

THE ZEALOTS: THE CASE FOR REVALUATION

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Two events have conspired to redirect the attention of scholars towards the Zealots, who played so decisive a part in the Jewish rebellion against Rome between A.D. 66 and 73: the discovery of the Judaean Desert manuscripts, and the total excavation of Masada (1955–56; 1964–65). Both events have cast new light on the Zealot movement, but, as is so often the case with new discoveries, they have also created new problems, and neither can furnish a substitute for the careful examination of, and reflection upon, the character and origins of the movement. The important material has for long been available to scholars. Despite this, agreement has been rare. However conscientious historians have wished to be, they have tended to be influenced by the traditions to which they are the heirs. Denounced by their enemies in the ancient world, the Zealots, it may be thought, have also been exposed to subtler misunderstandings on the part of modern historians.

Throughout the period of history in which the Zealots figured, the attitude towards them of the nascent Christian movement was understandably neutral, though its objections to the rule of Rome were, in a way, no less essential to its beliefs; but for this fact, the attitudes of many Christian (or at least non-Jewish) historians might well have been different. In the past, in fact, they have tended to favour the established order, accepting a viewpoint that is pro-Roman in varying degrees. Jewish historians, on the other hand, faced by a theologically conceived tradition of historiography that has judged Jewish history by special standards, have in reaction tended to be apologetic or, in a new era of national revival, to claim for the Zealots an *a priori* justification, be it moral or political. Thus it is that many scholars have, until recently, judged the Zealots somewhat in isolation from their contemporary social context; they have forgotten that similar national or social movements are to be found elsewhere in the Roman Empire, some of which—though no less militant—have managed to catch the sympathies of scholars of modern times. Arminius, Vercingetorix, Spartacus—such ‘heroic’ figures have had their appeal to scholars of different nationalities at various times. It is not inapposite, in this *Journal*, to mention a British instance. British scholars may choose, by an appeal to Josephus’ account, to condemn the Zealots for thuggery, wholesale murder and the ‘horrible massacre’ of their wives and children (as Hamilton does, for example),¹ or to declare (with Sir Ian Richmond)² that they were ‘no heroes’—pronouncements which may, or may not, stand up to a careful examination of sources and circumstances—heroism is difficult to measure objectively. It is enough to recall the acts of the historical Boudicca, and her nineteenth-century apotheosis (not to mention a statue by the Houses of Parliament), to realize that problems of perspective are not confined to Jewish history. Thus Richmond himself—he was admittedly speaking in the context of a Coronation³—was more charitable towards Boudicca in 1953 than he was later to feel towards the Jews of Masada. Perhaps, we may say, it is a matter of the case being made, of the brief in hand; but the final judgment is another matter, and the evidence is surely worth our serious attention.

The most widespread verdict about the Zealots has been that they were fanatics.⁴ This convenient view takes over the bias of our sources, and rates the Zealots low in human

¹ A. S. Hamilton, *JRS* LVII, 1967, 272–3.

² I. A. Richmond, *JRS* LII, 1962, 155.

³ *ibid.* *JRS* XLIV, 1954, 43. For the nineteenth century, we may remember Cowper or Tennyson.

⁴ Schürer (*Gesch. Jüd. Volkes* I, 1901, 486): ‘eine strengere fanatische Partei’; A. H. M. Jones, (*The Herods of Judaea*, 1938, 237): ‘perverse fanatics’; so also Dubnow, *Weltgeschichte des jüdischen Volkes* II, 1925, 375; Wellhausen, *Prolegomena to the History of Israel*, (Eng. tr. 1957), 535; Travers Herford, *The Pharisees*, 1924, 52: ‘the wild men of the Pharisees’. Mommsen and Eduard Meyer were both ironical. ‘Alongside the fanatics,’ says the former (*Provinces of the Roman Empire*, II, (Eng. tr. 1899), 222), ‘the decayed or decaying elements of society played their part’; they were

admittedly patriots, but ‘not daring statesmen, but fanatical peasants . . . began and waged the war against Rome’. Meyer, after a short and adequate account of the Zealot ideology, adds (*Ursprung und Anfänge des Christentums* III, 1921, 402–4): ‘to the mass, these pious robber chieftains appeared as martyrs for the Law, surrounded by a false halo of sanctity.’ Momigliano (*CAH* x, 1934, 852) was content to characterize the Zealots as ‘an extreme minority’; but otherwise the *CAH* is completely silent on the origin and development of the movement. MacMullen (*Enemies of the Roman Order*, 1966) deals with the background of the group without as much as mentioning their name, and confines himself to the mystical prophecies which constituted a feature of the movement.

sympathy; but the ideas and experiences of more recent times have prompted fresh approaches. One modern historian to aim at a more positive view of the Zealots was Klausner, who even called them 'the communists of the time, enthusiastic patriots'.⁵ For some years other investigators, trying to avoid a temptation to identify their view of ancient society with that of its ruling group, have devoted their attention to a broader front, and the other currents of opposition and resistance in the Roman Empire. The sociological impulse in historical studies, the growing awareness of economic factors and the effects of class-divisions, not to mention the changes in modern society and the emergence of forces, political and non-political, of protest by the underprivileged, have all contributed towards creating more understanding of, and interest in, the movements of revolt or resistance in the ancient world.⁶ Students of the Empire can no longer ignore three valuable and relatively recent investigations of the Zealot movement: Professor S. G. F. Brandon's *Jesus and the Zealots* (1957); Dr. M. Hengel's *Die Zeloten* (1961); and Professor C. Roth's briefer study published in 1959.⁷ The first suffers, perhaps, from the fact that Brandon's examination of the Zealots is a preface to his case for a highly debatable special thesis, viz., that Jesus of Nazareth was influenced by the Zealot school of thought,⁸ but his treatment is refreshingly free from an unreasoning rejection of the Zealots as such. Hengel's study seems to me as objective an examination of the subject as is at present possible; his picture is built up by critical and comparative methods, and draws on the entirety of biblical, talmudic and other contemporary sources. He employs a comprehensive 'vertical' view of Judaism as a whole to trace the organic roots of Zealotry, and combines it with an adequate 'horizontal' knowledge of the Roman Empire in general, together with a searching and critical attitude to Josephus, who is perforce our main source for the events. If Hengel's work has deficiencies, they perhaps lie in an underestimate (though not a neglect) of the economic and political pressures to which most sections of the Jewish people at the time were subjected, and the chronological limits of his treatment which ends with the Destruction of the Second Temple and the fall of Masada. But he furnishes an authoritative basis for all future study, however we may disagree with individual details; and what follows will utilize his work freely and with a due sense of acknowledgement.

But a word must also be said of the historical sources from which our immediate knowledge of the Zealots is derived. It seems trite, but is nevertheless necessary, to repeat that they are few, and that the only works furnishing anything like a comprehensive series of reports are by Flavius Josephus—the *Jewish War*, the *Jewish Antiquities* and his *Life*. I do not propose to deal with source criticism—this has been adequately handled by others.⁹ Suffice it to say that Josephus' account, where he took information from other sources, derives from writers who were far from tender towards the Jewish resistance movements;

⁵ *History of the Second Temple* II, 1954, 122–123. Two earlier writers, Jost and Noth, had been more favourable: for Jost the Zealots were non-political, entirely concerned in saving the Law (*Gesch. des Judenthums*, 1867, 327–8); Noth thought that 'they interpreted traditional promises in a national sense' (*The History of Israel* (Eng. tr. 1960), 432). Among non-Jewish writers a notable exception was Dean A. P. Stanley, personal friend of Queen Victoria, who wrote with warm appreciation of the heroism and self-sacrifice of the Zealots (*Lectures on the History of the Jewish Church* III, 1893, 411). For a brief but thoughtful analysis of the Zealot position in the light of the contemporary Jewish social and economic situation, S. W. Baron, *Social and Religious History of the Jews*² II, 1952, 46–48. 'There is an incisive formulation in Guinebert, *The Jewish World in the Time of Jesus*, 1939, 40: 'The ideal of the Kannaïm was a Jewish republic with God as its president and the Law for its constitution.'

⁶ e.g. M. Beer, *Allgemeine Gesch. des Socialismus und der socialen Kämpfe*, 1924; K. Vorländer, *Gesch. der socialistischen Ideen*, 1924; H. Fuks, *Der geistige Widerstand gegen Rom in der antiken Welt*, 1938; M. Rostovtzeff, *A Social and Economic History of the Roman Empire* (2nd edn. 1957); E. A.

Thompson, 'The Peasant Revolts in Late Roman Gaul and Spain', *Past and Present* II, 1952; R. MacMullen, *Enemies of the Roman Order*, 1966. Neither Beer nor Vorländer, though both have sections on social movements among the ancient Jews, mention the Zealots; militant revolutionary movements based upon religious beliefs—at any rate among the Jews—were probably embarrassing to these writers. Even the Victorian conscience was not completely at ease with the Empire's social record; W. T. Arnold, writing in 1879, found it necessary to defend the benefits conferred by Roman rule on its conquered subjects and to cast a profit and loss account in the process (*The Roman System of Provincial Administration* 3, 1914, 32–44).

⁷ 'The Zealots in the War of 66–73', *Journ. of Semitic Studies* IV, 1959, 332–55.

⁸ His theory has close points of contact with the views of R. Eisler, Ἰησοῦς Βασιλεὺς, κτλ., 1929.

⁹ Schürer, op. cit. I, 1901, 74–105; G. Hölcher, s.v. Josephus, P–W IX, 1916 ff.; R. Laqueur, *Der jüdische Historiker Flavius Josephus*, 1920; H. Drexler, 'Untersuchungen zu Josephus und zur Geschichte des Jüdischen Aufstandes', *Klio* XIX, 1924, 277 ff.; H. St. J. Thackeray, *Josephus, the Man and the Historian*, 1929, etc.

down to the reign of Archelaus he drew extensively upon Nicholas of Damascus, a Greek and personal minister of Herod, and so profoundly antagonistic to the nationalist parties.¹⁰ His own independent observations of the same theme are influenced by his family and his social derivation, which was Sadducee, and so on the whole out of sympathy with the masses, and by the fact that he was involved in sharp conflict with the Zealots while he was performing his official function for the Jewish revolutionary government in Galilee. His purpose in writing the books must further be taken into account. The *War*, written to laud the victors and to play down the responsibility of the Jews as a whole for the revolt, sought to present the Zealots as the main, if not the sole, agents of the rising and of the destruction of the Temple. In proportion as the role of the people as a whole was minimized, that of the Zealots had to be emphasized and isolated, and the colour of their villainy became blacker. Any distortion would hardly have been rectified by other sources that Josephus claims to have used, such as the imperial operational reports, or personal information from Agrippa II.¹¹

The *Antiquities*, on the other hand, has as its object the promotion of understanding of the Jewish nation and its history. Its sources are broader, its approach more critical. It includes some matter hostile to the Herods, and stresses the role of the High Priests. A much greater degree of responsibility for the national disaster is ascribed to the Roman mishandling of Judaea, but the general attitude to the Zealot movement is still clearly unfriendly. Finally the *Life*, Josephus' personal apologia, is inevitably suspect concerning the conflict between him and the Galilean patriots, although Laqueur has shown that it is probably more veracious than the *War*.¹²

Lastly, the tenor and attitudes of Josephus' writings, especially where they touch upon the Zealots, were necessarily affected by one important fact: he had changed sides, and had actively assisted the Romans. Even where his sources on the Zealots were varied in their nature, his own attitude to these most consistent and enduring of Rome's adversaries among the Jews was bound to be hostile. One detail will be enough: Josephus can insinuate that Simon bar Giora was guilty of cannibalism—he says 'almost', but the thrust is plain.¹³ The general result is a paradox, that our only fairly extensive source for our subject had also the strongest personal motives for prejudice and hostility.

The other sources on the Zealots are the *Megillat Ta'anith*, a record of days of fasting and festival, believed by scholars to be a Zealot document;¹⁴ a few talmudic passages; Hippolytus' *Refutatio omnium haeresium*,¹⁵ and—more meagrely—Tacitus,¹⁶ Dio,¹⁷ and Epictetus.¹⁸ There may be added the Qumran ('Ein Fesha) sectarian documents (including especially the 'War Scroll',¹⁹ which few scholars today would deny reflect at various points the Zealot ideology), and also the sources for the Essenes²⁰ if—and only if—they are accepted as identical with the Qumran sect, which is still very much a subject of dispute. Some of the manuscript fragments found at Masada are certain to throw additional light on the Zealots when they are published. There is, further, little doubt that various Zealot sentiments are to be recognized in such Jewish works as the Sibylline Oracles, the *IV Ezra* and the *Vision of Baruch*.

Before we consider the actual identity and character of the Zealots as a movement, it would be well to recall the predicament in which the Jews found themselves between Pompey's advent in 64 B.C. and the outbreak of their revolt in A.D. 66. The facts are familiar

¹⁰ Hengel 8–9, with references.

¹¹ cf. Jos., *Vita* 342, 358, 366.

¹² op. cit., Preface and Part I.

¹³ *Bj* iv, 541; cf. Dio (Xiph.) LXVIII, 32, making similar charges against the Jewish rebels under Trajan. M. Joel, *Blicke in die Religionsgesch.*, 1893, II, 153 ff. and 165 ff. was able to show that the allegation was probably absent from Dio's original text. Similar atrocities by the Egyptians (Juv., *Sat.* xv, 93–115; cf. J. G. Milne, *Hist. of Egypt under Roman Rule*, 1898, 63) may have been projected upon the Jews by the Egyptians themselves: cf. *P. Giss.* 24 (Tcherikover and Fuks, *Corp. Pap. Iud.* II, 1960, no. 457).

¹⁴ H. Lichtenstein, *Die Fastenrolle*, 1922.

¹⁵ 9, 26.

¹⁶ *Hist.* v, 9; 12.

¹⁷ *Epit.* LXV, 4–7.

¹⁸ Ap. Arrian, *Diss.* IV, 7, 6.

¹⁹ Y. Yadin, *The Scroll of the War of the Sons of Light and the Sons of Darkness, from the Judaean Desert* (Heb. edn., 1957).

²⁰ Philo, *Quod omnis probus liber* 12, 13; *Eus., Praep. evang.* VIII, 11; Jos., *Bj* II, 120–161; *Ant.* XIII 171; xv, 371; XVIII, 18–22; Plin., *HN* v, 17.

from the Roman end; but, to the Jews, the advent of the Romans had been seen as a story of simple violation. Pompey initiated direct contacts between Rome and Judaea by desecrating the Temple; Crassus added robbery to sacrilege by plundering the Temple treasure; Cassius mulcted the country of 700 talents, and sold into slavery the inhabitants of four towns which failed to meet his demands. After a brief period of relief under Julius Caesar, a bitter and prolonged war was waged between Herod, actively supported by Rome, and Antigonus Mattathias, which ended with the decimation of both Sadducees and Pharisees and the bloody storming of Jerusalem. The reign of Herod witnessed the execution of the Hasmonaean nobility and the virtual destruction of the nation's representative council, the Sanhedrin; large tracts of land, the property of the Hasmonaean house and Herod's opponents, passed into Herod's hands. A people which till the Roman advent had been to a considerable extent free, for nearly a century, of taxation by a foreign power, found itself staggering under the weight of combined royal taxes and Roman tribute.²¹ Herod's expenditure was enormous, and Josephus himself reported that it exceeded his resources.²² In A.D. 17 Judaea appealed to Tiberius for a tax diminution.²³ Herod's reign saw the replacement of the hereditary high priesthood by a series of puppet incumbents, the progressive murder of the last scions of the Hasmonaean house and the death or incarceration of all opponents of the régime. After Herod's death the revolt that swept the country resulted in the slaughter of 3,000 Jews in the courts of the Temple, the crucifixion of 2,000 more,²⁴ and the looting of 400 talents from the Temple treasury.

In these circumstances and given this viewpoint, it is hardly surprising that the Zealot movement's organized ideological form crystallized in A.D. 6, when Archelaus was deposed and Judaea was converted into a prefectorial (afterwards a procuratorial) province.²⁵ Hengel, moreover, has pointed out that,²⁶ from the moment of Pompey's advent and down to the demand of Gessius Florus for seventeen talents of the Temple treasure in 66, the Jews of Judaea itself were at no time free of apprehension for their sanctities. Herod nailed the symbol of paganism to the Temple façade. He introduced the imperial cult into all the Greek cities, including those of mixed Greek and Jewish population, and into Jerusalem itself. Pilate raided the Temple treasury, and was barely induced to refrain from bringing the imperial *signa* into the city. Gaius nearly precipitated a general rising by his order to set up his statue in the Holy of Holies, and the disaster was only averted by the strategy of P. Petronius and by the Emperor's death. The impingement of the Antonia upon the Temple court constituted a continuous provocation.

But men do not live by faith alone. In the revolt of 4 B.C., one of the chief centres of revolt was the royal estates of the Peraea,²⁷ a fact suggesting either that the Herodian administration had been economically oppressive, or that between the Jewish tenants and the hellenized officials (Jewish or gentile?), tension had existed. It is a moot point whether the taking over of the vast royal estates^{27a} by Rome and the commencement of taxation by Roman officials on the deposition of Archelaus initially improved the peasants' situation or rendered it more acute. The character of most of the procurators of the time was certainly no guarantee of administrative integrity. But the existence of a deteriorating agrarian situation in the years before the rising of A.D. 66, in which the rural population was prominent, is evident enough (see below), and it cannot be coincidence that one of the first

²¹ It has been claimed (e.g. by Otto, P-W *Suppl.* II, s.v. Herodes, 1913, col. 55) that Judaea was free of Roman tribute under Herod and his sons. I find this difficult to credit; if Julius Caesar, who was highly favourable to the Jews, nevertheless imposed tribute on his ally Hyrcanus II (Jos., *Ant.* XIV, 201), surely Augustus would not have remitted it. Momigliano found reason to think tribute was imposed: *Ricerche sull'organizzazione della Giudea sotto il dominio romano* 63 a.C.-70 d.C. (1934), 49-51.

²² *Ant.* XVI, 154.

²³ Tac., *Ann.* II, 42.

²⁴ *Bj* II, 75. To this episode should relate the ruling of T. Bab. *Semahot* 2, 12: 'Whoever has a husband, wife, father or mother who was crucified while he was in a city, should not dwell in that city unless it is as large as Antioch.' Beloch, *Bevölkerung*

der griechisch-römischen Welt, 1886, 245, estimated the population of Antioch under Augustus at 300,000.

²⁵ The prefects: A. Frova, 'L'iscrizione di Ponzio Pilato a Cesarea', *Rendic. Ist. Lomb.* xcv (1961), 419 ff.; Sherwin-White in *JRS* LIV, 1954, 259; A. H. M. Jones, *Stud. in Rom. Government and Law*, 1960, 119, 124.

²⁶ Hengel, 211 ff.

²⁷ *Ant.* XVII, 277; *Bj* II, 59.

^{27a} It seems highly unlikely that they were sold up; Josephus' word (*Ant.* XVIII, 26) ἀποδιδόμενος surely means 'having leased out'. Augustus may have made presents of various estates to his supporters (cf. for Egypt, Rostovtzeff, *Soc. Econ. Hist. R. Emp.*², 1957, 670 f.), but the wholesale selling-up of crown domains would not have been in harmony with his policy.

acts of the revolutionaries at Jerusalem was to destroy the debt records,²⁸ or that Bar Giora's followers, partly drawn from the Peraea, attacked the houses of wealthy landowners.²⁹ In these circumstances, it is less surprising that the revolt broke out, or that it was continuous in the form of growing guerilla activity from at least 47 B.C., than that it came to a final head only after sixty years. Even on the very brink of the final outbreak, the Jerusalem population consented to greet the Roman cohorts peacefully by way of reconciliation and their action was met by a rebuff.³⁰ Even apart from questions of faith, indeed, rebellions broke out with some frequency in the Empire. The Spanish and Illyrian insurrections, Florus and Sacrovir, Boudicca and Civilis are familiar enough to the historian. But we do not know the details of these risings to the full extent that we possess them for the Jewish revolt, and if the specialists may one day have something to say of religious ideologies in these movements, the information is not yet extensive.³¹ Nor does it further the historian's understanding to suggest that the Jews were a peculiar people, more seditious than the rest,³² who would not toe the line like decent citizens. The question remains one of comprehension—what did they have which caused them to react more violently and resolutely to their oppressors and enabled the nation to survive their defeat?

The formal organized emergence of the Zealot movement took place in A.D. 6, but it had antecedents. When in 47 B.C. Herod put to death a Hezekiah and his fellow robbers in Galilee, these were not simply common bandits, since Herod was called to account for their summary execution before the Sanhedrin itself.³³ The immediate causes of Hezekiah's 'banditry' was a conflict with the Tyrian villages over the border; but we know that the Judah of Gamala who founded the Zealot sect in A.D. 6 was his son,³⁴ and it was he who seized Sepphoris in the rising after Herod's death in 4 B.C.³⁵ The roots of the Galilean 'banditry', then, may have lain in a local reaction against Herod as the foreign rival of the last Hasmonaeans. This is suggested by two further details, viz., that Herod had to fight an organized force of 'robbers' near Arbel during his war with Antigonus,³⁶ and to drive another resistance group from its cave-dwellings in the same district.³⁷ Both these groups revealed notable qualities; the first exhibited military discipline and capability, fighting Herod in full formation in the open field and well-nigh defeating him. The second group, the troglodytes, included a remarkable family whose head, refusing quarter, slew first his entire family and then himself. This looks like an early example of what we have come to recognize as a Zealot characteristic: preparedness for suicide as an expression of supreme devotion to the Law. Suicide rather than subjection to Rome was not confined to the Zealots, as we well know,³⁸ and the phenomenon among the Jews may also on various occasions have been the result rather of mere desperation than of devotion to a principle. But the patriarch of Arbela refused quarter deliberately, and, while the speeches of Eleazar ben Yair exhorting to suicide at Masada³⁹ are almost certainly the figment of Josephus, they reflect the historian's awareness that the act was deliberate. (See further below, note 183.)

Whence came these notable features among the Galilean bandits—their military tradition and their extreme religious devotion? One possible view is that these were the descendants of military settlers settled by the Hasmonaean rulers in Galilee, after it was annexed by Aristobulus or more probably by Alexander Jannaeus (Yannai).⁴⁰ The Maccabean derivation of the Zealot movement has, indeed, been claimed by Bonsirven⁴¹ and Jost,⁴² and the American scholar Farmer devoted a complete study to proving direct

²⁸ *BJ* II, 427.

²⁹ *BJ* II, 652.

³⁰ *BJ* II, 297–300.

³¹ On some of the religious manifestations accompanying the Boudicca revolt, see A. Ross, *Pagan Celtic Britain*, 1967, 36; 218; 350; 360.

³² cf. *RIB* 152, at Bath: 'locum religiosum per insolentiam dirutum virtuti et n(umini) Aug repurgatum . . .' Was the rehabilitation in the third century of a remote native prehistoric shrine at Arminghall, Norfolk (see *PPS* II, 15–16) carried out in defiance of the authorities?

³³ *Ant.* XIV, 158–184. It is probable enough that Hezekiah represented an old local family of landowners. The name appears on a sarcophagus recently discovered in a mausoleum in the north-eastern corner

of Galilee; see Y. Kaplan, *Eretz Yisrael VIII* (Suknik Memorial Volume, 1967), 104 f. (Heb. with Eng. summary). Although the sarcophagus belonged to the late second century, when the mausoleum originated, the name may well have been permanent in the family. It occurs among the Zealots of Masada (Yadin, *IEJ* xv, 1965, 112).

³⁴ *Ant.* XVII, 271; *BJ* II, 56.

³⁵ *BJ* II, 56.

³⁶ *BJ* I, 304–307.

³⁷ *BJ* I, 309–313.

³⁸ Boudicca, Decebalus *et al.*

³⁹ *BJ* VII, 323–337; 341–388.

⁴⁰ Schürer, *op. cit.* I, 1901, 275–6.

⁴¹ *Le Judaïsme palestinien* I, 1934, 59.

⁴² *Gesch. des Judenthums* I, 1857, 327–328.

continuity of ideological tradition.⁴³ He has not, perhaps, proved his case, but the assumption of general ideological inheritance needs little demonstration. It must be sufficient here to note the common features: preparedness to defend and to propagate the faith by the sword; the promptness to attack, not only the persecutor, but also the collaborators and compromisers among the Jews themselves; and the readiness for self-immolation or martyrdom, as typified by the deaths of the Maccabean brothers Eleazar and Judah, and as commemorated by the Fourth Book of the Maccabees. We may also note the derivation of the Maccabean resistance from the Hassidim, the progenitors of the Pharisees, of whom the Zealots formed doctrinally a part. It is not less interesting, then, that the conduct and existence of the Galilean 'robber' movement find a circumstantial explanation in a Hasmonaean derivation. Be that as it may, archaeological evidence has indicated that the Qumran sect settled near the Dead Sea in Yannai's reign,⁴⁴ and its documents included a copy of the so-called Damascus Covenant, which testifies to a period in which the Sect (or part of it) was in exile in Damascus. Though the document is later,⁴⁵ a scholion to *Megillath Ta'anith* speaks of the flight to Chalcis of scholars in Yannai's time,⁴⁶ and it is notable that Josephus dates the formation of the Sect of Essenes to Jonathan's reign.⁴⁷ What is clear is that the *War Scroll* of the Qumran Sect, with its pronounced Zealot affinities, derives much from the Maccabean period.⁴⁸ Pace Professor Yadin, the Maccabean derivation of the military formation there described with its tactical division into thousands, hundreds, fifties and tens is clear;⁴⁹ it was that adopted by Judah the Maccabee, at his rally at Mizpah,⁵⁰ and has resemblances to the Ptolemaic system.⁵¹ The division into tens, hundreds and thousands was further adopted by the Zealots.⁵²

It is with the Maccabean inheritance of the Zealots in mind that we may reconsider Judah of Gamala (or Galilee), whom Josephus in the *Wars* regards as the founder of the Fourth Sect among the contemporary Jewish religious groups or currents.⁵³ In the *Antiquities* he associates him with Zaddoq the Pharisee,⁵⁴ and this is in accordance with his statement that Judah's group agreed doctrinally with the Pharisees.⁵⁵ The occasion for the emergence of the group as a distinct party with a declared ideology was the census initiated by Sulpicius Quirinius, legate of Syria, on the annexation of Judaea.⁵⁶ Judah's attitude, briefly formulated, was that no such census, as a prelude to taxation, could be submitted to by any Jew, since this was a symbol of servitude, whereas Israel could only serve God, and He alone could be acknowledged as king. His declaration found a very large response (οὐκ ὀλίγους *Bḡ* VII, 253) among the population, and, indeed, Josephus calls him a powerful thinker (σοφιστής),⁵⁷ implying that he was a man of education, and later rabbinical sources call him a *hassid* (saint) and scholar of the Law.⁵⁸ Very soon after his enunciation, apparently, his followers commenced direct action against Jews who submitted to the Roman census, and such action (paralleled by Mattathias the Hasmonaean's operations against backsliding Jews) characterized his movement henceforth.⁵⁹ Its basic precedent was, as with the Maccabees, the example of Phineas, who slew the erring Israelite and his Midianite paramour in *flagrante delicto*.⁶⁰ Judah's rising was apparently suppressed, Judah was killed and his

⁴³ W. R. Farmer, *Maccabees, Zealots and Josephus*, 1956, who cites several other historians who have noted the affinity between the two movements.

⁴⁴ R. de Vaux, *Rev. bib.* LXIII, 1955, 534; 538.

⁴⁵ G. R. Driver, *The Judaean Scrolls*, 1965, 303-304; 367.

⁴⁶ Lichtenstein, *Die Fastenrolle* 347.

⁴⁷ *Ant.* XIII, 171.

⁴⁸ M. Avi-Yonah, *IEḡ* II, 1952, 1-5; M. H. Segal, *Scripta Hierosolymitana* IV, 1958, 141-143.

⁴⁹ Y. Yadin, *The Scroll of the War* etc. 54 ff.

⁵⁰ *I Macc.* 3, 46.

⁵¹ J. Kromayer, G. Veith, *Heerwesen und Kriegführung der Griechen und Römer*, 1928, 128. Even if there are Roman features in the tactics of the War Scroll, such as the advance and retirement of skirmishers through the gaps of the infantry units (ibid. 148), the general features are, I believe, Hellenistic. The Roman infantry's tactical unit, after all, was at this period 500 strong, except for the

leading legionary cohort. I am not sure if the oblong shield, which Yadin uses as a sign of Roman date, had not arrived in Judaea, whether by Roman influence or not, in Maccabean times: cf. *II Macc.*, 10, 79-80; *Jos.*, *Ant.* XIII, 94-96, where Jonathan's men, formed into a square, protect themselves from missile fire by locked shields (φραξιόμενοι τοῖς ἐπλοῖς ὑποδέχεσθαι τὰ βέλη). In at least two cases in which the word φραξσω is used in reference to shields (*Il.* 13, 130; Herod. 9, 61), rectangular shields are meant. Cf. also *Ant.* XIII, 339 (Jannaeus).

⁵² *Bḡ* II, 578; cf. *Exod.* 18, 25.

⁵³ *Bḡ* II, 117-119; VII, 253; *Ant.* XVIII, 1-22.

⁵⁴ *Ant.* XVIII, 4, 9.

⁵⁵ *Ant.* XVIII, 23.

⁵⁶ *BJ* II, 118; VII, 253. cf. Luke II, 1-6.

⁵⁷ *Bḡ* II, 118; 433 (σοφιστής δεινότατος).

⁵⁸ *Eccles. Rabba*, on I: II.

⁵⁹ *Bḡ* VII, 254.

⁶⁰ *Num.* 25, 6-13.

followers were dispersed at a date unknown;⁶¹ his sons Simon and Jacob were crucified by Tiberius Alexander between A.D. 45 and 48.⁶² Menahem and Ya'ir, who continued the leadership, were two younger sons of Judah,⁶³ Ya'ir being the father of Eleazar who commanded at Masada.⁶⁴ These continued Judah's work, constituting a dynastic hereditary leadership such as had existed within the Hasmonaean family and is found also, for instance, among the early Christian community of Jerusalem down to the time of Hadrian.⁶⁵ This implies, as does also the term ἰδία ἀρχεσις used for it by Josephus,⁶⁶ that Judah's group was an independent organized sect with a charismatic leadership.⁶⁷

The primary point in Judah's teaching was certainly the insistence on the exclusive kingship of the Deity. Hengel believes⁶⁸ this principle was opposed to Jewish tradition, at least in so far as Jews had in the past submitted both to kingship among themselves and to foreign rule. It is needless to comment that the rule of foreign sovereigns could always be acquiesced in on the plea of *force majeure*; where the Jewish kingship was concerned, criticism of the monarchy, in principle and in practice, was never lacking, and Samuel's scathing prognosis of the nature of monarchy,⁶⁹ whether *post eventum* or not, represented a genuine current of thought, fully expressed by the prophets. Opposition to the Hasmonaeans was continuous on the part of the Pharisees, as it was also to Herod. The contemporary difference of opinion on the subject is perhaps made clearer by the utterances of scholars in the period immediately after the Destruction, and not referred to by Hengel. R. Yohanan ben Zakkai, explaining the exile of Israel after 70, says it was 'because Israel threw off the yoke of Heaven and made for themselves a king of flesh and blood.'⁷⁰ The statement looks paradoxical in terms of the Zealot doctrine and coming from their prime Pharisee opponent, because precisely the Zealots rejected earthly kingship as opposed to divine sovereignty; but as in all theocratic movements, the central problem was, in whom to recognize the implementer and instrument of the divine will on earth. The solution found by Judah of Gamala took the form of a charismatic leadership, of messianic character and of royal aspiration. The majority of the Pharisees, on the other hand, here represented by Yohanan ben Zakkai, meant by 'the yoke of Heaven' the acceptance of the Law and the *halakhah* as interpreted by them, irrespective of the political régime.⁷¹ Needless to say, in this doctrinal difference the internal political problem of control of the community played its part. Inevitably Judah's interpretation implied the rejection of a concept of the Law independent of the nature of the political régime, and required direct personal action to fulfil the divine will.

The principle of direct action against both transgressors and the foreign power was closely bound up with the principle that God would help those that helped themselves,⁷² and this too is alluded to in R. Yohanan ben Zakkai's expression in allusion to the Zealots, that they had 'cast off the yoke of Heaven'. It is further evident that Judah conceived the fulfilment of the Law as incompatible with obedience to a ruler who regarded himself (or was publicly regarded) as a god. This is nowhere clearly stated, but the issue after all lurked perpetually behind the entire Roman-Jewish conflict, coming to a head under Gaius and only postponed by his death. Even after the Destruction of the Second Temple and after the rebellion of Ben Kosba, the more moderate Pharisee scholars, whose predecessors had previously solved the problem by authorizing sacrifices for the Emperor's welfare,⁷³ never compromised on the issue of Caesar worship.⁷⁴

The aspiration to liberty accompanies the revolutionary movement like a leitmotif, and is placed by Josephus in the mouths of all its participants;⁷⁵ the coins of the rebellion also

⁶¹ *Acts* 5, 37.

⁶² *Ant.* XX, 102; cf. Tac., *Hist.* v, 9; 10.

⁶³ Hengel, 338.

⁶⁴ *Bḥ* II, 447.

⁶⁵ Hegesippus ap. Euseb., *HE* III, 206.

⁶⁶ *Bḥ* II, 118.

⁶⁷ Hengel, 87.

⁶⁸ *ibid.*, 94.

⁶⁹ *I Sam.* 8, 11-18.

⁷⁰ Tos., *Babba Qama* VII, 5.

⁷¹ This does not mean that the Pharisees were apolitical; merely that they included among them-

selves varying political opinions. Cf. G. Allon, 'The Attitude of the Pharisees to the Roman Government and the House of Herod', *Scripta Hierosolymitana* VII, 1961, esp. 56-58.

⁷² *Ant.* XVIII, 5; *Bḥ* II, 163.

⁷³ *Bḥ* II, 197; *C. Ap.* II, 77.

⁷⁴ E. E. Urbach, 'The rabbinical law of idolatry in the second and third centuries in the light of archaeological evidence and historical facts', *IEJ* IX, 1959, 238-239.

⁷⁵ Hengel, 114 ff.; Jos. *Bḥ* II, 259, 264; VII, 341; *Ant.* XVIII, 4, etc.

bear it as a slogan (*herut Tziyyon*).⁷⁶ The concept of human liberty implicit in Judah's view of the tribute as a symbol of slavery, was indeed profoundly rooted in Judaism. It is closely bound up with the memory of Exodus, and liberation from slavery is specifically emphasized in the Passover liturgical text and its associated commentaries.⁷⁷ In an Aramaic translation of Lamentations we read: 'Proclaim freedom for your people, the House of Israel, through the Messiah, as you did through Moses and Aaron in the days of Passover.'⁷⁸ Rabban Gamaliel said: 'In every generation it behoves a man to see himself as if he personally had come out of Egypt.'⁷⁹ (Later generations added: 'from the house of servitude'.) Simon bar Giora, who led a different section of the Zealot revolutionary movement, and made a policy of liberating slaves,⁸⁰ may well have been implementing a similar interpretation. As Hengel points out, the liberty involved was also the freedom of Israel to serve God, and possessed an eschatological significance.⁸¹ It was also closely connected, we might add, with the Seventh Year, when slaves were freed⁸² and debts cancelled.⁸³

Judah's resistance to the census would be formally justified in Jewish terms by the traditional belief that the 'numbering of the people' invited condign divine punishment, such as was visited upon Israel, in the form of a plague, after David's census.⁸⁴ Thus Hengel.⁸⁵ The point may well have been exploited by Judah, but some form of statistical survey of Judaea must already have been taken by the Ptolemies and Seleucids,⁸⁶ nor could the taxation of land and heads have been new. More powerful, however, must have been the impact of the *tributum soli*, because, in biblical parlance, the earth belonged to God: 'The land shall not be sold in perpetuity, for the land is mine,'⁸⁷ and even if the juridical theory that all provincial land was that of the sovereign or the senate, did not hold at this period,⁸⁸ the tax looked like a rent rather than a contribution. Even if much land now in fact had passed to Caesar, and its tenants were thus technically exempt from the *tributum soli*, its rents still went into the Roman coffers, and they still paid the *tributum capitis*. The problem, notwithstanding, may be posed: why, if tribute and census were not novelties, was Judah's attack effective?

Much may have lain in a clear enunciation by a forcible personality at a crucial moment (Josephus' statement that he said things 'never before heard' may have been truer than at first appears; thinking and speaking out are two different activities). But there may be an additional explanation. Julius Caesar's treaty with Hyrcanus II, defining the conditions of tax-payment by Judaea to Rome, specifically exempted the country from delivery in the Sabbatical year.⁸⁹ We are ignorant of the clauses of Herod's agreement with the Senate,⁹⁰ but it is more than possible that the same clause reappeared, so that an important social provision sanctified by the Jewish faith remained unfringed. If recognition of the principle was abolished by Quirinius' reorganization of A.D. 6, we should have an adequate explanation of Judah's reaction and of the support it obtained.⁹¹ But this must remain no more than a reasonable hypothesis. The issue of the ownership of the land might seem theoretical to the town-dweller or the wealthy magnate who had no fear of fiscal expropriation; but, irrespective of the fact that a high proportion of urban dwellers of the time

⁷⁶ A. Reifenberg, *Jewish Coins*², 1947, 58, nos. 147-149. B. Kannaël, *BASOR* 129, 1953, 18 ff., has suggested that the Year IV silver coins issued by the revolution and inscribed *ligeulat Tziyyon* ('for the redemption of Zion'), were those of Simon bar Giora. Did the legend allude to his social programme?

⁷⁷ cf. *Mekhil.*, *Exod.*, 14, 2; *M. Pes.*, x, 5.

⁷⁸ Targum Lam. 2, 22 cited by Strack and Billerbeck, *Kommentar zum Neuen Testament* III, 1922-28, 576.

⁷⁹ *M. Pes.* x, 5.

⁸⁰ *Bḥ* IV, 508.

⁸¹ Hengel, 123.

⁸² *Exod.* 21, 3; *M. Quidd.* 1, 2; cf. *Bab. B. Qama*, 129.

⁸³ *Deut.* 15, 2; *M. Shabb.* x, 1.

⁸⁴ *II Sam.*, 24.

⁸⁵ Hengel, 134-136.

⁸⁶ For Seleucid taxes, *Jos.*, *Ant.* XII, 142; *I Macc.*, 10, 29-30; for property returns in Judaea under the

Ptolemies, Rostovtzeff, *Soc. Econ. Hist. Hell. World*² 1, 1964, 340.

⁸⁷ *Levit.* 25, 23.

⁸⁸ Gaius, 2, 21; T. Frank, *JRS* 1927, 161, argued that it did not apply till Claudius' reign; A. H. M. Jones (*Studies in Rom. Government and Law*, 1960, 143-9) does not believe it existed until Gaius and even so did not affect policy.

⁸⁹ *Ant.* XIV, 202.

⁹⁰ A *senatus consultum* only is mentioned (*Ant.* XIV, 385; 388). But in *Ant.* XVII, 246 Herod is referred to as φίλος καὶ σύμμαχος. Otto (Herodes, 57) does not think this implied a *foedus*.

⁹¹ The comment of R. Isaac on *Ps.* 103, 20, 'men of might do his word', is illuminating, although he lived in the fourth century: 'Of what does the text speak? . . . Of those who maintain the Seventh Year (fallow) . . . He sees his field and vineyard fallow yet pays the *annona* without a word. Is there a greater hero than this?'

owned and worked the soil, to the small peasant and hereditary tenant the question was grim and momentous. For at least a century, and perhaps for much longer, the Jewish holder had been protected by the restrictions of Jewish law from arbitrary expropriation. But such restrictions could no longer be valid if the immediate authority became subject to non-Jewish law.⁹²

The problem of the names applied to the followers of Judah of Gamala and to the broader movement implicated in the rebellion of A.D. 66 is a tangled skein, but its clarification, if not its solution, is important for an understanding of the various currents or groups. Till now in this paper we have used the term 'Zealot' as a general term for the entire complex of militant groups involved in the rebellion, but the issue is less simple, and Hengel devoted considerable attention to it.⁹³ The commonest term applied by Josephus to the revolutionaries as a whole is *λησται*; it is first used for Hezekiah and the Galilean groups, and after the foundation of Judah's 'Fourth Sect' the 'robbers' are said to have greatly increased in numbers.⁹⁴ At the beginning of the war of 66, Josephus distinguishes between the *λησται* and the moderate party; but the term drops back after the murder of Menahem, Judah's son and leader of his disciples, being nevertheless applied to the party of John of Gischala and then again to the Masada group led by Menahem's successor and relative, Eleazar ben Yair, who, however, are more generally called by Josephus *σικάριοι*. In the *Antiquities*, however, the term *λησται* occurs more frequently after the defeat of the rebellion in Galilee (66-68), and is applied to the radical war party in Jerusalem, both *λησται* and *ζηλωται* being used equally. The word *λησται*, and its Latin equivalent, *latrones*, or *latrunculi*, referred of course in Roman parlance to all criminals using armed violence, and the *latro* or *latrunculus* was distinct from members of the armed forces of states declared to be enemies of the Roman people, and possessed no rights in public law.⁹⁵ In view of the endemic occurrence of banditry in the ancient world, even under the Empire, it is obvious that there is little disposition on the part of sources to distinguish between mere criminals and armed resistance-groups fighting Rome for patriotic motives. Clearly, while both elements might be the product of economic factors, both could be indistinguishably mingled. Thus on the one hand the term would have been applied by the Roman administration indiscriminately to the Jewish insurgents, and on the other hand was utilized by Josephus to denigrate the Zealots and to conceal their religious and social motives. Rabbinical literature often uses the Greek term in its Hebrew form (*listim*), for brigands, but without reference to the Zealots, and sometimes in reference to Roman government officials, governors and commanders. The Jewish scholars were not alone in that.⁹⁶

The term *σικάριοι* has caused still greater confusion. Inevitably its origin has been attributed, in reference to the Jewish revolutionaries, to the Zealot tactic of cloak and dagger assassination that is first heard of in Jerusalem under the procuratorship of Festus.⁹⁷ As a Greek word it is apparently confined to Josephus and the *Acts of the Apostles*. But it seems probable, in view of the word's regular use for murderers and men of violence ever since the promulgation of the *Lex Cornelia de sicariis et veneficis* (83 B.C.),⁹⁸ that it was a term applied by the Roman government and armed forces to the Jewish insurgents as a whole, and this is the more likely if the use of the term in Acts 21:38 in reference to the 'Egyptian prophet' who created disturbances in the country in 52-60, is not an anachronism or post-70. Josephus uses the term equally with *λησται* for the activists, and more specifically for the Masada group; additionally for the Zealots who fled to Egypt, and to describe Jonathan the Weaver who incited to rebellion at Cyrene. But Josephus never uses the term for the defenders of Jerusalem against Titus.⁹⁹ Hengel concludes that the term, though

⁹² It was in Herod's time or a little later that Hillel virtually abolished the septennial cancellation of debts, by the device of the *prozbul* (*M. Sheb.* x, 4). This was doubtless good for business and may well have made credit available to the small man. But credit is a two-edged weapon. In 66, when the rising broke out, the Zealots burned the debt-records in the public records office of Jerusalem (*Bʿ* II, 42).

⁹³ Ch. II, 25 ff. I have generally followed Hengel. For other discussions whose conclusions do not

coincide with his, see C. Roth, *Jour. of Semitic Studies*, IV, 1959, 333-337; Brandon, *Jesus and the Zealots*, 1967, ch. II.

⁹⁴ *Ant.* XVIII, 7.

⁹⁵ *Ulp., Dig.* 48, 13, 7 (6).

⁹⁶ cf. *Tac., Agric.* 30.

⁹⁷ *Bʿ* II, 254.

⁹⁸ *Institutes* 4, 18, 5.

⁹⁹ Hengel, 50.

pejorative, and first applied by the Romans, may have become for the Jewish activists a title of honour, and is to be associated more especially with the Galilean group founded by Judah, which met its end at Masada. Less consistent with this conclusion would seem to be the fact that three of the four rabbinical references to the Sicarii associate them with the siege of Jerusalem, mentioning their destruction there of the granaries and of an aqueduct.¹⁰⁰ One of these passages makes it clear that the term was synonymous with the Hebrew word *Qannaim*, whose Greek equivalent is ζηλωταί.¹⁰¹

The term ζηλωταί is applied by Josephus to several political groups and is virtually confined to those operating in Jerusalem during the siege, but is never used for the rebels as a whole. It seems first to have denoted the priestly radical group of Eleazar ben Simon, then Menahem's associates, and subsequently the groups of Yohanan of Gush Halav (John of Gischala), of Simon bar Giora and of the Idumaeans. In his final indictment of the radicals in the *War* (VII, 259-274), Josephus commences with Judah of Galilee's faction, proceeds to the Sicarii, to John of Gischala and the Idumaeans, and ends with the Zealots, very much as if they were the most important and had played a decisive role in the earlier development of the movement prior to the siege of Jerusalem. It is also clear on Josephus' own evidence that the term was used in an honorable sense.¹⁰²

The Hebrew equivalent, *Qannaim*, is twice referred to by the Jewish scholars, once in reference to those who burned the granaries of Jerusalem, during the siege,¹⁰³ and once as a term for those who take direct action against transgressors¹⁰⁴ on the pattern of the biblical Phineas.¹⁰⁵ The disciple Simon is called by this term by Luke¹⁰⁶ and in *Acts*,¹⁰⁷ whereas Mark and Matthew substitute the epithet Καναναῖος. Hippolytus, describing the four groups into which the Essenes allegedly split, defines one of them as the Zealots, called by some the Sicarii;¹⁰⁸ these, he says, engaged in forcible circumcision of uncircumcised Jews.¹⁰⁹ But it is clear from the characteristics which he attributes to three of these four groups, that all were Zealot and that his distinctions are probably groundless: of the other two, one (according to Hippolytus) refused to enter a town containing statues or to look at a coin because of the image on it;¹¹⁰ the other refused to call anyone 'lord' except God, even when faced with the threat of death. All these principles are distinctively ascribable to Judah of Galilee's sect, and it is probably correct therefore, to see in the latter the original group by whom the term 'Zealots' was adopted.¹¹¹ It seems certain, too, that the 'Galileans' referred to by Justin, Hegesippus and Epictetus were Zealots.¹¹² Epictetus describes their utter refusal under royal pressure to repudiate the supremacy of God, and despite Harnack and Meyer's view that he meant Christians, the term 'Galileans' does not seem to have been applied to Christians before Julian,¹¹³ a point emphasized by the fact that both Justin and Hegesippus refer to the 'Galileans' as a Jewish sect.

It is in any case plain that Judah's faction was the first to emerge with a defined ideology

¹⁰⁰ *M. Makhs.* I, 6; *Lam., Rabba*, ad 4-4; para. 7; *Avot de-RN* 7. It is doubtful if the rabbinical term *Siqarion* had any direct relation to the Jewish *sicarii*. The word, evidently derived from the *Lex Cornelia de sicariis et venificis*, refers to rabbinical regulations governing the purchase of lands confiscated by the Roman government from Jewish owners on the authority of the *Lex Cornelia*, and sets restrictions on their acquisition by Jewish purchasers other than the original owners. (*M. Gittin* v, 6; *Tos. Gittin*; *ibid.*; *B. Gittin*, *ibid.*; etc.) See S. Safrai, *Zion* XVII, 1952, 56-64; A. Gulack, *Tarbiz* v, 1934, 23-27, for a less probable explanation.

¹⁰¹ *Avot de-RN* 7.

¹⁰² *Bḥ* VII, 270 τὴν προσηγορίαν αὐτοῖς ἀπὸ τῶν ἐπ' ἀγαθῶν ζηλουμένων ἐπέθεσαν.

¹⁰³ *Lam. Rabba* ad 4:4, para. 7; *Avot de-RN* 7.

¹⁰⁴ *M. Sanh.* IX, 6.

¹⁰⁵ *Num.* 25, 7.

¹⁰⁶ *Lk.* 6, 15.

¹⁰⁷ *Acts* I, 13.

¹⁰⁸ *Refutatio omnium haeresium* 9, 26.

¹⁰⁹ Also of gentiles: cf. the summary circumcision of the commandant of the Roman garrison of Jerusalem, Metilius, who was spared on condition of

judaizing (*Bḥ*, II, 454). This man's subsequent career, were it known, would be of interest. Also *Jos., Vita* 23 (113).

¹¹⁰ This is of course an extreme interpretation of the commandment against images (*Exod.* 20, 4-5). While I know no text that specifically associates such an attitude with Judah's group, it is entirely logical that this should have been part of their code. Cf. the incident of the tearing down of Herod's eagle from the Temple (*Ant.* XVII, 149-183), and the demolition of Antipas' palace at Tiberias, adorned with animal figures, at the outbreak of the revolt (*Jos., Vita* 65). This iconoclasm took on its most pronounced form in Cyrenaica in the revolt of 115-117, see *Journ. Jew. Stud.* II, 1951, 177-186.

¹¹¹ Hengel, 72 ff.

¹¹² Justin, *Dial. Tryph.* 80, 2; Eus., *HE* IV, 227; Epict. ap. Arrian, *Diss.* IV, 7, 6.

¹¹³ Hengel, 60; this is indeed shown by the Wadi Murabba'at document (*Rev. bib.* 60, 1953, 276 ff.), a letter in which Ben Kosba orders the recipient to 'leave the Galileans alone'. These can hardly be Christians, unless we choose to disbelieve the contemporary report of Justin (*Apol.* I, 31) that Ben Kosba persecuted them.

and course of militant action, and remained a distinctive group throughout the war, dedicated to a hereditary leadership and a strict code of conduct. While active, and even the leaders, in the armed rising which eliminated the Roman garrison of Jerusalem, their remnant under Eleazar ben Yair retired, after their leader Menahem had been assassinated, to Masada, which they had captured by *coup de main* at the outset of the revolt: they took no further part in the national struggle except for a local raid on 'Ein Geddi.¹¹⁴ The reason for this last operation was probably that the area served as a local supply base for the Roman forces,¹¹⁵ and a Cohors Thracum is now known to have been stationed there between 70 and Hadrian's time.¹¹⁶ It is further notable that, when Simon bar Giora's group reached Masada, they were not admitted to the inner fortress by Eleazar ben Yair, and after a period of temporary cooperation departed.¹¹⁷ The incident demonstrates the exclusive character of the Masada group, and evidently its members had retired from Jerusalem in profound disappointment after the death of Menahem, having believed that he was to become king of the new Jewish polity. It should be emphasized that there is no clear statement that the High Priest Ananias was killed by Menahem, although this can be read into Josephus;¹¹⁸ and the slaughter of the Roman garrison of Herod's citadel, after it had capitulated on terms, took place after his death.

The discovery at Masada of fragments of writings paralleled at 'Ein Fesha near Khirbet Qumran,¹¹⁹ makes it highly probable that some at least of the Qumran group, the 'Serah ha-Yahad', joined Eleazar ben Yair's Zealots at Masada. The question therefore arises, whether this means that the Essenes in the period concerned adopted a radical policy and whether it was they who came, in whole or in part, to join the Masada garrison. I can claim no expertise in the science of the Judaean Scrolls, and non-experts embark upon that vast sea at their peril; but an adequate treatment of relevant problems compels a consideration of the evidence of specialists on this point.

On the question of the identity or non-identity of the Essenes and the Qumran sect they are divided,¹²⁰ but the evidence seems to me to be against the identification of the two. Firstly, it is significant that while Josephus gives a very sympathetic account of the Essenes,¹²¹ his attitude to Eleazar ben Yair's group at Masada is to club them together with the remaining revolutionaries who are the object of his general indictment,¹²² and he puts into Eleazar's mouth words of condemnation of his own actions.¹²³ Secondly, whereas the Essene doctrine appears to have dictated a distinctly pacific outlook,¹²⁴ the *War Scroll* of the Qumran sect reflects a military atmosphere and organization. Further, in the emergency of the revolt, one of the Essenes, John, is found in charge of a district for the revolutionary coalition government,¹²⁵ showing that the sect adhered not to the Jewish opposition radicals but to the more moderate revolutionary 'establishment'. Alleged differences between the two sects on questions of communism, marriage and sacrifice are not sufficiently clear-cut to assist a decision, but both Rabin¹²⁶ and Driver¹²⁷ have pointed also to differences in the mode of probation prior to admission to the respective orders which make identity extremely difficult to accept.

As regards domestic régime and economy, however compactly the defenders of Masada were organized, they included women and children, and led an orderly family life, each family in its quarters.¹²⁸ On these grounds alone, therefore, even if they were ruthless to the

¹¹⁴ B \bar{J} IV, 402.

¹¹⁵ cf. 'Ein Geddi's role as supply-base to Ben Kosba.

¹¹⁶ Yadin and Polotsky, *Bull. Isr. Explor. Soc.* xxvi, 1962, 239. The Roman bathhouse at 'Ein Geddi, of military type, and excavated in 1965, yielded coins of the above-mentioned period (*Arch. News of the Israel Government Dept. of Antiquities* XIII, 1965, 3).

¹¹⁷ B \bar{J} IV, 503-507.

¹¹⁸ B \bar{J} II, 442.

¹¹⁹ *Illus. Lond. News*, 31st Oct., 1964, 6974; *IEJ* xv, 1965, 105-108; Yadin, *Excavation of Masada*, 1965, 108.

¹²⁰ For a bibliography of the controversy to 1967, Brandon, *op. cit.*, 61-62. A second sectarian settlement between Khirbet Qumran and 'Ein Geddi was

identified recently by Mr. Pesah Bar-Adon, the discoverer, who kindly showed me the site.

¹²¹ *Ant.* XIII, 172; XVIII, II; B \bar{J} II, 120-161.

¹²² B \bar{J} VII, 253-274.

¹²³ B \bar{J} VII, 329.

¹²⁴ Philo, *Quod omnis probus liber* II, 457, 633.

¹²⁵ B \bar{J} II, 567. That John was a solitary dissident from the sect seems improbable; the oaths taken by probationers before entry to the order were such as to make life outside it impossible without the order's consent (B \bar{J} II, 143-144).

¹²⁶ Ch. Rabin, *Studies in the Judaean Scrolls in Memory of E. L. Sukenik*, 1957, 104-22 (in Heb.).

¹²⁷ *The Judaean Scrolls*, 1965, III ff.

¹²⁸ Yadin, *IEJ* xv, 1965, 72.

political enemy, it is not easy to identify them with the stratum that produced the dagger-men and transvestists of the period just before the siege of Jerusalem,¹²⁹ which they had abandoned immediately after the outbreak of the revolt.¹³⁰

The Masada group founded by Judah of Galilee is the only one of which we possess any details, because they were forerunners who influenced the fundamental lines of the other Zealot groups. Beyond their basically radical outlook, the ideas and aims of the factions of Eleazar son of Simon, John of Gischala and Simon bar Giora are little known to us. But something can be judged from their leaders. Eleazar ben Simon was a priest and leader of a radical group of priests previously led by Eleazar son of Ananias the High Priest; he had taken the initiative of suspending the sacrifices offered on behalf of the Emperor. It may be assumed that his followers were largely the lesser priests who had been alienated by the oppression and corruption of the Roman nominees to the High Priesthood. John of Gischala is a more problematic character. Whether he was as false and unscrupulous as Josephus paints him is hard to tell, since he was Josephus' personal enemy, but he appears to have been an able political tactician and in-fighter. He was certainly an economic speculator,¹³¹ and if he possessed any social ideals besides his activism against Rome, there is no hint of them in Josephus.¹³² It is more especially to his Galilean followers that Josephus ascribes transvestism, looting and indiscriminate bloodshed.¹³³

On Simon bar Giora's background and ideas we have more information. He was son of a proselyte from Gerasa, which behaved humanely to its Jewish community at the outbreak of the war. He appears to have cherished equalitarian social aims, for in Judaea he attacked the houses of big estate owners,¹³⁴ and is stated to have consistently freed slaves.¹³⁵ While in control of the Upper City of Jerusalem during the siege he seems to have acted against the wealthy with special rigour.¹³⁶ On the other hand he was loved and admired by his followers¹³⁷ and the loyalty he commanded among the Idumaeans,¹³⁸ also proselytes, may have originated from a shared sense of inferiority. He may however have been in contact with Maccabean tradition, for it is notable that he ambushed Cestius Gallus on the Beth Horon ascent where Judah the Maccabee had routed Seiron.¹³⁹ It is significant that while the Romans punished John of Gischala with life-imprisonment, Bar Giora was strangled in the Mamertine prison.¹⁴⁰ The reason for the capital sentence was certainly Simon's equalitarian trend; Vespasian feared Jewish Messianism, but he feared a conscious rising of the lower orders more. This may well have been the 'plague', 'sickness' or 'madness' which the Jews were accused of spreading through the world; the same term was applied to the spread of the Zealot movement itself.¹⁴¹ The appearance of these three allied conceptions of the Jewish revolutionary movement in three such various sources as the Emperor Claudius, Josephus and Orosius is illuminating. Claudius in A.D. 41 was clearly apprehensive of the reinforcement of Jewish Alexandrian militancy from Judaea itself—and his language, probably used shortly after a Jewish attack upon the Greeks of Alexandria,¹⁴² suggests that the ideas imported or reinforced from Judaea had not only contributed to the outbreak, but were extremely infectious and inflammatory. In this context we may recall Isidorus' allegation to Claudius,¹⁴³ that the Jews ὅλην τὴν οἰκουμένην [ἐπιχειροῦσιν τὰρὰς] ὄσειν. It may not be irrelevant to add that an epidemic, by definition, does not observe ethnic or provincial boundaries.

¹²⁹ *Bḡ* IV, 560–563.

¹³⁰ *Bḡ* II, 447.

¹³¹ *Bḡ* V, 591.

¹³² Roth has pointed out (*Jour. Sem. Stud.* IV, 1959, 346) that Josephus never calls him a Zealot, that he at first supported the aristocratic government (*Bḡ* IV, 215–216), and that he was lax in religious observance (*Bḡ* VII, 264).

¹³³ *Bḡ* II, 480.

¹³⁴ *Bḡ* II, 652.

¹³⁵ *Bḡ* IV, 508.

¹³⁶ *Bḡ* V, 439.

¹³⁷ *Bḡ* V, 309.

¹³⁸ *Bḡ* V, 249.

¹³⁹ *I Macc.* 3, 13–26; *Bḡ* II, 521. The actual topography of Beth Horon is such that only at one point can the route be commanded from above on

both sides, and precisely this must have been chosen for attack. This being the case, Simon's source of information may well have been local tradition going back to Hasmonaean times. Yet in general the topography of the area is virtually irreconcilable with Josephus' account.

¹⁴⁰ *Bḡ* VII, 154.

¹⁴¹ *Corp. Pap. Jud.* II, no. 153, ll. 95–100, καθάπερ κοινόν τεῖνα τῆς οἰκουμένης νόσον ἐξεγείροντας; Oros., VII, 27, 6, tertia sub Traiano plaga Iudaeos excitavit; Jos., *Bḡ* VII, 437: Ἦψατο δὲ καὶ τῶν περὶ Κυρήνην πόλεων ἢ τῶν σικαρίων ἀπὸνοια καθάπερ νόσος.

¹⁴² *CPḡ* II, no. 153 (P. Lond. 1912) *loc. cit.*; for the interpretation of Tcherikover, *Jews of Egypt*², 1963, 150–55.

¹⁴³ *CPḡ* II, no. 156 c (A.P.M. 3B), ll. 21–24; the restoration appears to be by Tcherikover-Fuks.

This evokes the question of the social basis and aims of the Zealot movement. Hengel has emphasized a strong antagonism during the revolt between the urban and rural elements, which came to expression in Jerusalem.¹⁴⁴ Whether this view is right or wrong, there is little doubt that agrarian discontent was extreme and was one of the main factors leading to the revolt. A major cause may have been the displacement of numerous Jewish peasants from the city-territories annexed by the Hasmonaeans and restored to the gentile population by Pompey. The combined levying of Roman taxation (now collected directly by Roman officials)¹⁴⁵ and the religious dues (tithe, heave-offering, second tithe, half-sheqel), must have been extremely oppressive to the poorer peasant, and a class of cultivator grew up which omitted the religious payments.¹⁴⁶ Overparcellation of holdings due to a rapidly rising population made holdings unrentable.¹⁴⁷ Herod's widescale confiscations of land had made the larger landlords feel insecure, and Roman rapacity converted them into extortionist collaborators with the alien.¹⁴⁸ The most striking contemporary picture of hatred between landlord and tenant is to be found in the Gospel of Matthew.¹⁴⁹

It is an interesting question whether the radicals had a programme of reform. To look for a constructive socialism in the full economic sense in this period would be to risk an anachronism, but the notion of a simple social communism did exist. Apparently this was part of a more widespread feeling, if we may judge from Josephus' encomium of the High Priest Hanan.¹⁵⁰ The Qumran Sect, Zealot in direction, and clearly derived from the Pharisee current, practised some form of economic cooperation.¹⁵¹ Interesting is a passage of the Tosephta to Shevi'ith, not later than the second century of the present era:¹⁵² 'In the beginning the emissaries of the rabbinical court would go round the homes of the hamlets: they would take produce from everyone who brought it and give him food for three meals and store the rest in the barn of the town (or chief domain farm). When the time of fig-harvest came, the emissaries of the court would hire labourers, process the figs, press them into cakes and store them in the barn of the town . . .' And so on also for the vintage and the olive-harvest. Extensive cooperation in the harvesting, pressing and marketing of olives in north Syrian villages, from the second century A.D. onwards, has been reasonably assumed by Tchalenko on the basis of an analysis of the remains of their buildings,¹⁵³ and the excavation of Jewish villages may yet reveal a comparable phenomenon.¹⁵⁴ John of Gischala's monopolistic 'scoop' of olive oil in Galilee suggests that the machinery for centralized marketing may have already existed.¹⁵⁵

It is notable that the Mishnah states briefly that communism of property is a characteristic of the 'Am ha-Aretz', a social group which, while it included the philistines and ignoramuses of the well-to-do, consisted also of the uneducated among the peasants.¹⁵⁶

¹⁴⁴ Hengel, 371.

¹⁴⁵ Heichelheim ap. Frank, *Econ. Survey of Anc. Rome* IV, 1938, (Syria), 233.

¹⁴⁶ A. Büchler, *Der Zaläische Amhaares*, 1906. At Masada the Zealots were careful in the payment of tithe to the priests amongst them; this is evident from the ostraka found (Yadin, *IEJ* xv, 1965, 112). For the importance of tithes as a source of grievance in seventeenth-century England, see H. N. Brailsford, *The Levellers and the English Revolution*, 1961, 133-136 and *passim*.

¹⁴⁷ cf. *M. Bab. Bat.* I, 1; Eus., *HE* III, 20, 1-2, evidencing holdings of less than 1,000 sq. m. and of 39 plethra; Y. Felix, art. 'Agriculture' in *Encyc. Hebraica* xviii, 1965, cites holdings of 8, 6, $\frac{3}{4}$ and even $\frac{1}{4}$ of an acre; contrast Ps.-Aristeas, 119 (circa 200 B.C.).

¹⁴⁸ Baron, op. cit. (above, n. 5) 276 f.—This is a comprehensive and cogent survey of the situation, with full references. Cf. also Klausner, *History of the Second Temple* IV, 1950, 74 ff. (in Heb.).

¹⁴⁹ *Matt.* 21, 33-42.

¹⁵⁰ *B'J* IV, 319-320: ἡγαπατικῶς τὸ ἰσότημον καὶ πρὸς τοὺς ταπεινότατους, φιλελεύθερος ἐκτόπως καὶ δημοκρατίας ἐραστής . . .

¹⁵¹ Millar Burrows, *The Dead Sea Scrolls of Saint Mark* II, 1951, Pl. I: 'and all those who volunteer in

truth shall bring together all their knowledge and strength and possessions' (transl. by the present writer). But the communism of the Yahad has been disputed by Rabin, op. cit. (above n. 126), 116-117. Cf. *Orac. Sibyll.* XII, 350-354 (surely an echo of the Zealot period):

Οὐκέτι γὰρ δόλιος χρυσὸς οὐδ' ἀργυρὸς ἔσται
 Οὐ κτήσις γαίης, οὐ δουλείη πολύμοχθος:
 Ἄλλὰ μίη φιλότιης τε καὶ εἰς τρόπον εὐφρονη δῆμω
 Κοινὰ δὲ πάντα ἔσται, καὶ φῶς ἴσον ἐν βίωτοις . . .

¹⁵² Zuckerman, VIII, 11.

¹⁵³ G. Tchalenko, *Villages antiques de la Syrie du nord* I, 1953, 377 ff.

¹⁵⁴ Something similar may be suspected at the partially-excavated Galilean Jewish village of Korazin (third-fourth centuries), which had a considerable concentrated group of oil-presses in its south-western quarter, and a group of large public buildings of undefined use associated with the synagogue (Isr. Dept. of Antiquities, *Arch. News.* III, 1962, 3 ff.; XIII, 1965, 18 f.) (in Heb.).

¹⁵⁵ *M. Pirkei Avot* v, 10.

¹⁵⁶ G. Allon, *Hist. of Eretz Yisrael in the Periods of the Mishnah and the Talmud* II, 1947, 81-82 (in Heb.), criticizing Büchler and others. For communally owned fields in Syria, see Libanius, *De patrociniis* (Förster) XLVIII, 11.

From the above the possibility emerges, that socially constructive elements practising a personal socialism did exist among the Zealot groups. The evidence at Masada is not at the moment indicative in this direction. Coinage was in extensive use among the Zealot group there, but Professor Yadin, at least in the interim stage of reporting, believed that this was used rather as token currency than to represent wealth.¹⁵⁷ Various ostraka were found suggesting strict rationing, but clearly such was inevitable under siege conditions,¹⁵⁸ and the commanders would seem to have enjoyed more comfortable quarters.¹⁵⁹ None of these reservations, however, necessarily precludes an extensive degree of internal mutual aid such as we hear of among the Essenes. It is worth adding that the Zealots re-adapted the small basilican prayer-house at Masada as a hypostyle hall in which the worshippers sat on benches along all four walls, much as in the Greek *bouleuteria*—surely an expression of democracy.¹⁶⁰

It remains an important historical problem, the solution of which would cast light on the character of the Zealot parties, why the three major Zealot groups in Jerusalem fought each other till the last moment, although the Romans stood at the gate, and only united their forces to repel the Roman assault when it actually began. Hengel has emphasized that a vital turn of events was constituted by the death of Menahem, who represented the most compact group and also the oldest ideological tradition which had served as a point of crystallization for the other parties. As a result of his removal, the way was open for an unrestricted conflict between mere power-seekers.¹⁶¹

This theory is correct on the assumption that all the other groups were led by opportunists. One may admit this possibility in relation to John of Gischala; it seems less likely of Eleazar ben Simon, who represented the priesthood, or of Simon bar Giora, who liberated the slaves. The late Professor Cecil Roth has suggested that the fight *à outrance* is to be explained by the belief of each group that divine intervention in favour of the revolt could only come if religious requirements as interpreted by that group were fulfilled.¹⁶² While the belief in such divine intervention was probably a reality,¹⁶³ we have little or no evidence of such differences of religious requirement as would warrant Roth's assumption. But it would at least agree with the thesis that all these groups were under the influence of the messianic aspiration. As we have indicated, the Zealot problem was, if God alone was ruler, who was to interpret His will, and the solution was the charismatic leadership. The assumption of such a leadership, hereditary or otherwise, would almost inevitably imply a claim to messianic kingship, which could *ipso facto* admit of no competitor. If the principle was held by more than one party, conflict was unavoidable. But our information is confined to Menahem's party: Judah¹⁶⁴ and his son Simon¹⁶⁵ claimed the kingship, and the same is implied for Menahem.¹⁶⁶ Yet precisely the latter's party, after his murder, retired from the political struggle, and I can see no evidence for Hengel's assumption that Simon bar Giora aspired to royalty.¹⁶⁷ On the whole, therefore, we must admit that our knowledge is inadequate to decide the problem of the internal Zealot conflicts. A provisional reconstruction might see the relation between the three parties that remained in Jerusalem as a struggle between a party of priestly authority, a socially extreme party of proletarian complexion, and a party of more purely nationalist colour, led by an opportunist. Yet this division may be too rational. The factor of regional particularism crystallizing about strong personalities probably also played its part, and in this sense ideological or doctrinal differences may have been results as well as causes, as they have been in the Middle East for generations. Nor should it be forgotten that Simon bar Giora's faction seems to have contained proselytes and perhaps even unconverted gentiles.

¹⁵⁷ *IEJ* xv, 1965, 118.

¹⁵⁸ *ibid.* 113.

¹⁵⁹ *ibid.* 61, 64.

¹⁶⁰ Applebaum, *Fourth World Congress of Jewish Studies: Papers 1*, 1967, 107-108 (in Heb.).

¹⁶¹ Hengel, 373.

¹⁶² *Jour. Sem. Stud.* iv, 1959, 341-342.

¹⁶³ W. R. Farmer, *op. cit.* (n. 43), esp. 194-195. It is also implied by the concentration of all the Zealot groups in Jerusalem, regarded as the focus of the Divine Will.

¹⁶⁴ *BJ* 11, 55.

¹⁶⁵ Tac., *Hist.* v, 9: 'Simo quidam regium nomen invaserat'.

¹⁶⁶ *BJ* 11, 444. Menahem's messianic claim is well evidenced by *Lam. Rabba* 1, 16 = *Jer. Ber.*, 5a, 12; Hengel, 301. He is notably the only Zealot leader remembered by the rabbinical scholars, apart from his father, Judah.

¹⁶⁷ Hengel, 301.

There remains the interesting phenomenon of the Zealot preparedness for suicide in preference to captivity. Instances of this behaviour are to be noted at Arbela,¹⁶⁸ at Jotapata,¹⁶⁹ at Gamala¹⁷⁰ and at Masada,¹⁷¹ in the last phase of the fighting at Jerusalem, Dio stresses that a number of the defenders sought their own deaths on the Roman swords.¹⁷² The root of this conduct lay probably in the Maccabean tradition of martyrdom,¹⁷³ and this conduct alone should be sufficient to prove that among the Zealots was a core of profoundly religious patriots. The Zealot heroism in the face of torture was admitted by Josephus, their most uncompromising enemy,¹⁷⁴ indirectly by Tacitus¹⁷⁵ and by Epictetus.¹⁷⁶

With due recognition of this readiness for martyrdom, i.e. death rather than disobedience to God and the Law, we must yet remember the fate that awaited these men and their families in the event of capture. Crucifixion or the arena were the fate of all rebels who took arms against the Empire,¹⁷⁷ and apparently was meted out equally to women.¹⁷⁸ Jonathan the Weaver, who led the revolt at Cyrene, was burnt alive.¹⁷⁹ Torture was used against many, if not all, the Zealot prisoners.¹⁸⁰ The experiences likely to befall the women who escaped the death penalty, or were awaiting it, need no elaboration, but it might be in place to furnish documentation. The story was no new one: an attempt had been made to impugn John Hyrcanus' right to be High Priest on the grounds that his mother had been a captive in the time of Antiochus Epiphanes, and the allegation was the subject of a rabbinical inquiry.¹⁸¹ *M. Avodah Zarah* (v, 6) rules that if a (Roman) patrol entered a town in peacetime, wine jars left open were then prohibited, because they might have been sampled by the troops and used for libations. If the same occurred in wartime, however, the jars were permitted, because on active service there was not time for such rites. Other texts add: '(in wartime, troops) have no time for libations, but they do have time for rape' (*Ketub.*, 27: 1; *Av.Z.*, 71a). The same passages rule that 'all wives of priests in a city captured by siege-operation are disqualified for the priesthood' (because they are deemed to have been assaulted). Other cases are cited in talmudic literature recording rabbinical enquiries into the fates in like circumstances of Jewish women of lay or priestly extraction, in order to establish the facts relating to them.¹⁸² They all concern the acts of Roman troops. With such prospects before them, the conduct of the men of Masada, who killed their women and children before they ended their own lives, becomes more comprehensible.¹⁸³

If we may sum up two outstanding points emerging from the present brief survey, we would emphasize the need to evaluate the Zealots as an organic growth of Judaism in response to the critical situation created by the relations of Judaea and the Roman Empire;

¹⁶⁸ Above, n. 37.

¹⁶⁹ *Bḥ* III, 355-361; 384.

¹⁷⁰ *Bḥ* IV, 79-81.

¹⁷¹ VII, 389-401.

¹⁷² *Epit.* LXV, 6.

¹⁷³ cf. *III and IV Macc.*; Hengel, 268.

¹⁷⁴ *Ant.* XVIII, 23-25; *Bḥ* VII, 417-419.

¹⁷⁵ *Hist.* v, 5; 'animosque proelio aut suppliciiis peremptorum aeternos putant; hinc generandi amor et moriendi contemptus.'

¹⁷⁶ *Diss.* IV, 7, 6.

¹⁷⁷ *Pauli Sententiae* 5, 23, 1. It appears to have been inflicted predominantly on slaves, brigands and pirates, but the degree to which it could be inflicted on free Roman citizens is not clear. On infliction for treason and rebellion, *Dig.*, de Poenis, XLVIII, 191; *Dion.* v, 52.

¹⁷⁸ See the talmudic citation, n. 24.

¹⁷⁹ *Bḥ* VII, 450.

¹⁸⁰ E.g. *Ant.* XVIII, 23-24; *Bḥ* VII, 417-419; cf. II, 153.

¹⁸¹ *Ant.* XIII, 288-298; cf. Tcherikover, *Hellenistic Civilization and the Jews*, 1959, 254.

¹⁸² E.g. *Jer.*, *Ketub.* 2, 26, fo. 6; *Jer.*, *Ned.* XI, 40, fo. 4. Many other cases are recorded. I owe the present citations to Professor S. Safrai, to whom I am grateful for permission to use them.

¹⁸³ R. Ishmael, a contemporary of R. 'Aqiva (in

Hadrian's time) is found endeavouring to restrict the conditions under which suicide in the face of persecution was permissible. (*B. Sanh.*, 74a; see Y. Katz, *Exclusiveness and Tolerance*, 1961, 83.) The Masada tradition, however, may have survived into the Middle Ages, under the pressure of the Jewish fate. In 1190, after defending themselves for several days in York Castle against the militia and the mob, ninety Jews of a group of a hundred and fifty committed suicide under the exhortation of the R. Yom Tov. The rest were massacred. 'Let us rather do as our fathers did in the days of old,' says the rabbi according to one account. Details of the episode, which bears a strong resemblance to the last act as Masada, will be found in H. W. C. Davis, *England under the Normans and Angevins*, 1924, 293-4; for a slightly different account, G. G. Coulton, *Medieval Panorama*, 1938, 361-365. The suicide is factual, but the problem is whether R. Yom Tov or the mediaeval chronicler had read Josephus or Josippon, and if so, which. J. Jacobs, *The Jews of Angevin England*, 1893, 125 n., thinks William of Newbury had read the Latin Josephus, 'which occurs in all booklists of English Abbey and Cathedral libraries,' and that this had coloured William's account. The name of the chief pogromist at York is perpetuated in Acaster Malabis, 30 miles south of the city.

secondly, that such an evaluation must be based on an awareness of the acute nature of the social and religious conjunction of the period. Examination of the facts, in so far as they are known and in so far as they can be extracted from the inaccuracies and half-statements of Josephus, shows that Judah of Galilee's Zealot group was the creator of the Zealot ideology and its strictest adherent, also the most consistent and successful in action against the Romans. This group, on the loss of its leader, retired from the power-struggle in Jerusalem and ended its existence in the solitude of the desert fortress. On the whole, its conduct can be distinguished from that of the allied currents active in the revolution and even its direct connection with the 'cloak-and-dagger' tactic prior to the revolt cannot be satisfactorily proved. The Zealot movement, however, did not perish in 73. It can be shown to have animated the Diaspora revolts of Trajan's time, and certainly contributed to the rising of Ben Kosba.¹⁸⁴

Few movements of revolt can be condemned without double condemnation of the oppressors. The Zealots were the exponents of one element which they inherited from the past and transmitted to the future: refusal to equate the ruler, however powerful, with divinity. The issue, in different forms, is still with us.

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¹⁸⁴ A consideration of the Zealot influences affecting these risings would require an additional paper. I have discussed the Zealot element in the Trajanic rebellion in my Hebrew book on *Jews and Greeks in Ancient Cyrene*, 1969, 210-23. Y. Devir has lately put forward the view that Ben Kosba derived from the Qumran Sect; a good case may be made for his origin in this or in a parallel current (Y. Devir,

Bar Kokhba, the Man and the Messiah, 1964, in Heb.). It is worth mentioning that on the evidence of a document from the Nahal Hever cave, Ben Kosba's followers called themselves ἀδελφοί, i.e. they were organized in some form of religious order (B. Lifschitz, *Bull. Isr. Explor. Soc.* xxv, 1961, 72-73).