברית ראשונים), or with the “ancients” (NJPS).[10] It is with the founding of the community, or shortly thereafter, that the covenant is renewed, according to the “first laws” (המשפטים הראשונים) that they or the Teacher of Righteousness established, as in CD 20:31–32.[11] For the present being suspended between the “first” and the “last” ones (בראשונים ובאחרונים), see CD 20:8–9. Related to “the last ones” (אחרונים) is the expression “end of days” (אחרית הימים), denoting the final, pre-eschatological time, which has already begun with the founding of the community: CD 4:4; and 6:11a.[12] Similar expressions for the impending finality and its accompanying revelation are “the last generation/(s)” (דור אחרון/דורות אחרונים) in CD 1:11–12;[13] and, last but

Maxine L. Grossman, *Reading for History in the Damascus Document: A Methodological Study*, STDJ 45 (Leiden: Brill, 2002), who also treats 4QMMT in a similar vein. The contributions of other scholars whose approaches are likewise consonant, to a variety of degrees, will be cited below, especially in n. 87. Given the brevity of this article, questions of the complicated historical relation of CD to the 4QD fragments, as of the historical relation of the Damascus Document to other “sectarian” compositions, cannot be entered into here.

9 See CD 1:4, 16; 3:10; 4:8–9; 6:2; 8:17; 20:8–9, 30. In CD 3:10 (cited below), the “first ones” are viewed negatively for their abandonment of the covenant after having entered it.

10 For this expression in the Damascus Document, where all but one occurrence in the scrolls appear, see CD 1:4; 3:10; 4:9; 6:2; 4Q266 (4QD[a]) 2 i 20; 4Q267 (4QD[b]) 2 7; 4Q269 (4QD[d]) 2 5; 6Q15 (6QD) 3 5. On CD 3:10 (cited below), see also the previous note.

11 For the expression “first laws,” see also CD 20:31; 1QS 9:10.

12 For a broader discussion of the phrase’s meaning, see Shemaryahu Talmon, “The Signification of אחרית הימים, ‘Latter Days,’ in the Hebrew Bible and in the Covenanters’ Literature,” in *Literary Motifs and Patterns in the Hebrew Bible, Collected Studies* (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2013), 137–56; Annette Steudel, “אחרית הימים in the Texts from Qumran,” *RevQ* 16 (62) (1993): 225–46. Note, in particular, how the “well midrash” of CD 6:2–11, another myth of origins, begins with ראשונים and concludes with אחרית הימים.

13 Cf. 1QpHab 2:7; 7:2 (הדור האחרון).

not least, "the final interpretation of the Torah" (מדרש התורה האחרון) in the final lines of the Damascus Document according to 4QD fragments, which may refer to the Damascus Document itself (or at least to its contained laws).[14]

In this recurring attention to firsts and lasts, beginnings and ends, "Urzeit und Endzeit," the time between might seem overshadowed, or nearly so. This time (or space) is, as we shall shortly see, filled in with allusions to and interpretations of biblical "history" as much as, if not more than with the history of the community. Alternatively, we can think of the extended middle section of laws, whose true proportions are now better known and appreciated with the publication of the 4QD fragments in 1996,[15] as constituting the fullest account of the present life of the community. However, the preoccupation with beginnings and ends, with only faint attention to the narrow ridge-line of the present, may be said to characterize apocalyptic historiosophies more broadly.[16]

For example, in 2 Baruch, a late-first century pseudepigraphic apocalypse, its author, most likely writing in Palestine following the destruction of the Second Temple in 70 CE, expects Israel's final redemption to be close at hand, and urges wholehearted fulfillment of the commandments of the Torah as its precondition. Baruch, having witnessed the destruction of the (First) Temple, laments before God the sufferings of the righteous and the prospering of the wicked. Moses, he says, brought the light of the lamp of "the law" (*nāmûsāʾ*) to Israel only to find that "many whom he illumined took from the darkness of Adam and did not rejoice in the light of the lamp" (18:2). After affirming covenantal justice in Deuteronomic terms, God responds impatiently to Baruch as follows (19:1–4):[17]

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14 4Q266 (4QD^a) 11 20–21; 4Q270 (4QD^e) 7 ii 15; as well as 4Q266 (4QD^a) 5 i 17.

15 Joseph M. Baumgarten. *Qumran Cave 4. XIII: The Damascus Document* (*4Q266–273*), DJD 18 (Oxford: Clarendon, 1996).

16 While the sectarian texts of the Dead Sea Scrolls are not apocalypses in form, they often share the historical perspectives and preoccupations of apocalyptic literature. Of course, several apocalyptic texts (in form and message) were found among the scrolls, most notably 1 Enoch, the Book of Jubilees, and Aramaic Levi, as well as others. On this, see most recently Devorah Dimant, "Apocalyptic and the Qumran Library," in *The Faces of Torah: Studies in the Texts and Contexts of Ancient Judaism in Honor of Steven Fraade*, ed. Michal Bar-Asher Siegal, Tzvi Novick, and Christine Hayes, Journal of Ancient Judaism Supplements 22 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 2017), 95–118, especially her emphasis on the resonances between the scrolls and the "historical apocalypses," with their periodization of history. See also below, n. 88.

17 The text of the apocalypse is extant in a single Syriac manuscript that is a translation from Greek, which may in turn have been a translation of a Semitic original. In rendering the following, I have followed the critical text of S. Dedering, *The Old Testament in Syriac*, Part IV, Fasc. 3, *Apocalypse of Baruch* (Leiden: Brill, 1973), 9. For a fuller discussion, see

> You, therefore, should not worry yourself about them, nor distress yourself over these things which have been. For it is now the end of time that should be considered … and not the beginning.

Baruch is told not to disturb himself with the present suffering of the righteous and the destruction of the temple, since his sights should be set on the imminent end of time, when righteousness and wickedness will be justly judged according to the eternal celestial witnesses. The main difference from the Damascus Document is that the latter calls upon its readers/auditors to attend to both the beginning and the end. We turn now to some expressions of the shaping of memory of the "first things" and their rhetorical function.

3 In the Beginning I

The Damascus Document begins its story in two places, one with the initial formation of the community under the leadership of the Teacher of Righteousness during the Babylonian exile in an extended sense, the other with the earliest generations of humankind.[18]

The Cairo Genizah manuscript of the Damascus Document begins as follows (CD 1:1–2:1), accompanied by textual notes and followed by a brief commentary focusing on its possible historical aspects. More than any text from the Dead Sea Scrolls (with the possible exceptions of 1QpHab and 4QpNah), this passage has been heavily mined for its possible historiographic data. It deserves to be read in its entirety:[19]

S.D. Fraade, *From Tradition to Commentary: Torah and its Interpretation in the Midrash Sifre to Deuteronomy*, Jewish Hermeneutics, Mysticism, and Religion Series (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1991), 154–58.

18 Compare the traditional Passover Haggadah, which begins its narration of the Passover story first with slavery in Egypt and secondly with idolatry before Abraham, in effect with two types of service (עבודה). Compare Mek. R. Ishmael Baḥodesh 5 (ed. Horovitz-Rabin, 222), for the dual possibilities of Israel having been redeemed from a "house of servitude" and from a "house of idolatry." Of course, the Torah itself begins with two stories of origins.

19 The translation of this and other passages from the scrolls are my own. We have fragments of 4QD which contain admonitions that are likely to have preceded the beginning of CD: 4Q266 (4QD[a]) 1a–b 1–5a; 4Q266 (4QD[a]) 1a–b 5b–24 (// 4Q267 [4QD[b]] 1 i 1–8); 4Q266 (4QD[a]) 2 i 1–6a (// 4Q268 [4QD[c]] 1 5–8).

[1] And now listen[20] all who know righteousness and discern the deeds of [2] God, for he has a dispute[21] with all flesh and he will execute judgment against all who despise him. [3] For in their unfaithfulness when they left him, he hid his face[22] from Israel and from his sanctuary [4] and gave them over to the sword.[23] But when he remembered his covenant[24] with the first ones,[25] he left a remnant[26] [5] of Israel and did not give them to destruction. And at the end of the period of (his) wrath,[27] three hundred [6] and ninety years after giving them into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon,[28] [7] he visited them and caused a root of planting[29] to sprout from Israel and from Aaron,[30] to inherit [8] his land, and to grow fat on the goodness of his soil. And they discerned their iniquity and knew that [9] they were guilty people, and like blind people and like those who grope for a way[31] for [10] twenty years. And God discerned

20 4Q268 (4QD[c]) 1 9 reads "now listen to me." For the same, see CD 2:14; 4Q268 (4QD[c]) 1:9. The use of the verb שמע to open an oration is commonly employed in the hortatory sections of Deuteronomy (5:1; 6:4; 9:1; 20:3; 27:9), conveying a sense of oral communication. See also CD 2: 2, 14; 4Q266 (4QD[a]) 1a–b 5b; 4Q270 (4QD[e]) 2 ii 19; Mic 1:2; Prov 4:1; and especially Isa 51:7, with which the whole sentence is almost identical. It is suggestive of an oral performative setting, to which I will return. See below, nn. 85–86.

21 This denotes a judicial setting, as the prophets bring suits against Israel or the nations. See Hos 4:1; Jer 25:31.

22 A Deuteronomic expression for God's withdrawal of his protective favor from Israel, here extended to include the sanctuary (temple). See Deut 31:17, 18; 32:20; and especially Ezek 39:23.

23 For the same image, see CD 1:17, 21; 3:10–11; Ezek 39:23; Jer 25:31l; Ps 78:62, referring to the Babylonian conquest and exile.

24 On God's remembering the covenant, see Gen 9:15–16 (with all living creatures); Lev 26:42 (with the Patriarchs); 26:45 (with the first ones; Exodus from Egypt). For much the same expression, see CD 6:2.

25 For the expression, see above, nn. 9–11.

26 See, for example, Isa 10:20–23; Jer 23:3; 24:4–7; 31:7; Ezek 11:14–20; Hag 1:12–14; 2:2; Zech 8:6, 11–12; 1Q33 (1QM) 8:8 and 1QH[a] 14:8; CD 2:6–7, 11.

27 For the present period of divine wrath, whose end is expected to be imminent, see 4Q266 (4QD[a]) 2 i 3; 11 19.

28 The number 390 years appears in Ezek 4:5 as the number of years of punishment that Israel would suffer. It is most likely used here not literally but symbolically (or approximately). If taken literally as the actual number of years from the onset of the Babylonian exile (587/6), it would yield a date of 197/6 BCE.

29 Referring symbolically to the origins of the community. See Isa 60:21; 61:3; 1 En. 10:16; 84:6; 93:5, 10; Jub. 1:6; 16;26; 21:24; 36:6; 1QS 8:5; 11:8; 1QH[a] 16:5.

30 The community comprises non-priests and priests, as in CD 6:2–3; 1QS 5:6; 8:5–6.

31 See Isa 59:10.

their deeds,[32] for with a full heart they sought him,[33] [11] and he raised for them a Teacher of Righteousness,[34] to guide them in the way of his heart. And he made known [12] to the last generations what he would do[35] in the last generation[36] to the congregation of traitors.[37] [13] They are the ones who turn from the way.[38] This is the time about which it was written, "As a wayward cow, [14] so did Israel stray; [therefore, the Lord will graze him]" (Hos 4:16), when the scoffer[39] arose, who sprinkled upon Israel [15] waters of falsehood,[40] and led them astray in a wasteland without a way,[41] bringing down the eternal heights[42] and departing [16] from the paths of righteousness[43] and moving the border[44] which the first ones established in their inheritance, so as [17] to cause the curses of his covenant to cling to them, delivering them to the avenging sword of the vengeance[45] [18] of the covenant. For they sought smooth things[46] and chose delusions and sought [19] loopholes and chose the fair neck,[47]

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32 See Ps 33:15; 1QS 4:25; 1QHᵃ 9:7.

33 See 1 Chr 28:9.

34 For possible biblical origins of the sobriquet, see Hos 10:12; Joel 2:23; Isa 30:20–21. For the expression, or variants thereto, elsewhere in CD, see 20:1, 14, 28, 32. It appears frequently in 1QpHab.

35 See 1QpHab 2:7–10; 6:15–7:5.

36 For "last generation(s)," see above, n. 13.

37 A rival group. See 1QpHab 2:1–10; 5:8–12.

38 God's way, the right way, or the way of righteousness. Elsewhere, the audience is urged to depart from the way of traitors, etc. Such language is frequently employed in CD: 1:15–16; 8:4–5, 16; 19:17; 20:23–24.

39 Presumably the break-away leader of the "congregation of traitors" of CD 1:12. See 20:11 for the plural. He may be the same as "the man of the lie" (CD 20:15; 1QpHab 2:2; 5:11; 11:1) and/or "the spouter of the lie." See CD 8:13 (// 19:25–26); 1QpHab 10:9; 1Q14 (1QpMic) 8–10 4; cf. CD 4:19–20.

40 That is, who taught false teachings. See Amos 7:16; 9:13; Mic 2:6, 11.

41 For the expression, see Ps 107:40; Job 12:24; 4Q266 (4QDᵃ) 11 10–11.

42 Compare Hab 3:6. It probably means, treating the law with disdain.

43 Compare Jub. 1:20; 1 En. 92:3; 1QHᵃ 15:14.

44 For the expression, see Deut 19:14; 27:17. Here, however, the phrase is used figuratively for changing the laws. See CD 5:20; 19:15–16; 20:25; Philo, *Spec.* 4.149.

45 Deriving from Lev 26:25. Compare CD 1:4, with above, n. 23.

46 The Hebrew rendered as "smooth things" is חלקות, referring to lies and falsehoods, as in Isa 30:10. Elsewhere, "the seekers after smooth things" seems to refer to the Pharisees, who, from the perspective of the community, were too lax in their interpretation and application of the law. See 4Q169 (4QpNah) 3–4 i 2, 7; ii 2, 4; iii 6–7; 4Q163 (4QpIsaᶜ) 23 ii 10 (restored); 4Q177 (4QCatena A) 9 4 (restored); 4QHᵃ 10:15 (restored), 32.

47 This derives from Hos 10:11, with reference to "Ephraim," which name is sometimes thought to designate the Pharisees, as in 4Q169 (4QpNah) 3–4 ii 2.

> and justified the evil person and condemned the righteous person,[48] [20] and caused the covenant to be broken and the law to be violated and they banded against the righteous soul,[49] and all who walk [21] perfectly[50] their soul loathed. And they attacked them with the sword and rejoiced over the strife among the people.[51] And the anger of [1] God was kindled against their congregation, ravaging all of their multitude, and their deeds were impure[52] before him.

The opening lines of this admonition allude to the destruction of the First Temple and the Babylonian exile, with the conditions of destruction and exile understood as continuing into the present time of the text, but with the expectation that they will terminate imminently. The text's auditors are the covenantal remnant awaiting both their final redemption and the divine destruction of their rivals with the "covenantal sword of vengeance." The opening exhortation is framed by God's anger with humanity's unrighteousness and his exacting of punishment of them, both in the mythic past of the destruction of the First Temple and Babylonian exile and, by implication, in the final imminent judgment.[53]

In between, we learn of the founding of the community of the righteous remnant, with whom God renews the covenant, and of God's having provided them with a prophetic leader, the Teacher of Righteousness. The righteous chosen remnant are not spared destruction because they are sinless, but because they acknowledge their sins and seek a more righteous path ("And they discerned their iniquity and knew that they were guilty people", lines 8–9). This chronological narrative of historical origins is unique here among the Dead Sea Scrolls. Introduced into this overarching historical scheme is a polemic against a break-away group (or groups), and its untruthful leader/teacher, who are characterized as having tampered with the laws of the covenant in such a way as to make them more lenient to the point of severely violating the covenant. God's angry retribution against this group, and by implication the rest of Israel as well, can be expected shortly. This narrative needs to be understood, first and foremost, for its performative rhetoric of group identity formation and justification, rather than for its value for the construction of modern scholarly

48 That is, turned justice on its head. The expression derives from Prov 17:15. See CD 4:7 for the reverse.

49 This derives from Ps 94:21.

50 For similar phrases, see CD 7:4–5; 14:1; 1QS 8:18; 9:9.

51 For the rejoicing of the righteous, see CD 20:33 (MS B).

52 For a similar expression and idea, see 1QS 5:19–20.

53 The preceding 4QD fragments make this explicit. See above, n. 19.

narratives of "Qumran origins." The 390 years (Ezek 4:5) and the citation of Hos 4:16 (plus a plethora of scriptural allusions) serve the same collective, self-justifying purpose of viewing the formation of the community and the assignment of its inspired leadership as being prophetically, which is to say divinely, pre-ordained. Reconstructing and understanding the performative history from within is no less a "historical" task than is the representational one from without.

4 In the Beginning II

Another early section of CD (2:14–3:12a) sketches a selective "history" of humankind beginning with the fallen angels of Gen 6:1–6:

> [14] And now, sons, listen to me[54] and I will uncover your eyes so as to see and to understand the deeds [15] of God and to choose what he desires and to reject what he hates[55] so as to walk perfectly [16] in all of his ways and not to stray after the desire of the guilty inclination and lustful eyes.[56] For many [17] have gone astray on account of them and mighty warriors have been stumbled on account of them from the earliest times until now. In their walking after the stubbornness [18] of their heart(s),[57] the Watchers of heaven fell.[58] They were caught by it

54 This is the same wording as the first stich of Prov 7:24, the continuation of which displays other similarities.

55 Notwithstanding the repeated themes of polar opposites and predetermination, human choice, as in the Book of Deuteronomy (e.g., 30:15–20), is emphasized.

56 Compare Num 15:39: "So that you not follow your heart and eyes in your lustful urge" (NJPS), which resonates even more in the Hebrew. Compare also Ezek 6:9; as well as 1QS 5:4–5. The noun *yeṣer*, here translated as "inclination," appears biblically in the sense of form, purpose, and finally, impulse, often with a negative valence. See Gen 6:5; 8:21. Compare its use in 1QS 5:4–5 (but missing in some 4QS fragments); 4Q417 (4QInstruction[c]) 1 ii (formerly 2 ii), 12; 1QH[a] 8:6; and the use of "evil heart" in 4 Ezra (e.g., 4:20–27) and "guilty heart" in 1QS 1:6.

57 See also CD 3:5, 11–12; 8: 8, 19; 20:9–10; 4Q270 (4QD[e]) 7 i 8; 4Q266 (4QD[a]) 5 ii 11. The connotation here may be one of licentious sexual desire and activity, but it can also have the broader sense of a strongly willful heart to do evil. For its biblical use in the broader sense, see Deut 29:18; Jer 7:24; 11:8; Ps 81:13.

58 The Watchers are the "fallen angels" of Gen 6:1–4, called there the Nefilim (from the verbal root נפ״ל, to fall), although they could also be understood to be the immediate offspring of the angelic-human female misalliances (Gen 6:4). For the giant size of the sons of the Nefilim (CD 2:19), elsewhere referred to as the Giants or conflated with the Nefilim, see Num 13:33, with which compare Amos 2:9. The narrative of the fallen angels appears to

because they did not keep God's commandments. [19] And their sons, whose height was like the height of cedars and whose bodies were light mountains, fell. [20] All flesh that was on dry land perished[59] and they were as if they had not been,[60] on account of their having done [21] their own will and not having kept the commandments of their maker, until his wrath was kindled against them. [1] Through it the sons of Noah and their families went astray; through it they are cut off.[61] [2] Abraham did not walk in it[62] and he was counted as a friend (of God)[63] for his keeping of God's commandments[64] and did not choose (to follow) [3] the desire of his spirit. And he transmitted (his way) to Isaac and Jacob[65] and they observed (God's commandments) and were registered as friends [4] of God[66] and parties of the covenant forever. The sons of Jacob went astray with respect to them[67] and were punished on account of [5] their error. And their sons in Egypt walked in the stubbornness of their heart(s), plotting against [6] God's commandments, each man doing what was

have circulated widely in Second Temple times and is significantly developed in such Second Temple texts as 1 Enoch (6–16) and Jubilees (5:11), both of which are represented in their original languages (Aramaic and Hebrew, respectively) among the Dead Sea Scrolls.

59 This is due to the flood. For similar language describing the consequences of the flood, see Gen 7:21–22.

60 This is from Obad 1:16.

61 "Through it" refers back to "the stubbornness of their heart(s)" of CD 2:17–18. Though the biblical narrative would seem to portray the righteous Noah (Gen 6:9; cf. Ezek 14:14, 20), and by extension his sons, as the hero of the story, the strange incident in Gen 9:20–27 might suggest that his moral legacy was tainted. The "sons of Noah" may refer to the nations who descend from Noah (Gen 10) more generally. The use of the participle "they are cut off" (נכרתים) may suggest as much. Noah himself is neither said to be righteous nor sinful.

62 The phrase "in it" also refers again back to "the stubbornness of their heart(s) of CD 2:17–18. By contrast to his universal predecessors, Abraham does not "walk" in the "stubbornness of his heart" or follow the desires of his heart/spirit. Compare above, CD 2:14–16.

63 For Abraham as a "friend (of God)," see Isa 41:8; 2 Chr 20:7; 4Q252 (4QCommGen A) II, 8.

64 That the commandments were known and observed by the patriarchs long before their formal revelation at Sinai, is a common assumption of many Second Temple (e.g., Philo, Jubilees) and early rabbinic writings.

65 While the biblical narrative similarly hints at a continuous patriarchal chain of tradition, it portrays the patriarchs in more morally conflicted fashion than is the case here.

66 For this phrase, see above, n. 63.

67 "Them" refers to the divine commandments that they received from Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. While the "sons of Jacob" could refer collectively to the generations of Jacob's descendants (that is, to all of Israel), the following sentence suggests that the reference is to Jacob's twelve sons and their immediate descendants. While rabbinic traditions affirm that all twelve remained committed to their father's legacy, Jacob's testament to his offspring (Gen 49) suggests a more mixed evaluation, but nothing as negative as this.

> right in his own eyes.[68] And they ate the blood[69] and [7] their male(s) were cut off in the wilderness[70] (when God said) to them in Kadesh, "Go up and take possession" (Deut 9:23)[71] (?) their spirit and they did not listen [8] to the voice of their maker (nor to the) commandments of their teacher. And they murmured in their tents[72] and God's anger was kindled [9] against their congregation[73] and their sons perished because of it and their kings were cut off because of it and because of it their heroes [10] perished and their land was made desolate because of it.[74] Because of it the first ones[75] who entered the covenant were guilty and were given over [11] to the sword for having abandoned God's covenant and having chosen their own will. For they followed after the stubbornness [12] of their heart(s), each one doing his own will.[76]

In this exhortation, a telescopic historical sketch is produced, extending from time of the Watchers (the fallen angels, who mark the origins of widespread social evil and depravity[77]) and the flood until the Babylonian exile, barely

68 For the idiom, "right (ישר) in one's eyes," see Judg 17:6; 21:25. The negative portrayal of the Israelites in Egypt is unusual.

69 The eating of blood is prohibited in Lev 17:10, but already prohibited universally in Gen 9:4, with which compare Jub. 6:13–14.

70 From what follows, it is clear that this alludes to the story of the scouts in Num 13–14. Note that the narrative has moved quickly from the period of enslavement in Egypt to the travel through the wilderness following the exodus, skipping the revelation at Mt. Sinai.

71 The citation is abbreviated. The text could be reconstructed as, "He said to them at Kadesh, 'Go up and take possession of the land that I am giving you,' but they chose (to follow) the desire of their spirit(s) and did not listen to the voice of their maker." Compare CD 3:2–3.

72 See Deut 1:27; Ps 106:25.

73 This is identical to CD 1:21–2:1. The time of the present and that of the wilderness wandering are thereby linked. For the future, see CD 20:15–16.

74 In rapid succession, we move from the wilderness period to the time of the monarchy to the Babylonian exile, all cast in the same negative light of widespread Israelite disobedience, in anticipation of the renewed covenant with the righteous remnant.

75 Except for here, the "first ones," whether of Scripture or of the community's early history, are viewed positively. See above, nn. 9, 11.

76 We have here a summary statement, incorporating several previously encountered themes and phrases (e.g., I, 4, 16, 17, 21; II, 17–18, 20; III, 5) emphasizing pre-exilic Israel's turning from the covenant to the violation of the commandments in pursuit of their own wills and desires with disastrous consequences.

77 Otherwise, why not begin with Adam and Eve or Cain and Abel? Nor is there room in this account for a righteous Enoch or Noah. For the positive "glory of Adam" (or "of man"), see CD 3:20. Note that Ben Sira's chronological "praise of the ancestors" begins with Enoch (Sir 44:16), and only near the end (49:16) returns, in reverse order, to the antediluvians Shem, Seth, Enosh, and Adam. For a comparative study of Jewish and Christian attitudes

mentioning the Patriarchs, and not mentioning at all such biblical events as the Exodus from Egypt, the revelation at Mt. Sinai, and the conquest of the land. It illustrates the ongoing challenges of human (and then, more narrowly, Israelite) behavior to God's covenantal plans and expectations. It is as if each period of exile and divine punishment melts into the others. From earliest times the divine commandments (or some moral subset thereof) were known to the patriarchs and transmitted to their progeny but ignored or abandoned by vast majority of people as they sought, rather, to follow the desires of their eyes/hearts/spirits/wills rather than God's. Thus, a dueling of desires, divine and human, defines the successive punishments that humankind and Israel experience across history. Yet, through it all, God does not give up on the covenant with Israel, as represented by a righteous remnant, even as he wrathfully meets out the punishing consequences of its being violated and rejected. This etiology of evil and its consequences, spanning the first ones to the last ones, lays the groundwork, or emotional expectation, of the covenant's renewal in more recent history and its fulfillment in the urgently anticipated end of days. It is noteworthy that in this historical rendition it is all downhill going, beginning with the sons of Jacob, without exceptions. Neither Moses nor Sinai appear.

5 Performative Social Settings

The fact that the Damascus Document, as illustrated by the two extended passages herein considered, seeks to foster communal self-understandings (and eschatological expectations) against the backdrops of both scriptural and communal beginnings, should not seduce us into mining them for their historical nuggets (e.g., the dating of the community's founding, the identity of the Teacher of Righteousness or his rivals), any more than it can enable us to reconstruct scriptural history (e.g., the identity of the Watchers or the behavior of the Israelites while in Egypt), without first asking how such passages might have functioned rhetorically in social situ, which is every bit as much a historical question.

To begin with, I presume that the Damascus Document was not primarily read "cover to cover" by individuals in private settings, but rather recited and

to the antediluvians within broader historiosophic perspectives, see Steven D. Fraade, *Enosh and His Generation: Pre-Israelite Hero and History in Post-Biblical Interpretation*, SBLMS 30 (Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1984). For Ben Sira on the antediluvians, see ibid., 12–15.

studied piecemeal within a variety of communal settings. These could have included group study (and worship) rituals, in which most participants would have *heard* the text (however broken up) recited, and possibly interpreted, presumably by a leadership figure such as the Maskil.[78] The anthological nature of the text, in both its ancient and medieval manuscripts, and its seeming repetitiveness, especially in the opening admonitions but also in the topically grouped laws, suggests that it comprises discreet scripts, both legal and hortatory, to be performed in various communal settings.[79] Possible candidates for such settings for the recitation and study of the scripts of the Damascus Document are the nightly study sessions mandated in 1QS 6:6–8,[80] study as part of the process of entry into the community and advancement through its ranks,[81] and perhaps most importantly, the yearly gatherings for covenantal renewal, including blessings and curses, during the "third month" (the 15th day of Sivan) celebration of the festival of Shavuʿot. We now have direct evidence for a link between the Damascus Document and this annual ritual from the concluding section of 4QD, according to two manuscripts.[82]

Interestingly, to the extent that the Damascus Document emphasizes remembering, it is expressed in terms of God's remembering the covenant with the first ones (ברית ראשונים).[83] To the extent that the text's auditors are collectively commanded, it is not so much to "Remember!" (זכור)[84] as it is to "Listen!" (שמע),[85] which verb, especially in an oral setting, can suggest the

78 For the most recent discussion of the changing roles of the Maskil, in relation especially to those of the Mevaqqer, see Aryeh Amihay, *Theory and Practice in Essene Law* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 146–52.

79 On scripts, see Fraade, "Ancient Jewish Law and Narrative," 81* n. 39, 87*, 88*, 88* n. 58, 89* (=Fraade, *Legal Fictions*, 240 n. 41, 245, 245 n. 60, 246).

80 On which, see Steven D. Fraade, "Interpretive Authority in the Studying Community at Qumran," *JJS* 44 (1993): 46–69 (=Fraade, *Legal Fictions*, 37–67), esp. 56–58 (= 50–52).

81 For texts and discussion, see Fraade "Interpretive Authority," 53–56 (=Fraade, *Legal Fictions*, 45–49).

82 4Q266 (4QD^{a}) 11 17; 4Q270 (4QD^{e}) 7 ii 11. For the fifteenth of the third month (Sivan) as the festival of Shavuʿot according to the sectarian solar calendar, celebrated as a day of covenantal renewal, see Steven D. Fraade, "Rhetoric and Hermeneutics in Miqṣat Maʿaśe Ha-Torah (4QMMT): The Case of the Blessings and Curses," *DSD* 10 (2003): 150–61, esp. 155–59 (=Fraade, *Legal Fictions*, 93–124, esp. 98–102); idem, "Theory, Practice, and Polemic in Ancient Jewish Calendars," 157*–61* (=Fraade, *Legal Fictions*, 263–66); idem, "Ancient Jewish Law and Narrative," 71*–75* (=Fraade, *Legal Fictions*, 231–35). In these articles, it is argued that this could have been an occasion for reciting and studying selections from the Damascus Document and 4QMMT. For the renewal ceremony itself, see 1QS 1:16–3:12.

83 CD 1:4; 6:2.

84 This is in contrast to Scripture, especially Deuteronomic and Prophetic, e.g., Exod 13:3; 20:8; Num 15:39, 40; Deut 25:17; Deut 32:7 (and twelve others); Isa 44:21; Mic 6:5.

85 See above, n. 20.

performativity of collective oral/aural study.[86] As I have indicated, it suggests an oral setting in which texts, whether legal or narrative, are not so much read as recited, whether the purpose be worship or study or the two as one. This does not mean that memory is any less important, but that it is reinforced by ritualized recitations of shared accounts of beginnings, middles (through laws), and ends, that are orally recited and aurally received and absorbed. Shared historical memory in the community was tied to ritual recitation and study, which is to say to the experience of mythic (rather than strictly historical) time.[87]

86 See, for example, the tannaitic interpretation of Deut 32:1, Moses's penultimate oration, "Give ear O heavens, let me speak; Let the earth hear the words I utter": Among many interpretations, the Sifre interprets this verse and the next (Deut 32:2) as referring to the "curriculum" of rabbinic oral Torah. See Sifre Deut 306 (ed. Finkelstein, 339). For discussion, see Fraade, *From Tradition to Commentary*, 96–90. For rabbinic oral Torah in early rabbinic literature more broadly, with reference to the broader scholarly literature, see idem, "Concepts of Scripture in Rabbinic Judaism: Oral Torah and Written Torah," in *Jewish Concepts of Scripture: A Comparative Introduction*, ed. Benjamin D. Sommer (New York: New York University Press, 2012), 31–46; idem, "Literary Composition and Oral Performance in Early Midrashim," *Oral Tradition* 14 (1999): 33–51 (=Fraade, *Legal Fictions*, 365–79).

87 On this performative textuality in the scrolls, see, most recently, Mladen Popović, "Reading, Writing, and Memorizing Together: Reading Culture in Ancient Judaism and the Dead Sea Scrolls in a Mediterranean Context," *DSD* 24 (2017): 447–70. On the relation of ritual to memory in early rabbinic texts, see Steven D. Fraade, "Memory and Loss in Early Rabbinic Text and Ritual," in *Memory and Identity in Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity: A Conversation with Barry Schwartz*, ed. Tom Thatcher, SemeiaSt 78 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2014), 113–27; as well as the other contributions applying memory studies to ancient Jewish and Christian identities. Much of earlier scholarship has explored the relation of memory studies to historiography more broadly, as well as to biblical and Qumran texts. The following reflects my own eclectic indebtedness: Jan Assmann, "Collective Memory and Cultural Identity," *New German Critique* 65 (1995): 125–33; idem, *Cultural Memory and Early Civilization: Writing, Remembrance, and Political Imagination* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011); idem, *Moses the Egyptian: Memory of Egypt in Western Monotheism* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997); idem, *Religion and Cultural Memory: Ten Studies* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2006); George J. Brooke, "Memory, Cultural Memory and Rewriting Scripture"; idem, "Types of Historiography in the Qumran Scrolls," in *Ancient and Modern Historiography / L'historiographie biblique, ancienne et moderne*, ed. George J. Brooke and T. Römer, BETL 207 (Leuven: Peeters, 2007), 211–30; John J. Collins, "Reading for History in the Dead Sea Scrolls," *DSD* 18 (2011): 295–315; Philip R. Davies, "What History Can We Get from the Scrolls, and How?"; Noa Gedi and Yigal Elam, "Collective Memory—What Is It?" *History and Memory* 8 (1996): 30–50; Maurice Halbwachs, *The Collective Memory*, ed. Mary Douglas (New York: Harper and Row, 1980); idem., *On Collective Memory*, ed. and trans. Lewis A. Coser (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992); Brian Stock, *Listening for the Text: On the Uses of the Past* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1990);

It is in the mythic time of history that the covenantal bonds are both forged and fulfilled, and that revelation is ascertained. It is in present ritual time that the covenant is continually and communally maintained and reinforced, even as it is constantly challenged by historical circumstances that threaten its very continuity. The two passages we have examined reflect very different experiences of communal identity vis-à-vis the past and its ritual retelling: one told of a continuous connection to the community's first persons (founders and a founding teacher); the other told of a tremendous rupture between the Israel's scriptural first persons and the subsequent history of the "sons of Jacob," down to the present, save for a righteous but buffeted remnant. Both narratives await the same consummation in the lead up to the end of days, but arrive there through seemingly different routes of continuity and rupture, which are in dialectical but complementary alternation with one another (continuity amidst discontinuity).[88]

This is not the history of the chronicler-historians, but it is the construction of meaningful and bonding societal identity fashioned of ritualized memories of the past, performed in the present, and anticipating a radically renewed future. Perhaps that is why among the Dead Sea Scrolls there are plenty of festival calendars, but not a single chronology, such as we find in the early rabbinic Seder Olam.[89] It is also why the Damascus Document, the Dead Sea Scrolls, and the larger literature of ancient Judaism (and earliest Christianity) deserve to have their stories (re)told in any history of Jewish historiography.

Loren T. Stuckenbruck, "The Teacher of Righteousness Remembered: From Fragmentary Sources to Collective Memory in the Dead Sea Scrolls," in *Memory in the Bible and Antiquity: The Fifth Durham-Tübingen Research Symposium* (*Durham, September 2004*), ed. Stephen C. Barton, Loren T. Stuckenbruck, and Benjamin G. Wold, WUNT 212 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2007), 75–94; Liliane Weissberg, "Introduction," in *Cultural Memory and the Construction of Identity*, ed. Dan Ben-Amos and Liliane Weissberg (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1999), 7–26; Benjamin G. Wold, "Memory in the Dead Sea Scrolls: Exodus, Creation and Cosmos," in *Memory in the Bible and Antiquity: The Fifth Durham-Tübingen Research Symposium* (*Durham, September 2004*), ed. Stephen C. Barton, Loren T. Stuckenbruck and Benjamin G. Wold, WUNT 212 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2007), 47–74.

88 For alternatively imagined chronological routes from the first persons to the present, see Ben Sira's "Praise of the Ancestors" (44:1–50:21, beginning with Enoch, but see above, n. 77); the mishnaic "chain of tradition" ('Abot 1–2, beginning with Moses at Sinai); Animal Apocalypse (1 En. 85–90, beginning with Adam) and Apocalypse of Weeks (1 En. 93:1–10; 91:11–17, beginning with Enoch). See above, n. 16.

89 On the somewhat-rabbinic chronology Seder Olam (Rabbah) in the context of ancient historiography, see Chaim Milikowsky, *Seder Olam: Critical Edition, Commentary, and Introduction*, 2 vols. (Jerusalem: Yad Ben-Zvi, 2013), 1:3–214 ("Introduction") [Hebrew].