

**RULE OF THE COMMUNITY.** Occupying the major part of one of the seven manuscripts that were found in 1947 in what was to become known as Cave 1 at Qumran, the Rule of the Community (1QS; hereafter, 1QRule of the Community) was one of the first of the Dead Sea Scrolls to be discovered. At the time of its discovery and initial publication, 1QRule of the Community was given the title "Manual of Discipline." But the text actually bears the title "Rule of the Community" (in Hebrew *Serekh ha-Yahad*), and it is by this title that it now is known. The Rule of the Community is one of the most important of the sectarian texts, and its importance is underlined by the fact that fragments of no less than ten copies of the Rule of the Community subsequently were found in Cave 4 at Qumran (Rule of the Community<sup>a-j</sup> 4Q255-264). In addition, two tiny fragments of a copy of the Rule of the Community were found in Cave 5 (5Q11), and a quotation from the Rule of the Community is included in a fragment of another sectarian text from Cave 5, Rule (5Q13). While little is to be made of the evidence from Cave 5, there are important differences between the Cave 1 version of the Rule of the Community and the versions preserved in some of the Cave 4 manuscripts. It has been argued that these differences cast an important light on the composition of the Rule of the Community, but their significance is disputed. All copies of the Rule of the Community are in Hebrew, and there is no reason to doubt that this was the language in which it was composed. It is assumed here that the community for which the Rule was composed was Essene. [See Essenes.]

The Cave 1 copy of the Rule of the Community not only is the best preserved copy but also contains the longest version of this text known to us. For this reason, 1QRule of the Community is likely to remain the basis on which study of this document is conducted, but this does not mean that this version necessarily is to be regarded as the most original. The manuscript contains not only the Rule of the Community but also two other works: the Rule of the Congregation (1Q28a) and the Rule of the Blessings (1Q28b). [See Rule of the Blessings; Rule of the Congregation.] That these are three separate works, and not one single work, is shown by the fact that a space has been left in the manuscript between the end of 1QRule of the Community and the beginning of the Rule of the Congregation and again between the end of the Rule of the Congregation and the beginning of the Rule of the Blessings; by the fact that on the outside of the manuscript the remains of a title are preserved, "[The Ru]le of the Community and from [...]", which clearly seems to have referred to more than one work; and by the fact that there are differences of approach between 1QRule of the Community on the one hand and the Rule of the Congregation

and the Rule of the Blessings on the other. Perhaps the motive for combining all three works on one scroll lay in the fact that they are all concerned with the ordering of the life of the community—1QRule of the Community with the community in the present age and the Rule of the Congregation and the Rule of the Blessings with the community in the future age. Recognition of the fact that 1QRule of the Community, Rule of the Congregation, and Rule of the Blessings form three separate works inevitably has led to the question of whether 1QRule of the Community itself forms a single work. However, although 1QRule of the Community is a composite, as we shall see, the arrangement of the text in the manuscript clearly seems to indicate that 1QRule of the Community was meant to be read as an entity.

The physical arrangement of the text of 1QRule of the Community—the leaving of the ends of lines blank, the use of indentation, the placing of paragraph signs in the margin—serves to divide the text into paragraphs. But the text also contains a series of headings, normally followed by passages that are introductory in character, on the basis of which it may be divided into six main sections.

1QRule of the Community i.1-15 is an introduction that sets out the aims and ideals of the community.

1QRule of the Community i.16-iii.12 is a ritual for the ceremony of entry into the covenant (1QS i.16-ii.18), to which are attached instructions for the annual renewal of the covenant (1QS ii.19-25a) and a passage on the need for sincere inner conversion on the part of those entering the covenant (1QS ii.25b-iii.12). The ritual for the covenant ceremony draws its inspiration from the account of the covenant ceremony in *Deuteronomy 27* and the related material in *Deuteronomy 28-30*.

The third section, 1QRule of the Community iii.13-iv.26, is an exposition of the dualistic beliefs of the community, specifically the belief that the actions and the fate of all humans are under the control of one or the other of the two opposing forces in the world, the spirit of truth and the spirit of injustice. [See Dualism.] Dualistic beliefs underlie a number of other Qumran sectarian texts and are particularly prominent in the War Scroll (1QM), but they are not expressed elsewhere as explicitly as in this section of 1QRule of the Community. [See War of the Sons of Light against the Sons of Darkness.]

Columns v.1-vii.25 are a collection of rules for the organization of the life of the community. The collection is somewhat random in character and contains the following material: an introduction (1QS v.1-7a); a passage on the oath sworn by the new member on admission (v.7b-20a); a miscellaneous collection of rules governing such matters as the administration of reproof or the requirement that in every place where there are ten men from

the council of the community there shall not be lacking a priest (v.20b–vi.8a); rules for meetings of the community (vi.8b–13a); rules governing the admission of new members (vi.13b–23); and a list of punishments for infringements of the community's rules (vi.24–vii.25).

The fifth section, 1QRule of the Community viii.1–x.8, a program for a new community, frequently has been regarded as forming the core of the Rule of the Community. It provides rules for a community that apparently was on the verge of being set up in the wilderness and to which the prophecies in the *Book of Isaiah* concerning God's "plant" (*Is.* 60.21, 61.3), concerning the "cornerstone" (*Is.* 28.16), and concerning the preparation of the way of God in the wilderness (*Is.* 40.3), are all applied. When the community came into existence, its members would form the true (spiritual) temple and would, by the practice of righteousness and the endurance of suffering, make expiation for the land. In the wilderness they were to prepare the way of God by living a life devoted to the study and observance of the law (1QS viii.1–ix.11). This section also includes a description of the duties of the "wise leader" or "master" (*maskil*) (ix.12–26a), to which is attached a liturgical calendar (ix.26b–x.8) that prescribes the times at which praise was to be offered to God. [See Calendars and Mishmarot.] Because 1QRule of the Community viii.12b–14 refers to withdrawing into the wilderness, it has seemed natural to relate this section specifically to the establishment of the community at Qumran.

The final section, columns x.9–xi.22, is a concluding hymn of praise, which may be compared with the hymns in Hodayot (known best from a manuscript from Cave 1, 1QH) and to which the liturgical calendar (1QS ix.26b–x.8) serves as a natural transition. [See Hodayot.]

It is generally accepted that 1QRule of the Community was copied in the period between 100 and 75 BCE, and since there is evidence to indicate that the text was copied from another manuscript, it seems clear that the Cave 1 version of the Rule of the Community must have been in existence by at least about the beginning of the first century BCE. However, it has been argued on the evidence of the Cave 4 manuscripts of the Rule of the Community that the Cave 1 version represents a late stage in the evolution of this text.

As was noted above, fragments of no less than ten manuscripts of the Rule of the Community were found in Cave 4, but in practice it is only in the case of three of these—Rule of the Community<sup>b</sup> and <sup>d</sup> (4Q256, 258) on the one hand, and Rule of the Community<sup>e</sup> (4Q259) on the other—that sufficient text has survived for the manuscripts to be of real significance for our understanding of the evolution of the text. Of the remaining seven manuscripts, it must suffice to note that they range in date from the second half of the second century BCE (Rule of

the Community<sup>a</sup> 4Q255) to the first half of the first century CE (Rule of the Community<sup>h</sup> 4Q262); and that two of them (4Q255, 262) preserve tiny fragments—one in each manuscript—that appear to form part of the section on the two spirits but do not correspond exactly to anything in 1QS iii.13–iv.26 and thus suggest the existence of an alternative version of this material.

Rule of the Community<sup>b</sup> and <sup>d</sup> belong together in that both attest a text that is considerably shorter than that of column v of 1QRule of the Community and in that both can be shown, on the basis of the reconstruction of the extent of the manuscripts, to have had a shorter text than that of columns vi–vii of 1QRule of the Community. In addition, both were copied in the Herodian script and date from the last third of the first century BCE, and both apparently contained a text or texts in addition to the Rule of the Community: Rule of the Community<sup>b</sup> contains at the end what looks like the beginning of a further text, although it is impossible to say what this was, while the reconstruction of the extent of Rule of the Community<sup>d</sup> suggests that the manuscript did include a further text(s), whether a shorter version of the Rule of the Congregation and the Rule of the Blessings—there would not have been space for the exact equivalent of these texts—or some other text. However, in one important respect Rule of the Community<sup>b</sup> and Rule of the Community<sup>d</sup> differ. All sections of 1QRule of the Community are reflected in the fragments of Rule of the Community<sup>b</sup> except for the section on the two spirits (cf. 1QS iii.13–iv.26), and it is very unlikely that this section was not included in the text. In contrast, the fragments of Rule of the Community<sup>d</sup> begin with the equivalent of 1QRule of the Community v, and it seems very likely that this was the beginning of the manuscript and that the equivalent of 1QS i–iv never formed part of this text.

The manuscript that contains the fragments of Rule of the Community<sup>e</sup> also contains the fragments of a calendrical work, Otot (4Q319). The fragments of Rule of the Community<sup>e</sup> correspond to parts of 1QRule of the Community vii–ix, but its text differs in some respects from that of 1QRule of the Community, above all in the fact that Rule of the Community<sup>e</sup> does not contain the equivalent of 1QRule of the Community viii.15b–ix.11. Further, it is significant that no fragments corresponding to 1QRule of the Community x–xi (the liturgical calendar and the concluding hymn) have been preserved, and the reconstruction of the manuscript makes it almost certain that Rule of the Community<sup>e</sup> never contained the equivalent of 1QRule of the Community x–xi, but that the equivalent of the instructions to the "wise leader" (1QS ix.12–26) was followed immediately by the beginning of Otot. It is also possible, but by no means certain, that this manuscript, like Rule of the Community<sup>d</sup>, did not include

the equivalent of 1QRule of the Community i-iv. As to the age of Rule of the Community<sup>e</sup>, whereas Józef T. Milik (1962) dated its script to the second half of the second century BCE, Frank Moore Cross has recently assigned it to the period between 50 and 25 BCE.

The Cave 4 fragments of the Rule of the Community became generally accessible only in the 1990s, but even before their publication, although occasionally scholars such as P. Guilbert (1958-1959) defended the unity of 1QRule of the Community, it generally was accepted that 1QRule of the Community was composite. Jerome Murphy-O'Connor (1969), whose account of the formation of 1QRule of the Community was the most influential and was further developed by Pouilly (1976), attempted to relate the evolution of the text to the history of the Qumran community and argued that the text was formed in four stages by successive additions to an original core. Stage one, 1QRule of the Community viii.1-x.8a (minus some additions), was intended as a manifesto for a new community and belongs in the period prior to the establishment of the community at Qumran. Stage two, 1QRule of the Community viii.16b-ix.2 (with which Pouilly included viii.10b-12a), represents the addition of a small number of rules to take account of the realities of communal life and belongs to phase Ia in the occupation of the site at Qumran. Stage three, 1QRule of the Community v-vii (minus the interpolation of v.13b-15a [according to Pouilly, v.13b-vi.8a]), consists of the addition of a collection of rules governing communal life and reflects the institutionalization of the life of the Qumran community at the time of the expansion of its membership at the beginning of phase Ib. Stage four, 1QRule of the Community i-iv and x.9-xi.22 (plus the interpolation of v.13b-15a [or v.13b-vi.8a], x.4b, and x.6a), represents the addition some years later of material that was intended to revive the fervor of the members of the Qumran community.

Murphy-O'Connor's four-stage theory represented a significant attempt to explain the evolution of the text of 1QRule of the Community, but in the light of the evidence of the Cave 4 manuscripts it can be seen that, even if his approach was broadly along the right lines, the process was more complex than his explanation suggested. Thus, while Rule of the Community<sup>d</sup> and Rule of the Community<sup>e</sup> can be interpreted to support the view that 1QRule of the Community i-iv and x-xi (or x.9-xi.22) were added at a late stage to the Rule of the Community, there is no unequivocal manuscript evidence to suggest that these sections were added at the same time and represent a single stage. Again, despite the fact that 1QRule of the Community v-vii and viii-ix are very different in character and presumably had a separate origin, there is no manuscript evidence to support the view that the equivalent of 1QRule of the Community viii-ix (or

viii.1-x.8) ever existed as a version of the Rule of the Community apart from the equivalent of 1QRule of the Community v-vii. Finally, the evidence of Rule of the Community<sup>e</sup> suggests that if there was an addition within 1QRule of the Community viii-ix, it consisted not just of viii.16b-ix.2 but the whole of viii.15b-ix.11; and the evidence of the short text of Rule of the Community<sup>b,d</sup> suggests that the formation of the text of 1QRule of the Community v-vii is not simply to be explained by the assumption of the interpolation of a single passage, whether of v.13b-15a or of v.13b-vi.8a.

In a recent study of the formation of the Rule of the Community, Sarianna Metso (1997) has argued that although Rule of the Community<sup>b,d,e</sup> (if Cross's dating is correct) are all younger than 1QRule of the Community, they represent alternative versions of the Rule of the Community that are older than that represented by 1QRule of the Community, and that behind both of them lies the original version of the Rule of the Community, which is no longer attested in any manuscript. This original version is likely to have consisted of a text parallel to 1QRule of the Community v-ix, but with the shorter text of columns v-vii represented by Rule of the Community<sup>b,d</sup> and without the passage parallel to 1QRule of the Community viii.15b-ix.11 (cf. Rule of the Community<sup>e</sup>) in columns viii-ix. The absence of the equivalent of 1QRule of the Community i-iv in this version is confirmed by the evidence of Rule of the Community<sup>d</sup>, and the absence of the equivalent of 1QRule of the Community x-xi is confirmed by the evidence of Rule of the Community<sup>e</sup>—and of Rule of the Community<sup>e</sup>, which dates from the period 100 to 75 BCE and, in the light of the reconstruction of the extent of the manuscript, appears not to have had this material. Otot may have been included at the end of the text.

This original version was then revised in two different ways. In the version represented by Rule of the Community<sup>e</sup>, substantial additions were made to the text parallel to 1QRule of the Community v-ix, which were intended to provide scriptural legitimation for the community's regulations and to strengthen the community's understanding of itself as the true keeper of God's covenant with Israel. However, the equivalent of 1QRule of the Community viii.15b-ix.11 was not included, and Otot followed immediately after the end of the equivalent of 1QRule of the Community ix, not the final hymn of 1QRule of the Community x-xi. Metso also believes that the equivalent of 1QRule of the Community i-iv was not included in the version represented by Rule of the Community<sup>e</sup>, but it should be noted that it is far from certain that the equivalent of this section was lacking in Rule of the Community<sup>e</sup>. In the version represented by Rule of the Community<sup>b,d</sup>, the shorter text parallel to 1QRule

of the Community v–vii was retained, but a text parallel to 1QRule of the Community viii.15b–ix.11 was included. The final hymn was added at the end in place of Otot, and—at the stage represented by Rule of the Community<sup>b</sup>—the equivalent of 1QRule of the Community i–iv was added at the beginning of the text. At a final stage, a redactor drew on both of these versions to produce the text of the Rule of the Community represented by 1QRule of the Community.

Despite the uncertainties caused by the fact that Rule of the Community<sup>b,d</sup> and Rule of the Community<sup>e</sup> apparently are all of later date than 1QRule of the Community, Sarianna Metso's account of the textual development of the Rule of the Community has a good deal to commend it. Her explanation takes account not only of the evidence presented by the various manuscripts but also makes sense of the evidence provided by traditional forms of literary criticism of 1QRule of the Community. However, other scholars have argued for the priority of the text represented by 1QRule of the Community. Thus Philip S. Alexander (1996), in the most significant representation of this view, has argued that the dating of the manuscripts ought to be taken seriously in the reconstruction of the redaction history of the Rule of the Community. He believes that on text-critical grounds three main forms of the Rule of the Community are to be identified, and on the basis of the paleographical evidence he would date these recensions as follows: 1QRule of the Community (plus Rule of the Community<sup>e</sup> 4Q257) to approximately 100 BCE; Rule of the Community<sup>e</sup> to approximately 50 BCE; and Rule of the Community<sup>b</sup> and <sup>d</sup> to approximately 25 BCE. In support of this view he argues that it is just as likely that Rule of the Community<sup>e</sup> and Rule of the Community<sup>b</sup> and <sup>d</sup> are abbreviated texts as it is that 1QRule of the Community is an expanded text. Thus, for example, in relation to the fact that Rule of the Community<sup>e</sup> does not have the equivalent of 1QRule of the Community viii.15b–ix.11, Alexander argues that the omission of the material contained in 1QRule of the Community by the redactor of Rule of the Community<sup>e</sup> is just as plausible on internal grounds as its insertion by the redactor of 1QRule of the Community.

Alexander's stress on the importance of the paleographical considerations has to be taken seriously. On the other hand, the view put forward by Metso better takes account of the indications within 1QRule of the Community itself that its text is composite, and that it acquired its present form by a process of evolution. The debate on this issue is far from over, but in the end it may have to be recognized that there can be no certainty on the question of the redaction history of the Rule of the Community.

The Rule of the Community and the Damascus Document have enough in common for attention inevitably to

have been focused on the relationship between them. [See Damascus Document.] In fact, the two works are somewhat different in character, but there is a real similarity between the communal regulations contained in 1QRule of the Community v–ix and those contained in the corpus of laws in the Damascus Document. The relationship between these two sets of regulations often has been explained on the basis that the Rule of the Community was intended for those Essenes living at Qumran, while the Damascus Document was intended for those Essenes who lived among their fellow Jews in towns and villages. The emphasis on the wilderness ideology in 1QRule of the Community viii–ix gave this explanation plausibility, and it is not totally to be abandoned. But some, at least, of the regulations included in 1QRule of the Community v–vii suggest that they, like those of the Damascus Document, were intended for Essenes who were living among their fellow Jews; and the existence of other rules, particularly Serekh Damascus (4Q265), has shown that the situation was more complex than a simple division between a rule intended for Essenes at Qumran and a rule intended for Essenes living elsewhere. [See Serekh Damascus.] It is perhaps more accurate to say that the Rule of the Community and the Damascus Document belong to different, but related, communities, and that the two works reflect the life and the history of these communities. It is significant that whereas the Damascus Document refers to the group with which it is concerned as a "congregation" (*'edah*), the key word for the Rule of the Community is "community" (*yaḥad*).

As we have seen, the Rule of the Community in the form represented by 1QRule of the Community was already in existence by approximately the beginning of the first century BCE, and the origins of the Rule of the Community must therefore go back into the second century; in fact Rule of the Community<sup>a</sup> dates from the second half of the second century BCE. It often has been assumed that the Teacher of Righteousness was the author of the Rule of the Community, and this view has been linked to the view that the Rule of the Community, and particularly 1QRule of the Community viii–ix, was to be associated with Qumran, and that the Teacher was responsible for the withdrawal of the community to Qumran. [See Teacher of Righteousness.] While all this is possible, it cannot be anything more than speculation because the Rule of the Community contains no evidence about the identity of its author.

[See also Community Organization.]

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**RULE OF THE CONGREGATION** (1QSa = 1Q28a), also known as the Messianic Rule or by its Hebrew name *Serekh ha-'Edah*, is preserved only as an appendix copied on the same scroll after the Rule of the Community (Manual of Discipline, *Serekh ha-Yahad*), and followed by the Rule of Benedictions. The script is from the Hasmonean

period, dating to about 100-75 BCE. Despite appearing on the same scroll, and being related in many ways, the Rule of the Community and the Rule of the Congregation are clearly two separate documents that need to be studied individually. Yet the many relationships of these two texts indicate why the copyist decided to place them on the same scroll. There are also many parallels between the Rule of the Congregation and the War Scroll (1QM), involving some of the purity laws, ages of military service, and the concept that angels are among the sectarians, requiring the highest standards of ritual purity.

The Rule of the Congregation was clearly considered to be a central text by the sectarians or it would not have been copied immediately after the Rule of the Community. Yet only one manuscript of this document survives. Its content is a description of the nature of the eschatological community as understood by the sectarians. This community would presumably come into being in the aftermath of the great eschatological war described in the War Scroll. Accordingly, this text was an essential part of the messianic worldview of the Qumran sectarians.

When read in comparison with the Rule of the Community (1QS), it becomes clear that the Rule of the Congregation presents a messianic mirror image of the life of the sectarians in the present, pre-messianic age. One can conclude that life in the present sectarian community is seen as an enactment of what will be the order of the day at the End of Days. At the same time, the life of the eschatological community reflects a transformation of the present order into the life of the End of Days.

The text is made up of several sections, each of which might have originally stood alone before redaction into the complete document as it is now preserved.

*The Sectarian Assembly* (1QSa i.1-6). The title of the text is derived from the opening sentence, which specifically alludes to the eschatological character of what follows. The leadership of the sect, even in the End of Days, is retained by the Sons of Zadok, the Zadokite priests, who are associated with their followers who have kept God's covenant when all others went astray. At the onset of the End of Days, the priestly Sons of Zadok assemble with their wives and children and celebrate a covenant renewal ceremony, reading the law aloud. This text most certainly expects normal family life in the eschatological community.

*The Stages of Life* (1QSa i.6-19). The text then outlines the stages of life of the sectarian, beginning with the earliest education and extending to old age. Twenty is the age of majority when marriage and sexual relations are to ensue. The text details various ages for different military roles. At twenty-five the male sectarian enters into full service, and at thirty he may take a leadership role.

*Those Disqualified from Service* (1QSa i.19-22). At old