THE ORIGIN OF EVIL IN APOCALYPTIC LITERATURE
AND THE DEAD SEA SCROLLS

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One of the more novel approaches to the study of apocalypticism in recent years has been that of the Italian scholar Paolo Sacchi. Sacchi has argued in a series of articles, recently collected in his book *L'Apocalittica Giudaica e la sua Storia*, (Brescia, 1990),¹ that apocalypticism should be understood primarily as an ideology. He distinguishes this ideology from the literary genre apocalypse, but remains vague on what if any relationship there is between them. He looks for the essence of the tradition in its origin, which he finds in the Enochic Book of the Watchers. Here, he claims, the generative idea lies in the notion that sin is not of human origin but is antecedent to human choice. The fall of the Watchers is the primordial sin. The apocalyptic tradition that unfolds in 1 Enoch addresses this generative idea in various ways. The tradition is not static. The book of Jubilees marks a significant development along the same lines as the Book of the Watchers. Mastema, or Satan, now emerges as the personalized embodiment of evil. The Epistle of Enoch even records a contradiction of the original conception: “I swear to you, you sinners, that as a mountain has not, and will not, become a slave, nor a hill a woman’s maid, so sin was not sent upon the earth, but man of himself created it” (1 Enoch xcviii 4). The Doctrine of the two Spirits at Qumran (which Sacchi attributes to the Teacher of Righteousness) is alleged to be completely in line with the Book of the Watchers, although it does not share the eschatology of the Enochic book (Sacchi, p. 76). The continuity lies in the fact that evil is attributed to a supernatural source.

Sacchi’s view of apocalypticism has now been taken up by Florentino García Martínez, and used as one of the pillars of the so-called

¹ See the endorsement of Sacchi’s approach by F. García Martínez, “Encore l’Apocalyptique”, *JSE* 17 (1987), p. 231.
"Groningen hypothesis" of the origin of the Qumran sect. This hypothesis assumes, with most scholars, that the major rule books and such crucial documents as 4QMMT and the Pesharim pertain to the same sect. It also assumes, in accordance with the long-standing consensus, that the sect is Essene, or at least an offshoot of the Essene movement. It locates the origin of this movement in Palestine, specifically "in the Palestinian apocalyptic tradition before the antiochian crisis". The understanding of this apocalyptic tradition is taken from Sacchi. García Martínez claims that the dualism of Qumran was a modification of the tradition found in 1 Enoch and Jubilees, and that the yhd can be seen as development of the same movement. My objective here is to examine the coherence of this movement and more specifically its relevance to the dualism of the two spirits, as we find it in the Qumran Community Rule.

Sacchi is certainly correct that the problem of evil has a generative role in the apocalyptic literature, and that the typical apocalyptic explanation of evil posits a supernatural source. Whether this idea can be treated as the essence of apocalypticism is another matter. The problem of evil is as central in wisdom as in apocalyptic literature. What is distinctive is the kind of explanation and resolution of the problem that is provided. Like most scholars, I would argue that the apocalyptic explanation of evil lies in its eschatology, at least as much as in its protology. The Book of the Watchers does not stop with the fall of the Watchers. It also describes their judgement and punishment, and fully two thirds of the work are taken up with Enoch's tour of the cosmos, where he sees such marvels as the chambers of the dead and the place prepared for the final judgement. These motifs are not incidental. They are fully as important to the structure of apocalyptic thought as the primordial sin. Sacchi's focus on the origin of evil is too narrow to comprehend the phenomenon of apocalyp-

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