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Response to Internet Accusations

August 29, 2008

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Background in the Dead Sea Scrolls Controversy

The purpose of this document is to provide an explanation for the context of the accusations of plagiarism made against me in a post initially placed on a blog entitled NowPublic on August 4, 2008.¹ Further, this and various similar blog entries were referred to in fraudulent e-mails sent in my name as well as in numerous other e-mails sent from fictitious people to various NYU students, faculty and administration. In fact, at present, on a daily basis, libelous e-mails are being sent systematically to Biblical and Judaic Studies scholars and museum staffs, and posts are being placed on numerous blogs, most opened for this purpose. Most aggravating is the fact that a posting has been made in my name and several e-mails have been written in my name. Impersonation is a form of identify theft and constitutes a violation of the law of the State of New York where this crime was committed against me. I am currently pursuing redress within that framework.

This document will provide full background for understanding the attack on me and a number of other prominent Dead Sea Scrolls scholars and other scholars of Judaism and Christianity in Late Antiquity. The immediate context for these accusations will be seen to arise from three basic causes:

1. The fact that the scholarly community at large has not accepted the views of Professor Norman Golb of the University of Chicago;
2. the fact that museum exhibits of the Dead Sea Scrolls throughout the country and abroad have given little consideration to Golb's theories;
3. the fact that Golb's student Michael Wise was shown by me at a public session at the New York Academy of Sciences conference on the Dead Sea Scrolls to have

¹ <http://www.nowpublic.com/culture/plagiarism-and-dead-sea-scrolls-did-nyu-professor-snitch-chicago-historians-work>

plagiarized text editions from other scholars and that subsequently he did not receive tenure at the University of Chicago.

The present attacks stem from a supporter of Golb's whose identity is fairly certain, and who has decided to use e-mail and the Internet fraudulently to post accusations about a variety of distinguished scholars and institutions. He has chosen the accusation of plagiarism against me as a means for advancing this sordid attempt to encourage acceptance of Golb's theories.

While under normal circumstances no one would expect academic controversies to reach such heights, and to include libelous and illegal behavior, the Dead Sea Scrolls controversy has been noted for such things since the discovery of the scrolls by the now famous or infamous Bedouin boy in 1947. Slander and controversy have often replaced the academic debates that should be at the center of Dead Sea Scrolls research, and so the present accusations are unfortunately not all that surprising. It is sad that this important field continues to be marred by this kind of behavior.

It is important to understand that this action is part of a campaign against Dead Sea Scrolls scholars that has been going on now for over two years in connection with Dead Sea Scrolls exhibits at San Diego and Raleigh, North Carolina. They have only finally decided to go after me. Previous to that, Professor Golb himself conducted a sustained attack in the media, in a series of letters and even in lawsuits, of a very similar character to that currently being waged via Internet. Now a surrogate has resorted to these horrible and illegal tactics against me and others. Sadly, he has even accused numerous Christian colleagues of anti-Semitism, when their only sin was working closely with the Israel Antiquities Authority and Israeli and Diaspora Jewish scholars to create exhibits of the Dead Sea Scrolls appropriate and meaningful for all segments of the American audience.

The basic modus operandi is to send e-mails, some impersonating me and others not, referring people to blogs that make it appear as if there has been serious discussion of the accusation of plagiarism. In fact, all of the individuals found on these blogs and all those who sign the e-mails are in reality represented by fake identities. It is, therefore, impossible, or better, futile, to respond to these accusations. Since the supposed discussants do not exist, any responses will simply be used by the writer of all of these blogs and responses as a basis for further attacks.

The worst part of all this is that he has written e-mails under a phony gmail account in my name admitting plagiarism and has sent these e-mails to students and faculty. I have already followed Google's instructions and filed a complaint with the appropriate government agency. In fact, I understand that impersonation is a state crime, but this person is very successful in covering his tracks.

Everybody in the field who has not ignored these reports has found that the perpetrator has been able to use the answers to make a scholar who responded look even worse. Generally speaking, everyone thinks that the best thing to do is to ignore these e-mails and posts.

Norman Golb and his Theory

Norman Golb serves as Ludwig Rosenberger Professor of Jewish History and Civilization at the University of Chicago. Early in his career Golb published several important articles about the Damascus Document, a text that survived in two medieval manuscripts that was also discovered at Qumran, proving it to be one of the Dead Sea Scrolls texts. These articles dealt with the relationship of the scrolls to the medieval Jewish sect of the Karaites.

Later, after pursuing medieval Jewish studies, Golb returned to the Dead Sea Scrolls with articles published in 1980² and again in 1989.³ He argued against the notion that Qumran, the site at which the Dead Sea Scrolls had been found, served in antiquity as a sectarian Jewish religious center, but saw it instead as a fortress. He further argued that the Dead Sea Scrolls did not relate to one particular Jewish sect, usually identified by scholars as the Essenes, but rather represented a wide variety of Jewish groups. Finally, Golb argued at times that the scrolls constituted mainly the library of the Jerusalem Temple⁴ or at other times that they (also) came from various Jerusalem libraries⁵ and that they had been brought to Qumran during the time of the Jewish revolt against Rome in 66-73 CE to protect them from destruction at the hands of the Romans. He saw the enigmatic Copper Scroll as referring to additional caches of hidden scrolls.

This theory is itself dependent on the works of others and on assumptions widely shared in the field of Dead Sea Scrolls studies. It was pointed out already in 1955 by H.F.D. Sparks⁶ that the Dead Sea Scrolls should not be seen as the literature of only one sect, and that they reflected a wider perspective on Palestinian Judaism because, in Sparks' view, the Qumran sectarians had gathered into their library works of other earlier and related groups. In addition, the notion that the library might come from the Jerusalem Temple and, of course, that it reflected a wider sense of the Judaism of the time, was put forward in detail by K. Rengsdorf in 1960.⁷ While this theory is very close (perhaps identical) to

² "Problem of Origin and Identification of the Dead Sea Scrolls," *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 124, 1 (Feb. 20, 1980), 1-24.

³ "The Dead Sea Scrolls, A New Perspective," *The American Scholar* (Spring, 1989), 177-207. See also "Who Hid the Dead Sea Scrolls," *Biblical Archaeologist* 48, 2 (June, 1985), 68-82; "Khirbet Qumran and the Manuscripts of the Judaean Wilderness: Observations on the Logic of Their Investigation," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 49, 2 (1990), 103-14.

⁴ N. Golb, "On the Jerusalem Origin of the Dead Sea Scrolls and the Military Nature of the Khirbet Qumran Site [Presentation] Jerusalem, International Dead Sea Scrolls Conference (23 July, 1997), 2; idem, "Newly Discovered Tunnel May Once Have Carried Dead Sea Scrolls," *Forward* (Oct. 24, 2007).

⁵ Golb, "On the Jerusalem Origin," 4; idem, "Who Hid the Dead Sea Scrolls?" *Biblical Archaeologist* 40, 2 (June, 1985), 81; idem, "The Dead Sea Scrolls—An Exchange," *American Scholar* (Spring, 1989), 628.

⁶ "The Books of the Qumran Community," *Journal of Theological Studies* n.s. 6 (1955), 226-9.

⁷ *Hirbet Qumran und die Bibliothek vom Toten Meer* (Studia Delitzschiana 5, 1960); idem, *Hirbet Qumran and the Problem of the Library of the Dead Sea Caves* (Leiden : E. J. Brill, 1963).

that which Golb announced later on, Golb claims not to have known about it when he gave his first lecture on the topic and is at pains to differentiate his theory from Rengsdorf's.⁸ Finally, the presence of biblical texts and apocryphal texts in the Dead Sea Scrolls, dating to before the existence of either the Qumran buildings or the sectarian divisions in Judaism, makes it obvious to anyone that the scrolls contain more than the works of one particular sect. This point was made strongly in a review that I wrote that appeared in 1980, based on the book of J.T. Milik under review.⁹ Particularly in regard to the nature of the biblical manuscripts, it has been common knowledge from the very beginning of the discovery of the texts that they do not represent particular biblical texts of one sect, but rather throw light on the state of the Hebrew biblical text in the Jewish community in general.¹⁰

We should note at this point that considerably before Golb wrote any of his works, I had called attention to the wide nature of the Qumran library and also to the fact that the Essene identification of the Qumran sect was greatly mistaken in that it was oversimplified. I had already criticized the Essene hypothesis and effectively rejected it in my Brandeis University doctoral dissertation (1974) and in my first book, *Halakhah [=Jewish Law—L.H.S.] at Qumran* (1975).¹¹ My own theory is radically different from Golb's, and I advocated, especially after 1984, a completely different theory—namely, that the original sectarians were Sadducean priests who might have developed into the group called by Josephus "Essenes."¹² In any case, whereas it is true that Golb and I share in calling attention to certain well-known facts about the Qumran corpus, our views differ completely. I argue that Golb's theory claiming that there was no sect that was responsible for gathering the materials found at Qumran ignores the nature of the manuscript collection as a whole that, admittedly, was not available to him because it had not yet been published when he put forward his theory. Indeed, it is precisely because of this fact, namely that the scrolls themselves do not bear out Golb's theory, that his theory was rejected by almost all scrolls scholars in the aftermath of the release and publication of the scrolls. On the other hand, even those who have rejected some of my far reaching original conclusions regarding the Sadducean origins of the sect, an approach denied

⁸ N. Golb, *Who Wrote the Dead Sea Scrolls?* (New York: Scribner, 1995), 157-65.

⁹ Review of R. de Vaux and J.T. Milik, Discoveries in the Judaean Desert VI, *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, Vol. 100, No. 2 (Apr. - Jun., 1980), pp. 170-172. Further, this conclusion is clear from my study of the Sabbath Songs found at Qumran and Masada, "Merkavah Speculation at Qumran: The 4Q Serekh Shirot 'Olat Ha-Shabbat," *Mystics, Philosophers, and Politicians, Essays in Jewish Intellectual History in Honor of Alexander Altmann*; ed. J. Reinharz, D. Swetschinski (Durham: Duke University Press, 1982), 15-47. The article was submitted before Golb addressed these issues. Cf. E. Tov, "A Qumran Origin for the Masada Non-biblical Texts?" *Dead Sea Discoveries* 7/1 (2000) 57-73.

¹⁰ F.M. Cross, *The Ancient Library of Qumran and Modern Biblical Studies* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1958), 121-42; E. Tov, "The Orthography and Language of the Hebrew Scrolls Found at Qumran and the Origin of these Scrolls," *Textus* 13 (1986), 31-57. Tov argues that the biblical manuscripts derived from a representative sample of the biblical manuscripts in use by the general Jewish community in the Land of Israel in Second Temple times.

¹¹ (Leiden: Brill, 1975), 19-21, 134-6.

¹² "New Light on the Pharisees: Insights from the Dead Sea Scrolls," in *Bible Review* 8 (June 1992), pp. 30-33, 54, reprinted in: *Understanding the Dead Sea Scrolls*, ed. Hershel Shanks (New York: Random House, 1992), 217-224; *Reclaiming the Dead Sea Scrolls*, (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1994), 69-95; "Origin and Early History of the Qumran Sect," *BA* 58, 1 (1995), 37-48.

heatedly by Golb, have assimilated many of my observations into their theories. Golb, however, has not fared so well. Generally speaking, his views are rejected, and because of his confrontational, aggressive, strong-arm tactics, and the fact that he gives the same lecture over and over, he does not receive invitations to lecture at Dead Sea Scrolls conferences and museum exhibits.¹³

Golb and the Museum Exhibits

Beginning in 1993, and continuing up to the present, there has been tremendous popular interest in the United States, Europe and Israel in public exhibits of the Dead Sea Scrolls. (New York's second exhibit opens Sept. 21 at the Jewish Museum.) These exhibits have been highly successful in bringing the Dead Sea Scrolls and their message to large audiences. Generally, the exhibits have been organized by local institutions together with the assistance of the Israel Antiquities Authority, sometimes with the Israel Museum or Jordanian Department of Antiquities, also with the help of the Dead Sea Scrolls Foundation (of which I am a member of the board), and are often coordinated by local scholars. These exhibits provide much publicity, opportunities for public lectures and other programs, and (one must admit) income and even notoriety for a wide variety of Dead Sea Scrolls scholars.

Because of the decisions of those arranging these exhibits, apparently including the museum staffs, the Israeli authorities or the local scholars, Norman Golb has not been invited to lecture at most of these exhibits. Further, points of view such as Golb's, as well as other one- or two-person scholarly views, have been given only brief treatment in these exhibits. Generally, the exhibits have followed the commonly accepted view that a sect of Jews, thought by most to be the Essenes, inhabited the site of Qumran from c. 100 B.C.E.-68 C.E. and gathered the scrolls. Other views have been presented as alternatives, and scholars representing other points of view have been invited to lecture at scrolls exhibits, but generally not Golb.

Norman Golb has used a variety of methods, including threats, lawsuits and use of the Internet, to advance the claim that his point of view should be followed in these exhibits. In one episode, when, in an audio guide narrated by Robin McNeil, Jodi Magness of the University of North Carolina described some evidence as indicating why Norman Golb's theory could not be correct, Golb sought to file a suit for libel against the M.H. de Young Memorial Museum in San Francisco, Magness, and even McNeil.

Now, the Internet has become the locus of the battle of the scrolls. Numerous blogs have been constructed by a supporter of Golb in which made-up names ("aliases") have been fictitiously placed into dialogue with one another and with a few real people who may have responded by accident. These imaginary respondents (known in the Internet world as "sockpuppets") all can be traced to the same group of computers in a public space as

¹³ The organizing committee of the conference commemorating the 60th anniversary of the Dead Sea Scrolls, held at the Shrine of the Book of the Israel Museum in July, 2008, decided not to involve Golb in the program. Some others with dissident theories were invited, but declined to attend. I was a member of that committee.

they all are the work of one person. These blogs essentially argue that Golb's point of view alone should be considered legitimately academic and, even worse, that other points of view are all anti-Semitic.

I myself have argued stridently, I admit, against what I have called the "Christianization" of the scrolls, in which the Dead Sea Scrolls are understood as some type of a pre- or proto-Christian set of documents leading inexorably to the rise of Christianity. I believe that I have been successful in convincing the field that this was a serious methodological flaw. I am happy to note that Jewish and Christian scholars, coming from various fields of biblical, early Christian and Judaic studies, have reached a consensus of agreement in this regard. Accordingly, it pains me to see that these blogs as well as other writings stemming from the suspect or those from his aliases routinely accuse Christian colleagues and friends with whom I have worked closely of anti-Semitism. Even in the most strident period of the fight to eliminate the Christianizing bias of scholars of the scrolls, I never launched such attacks, especially since they would have been completely false regarding virtually all the scholars involved. In fact, one of the most Christianizing of all, Robert Eisenman, is a devoted and loyal, practicing Jew. Put simply, just as you do not have to be Jewish to eat Levy's rye, you do not have to be Christian or anti-Semitic to Christianize the scrolls. Further, the exhibits were arranged basically by Israel Antiquities Authority staff and in some cases those who led the efforts locally were Jewish. None of this matters to those who seek to launch scurrilous *ad hominem* attacks on scholars simply because they do not agree with their views. Unfortunately, when one realizes that the main suspect behind all of these aliases is in close contact with Norman Golb, this behavior becomes even more obnoxious.

The Michael Wise Affair

To understand the accusations against me, it is necessary to recall an event that took place in 1992. In that year a group of academic scholars of the Dead Sea Scrolls, myself included, were working at the Annenberg Institute for Advanced Judaic Studies in Philadelphia, now the Center for Judaic Studies of the University of Pennsylvania. At that time a book came out by Robert Eisenman of Cal State Long Beach and Michael Wise, a young doctoral graduate of the University of Chicago who had studied with Golb and who was then on the faculty.¹⁴ Wise was a promising scholar who had written an excellent dissertation, which I often cite, and a number of important articles. The book by Eisenman and Wise claimed to publish 50 hitherto secret Dead Sea Scrolls texts. Furthermore, these were purportedly edited from the manuscripts and prepared for publication by the editors. In fact, it can be proven by close examination of the copying mistakes and of a variety of other specific features of these text editions that they had been plagiarized from handouts distributed by colleagues at conferences. In one case, they borrowed from a privately circulated text edition prepared by others. It was decided on behalf of the scholars at the Annenberg to issue a public statement in which I had a major role. As a result, Norman Golb asked that there be a public hearing on this issue of plagiarism at the upcoming conference on the Dead Sea Scrolls which he and his Chicago

¹⁴ R. Eisenman and M. Wise, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Uncovered, The First Complete Translation and Interpretation of 50 Key Documents Withheld for Over 35 Years* (Shaftesbury, Dorset: Element, 1992).

colleagues had planned at the New York Academy of Sciences.¹⁵ Golb asked me to present the case against Wise. It was widely assumed that Eisenman had not worked on the text editions since this was not his forté.

I begged Golb to avoid this public hearing and to recognize that we were right. Golb, confident in his forensic abilities and certain that he could easily disprove my assertions, insisted on holding this public hearing. To his great surprise, the evidence against Wise was so convincing that it was impossible for him to raise any serious objection. Because Wise was an excellent young scholar and because of the sadness of this entire event, the accusers accepted an apology from Wise and a promise to give credit to those who were owed it in future editions of the book.¹⁶ With this, we all thought the issue was over. However, subsequent printings of the book made no attempt to give such credit and so, the journal *Revue de Qumran*¹⁷ published a statement asserting that Wise had not come through on his promise made as part of the settlement. Subsequently, Wise was considered for tenure by the University of Chicago and he did not receive it. I had no relationship to that process and have no idea who did.

The account of these events found in Norman Golb's, *Who Wrote the Dead Sea Scrolls?*¹⁸ is inaccurate—better tendentious—to say the least. Ironically, a more accurate account is found in a French novel, *Qoumran*, by Eliette Abicassis.¹⁹

It is now clear to me that those launching the present attack on me are seeking to somehow avenge what they see as a wrong done to Michael Wise. As I noted in an interview with Avi Katzman,²⁰ itself quoted in the accusatory blog (although miraculously this section does not appear there) I regarded the entire Michael Wise affair as a great tragedy for Wise and for the field. Wise had declined to become part of the expanded editorial team when scholars of all kinds were invited to join in publishing the texts after they were "liberated." He realized that participation in the publication team was not consistent with the publication of his book that misused the work of team members. Otherwise, he would have been an excellent contributor.

The Avi Katzman Article

In January of 1993, I was interviewed for a Hebrew newspaper article regarding the Dead Sea Scrolls that appeared in the prestigious Israeli paper *Haaretz*. The article was written

¹⁵ The session is fully published in M.O. Wise, N. Golb, J.J. Collins and D.G. Pardee, *Methods of Investigation of the Dead Sea Scrolls and the Khirbet Qumran Site* (New York: The New York Academy of Sciences, 1994), 455-497. My remarks are on pp. 463-468 with an additional comment on p. 488. Wise's statement is found on p. 496 followed by the statement of the assembled Qumran scholars on that same page.

¹⁶ J.N. Wilford, "Scroll Scholars Resolve Dispute," *New York Times* (December 18, 1992).

¹⁷ F. Garcia Martinez, "Notes al margen de The Dead Sea Scrolls Uncovered," *Revue de Qumran* 16 (1993), 123-50.

¹⁸ (New York: Scribner, 1995), 310-18.

¹⁹ (Paris: Actes-Sud, 1996). It is available in English translation as *The Qumran Mystery* (Orion: London, 1998).

²⁰ "אנשי המערות," [= "People of the Scrolls"] *Haaretz* Supplement Jan. 29, 1993, pp. 31, 50.

by Avi Katzman, who describes himself as practicing aggressive, biased journalism.²¹ Perhaps I should not have agreed to be interviewed by him, but at the time I thought little of it. The interview was conducted entirely in Hebrew. The accusatory blog post refers to this interview but ignores the context, namely a long discussion of the tragedy of the Michael Wise affair. Even worse, the blog post makes the fictitious claim that Katzman accused me of plagiarism. Let me state that there is absolutely no accusation of plagiarism in this article. In other words, the blog's claim that such accusations have now "resurfaced" is nonsense, since no such accusation was ever made, not in the Katzman article nor in Norman Golb's book in which he attacks me at length for everything else.

Katzman asked me specifically a rather interesting question: why do I attack Golb so often if in fact there were similarities between our views? After all, I constantly emphasized the significance of the scrolls for the wider understanding of the history of Judaism, seeing these texts as significant way beyond the sectarian group that I believed had inhabited the site of Qumran and gathered its ancient library. Katzman, on the other hand, was in full agreement with Golb's ideas that no sect ever inhabited Qumran and that it had been a fortress. We will not get into the question here as to whether Qumran could have been a fortress. Suffice it to say that the presence of a guard tower does not make any form of building complex a fortress.²² Further, the archaeological claims made by Golb and later by Y. Hirschfeld,²³ I. Magen and Y. Peleg²⁴ in this regard cannot be sustained on objective scientific grounds.

In any case, I answered Katzman that many of the things Golb had said were generally accepted facts that he had not invented. The published article itself has me asking: "Did Golb write the Bible?" Unfortunately, Katzman had gotten this wrong. What I asked was did anyone think that the Qumran sect had written the Bible, meaning that it has been clear from the very beginning, when it was recognized that there were biblical and apocryphal texts in the Qumran collection, that all the Dead Sea Scrolls were not authored by one Jewish sect in Second Temple times. In any case, despite the fact that this did not come out correctly, no accusation of plagiarism was ever made or even hinted at by Katzman. I should also note that Katzman completely incorrectly characterized my recently published Hebrew book²⁵ in that article, as he apparently had not actually read it.

It is this article that is being claimed by the blogger to represent an initial accusation of plagiarism which supposedly took place in 1995. Let me state emphatically that I was never accused of plagiarism in 1995 by Avi Katzman or by anyone else.

²¹ See n. 20.

²² H. Eshel of Bar-Ilan University has disproved this possibility beyond a doubt based on archaeological comparisons with other fortresses in a forthcoming article.

²³ Y. Hirschfeld, *Qumran in Context, Reassessing the Archaeological Evidence* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2004).

²⁴ "Back to Qumran: Ten Years of Excavation and Research, 1993-2004," in K. Galor, J.-B. Humbert, J. Zangenberg, *Qumran, The Site of the Dead Sea Scrolls: Archaeological Interpretations and Debates* (Brill: Leiden, 2006), pages 55-113. Despite presenting incorrect conclusions, this paper is well of new and important information on the excavations of Qumran.

²⁵ *Halakhah, Halikhah U-Meshihiyut bi-Megillot Midbar Yehudah [Law, Custom, and Messianism in the Dead Sea Scrolls]* (Jerusalem: Israel Historical Society, Merkaz Zalman Shazar, 1993).

Golb's *Who Wrote the Dead Sea Scrolls*

In 1995, Norman Golb released his book, *Who Wrote the Dead Sea Scrolls?*²⁶ While this book attempts to be a spirited defense of Golb's own theory, it is mostly devoted to knocking the theories of others. In this regard, I was honored to receive a long treatment²⁷ in which Golb attempts to disprove my views regarding the Sadducean priestly origins of the Dead Sea sect. Let me emphasize at the outset that despite Golb's assertion that I had misunderstood him and given him insufficient credit, he never accused me of plagiarism. Instead, he engaged in great detail with my theory, attempting to disprove it.

Much of Golb's book repeats his previous articles including some on the subject of Dead Sea Scrolls exhibits.²⁸ His basic argument was that the exhibits were prejudiced, and that they allowed one particular point of view to dominate over all others. In fact, Golb was really arguing that his theory, rejected virtually unanimously by other scholars, should receive equal billing with the dominant view that the Dead Sea Scrolls were gathered by a group who lived at the Qumran site and placed the scrolls into the Qumran caves for safekeeping. In this respect, and also regarding his identification of Qumran as a fortress, Golb's views were indeed given little attention. Curiously, however, views with which he agreed and that were espoused by myself and other scholars concerning the relevance of the scrolls to the overall nature of Judaism in Second Temple times were increasingly well represented in these exhibits and in the lecture series surrounding them.

The War of Aliases

Apparently, someone seeking to advance the cause of Golb's theory has now taken to the Internet in a sustained campaign now directed against me. It is important to understand that this action is part of a campaign against Dead Sea Scrolls scholars that has been going on now for over two years in connection with Dead Sea Scrolls exhibits at San Diego and Raleigh, North Carolina. The perpetrator has only now finally decided to go after me.

The individual(s) in question have fake identities called "aliases" in the Internet world. The suspect produces an initial blog announcement, and follows it up by online discussions among people who do not exist and whose e-mail addresses can generally be traced back to the same computers from which the initial post has been made. The list of names is well-known to those in the field, and they are fictitious people. Robert Cargill, a recent UCLA Ph.D., has shown that the bloggers involved are all one person and that the entire thing is traceable to this individual.

This attack on me is just the latest in a series of attacks against Dead Sea Scrolls scholars and museum curators. Cargill, who made a film for the San Diego Dead Sea Scrolls

²⁶ See n. 18.

²⁷ Golb, 191-216.

²⁸ Golb, 343-60.

exhibit, was terribly victimized by such an attack for two years, with the aim of derailing his Ph.D. degree. Others include Professor Jodi Magness of University of North Carolina, a popular lecturer and the acknowledged expert on the archaeology of Qumran,²⁹ Professor Bart Ehrmann, a leading New Testament scholar at the University of North Carolina, Risa Levitt-Kohn, of the University of California at San Diego, curator of the Dead Sea Scrolls exhibits in San Diego and Raleigh, and soon to curate an exhibit in Toronto.

In my case, the worst part of all this is that he has written e-mails under a phony gmail account in my name, portraying me as if I were admitting plagiarism, and they have sent these e-mails to students and faculty at NYU. They have also written to me in the name of another alias, trying to get me to admit plagiarism as a way of placating the blogger. I have already followed Google's instructions to file a complaint with the appropriate government agency. At the behest of the FBI, I have discussed this matter as well with an assistant District Attorney in the Manhattan DA's office and the case is currently being investigated.

The Current Accusation

In my case, the immediate attack started with a posting on Aug. 4, 2008 of a blog entry entitled, "Plagiarism and the Dead Sea Scrolls: Did NYU department chairman pilfer from Chicago historian's work?" This supposed "article" claimed that recently the 1995 plagiarism accusation against me had now "resurfaced." As mentioned above, there never was a plagiarism accusation in 1995, as inspection of the Avi Katzman article will show. Furthermore, the assertions of this blog do not, in fact, have anything to do with plagiarism as defined either in legal or academic circles.

Nonetheless, *mirabile dictu*, the article is in fact itself plagiarized, from Norman Golb's book, *Who Wrote that Dead Sea Scrolls?*³⁰ The author of the blog has posted this or referred to it on many other blogs. Actually, the blogger lifted the material almost verbatim from Golb's pages on which he discussed my treatment of his work and modified it to turn it into an accusation of plagiarism, despite the fact that no such accusation was raised by Golb. While I would personally dispute Golb's claims that I misunderstood him or that I gave him less credit than I should have, he nowhere accuses me of plagiarism. The blogger has modified this original text and turned it into an accusation of plagiarism, never referring to Golb's book as the source of his accusation.

Let me again state: I was not accused of plagiarism by Avi Katzman in *Haaretz*, nor was I accused of plagiarism by Norman Golb in his 1995 book, nor have I ever been accused of plagiarism. The so-called resurfacing of such an accusation is expressed in the form of a plagiarized report based on Golb's book and it is a complete fabrication.

²⁹ Her volume, *The Archaeology of Qumran and the Dead Sea Scrolls* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002) is the standard reference in the field.

³⁰ Golb, 213-16.

Conclusion

The present claim that a charge of plagiarism has resurfaced is totally false since such a claim has never been made in the past. Furthermore, the work in question is not plagiarized, and those elements that are common to Golb and myself are either previously published views of others or commonly held facts regarding the Dead Sea Scrolls. Actually, our theories are radically different and no intelligent person would see my views as plagiarized from his.

The context of this attack is clear. It is part of an overall attack on Qumran scholars stemming from Golb's supporter's inability to reconcile the fact that Golb's view has generally been rejected by other scholars. The frustration of this individual regarding Golb's not being invited to lecture, the rejection of his theories by other scholars, and museum exhibits that do not in Golb's view give adequate attention to his theories has led this individual, in support of Golb, to accuse numerous scholars and curators of all kinds of sins, including anti-Semitism, anti-Zionism, embezzlement, intellectual dishonesty, now plagiarism, and none of those accused is in any way guilty of these terrible offenses. Rather, the actions of this individual constitute identity theft, libel and harassment of legitimate and honorable scholars.

Bandler, John

From: Lawrence H Schiffman [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, August 21, 2008 12:20 PM
To: Bandler, John
Subject: Letter and documents

Attachments: Plag.doc; Golb.doc; bio 3.doc; cvlhs.doc; Did Norman Golb Break the Law.pdf; Gadda Links by Alias.doc; Gadda Links by Post.doc



Plag.doc (26 KB)



Golb.doc (49 KB)



bio 3.doc (25 KB)



cvlhs.doc (178 KB)



Did Norman Golb Break the Law...



Gadda Links by Alias.doc (127 ...



Gadda Links by Post.doc (158 K...

Dear

Mr. Bandler,

Thank you very much for speaking with me this morning and for the interest you talk in my situation. The suspect is Raphael H. Golb, born in 1960, graduated from NYU Law school in 1995, living at 206 Thompson St, a block and a half from my office at NYU. All postings and e-mails are intended to advance the interests of his father, Professor Norman Golb of the University of Chicago. Professor Golb has written numerous things indicating his displeasure about the fact that his views have not received sufficient treatment at Dead Sea Scrolls exhibit that is taking place all over the country for years now. These views are not accepted by most scholars.

In order to explain fully I am attaching to this message several documents, including long lists of Internet postings sent by the subject. You will note that all the postings are full of aliases that all go back to the same IP addresses of the computers, almost all of which are in the Bobst Library at NYU. Several, for a number of aliases, go back to another computer in New York, which we suspect would be his home machine. The two lists in the small article that I am attaching come from Robert Carr Gil, a UCLA graduate student who has been greatly smeared by this campaign and who has maintained an investigation of it for some time. The suspect lives right near NYU, graduated from law school, and currently holds a library card having joined the Friends of the Library. The campaign began around when he joined the library and has continued up till now. His NYU e-mail account, apparently not used for this purpose to conceal his identity, is rhg8814@nyu.edu. Looking at the many blog sites, including one with my name is the name of the blog, points very clearly to the suspect, and all of the blogs and e-mails have to do with the theories of his father, a professor at Chicago. A number of scholars and other individuals have been regularly libeled in postings and e-mails. What I do not know is whether I am the only one who was impersonated, or if others were also impersonated. I would be happy to provide a list of those scholars or to canvass them.

I am also sending a selection of e-mails including the actual impersonating e-mails from the gmail account and some of the libelous materials in order to make clear the extent of this operation. In order not to fill your e-mail inbox, I am sending you now only a selection, marking their significance in the subject box.

Please be aware that the libelous postings, claiming that I am a plagiarist, as well as libelous postings against other scholars and e-mails to various people at NYU and other universities making similar claims, go on unabated. As you will see, the impersonations are limited to a few occasions.

For your information, I am attaching also a bio and complete CV.

Thank you very much for your help and consideration,

Lawrence H. Schiffman
Skirball Department of Hebrew and Judaic Studies
New York University
[REDACTED]

New York, N.Y. 10012

tel. [REDACTED]
res. [REDACTED]
fax [REDACTED]

----- Original Message -----

From: "Bandler, John" <[REDACTED]>
Date: Thursday, August 21, 2008 10:33 am
Subject: Test
To: [REDACTED]

>
>
>
> John Bandler
> Assistant District Attorney
> New York County District Attorney's Office
> 1 Hogan Place
> New York, NY 10013
> phone: [REDACTED] 1
> Fax: ([REDACTED] 21
> [REDACTED] 0v

>
> *****

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> email.

> *****

Is important to understand that this action is part of a campaign against Dead Sea Scrolls scholars that has been going on now for over two years in connection with Dead Sea Scrolls exhibits at San Diego and Raleigh, North Carolina. They have only finally decided to go after me.

The individuals in question have fake identities and so the people to whom you would be writing are not who they say they are. It is generally suspected in the field that this is done by Norman Golb or by his son.

The worst part of all this is that they have written e-mails under a phony Gmail account in my name admitting plagiarism and they have sent these e-mails to students and faculty. They also tried to get me to admit it as a kind of way of shutting up the troublemaker. I have already followed Google's instructions to file a complaint with the government agency. In fact, I understand that impersonation is a federal crime, but these people are very successful in covering their tracks. I have also consulted my personal attorney who is now looking over all of these materials.

Everybody in the field who has not ignored these reports has found that they have been able to use the answers to make him or her look even worse. Generally speaking, everyone thinks that the best thing to do is to ignore it.

At this point, I understand that an investigation to trace the e-mail addresses through the maze of phony links is an expensive process that might actually find the culprits. I believe that my attorney will be sending a lawyer's letter to Google demanding that they cancel the account using my name, but there are so many different e-mail organizations that they will have no problem at all in creating other new addresses for impersonating me.

While I know that no one will take this seriously, I should point out that the ideas claimed by Golb as original were published years before and include some concepts that are generally accepted in the field.

There is something called the "curse of the scrolls," which usually refers to scholars who lose all sense of balance in studying them. It appears that this has happened to some people who are now attacking me.

I expect that this will become a major time waste and annoyance.

Regards, and thanks for your help and support, Larry