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a group of former Millerites and Seventh-Day Adventists (for an ethnographic approach, see Holden 2002). Or better, adopting a suggestion proposed by Joel Marcus (1996), I would resort to the Habad or Lubavitcher movement (for other cross-cultural comparisons, see Regev 2004). After all, who claimed that “[o]ur post-rabbinic world mirrors the pre-rabbinic world of antiquity”?

Complicating the Notion of an “Enochic Judaism”

John C. Reeves

Gabriele Boccaccini's *Beyond the Essene Hypothesis* (Boccaccini 1998) advances a boldly provocative reconstruction of the social and literary history of second temple Judaism. Fusing the purportedly historical *testimonia* to Jewish sectarianism contained in contemporary apologists like Josephus and Philo with the contents of a number of the legendary, programmatic, and exegetical texts recovered from the caves at Qumran, Boccaccini posits the existence of a so-called Enochic Judaism out of which the Essene movement described in Josephus and Philo later emerged. This alleged Enochic strain of Judaism is so named because he closely identifies it with a distinctive religious ideology he discerns undergirding the contents of what eventually is incorporated within the Ethiopic Book of Enoch or 1 Enoch, more primitive portions of which have been recovered in Aramaic from Qumran. He isolates what he considers to be the defining contours of this particular ideology: a mythopoeic interpretation of early human history, a theodicy at variance with what he portrays as the normative biblical one, a deterministic understanding of the progression of historical events, and a devotion to the antediluvian figure of Enoch as the paramount medium of divine revelation.

Enochic Judaism, according to Boccaccini, competed alongside and against other varieties of second temple Judaism such as Zadokite Judaism and Samaritanism for the allegiance of the populace at large, and eventually gave birth to what Boccaccini terms mainstream Essene Judaism, a social movement out of which and in reaction to which the peculiar sectarian community of Qumran emerged. Long-recognized discrepancies between the contents of the Qumran texts and the reports about the Essenes found in Jewish and classical

sources can be resolved by ascribing the descriptions found in the latter works to the broader antecedent mainstream movement, whereas the Qumran evidence attests the existence of a sectarian rift within Essenism which attempts to harmonize the competing “Enochic” and “Zadokite” currents.

Such, *in nuce*, is the wide-ranging thesis of Boccaccini. There are many attractive features to his arguments, not least among which is his elegant solution to the vexing problem, as Norman Golb (1995) put it, of who wrote the Dead Sea Scrolls. Nevertheless, as I see it there are at least three major conceptual difficulties with his broad thesis which will each require some extended rehearsal in the present context.

The first difficulty relates to the generation *de novo* of an Enochic Judaism (retrojecting Essenism) out of the exceedingly murky religio-historical situation of the postexilic Achaemenid province of Yehud. A second problem is his overly positivistic reading of Hellenistic and Roman era Jewish Enochic literature through the restrictive and distorting lens of one post-Christian expropriation and arrangement of this material. The third and perhaps most important problem involves his uncritical acceptance of the category Essene as a meaningful label for actual religious behavior within the Judaism of the late second temple era.

a. Basing himself almost exclusively on the literary witnesses recovered from Qumran, Boccaccini confidently constructs an Enochic Judaism as a distinct ideological movement which emerges within the second temple period of Jewish history. It arises in conscious opposition to what he labels Zadokite Judaism, another construction, which he defines as the religious program sanctioned by the priestly elite who controlled the Jerusalem temple cultus. Enochic Judaism thus forms a nonconformist priestly tradition (Boccaccini 1998, 71) designed to subvert Zadokite textual and social hegemony.

Boccaccini holds that the library of texts recovered at Qumran can be mapped across these two polarities. Zadokite literature “includes most of the so-called biblical texts [excepting Esther and Daniel] and also apocryphal texts such as the Epistle of Jeremiah, Tobit, and Sirach” (68). Enochic texts, on the other hand, are represented in the Qumranic library by the Aramaic fragments of the Astronomical Book (1 En 72–82), the so-called Book of the Watchers (6–36), and the Aramaic Levi document.

To delineate the interests and claims of each group, Boccaccini isolates a series of characteristic elements or motifs which he argues can serve as markers to locate a particular text within an Enochic or Zadokite literary orbit. According to Boccaccini, Zadokite Judaism operates within the confines of an ordered universe which establishes clearly demarcated boundaries between binary categories like good and evil, holy and ordinary, and pure and impure. Disruptive

or destructive forces can be controlled or deflected provided these boundaries remain inviolate. The maintenance of these boundaries, and indeed, of the very cosmos itself, is overseen by the Jerusalem priesthood and the rituals performed by them in the temple. By contrast, Enochic Judaism holds that present existence is characterized by cosmic disorder, a disruption occasioned by supernatural forces and agencies acting in rebellion against the creator deity. Evil and impurity lie largely outside human control, and the restoration of a primal harmony must await divine intervention (Boccaccini 1998, 68–74).

Leaving aside for the moment the pertinent question of whether his dual schematic ordering and conceptual appraisal actually do full justice to the multiple ideologies and variegated contents of the Qumran corpus, it should perhaps first be asked whether the physical evidence collected from a single rural encampment in Judea can bear the rhetorical weight with which Boccaccini invests it. Qumran affords us a snapshot view of at least one and perhaps several Jewish textual communities during the late second temple period. Can we legitimately extrapolate from this limited perspective a wide-angle view that will shed light on the ideological currents coursing through all Jewish textual communities for the entire second temple period? Such a wide-angle view would also need to take into account the various regional centers of intellectual culture and their relatively sparse *testimonia* to both literary and behavioral trends and activities. Can we, for example, trace Enochic and/or Zadokite trajectories or tensions among the literary products of Alexandrian Judaism? Or among those, assuming they can be securely identified, of Babylonian Judaism? Or perhaps, most importantly, among that corpus of largely Hebrew-language texts which constitute what will eventually be labeled scriptural, namely, the Tanakh?

We must not forget that the second temple period during which Boccaccini contextualizes his Enochic and Zadokite movements is also the era when Jewish scripturalism emerged as a vital social force. Those texts which eventually became Tanakh were being promulgated, redacted, and shaped at the very same time that Boccaccini claims the Enochic and Zadokite *Tendenzen* were struggling for influence. Given the fairly rigid boundaries governing literacy in ancient Near Eastern societies, it is arguably the very same groups — Zadokites, Enochites, and the like — that were also involved in *this* authorial and editorial process.

Boccaccini is of course cognizant of this cultural development. As stated above, he situates most biblical literature among the Zadokite camp. His classification of biblical texts, however, betrays a kind of uncritical assumption about the age and authority of the Bible in the second temple world, an assumption he rightly criticizes in another place (57), but which he inexplicably reverts to

when isolating his Enochic and Zadokite Judaisms. It is a slippage of the kind that Robert Kraft has jocularly labeled the tyranny of canonical consciousness; namely, the common, almost unconscious, yet anachronistic and hence unwarranted retrojection of the later canonical conceptions formed within classical Judaism and Christianity into the then inchoate literary productions of the second temple period.

Boccaccini expends very little effort in trying to connect his alleged movement with the onset of early Jewish scripturalism, a phenomenon which arguably was inaugurated with the mission of Ezra and which eventually achieved dominance over all currents of Judaism that flourished during the Roman period, both in *Eretz Israel* and in the Diaspora. The question which must be asked, it seems to me, is: How does an alleged Enochic Judaism relate to the construction and promulgation of the Pentateuch and other scriptural collections? A simple polarity of Bible versus Enoch, which is what I read Boccaccini to be saying, brushes over some essential issues which need more careful study before being swept aside.

I must confess that despite both the character and the work or content of Enoch showing undeniable connections with Mesopotamian lore (Jansen 1939; Grelot 1958a; 1958b; VanderKam 1984; Reeves 1998), I am very sympathetic to the general tenor, if not always the specific points, of the arguments advanced in the past by Jonathan Smith (1975), Margaret Barker (1980; 1987), and Robert Murray (1985). These points have been most recently revived and solidified by Seth Schwartz (2001). They situate the Enochic legends among the autochthonous mythical lore associated with the royal cultus of the first temple; in other words, the very social circles from which Boccaccini derives his Zadokite group, the supposed adversaries of Enoch.

I agree with Boccaccini that the figure of Enoch and most Enochic literature have deep roots in priestly traditions (Jub 4:25; 7:38-39; 21:10; cf. Stone 1978, 489-90; VanderKam 1984, 185-86), but I suspect they are not as nonconformist as Boccaccini seems to think. I would add that the speculative cosmogonical and cosmological wisdom characteristic of the earliest layers of our extant Enochic sources and which continue to resurface up to a millennium and a half later in medieval Jewish, Christian, and Muslim texts,¹ should be associated with the intermediate redactional stages of the Pentateuchal source labeled by modern source-critics as the Priestly or P source. I suspect that Milik (1976, 30-32) may be brilliantly prescient in his recognition that what we now know as 1 Enoch 6-11 is actually more primitive than and presupposed by Genesis 6:1-4;

1. For an initial cataloguing of these texts, see my *The Recovery of the Enochic Library* (Reeves, forthcoming).

I would even be willing to endorse the Enochic passage as an integral component of an earlier rendition of the Priestly narrative of antediluvian events, and hence of the biblical book of Genesis itself.

b. The book now referred to by scholars as 1 Enoch exists in this integral form only within the Ethiopic scriptural tradition. This is a circumstance which has gone largely unappreciated by most students of second temple and Roman era Jewish literature. Hence I will restate this proposition in a more provocative way: the work referenced by scholars as 1 Enoch is not a Jewish book; rather, the surviving textual evidence indicates it is a Christian compilation. 1 Enoch 1-108 occurs as a textual unit only within the Ethiopic Christian biblical canon. Smaller consecutive portions of what eventually becomes 1 Enoch are extant in several Greek manuscripts, and isolated chapters or citations occur among Greek, Latin, Coptic, and Syriac witnesses, but again only within what are blatantly Christian contexts, the longest of which do not seem to predate the fourth or fifth century C.E.

The 7Q Greek fragments which purportedly stem from an early Greek recension of the Epistle (1 Enoch 91-105) are, in the words of Michael A. Knibb, "too small for any certain identification to be possible" (Knibb 2001, 401). The Akhmim or Panopolis manuscript transmits a recognizable form of 1 Enoch 1:1-32:6, and a duplicate version of 19:3-21:9, together with excerpts from the Gospel and Apocalypse of Peter. The Chester Beatty-Michigan papyrus gives us 97:6-107:3 (sans chap. 105), together with Melito's Homily on the Passion. The Byzantine chronographer George Syncellus (Mosshammer 1984, 11.19; 24.10; 27.8; 34.18) provides four separate quotations from works which he or his source(s) termed "the first book of Enoch about the Watchers," "the word of Enoch," or simply "Enoch's book." Most of these excerpts overlap with what eventually becomes 1 Enoch (6:1-9:4; 8:4-10:14; 15:8-16:1), but one of them is apocryphal.

This latter circumstance is suggestive. When coupled with the similar appearance of Enochic apocrypha at Qumran (Stuckenbruck 2000, 3-7) and the dozens of instances of putative Enochic citations or references to be found within later Jewish, Christian, Gnostic, and Muslim works (e.g., Reeves 2003, 44-52), it serves to remind us that producing books of Enoch was a cottage industry in the Near East during late antiquity and the medieval eras. Were we to take the words of Slavonic Enoch seriously (10:2, 5-7; Vaillant 1952), we could read a different book of Enoch every day for almost an entire year!

It is undeniable that the bulk of the content of what eventually becomes 1 Enoch possesses a Jewish origin. The Aramaic (and arguably Hebrew)² frag-

2. Note 1Q19, whose true status as either translation of or source for its Aramaic parallel has yet to be satisfactorily resolved.

ments recovered from Qumran indicate this much, even though they do not come anywhere close to mirroring the eventual contents of Ethiopic Enoch. Seven distinct manuscripts preserve various parts of 1 Enoch 1–36, 85–90, and 91–107, and four additional manuscripts relate to 72–82. Multiple copies of other allied compositions, such as the Book of Giants, are also attested (Reeves 1992; Stuckenbruck 1997; 2000; Puech 2001), and it is unclear how they might factor into the creation of an ancient Enochic library.

It seems likely that Enochic apocrypha were a staple of pseudepigraphic forgery even at this early stage. Knibb estimates that perhaps just under one-fifth of the Ethiopic version is represented at Qumran, and then qualifies this assessment by stating that “the Aramaic fragments which have survived are severely damaged; mostly we have to do with quite small pieces of text, and in no case do we have anything approaching an entire column from one of the manuscripts” (Knibb 1978, 2:12). This being the case, I think we need to be wary about ideological reconstructions and especially codicological arrangements which automatically assume that one particular post-Christian editorial scheme should govern our understanding of how physically isolated and scribally distinct portions of the Enochic corpus relate to one another.

The surviving Aramaic fragments provide meager evidence for the primitive joining of one Enochic subdivision to another, namely, the placement of 1 Enoch 1–5 prior to 6–36 or the Book of Watchers (Milik 1976, 4QEn^b 1 ii lines 1–2 or pl. VI).³ There is even less compelling evidence for the linkage of the Noah birth story (1 Enoch 106–107) to the final lines of the so-called Epistle (91–105) in 4Q204 (4QEn^c ar) 5 i fragment a (Milik 1976, pl. XIV; Tov 1993a, PAM 43.202). Further assumptions or pronouncements about the placement of the other Enoch subdivisions (e.g., Similitudes, 1 Enoch 37–71) or even apocrypha (e.g., Book of Giants) are completely speculative.

Ideological reconstructions such as those advanced by Boccaccini need to acknowledge the complicated shape of the reception history of Enochic literature when formulating their hypotheses about its intellectual background and interests. For example, it is only within this external context that one can speak intelligibly of an alleged Enochic pentateuch which was supposedly designed to subvert its Mosaic rival. Crucial components like the Similitudes (i.e., 37–71) are nowhere attested in second temple literature and should probably be banished henceforth from such discussions.

c. A final soft point in Boccaccini's construction of an Enochic Judaism

3. Note, however, that line 1 contains only the bottom stroke(s) of one or two letters (read by Milik and those following him as ^אי[^א]), which is hardly enough to guarantee that this line indeed concluded with what corresponds in later versions to 1 En 5!

involves his uncritical embrace of the existence of a sect called Essenes among the expressions of Judaism during the Hellenistic and Roman eras. He assigns writings purportedly advocating the ideology of the Enochic party, in effect practically all of the nonbiblical writings recovered from the caves at Qumran, to the mysterious Jewish sect termed Essenes, discussed by Philo, Josephus, and other pagan and Christian authorities (Adam and Burchard 1972). The category Essene, invariably conflated with its presumed historical referent, forms a crucial component of Boccaccini's argument. A close analysis of the most important Greek and Latin sources describing this group constitutes the first major section of his book (Boccaccini 1998, 21–49). He repeatedly invokes these testimonies as touchstones for assessing the alleged Enochic and/or Essenic propensities of various apocryphal and pseudepigraphic works. On the basis of these reports, together with a selective utilization of information gleaned from the Dead Sea Scrolls, he confidently delineates the historical and ideological vicissitudes of a religious trajectory within second temple Judaism, which he terms mainstream Essenism. Mainstream Essenism, according to Boccaccini, was the cultural locus for the expression of Enochic Judaism.

Since the initial decade of the scholarly study of the Dead Sea Scrolls, it has been largely accepted as a scholarly axiom that these recovered writings are to be associated in some fashion with the Essenes. The so-called Essene Hypothesis, signaled in Boccaccini's title, holds that the community apparently resident at Qumran and presumably responsible for generating and depositing the scrolls found near that site, should be identified with the Jewish sect of the Essenes mentioned in the Greek and Latin sources. Boccaccini endorses this suggested correlation as compelling and conclusive (165). A number of comparative studies of the Qumran texts alongside the classical reports about Essenes have isolated some admittedly intriguing correspondences between the two groups of texts, but they have also identified a number of important differences. There is no need to list those items here, since the standard discussions of the Qumran site and its associated scrolls treat this topic in some detail.

Accordingly, most scholars who accept this correlation have devised ingenious ways to argue an Essene identity for the Qumran sect despite these discrepancies, and Boccaccini is no exception. For him the Qumran writings should be associated with an internal schism within mainstream Essenism which led to the establishment of a dissident outpost of Essene sectaries in the desert of Judea. Josephus and Philo do not speak of the desert site at Qumran because they are providing a generic portrait of mainstream Essenism. Conversely, Qumran does not correspond in all particulars with the descriptions supplied in the Greek and Latin sources because its library allegedly attests to a small and ultimately ineffectual splinter movement within mainstream

Essenism, a fissure effected by the so-called Teacher of Righteousness and his small band of followers.

Leaving aside for the moment the writings from Qumran and their posited affinities with one or more of the religious groups supposedly operative in second temple Judaism, I think a pertinent question worth posing is whether in fact there was any such thing as an Essene sect. I want to be perfectly clear, and hence I will proceed deliberately. I am not questioning the notion of the Greco-Latin semantic marker "Essene," one which when wielded by writers like Josephus, Philo, or Pliny served to invoke a very specific network of ideas and cultural competencies within the minds of a discerning imperial readership. That notion or category is undeniably present and meaningful when read within its proper ethnographic context. I am much less confident, however, about whether the label Essene corresponded in point of fact to an actual party, group, or movement within second temple Jewish society. There are several factors here which prompt my skepticism.

1. There is not a single extant Palestinian or Syro-Mesopotamian Jewish writing authored in either Hebrew or Aramaic during the Achaemenid, Hellenistic, Roman, Byzantine, or Sassanian periods which mentions an Essene sect, categorizes a tradition or practice as Essene, or employs the label Essene in a recognizable way.

2. A superficial perusal of the table of contents of a comprehensive collection of the classical (i.e., Greek and Latin) descriptions of the Jewish sect of the Essenes can leave an unwary reader with the mistaken impression that the primary sources for a scholastic reconstruction of Essene ideology are manifold and grounded on an extensive series of empirical observations and experiences. In actual fact, though, it is extremely improbable that any of the extant tradents who speak of a Jewish sect of Essenes, including our earliest authorities, Philo and Josephus, write on the basis of such knowledge.

3. Finally, and more speculatively, I would like to suggest that modern scholars have been unduly credulous about the actual existence of a Jewish Essene sect. Since the era of Hecataeus and Herodotus, a popular *Tendenz* in classical ethnography was the description of a number of elite or secretive castes of religious and/or intellectual functionaries supposedly flourishing among various barbarian peoples who inhabited the fringes of the Greco-Roman *oikoumenē*.

Prominent examples of such castes would be the Druids of Gaul and ancient Celtic society, the magi of Persia, the Chaldeans of Mesopotamia, and the so-called naked philosophers, or gymnosophists, of India. At times they dwell interspersed among their respective *ethnoi*; but sometimes they exist in segregated isolation from their respective societies, and there are occasionally in-

stances of groups who can be found in the far reaches of the inhabited world where they constitute utopian conventicles (Mendels 1979). Regardless of their alleged physical location within or apart from their societies, Greek and Latin accounts about these groups exhibit a general family resemblance: members of these groups typically experience a marvelous longevity of life, they are dedicated to lives of piety and holiness, they are cultural repositories of priestly and philosophical wisdom, and they are adept in a number of useful arts, crafts, and technologies, among which the oracular sciences are prominently numbered. The Essenes and Philo's Therapeutae are clearly marketed by their publicists as the Jewish representatives of this ethnological trope.

Students of early Christian and medieval Muslim heresiography and historiography are thoroughly familiar with this literary tactic. The premodern historians of these religions will sometimes fabricate artificial sects in order to provide a communal framework for certain disreputable ideas or practices, or invent fictive heresiarchs so as to assign blame for critical disputes and schisms. One thinks of shadowy groups or figures like the Simonians, the Sethians, Dustai, and Ebionites. The Qur'ānic *Ṣābi'ūn* (Q 2:62; 5:69; 22:17) can be fit within this scheme. Medieval Muslim heresiography constructs the Barahima, a sect which supposedly denied the validity of prophecy, and the Jewish Maghariyya, "so called," Qirqisānī says, "because their writings were found in a cave" (1939-43, vol. 1, 12.1; Wasserstrom 1998, 127-54; Reeves 1999, 161-62).

Utopian currents are visible as well in these later literatures. The wicked Nimrod becomes adept in and an apostle of magical mysteries after his three-year sojourn on the eastern shore of Okeanos among the people of Yonton, the fourth son of Noah (Ri 1987, 208-17; Gero 1980, 321-30). According to the hermit Zosimus, the prophet Jeremiah's Rechabites are able to maintain their strict regimen in the guise of Christian monks living in a blessed land located at the ends of the earth (Charlesworth 1982).

One wonders, then, how much credence should be granted such analogous *testimonia* about the formal existence of a pietist elite within second temple Jewry. I would counsel, very little. To be sure, I would in no way deny that individual pietists were active within or at the margins of Jewish society. I am questioning only the existential status of a distinctive social aggregate bearing the name Essene. To sharpen this point and to urge caution among those who would blithely accept the historicity of a Jewish Essene sect solely on the basis of one or more literary source(s), I introduce here for consideration a series of semi-anthropological, descriptive excerpts taken from a medieval account about a Jewish group, allegedly to be found somewhere east of Palestine, who are most frequently called the *beney Mosheh* (Arabic *banū Mūsā*) or "the people of Moses" (Jellinek 1853-77, 2:103-5; 3:9-11; 5:18-20; 6:15-16; Albeck 1940, 124; Ox-

ford Bodl. Ms. Opp. 603, 41b-42a; Shahrastānī 1951-55, 1:507; Qazwīnī *apud* Wüstenfeld 1848-49, 2:18). The account, which enjoyed great popularity in medieval folkloristic and apocalyptic collections, belongs among a group of writings associated with the mysterious figure of Eldad ha-Dani, a traveling messianic agitator (Epstein *apud* Habermann 1949-56, 1:1-211, 357-90; Neubauer 1888-89; Shochat 1971) of the eighth or ninth century:

the levitical *beney Mosheh*: they are encamped east of the River Sa(m)batyon . . . no unclean animal or bird or creeping thing can be found among them; they have with them (only) their flocks and cattle. Six springs are there whose waters they have collected into a pool which they constructed, and they irrigate their land from the pool. All types of pure fish flourish in it (the pool), and by the springs and the pool flourish all kinds of pure waterfowl. They enjoy all kinds of fruits: (the fertility of the land is such that) whoever plants one seed harvests a hundredfold. They are religiously observant, each of them learned in Torah, Bible, Mishnah, and Aggadah. They are “pure pietists” (טהורים חסידיים). None of them ever swears a false oath. They live to be one hundred and twenty years old, and a son or daughter never dies during the lifespan of their father: they witness the succession of three or four generations. They construct their own houses and do their own sowing and harvesting because they have no slaves or maidservants. They never lock their doors at night. A very small child might go and tend their cattle for a number of days, and no one will be in the least bit anxious, for there are no thieves or dangerous wild animals or pests, and there are no demons or anything that might cause harm. Because they are holy and persist in the sanctity revealed by our teacher Moses, He (God) has granted all this to them and chosen them . . . and they will remain there until the time of the Eschaton. (Yassif 2001, 220-21)

I would suggest that it might prove instructive to begin situating and studying the classical accounts about the Essenes in tandem with the recurrent testimonies and traditions we find in late antique and medieval Jewish, Christian, and Muslim sources about utopian pietist groups like the *beney Mosheh*, the Rechabites, and the Maghariyya. Zeev Safrai (1979) has already pointed to some interesting connections linking the biblical and rabbinic discussions of the adherents of Yehonadab b. Rekhab with behavioral and doctrinal aspects of the Essene and Qumran sects. Patristic sources, Nilus of Ankara, the Byzantine *Suda*, probe the Essene-Rechabite axis even further, and there are versions of the Eldad ha-Dani legend which link the Rechabites with the *beney Mosheh* (Friedlaender 1910-11).

It does not require a trained eye to see that there exist a number of conceptual and thematic similarities between the descriptions provided by classical sources of the Essenes, or barbarian utopian communities, and that of Eldad ha-Dani of the people of Moses. Yet to my knowledge no responsible post-Enlightenment thinker has ever seriously maintained that the latter group really existed, or sought to attribute any Jewish literature to their creative pens. Why then should the Essenes be so uncritically privileged?

ENOCH AND QUMRAN ORIGINS

New Light on a Forgotten Connection

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