

Israel Archaeological Society 16 (1998): 33-63 (for the ritual baths, see 47-48). Finkielsztein argues that Hyrcanus conquered Marisa in 111/110 B.C.E. (not 112). For a useful collection of references to excavated pools in Palestine that are identified as miqva'ot, see Hanan Eshel, "A Note on 'Miqvaot' at Sephoris," in *Archaeology and the Galilee: Texts and Contexts in the Graeco-Roman and Byzantine Periods*, ed. Douglas R. Edwards and C. Thomas McCollough (Atlanta: Scholars, 1997), 131-33.

J. MAGNESS.
 THE ARCHAEOLOGY OF QUMRAN AND THE DEAD SEA
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Women and the Cemetery at Qumran

The question of women's presence at Qumran is related to the controversies surrounding the interpretation of the site. For example, if Qumran was a villa or manor house, women must have lived there. However, even among scholars who accept the identification of Qumran as a sectarian settlement there is no consensus regarding the presence of women. This is due largely to different information provided by our literary sources about the role or status of women in this sect. In this chapter, we examine the archaeological evidence for the presence of women at Qumran. We begin with a brief review of the literary sources.

Literary Sources on Female Sectarrians/Essenes

The field of Dead Sea Scrolls studies was long dominated by male scholars with an androcentric approach. This was due partly to the fact that de Vaux and some of the other members of the original publication team were Catholic priests (and all of them were men). In addition, our information about the Essenes is provided by males with misogynistic tendencies (Josephus, Philo, and Pliny). The fact that most modern scholars have assumed that the community at Qumran consisted of adult celibate men did not encourage the introduction of feminist or gender studies into the field. As Eileen Schuller has noted, "Certainly the standard view which depicts the authors of the scrolls as 'monks,' male celibates living in isolation in the desert, has not suggested to scholars that there is anything here of particular interest for the study of women in antiquity, except perhaps by way of a negative example of misog-

yny carried to its logical conclusion." This attitude has begun to change within the last decade, thanks to the work of Schuller and other scholars, including Lawrence Schiffman, Linda Bennett Elder, and Joan Taylor.

Both Philo and Pliny describe the Essenes as a community of adult celibate men. This reflects the negative attitude towards women and the admiration for an ascetic and celibate lifestyle held by many Hellenistic and Roman writers (especially philosophers). Pliny describes the Essenes as "a people unique of its kind and admirable beyond all others in the whole world, without women and renouncing love entirely. . . . Owing to the throng of newcomers, this people is daily re-born in equal number; indeed, those whom, wearied by the fluctuations of fortune, life leads to adopt their custom, stand in great numbers. Thus, unbelievable though this may seem, for thousands of centuries a race has existed which is eternal yet into which no one is born . . ." (*Natural History* 5.73).

Philo's misogynistic bias is evident in the following passage, in which he uses the celibacy of the Essenes as an excuse to launch into a diatribe against the evils of women and marriage:

On the other hand, shrewdly providing against the sole or principal obstacle threatening to dissolve the bonds of communal life, they banned marriage at the same time as they ordered the practice of perfect continence. Indeed, no Essaeon (Essene) takes a woman because women are selfish, excessively jealous, skillful in ensnaring the morals of a spouse and in seducing him by endless charms. Women set out to flatter, and wear all sorts of masks, like actors on the stage; then, when they have bewitched the eye and captured the ear, when, that is to say, they have deceived the lower senses, they next lead the sovereign mind astray. On the other hand, if children are born, they then declare with audacious arrogance, and swollen with pride and effrontery, what they were formerly content to insinuate hypocritically by means of allusions, and shamelessly employ violence to commit actions all of which are contrary to the good of the common life. The husband, bound by his wife's spells, or anxious for children from natural necessity, is no more the same towards the others, but unknown to himself he becomes a different man, a slave instead of a freeman. (*Hypothetica* 11.14-17)

At the beginning of his description of the Essenes, Josephus reveals a similar bias: "The Essenes renounce pleasure as an evil, and regard continence and resistance to the passions as a virtue. They disdain marriage for themselves, but adopt the children of others at a tender age in order to instruct them; they regard them as belonging to them by kinship, and condition

them to conform to their own customs. It is not that they abolish marriage, or the propagation of the species resulting from it, but they are on their guard against the licentiousness of women and are convinced that none of them is faithful to one man" (*War* 2.120-21). Elsewhere he states that, "In addition, they take no wives and acquire no slaves; in fact, they consider slavery an injustice, and marriage as leading to discord" (*Ant.* 18.21).

In these passages, Pliny, Philo, and Josephus seem to indicate that the Essenes were celibate men who adopted children or were joined by new members from outside the sect. However, Josephus, who is the only one of these three writers with a first-hand knowledge of the Essenes, indicates that at least some Essenes were married and had families. First, in *War* 2.120-21 he qualifies his statement that the Essenes "disdain marriage for themselves," by saying that "It is not that they abolish marriage . . . but are on their guard against the licentiousness of women. . . ." Later in *War*, Josephus describes an "order" of married Essenes:

There exists another order of Essenes, who, although in agreement with the others on the way of life, usages, and customs, are separated from them on the subject of marriage. Indeed, they believe that people who do not marry cut off a very important part of life, namely, the propagation of the species; and all the more so that if everyone adopted the same opinion the race would very quickly disappear. Nevertheless, they observe their women for three years. When they have purified themselves three times and thus proved themselves capable of bearing children, they then marry them. And when they are pregnant they have no intercourse with them, thereby showing that they do not marry for pleasure but because it is necessary to have children. The women bathe wearing a dress, whereas the men wear a loin-cloth. (*War* 2.160-61)

Josephus's testimony indicates that the group or groups our ancient sources describe as Essenes included men who practiced celibacy (at least occasionally if not permanently) as well as married members. As we shall see, the archaeological evidence suggests that the community at Qumran consisted mostly of adult men. This community (or less likely, a similar one) seems to have been the focus of Pliny's, Philo's, and much of Josephus's descriptions. These writers characteristically focused on those practices of the Essenes that were different and exotic. Not only did the celibacy practiced by at least some Essenes attract their attention, but it fed into the authors' misogynistic biases and was part of the ascetic lifestyle they considered to be virtuous. As David Goodblatt has pointed out to me, Philo describes the vir-

tues of female members (especially the “aged virgins”) of the Therapeutae. The fact that he does not mention female Essenes suggests that the community at Qumran was the focus of his description. Josephus admits that some Essenes were married, but explains that this was only for the purposes of “the propagation of the species.” Whether this was indeed the case or represents Josephus’s opinion (perhaps invented to explain why there were married Essenes), the fact remains that at least some Essenes were married. In addition, Josephus’s testimony indicates that the women observed at least some of the Essenes’ purity regulations, including immersion in ritual baths (while wearing a dress to ensure modesty).

The Dead Sea Scrolls provide similarly ambiguous (or at least mixed) information regarding women in the sect. The Community Rule (Manual of Discipline; 1QS), which many scholars consider to be a sort of constitution for the community at Qumran and includes the community’s penal code, contains no references to women (except for the biblical idiom “one born of woman,” 1QS 11.21) or legislation concerning sexual relations, marriage, and children. Because of the community’s concern with ritual purity, these omissions suggest that women were not present at Qumran. On the other hand, Elder has pointed out that “no published text from Qumran mandates celibacy.” Geza Vermès concurs, but argues that the omissions in the Community Rule indicate that the Qumran community consisted of male celibates: “The evidence here [in the Community Rule] is not obvious in that no regulation directly states that all the members were forbidden to marry. But in this document, to use an oxymoron, the argument from silence speaks loud and clear.”

The Community Rule contrasts with other sectarian documents which contain references to or legislation concerning women and children. The Damascus Document describes a society in which marriage and families were the norm. One passage specifically refers to married groups living in “camps” (CD 7.6-9): “And if they live in camps according to the rule of the Land, marrying and begetting children, they shall walk according to the Law and according to the statute concerning binding vows, according to the rule of the Law which says, *Between a man and his wife and between a father and his son*” (Numbers 30:17 [Eng. 16]). This document also includes legislation regarding marriage, divorce, and oaths given by women: “And each man marries the daughter of his brother or sister, whereas Moses said, *You shall not approach your mother’s sister; she is your mother’s near kin* (Leviticus 18:13). But although the laws against incest are written for men, they also apply to women. When, therefore, a brother’s daughter uncovers the nakedness of her father’s brother, she is (also his) near kin” (CD 5.7-11). “Inasmuch as He said, *It is for*

her husband to cancel her oath (Numbers 30:9), no husband shall cancel an oath without knowing whether it should be kept or not” (CD 16.10-11). “Likewise he who marri[es] a woma[n] . . . advice. Likewise he who divorces (his wife)” (CD 13.16-17). One passage in the Damascus Document refers to punishment given to members for “murmuring” against the “Fathers” and “Mothers,” suggesting that there were women of relatively high status in the sect (although of lower status than the “Fathers”): “[If he has murmured] against the Fathers, he shall leave and shall not return [again. But if he has murmured] against the Mothers, he shall do penance for ten days. For the Mothers have no *rwqmh* (distinction?) within [the Congregation]” (4Q270, fr. 7, 13-14).

A scroll called the Rule of the Congregation or Messianic Rule (1QSa) includes women and children in its description of the sectarian community at the End of Days: “When they come, they shall summon them all, the little children and the women also, and they shall read into their [ears a]ll the precepts of the Covenant . . .” (1QSa 1.4-5). In the War Scroll (1QM 7.3), women and children (as well as men who are crippled or impure) are excluded from the camps, suggesting that they were ordinarily part of the community: “No boy or woman shall enter their camps, from the time they leave Jerusalem and march out to war until they return.” Similarly, the Temple Scroll contains legislation for marriage, sexual relations, childbirth, and purity laws relevant to women. For example, it strictly separates impure menstruating women from the rest of the community. In the ideal temple as described in the scroll, pure women would be allowed to enter the outermost of the three courts. Although it might not be a sectarian composition, this document was apparently considered authoritative by the sect. One passage in the Temple Scroll mentions that women who have been captured in war and married their captor “may not touch your pure food for seven years. Nor shall she eat a whole offering until seven years pass; then she shall eat (it)” (11QT^a 63.14).

Despite Josephus’s testimony and the references to and legislation concerning women in some of the sectarian scrolls (including women who were called “Mothers”), it is unclear whether (or how) women were initiated into the sect and what status they could attain. The issue we shall consider here is not whether there were married (or female) Essenes in general (which depends on the evaluation of the literary sources), but whether there is archaeological evidence for the presence of women at Qumran. Archaeological evidence has been cited both to support and deny the presence of women at Qumran. This evidence falls into two main categories: (1) the human remains from the cemetery; and (2) the finds from the settlement. We begin with a review of the human remains from the cemetery.

The Cemetery

A large cemetery is located some 30-40 meters to the east of Qumran, separated by the boundary wall on the eastern side of the settlement (see Figs. 46, 47). The cemetery is spread over the top of the plateau (this is the "western sector," which de Vaux considered to be the main part of the cemetery), with extensions (or "secondary cemeteries") on hills to the north, east, and south (including to the south of Wadi Qumran). Here I refer to the cemetery at Qumran in the singular, although it is perhaps more accurate to refer to cemeteries, as some scholars have suggested. The cemetery is estimated to contain 1100 to 1200 graves (those excavated by de Vaux were numbered serially and designated "T" for *tombe*). All of the graves in the western sector (except for T4) are arranged in neat rows with a uniform orientation, with the head laid to the south and the feet to the north. The graves are marked by heaps of small stones, with a large headstone at each end. They are arranged in three groups that are separated by two broad east-west paths. Most of the graves on the hill to the southeast (the "southern extension") and all of the graves in the southern cemetery (to the south of Wadi Qumran) are oriented east-west, with the heads of the deceased laid to the east.

The 19th-century explorers Clermont-Ganneau and Condor and Tyrwhitt-Drake excavated two of the graves on top of the plateau (see Chapter 2). Clermont-Ganneau observed that the burials could not be Muslim due to their north-south orientation. Muslim burials in Palestine are usually oriented east-west, with the head laid to the east and the face turned south towards Mecca. Over the course of several seasons, de Vaux excavated 43 graves in the cemetery (including in the "extensions") at Qumran. The graves are dug into the marl of the terrace to an average depth of 1.5-2.0 meters, and most contain a single inhumation (that is, one whole body with the flesh still intact was laid in the grave). Four graves contained two burials each: T16, T24, T37 in the western sector, and T3 in the southern cemetery. Three graves contained apparent reinterments (T11, T24, T37; a reinterment means that a body was buried a second time, after it was buried elsewhere and the flesh had decomposed). The bodies were apparently wrapped in linen shrouds and some were perhaps placed in wooden coffins (as suggested by fragmentary wood remains and iron nails found in T17, T18, and T19). At the bottom of each grave, a niche or "loculus" was dug along the length of the shaft. The body was placed in this loculus, which was sealed by stone slabs or mud bricks. The shaft was then filled with earth (see Fig. 48).

Except for those in the southern cemetery, the graves contained virtually no burial goods or gifts. In a few cases, potsherds were mixed with the fill

of the shaft. As an aside, I note that in his preliminary report in the *Revue Biblique* 61 (1954): 215, de Vaux stated that a bag-shaped jar similar to the one illustrated there in Fig. 1:4 was found in the fill of T4. However, in Humbert and Chambon's volume (p. 346), the jar from the fill of T4 is described as a *jarre cylindrique* (a cylindrical jar), and an oil lamp of unspecified type is said to have been found in the fill of T26.

The lack of associated goods makes it difficult to date the burials. Because of the proximity of the cemetery to the settlement, scholars have assumed that they are contemporary. As we shall see, however, not all of the graves are necessarily associated with the settlement. Unfortunately, recent attempts to radiocarbon date the material from the graves have failed to yield results. This is because not enough collagen is preserved in the skeletons and there is too little carbon to allow even for accelerator mass spectroscopy (AMS) analysis. The wood from the coffins cannot be radiocarbon dated because it is saturated with paraffin, which was applied as a preservative after the excavations.

The skeletons excavated by de Vaux were preliminarily identified at the time of the excavations by Henri-Victor Vallois and Gottfried Kurth. Those from T1, T2, T9, T14, and T17 are now missing (that is, their whereabouts are currently unknown). In addition, the nine skeletons from 10 graves excavated by Solomon Steckoll in 1966 and 1967 are now lost. Because of this and because of Steckoll's highly speculative and controversial interpretations of the skeletons he excavated (including the identification of one as a "scribe" and another as a "horseman"), I do not include his material in this discussion.

Of the skeletons excavated by de Vaux whose whereabouts are known, 22 are now in Munich, nine are in Jerusalem, and eight are in Paris. Some of the skeletons ended up in Europe because they were taken by Vallois and Kurth to France and Germany for further study. The 22 skeletons in Kurth's collection in Munich were recently reexamined by Kurth's assistant, Olav Röhrer-Ertl (in collaboration with Ferdinand Rohrhirsch and Dietbert Hahn). Röhrer-Ertl has identified nine of the 22 skeletons as adult males, eight as adult females, and five as children. However, of the skeletons from the western sector (where all of the excavated graves except T4 were aligned in rows oriented north-south), Röhrer-Ertl has identified nine as adult males and two as adult females. These 11 skeletons came from 10 graves: T20, T21, T22, T23, T24a-b, T26, T28, T29, T30, T31; the females were in T22 and T24b. In addition, Vallois identified the skeleton from T7 in the western sector of the cemetery as a female (this skeleton is not among those reexamined by Röhrer-Ertl, but is part of Vallois's collection, now in Paris; see below). The other females and all of the children were buried in the extensions, which de

Vaux considered to be secondary. These extensions are: the central extension (with one excavated grave [T11], containing an adult male [see below]); the southern extension (with six excavated graves [T32-T37], apparently containing six adult females and one child); and the southern cemetery, located on the south side of Wadi Qumran (with four excavated graves [T1-T4] containing one adult female and four children; for the northern cemetery and northern extension, see below).

Joseph Zias, a physical anthropologist based in Israel, has challenged the identifications of the skeletons made by Röhrer-Ertl. According to Zias, all three of the supposed females from the western sector of the cemetery (T7, T22, T24b) exceed by 11-14 cm. the normal height range characteristic of the female population of Judea in the 1st century B.C.E. and 1st century C.E. Therefore, Zias believes that all three are adult males. In addition, based on their state of preservation and the differences in burial customs and orientation, Zias has suggested that the women and children found in the southern extension and in the southern cemetery represent relatively recent bedouin burials. These include the only burials that contained grave goods, consisting of beads, earrings, and a bronze ring. Zias has noted that whereas jewelry is rarely found in Jewish tombs of the Second Temple period, it is not uncommon in bedouin burials (including the bedouin graves that de Vaux excavated at Ein Feshkha; see below).

Another nine skeletons excavated by de Vaux were recently discovered in storage in Jerusalem and were reexamined by Susan Sheridan, a physical anthropologist from the University of Notre Dame. These skeletons come from T12, T13, T15, T16 (containing two skeletons, from T16a and T16b), T18, T19, and Tombs A and B (a box marked T17 contained pieces of wood and iron nails, but no bones). Sheridan has kindly provided me with the following information about them. The first seven skeletons, which come from graves in the western sector of the cemetery, are all adult males (including one 15- or 16-year-old "subadult" male from T15). There is some confusion regarding the location and source of the remaining two skeletons in this group. According to the markings on the boxes and on the bones themselves, they come from "Tomb A" and "Tomb B." Some scholars, including Humbert and Chambon, have equated these two graves with T9 and T10 in the northern cemetery. However, as Emile Puech has pointed out, Tombs A and B seem to represent graves that are distinct from T9 and T10. They might belong to a group of about 12 to 15 graves located to the north of the wadi at the northern end of Khirbet Qumran (that is, to the northwest of the northern cemetery). It is also possible that T9 and T10 were in the northern extension, in which case Tombs A and B should be located in the northern cemetery. According to

Sheridan, the skeleton from Tomb A is definitely an adult female, aged approximately 45-50. The skeleton from Tomb B is an old man over 60 years of age. These two graves were oriented north-south.

Sheridan has also reexamined the eight skeletons in Vallois's collection in Paris, which come from T3, T4, T5, T6, T7, T8, T10, and T11 (the remains from T3 were mixed with those from T8 and were labeled as coming from T8). All of these are located in the western sector of the cemetery, except for T10, which apparently lies in the northern cemetery (discussed above), and T11 in the central extension (to the north of the southern extension). Sheridan has kindly provided me with the following preliminary observations regarding these remains. First, all of these skeletons represent adult males. Even the skeleton from T7, which was identified by Vallois as a female, is apparently a male, although Sheridan expresses "slight reservation" over this identification because the preserved remains are fragmentary. Second, the skeleton from T4, which is located at the southern end of the western sector and is the only one in that sector with an east-west orientation, might represent a relatively recent (that is, a bedouin) burial. In this case, the jar found in the fill of this grave would already have been mixed in with the fill when the grave was dug. Sheridan notes that the male from T7 showed signs of severe arthritis in his hips and must have been in pain. The older woman from Tomb A suffered from moderate osteoporosis, and the old man buried in Tomb B suffered from severe osteoarthritis. The teenage male from T15 was apparently sick for most of his childhood. According to Sheridan, overall the population represented by the skeletons she examined suffered from neck arthritis, the build-up of hardened tartar on the teeth, and numerous tooth cavities. She also notes that the skeletons display no evidence of trauma (that is, a violent death), which contradicts one theory that these represent the burials of soldiers killed in battle (a suggestion associated with the interpretation of Qumran as a fort).

By now, many readers must be wondering how it is possible to confuse male and female skeletons, and why scientists cannot determine whether some of the burials are the remains of bedouins or 2000-year-old sectarians! The examination of ancient human remains (to determine the individual's age at the time of death, gender, physical deformities, ethnic characteristics, etc.) is done by trained physical anthropologists. In the case of Qumran, it is sometimes difficult to determine the gender due to the fragmentary state of the remains. In other words, the parts of the skeleton most indicative of gender, such as the pelvic region, are not always preserved. Various factors including local conditions such as the hot climate and the salinity of the soil have contributed to the poor state of preservation of the Qumran skeletons.

In addition, not all of the bones seem to have been collected and saved at the time of the excavations. For example, Sheridan notes that de Vaux seems to have collected mainly the cranium and the pelvis of the skeletons and left or discarded the other parts in the graves. Other excavated bones have since been lost or were stored in less than ideal conditions.

There are two main methods for determining the date of burials: (1) dating associated objects, that is, grave goods (burial gifts) or other objects (such as wooden coffins or cloth shrouds) that were placed in the graves at the time of the burial; (2) radiocarbon dating the bones themselves. As we have seen, neither of these methods has been used successfully on the Qumran material so far. In other words, due to the absence of associated grave goods, the lack of collagen in the bones, and the saturation of the wood coffin fragments with paraffin it is currently impossible to provide scientific dates for the Qumran burials. Perhaps the refinement and application of new scientific methods of analysis will provide information in the future.

Another problem with the Qumran material is the small size of the sample. Statistically, it is virtually impossible to draw any conclusions based on a sample of only 43 excavated graves out of a total of 1100-1200. In fact, Sheridan notes that the 39 skeletons which have recently been reexamined using modern anthropological methods represent only 3.5 percent of the burials in the 1100 graves. Opposition from certain sectors of the ultra-orthodox Jewish community in Israel as well as the current political situation make it unlikely that additional graves will be excavated in the foreseeable future. On the other hand, the fact that de Vaux excavated random graves distributed throughout the cemetery means there is a good chance that this sample is demographically representative of the whole.

In light of the current controversies surrounding the skeletal remains from Qumran, it is at present only possible to conclude as follows:

1. No more than two adult females (from T22, T24b) are known to be represented in the western sector of the cemetery at Qumran.
2. One more (apparently sectarian) adult female was found in Tomb A, to the north of the site (in the northern cemetery).
3. Women and children predominate in the southern extension and in the southern cemetery. I believe that Zias is correct in identifying these as recent bedouin burials. The burial in T4 at the southern end of the western sector might also represent a bedouin burial. The fact that bedouin burials are present at Qumran is indicated by de Vaux's reference to one he excavated inside the settlement (in L118, mentioned in Humbert and Chambon's volume), which was oriented east-west. De

Vaux also excavated three bedouin graves inside the main building at Ein Feshkha (in L2) and another about 100 m. to the northeast. A triangular mother of pearl pendant, 13 glass and glass paste beads belonging to a necklace, one stone bead, and a Turkish coin pierced by a hole were found in these graves. Other bedouin graves were excavated at Ein el-Ghuweir (see below).

4. Even with the females in T22 and T24b, there is a much higher proportion of males buried in the western sector of the cemetery.

Thus, the evidence from the western sector of the cemetery suggests that women were present at Qumran but represented a disproportionately small part of the population. The complete absence of infants and children among the excavated burials in the western sector is striking given the high rate of infant and child mortality in antiquity. Despite the small size of the sample, this evidence suggests that the community at Qumran did not include families. If we reject Zias's suggestion regarding the identification of the burials in the extensions as bedouins, then women and children were present in larger numbers among the sectarians (although still in a minority), but their graves were marginalized. This would also mean that female sectarians were buried with items of personal adornment (jewelry). This is important because, as we shall see, almost no jewelry or other gendered objects are recorded from the settlement at Qumran. If one argues that the absence of such items from the settlement is due to the ascetic lifestyle of the female sectarians, we should not find them in their graves. In other words, it is contradictory to argue that the absence of jewelry and other gendered objects from Qumran does not mean that women were absent from the settlement (on the basis of the assumption that ascetic women would not wear any items of personal adornment) while at the same time identifying the women buried with jewelry in the southern extension and southern cemetery as sectarians. We shall return to this issue later.

The fact that, despite differences in orientation, the bedouin burials at Qumran resemble the sectarian ones (and until now were identified as sectarian) indicates that more than just morphological criteria must be used in identifying their occupants. This problem has been highlighted by recent excavations in the 1st- to 2nd-century C.E. Nabatean cemetery at Khirbet Qazone at the southeast end of the Dead Sea. The 3500 graves at Khirbet Qazone are oriented north-south and, as at Qumran, the bodies were inhumed at the base of a shaft dug into the ground and sealed by mud bricks. There are, however, at least two major differences between these cemeteries: (1) the burials at Khirbet Qazone included proportionate numbers of men, women, and children, and (2) a few contained grave goods (mostly bracelets,

earrings, and beads, but no whole pottery vessels). Five funerary stelae were discovered from disturbed graves. This evidence indicates that shaft graves with a sealed loculus at the base containing a single inhumation were not used exclusively by the sectarian population at Qumran. This means that cemeteries with graves of this type cannot automatically be assumed to contain an Essene or sectarian population.

Another example of a cemetery of this type is located at Ein el-Ghuweir, a site on the western shore of the Dead Sea that lies to the south of and is contemporary with the settlements at Qumran and Ein Feshkha (see Chapter 10). Pesach Bar-Adon, an Israeli archaeologist who conducted excavations at Ein el-Ghuweir, identified the remains as a sectarian settlement. Bar-Adon also excavated two cemeteries, one on a hill to the north of the settlement and the other on a hill to the south of the site, on the other side of a ravine. In the northern cemetery, all but two of the graves were oriented north-south (Tomb 17 was oriented northwest-southeast and Tomb 15 was oriented east-west). In the southern cemetery, which Bar-Adon identified as a bedouin cemetery, the graves were oriented east-west. The graves resembled those in the western sector at Qumran. Each contained an inhumed body covered with a disintegrated shroud, which had been laid in a sealed loculus at the base of a shaft. The 18 graves Bar-Adon excavated in the northern cemetery contained 12 men and six women, while the two he excavated in the southern cemetery contained a man and a seven-year-old child. After mentioning that the southern cemetery is bedouin, Bar-Adon makes no further differentiation between the burials in the two cemeteries. The males ranged in age from 18 to 60/70 and the women were 18 to 34 years of age. Overall they appeared to be in poorer health than the population at Qumran. Storage jars and a bowl of 1st-century C.E. date found in the fill appear to have been deliberately smashed and placed in the some of the graves. One jar was inscribed in black ink with the Hebrew name Yehohanan, indicating that the population was Jewish. As we shall see, however, it is impossible to determine whether this population was sectarian or was connected with the community at Qumran.

Other cemeteries of this type have been excavated at a site near Ein el-Ghuweir called Hiam el-Sagha, as well as in Jerusalem. Based on the similarity of the graves to those at Qumran, the excavators of these cemeteries have suggested that they were used by an Essene or sectarian population. This method of burial is fundamentally different from that practiced by other Jews living in Judea in the 1st century B.C.E. and 1st century C.E. Many Jews buried their dead in underground, rock-cut burial caves consisting of one or more rooms, which were used by extended families over the course of several generations. Rock-cut burial caves are found at Jericho and Ein Gedi. By the 1st

century C.E., the burial caves in Jerusalem and Jericho had loculi cut into the walls to accommodate the individual bodies, which were wrapped in a shroud and sometimes placed in a wooden coffin. After a body was placed in the loculus, the opening was sealed with a stone slab. Sometimes the loculi were emptied after the flesh had decayed, and the skeletal remains were gathered and placed in small carved stone boxes called ossuaries. The ossuaries were left on the floors of the caves and in the loculi or on benches lining the walls of the burial chambers. Pottery vessels including cooking pots and perfume bottles were also placed inside the tombs. Sometimes coins were placed on the eyes or inside the mouth of the deceased. This apparently represents a custom that some Jews adopted from the Greeks; the coins were to pay Charon, who ferried the dead across the river Styx into the underworld. The entrances to the burial caves were closed with large stone slabs, or sometimes by a rolling stone. According to the Gospels, Jesus was laid to rest in a burial cave that belonged to Joseph of Arimathea.

Burying the dead in rock-cut caves used by several generations of the same family was an ancient custom among the Jews of Judea that goes back to the First Temple period. In contrast, the populations at Qumran, Ein el-Ghuweir, Hiam el-Sagha, and the cemeteries of this type in Jerusalem were buried individually instead of with their families and ancestors. No one has satisfactorily explained their peculiar orientation, although a number of suggestions have been made. As some scholars have noted, if a physical resurrection was envisioned, the bodies would be facing north. The cemetery at Khirbet Qazone indicates that this method of burial is not only associated with sectarians or even only with Jews. Perhaps, as Taylor has suggested, it represents a burial custom among the poor that was adopted by (or originated with?) the community at Qumran. Nevertheless, the fact that the western sector of the cemetery at Qumran is adjacent to the settlement (as well as the north-south orientation of the burials in that sector) indicates that those buried there represent the site's occupants.

Gendered Objects from Qumran

Do the artifacts recovered in de Vaux's excavations provide any indication of whether women were present among the community at Qumran? As we shall see, although it is largely negative, the archaeological evidence suggests only minimal female presence at Qumran. Aside from finding the physical remains of women in the settlement (such as the female burials in the cemetery), one means of identifying women in the archaeological record is to find

objects that reflect their presence, that is, objects that were used or owned *exclusively* by women. Scholars refer to these as "gendered" objects. Tampons and brassieres are modern examples of gendered objects.

Were any gendered objects found at Qumran? Unfortunately, few organic materials are preserved from de Vaux's excavations. This means that items such as hairnets, which might attest to the presence of women at Qumran, have not survived (assuming they originally existed). Taylor noted that "in a society in which many roles were clearly gendered . . . certain objects were particularly used by women: combs, mirrors, cosmetics, also jewelry (beads, necklaces, earrings, noserings) and spindle whorls or other items reflecting specific women's domestic work." The gathering and preparation of wild vegetables, dairy production, spinning, laundering, water fetching, cooking, and pottery production have traditionally been major female activities worldwide. Women in Roman Palestine also engaged in work outside the domestic sphere, for example, in pottery-making, trade, agriculture, butchery, and bread-making. As a rule, however, women were responsible for the household tasks, while men worked outside the house. Despite the chronological and interpretive problems surrounding rabbinic sources and their relationship (if any) to the community at Qumran, they are important for this discussion because they provide some information about women in Roman Palestine. According to the rabbis, "These are the kinds of labor which a woman performs for her husband: she (1) grinds flour, (2) bakes bread, (3) does laundry, (4) prepares meals, (5) feeds her child, (6) makes the bed, (7) works in wool" (Mishnah *Ketubot* 5:5). However, even work considered to be a woman's task when performed inside the house, such as baking, was usually a male profession in other contexts. This means that although women could have done some of the cooking and baking at Qumran or manufactured pottery we cannot assume that this was the case.

We must therefore identify among the archaeological finds from Qumran objects such as those mentioned by Taylor which were associated exclusively or almost exclusively with women — that is, gendered objects. Our search is hampered by the lack of a final publication of the material from de Vaux's excavations, which means that none of the conclusions presented here can be considered definitive. However, de Vaux's published field notes include lists of the objects found in each locus. Of the gendered objects that Taylor enumerates, no combs or mirrors appear in these lists (see Figs. 55, 57). Since combs and mirror cases were made of wood, their absence is not surprising (although the preserved materials could include the mirrors themselves, which were made of polished bronze, or bronze mirror cases like the one from Masada mentioned below, or other cosmetic items).

The other types of gendered objects mentioned by Taylor are jewelry and spindle whorls. Although men in the Roman world sometimes wore finger rings and fibulae (a kind of safety pin to used to fasten a cloak), Alexandra Croom has observed that "Men tended not to wear much jewellery, as those that did were considered effeminate." On the other hand, women wore a variety of jewelry including necklaces, earrings, finger rings, and bracelets. Spindle whorls are associated with spindles, which were used for spinning wool. The raw wool or linen was tied to a stick called a distaff and then teased out by hand, using a weighted stick (the spindle) to twist the raw material into thread. The spindle was a bone or wooden stick with a spindle whorl at the top to provide the weight. Spindle whorls are cone-shaped objects made of stone, bone, wood, or glass and pierced by a hole for attachment to the spindle (see Fig. 57). According to Croom, "Spinning was such a typical activity that the distaff and spindle became a symbol of womanhood." Taylor too has noted that "the association of women with spinning was one of the most definitive among gendered roles in antiquity." Even in industrial contexts at Pompeii, the spinners were apparently women whereas the weavers were men. I agree with Taylor that in the rabbinic sources "spinning does *not* appear on the list of 'banned' male employments, probably because in Graeco-Roman Palestine spinning — like midwifery — was something *men did not do*."

There do not appear to be any references to spinning and weaving in the sectarian scrolls. In addition, despite a number of references to Essene clothing, Josephus and Philo do not mention spinning and weaving either. Although it is an argument from silence, if male members of the highly gendered Essene community engaged in spinning, presumably this activity would have been legislated (in the sectarian scrolls) or singled out for description and perhaps ridicule by Josephus, Philo, and other authors. For example, Tal Ilan has noted that, "When women are mentioned in the documents composed by the Dead Sea Sect, it is almost always in *halakhic* contexts." It thus seems safe to associate spindle whorls in Roman Palestine (including at Qumran) with the presence of women. However, the archaeological evidence does not support Taylor's assertion that "the most striking objects for engendered archaeology to be uncovered at Qumran are bone spindle whorls." In fact, only two spindle whorls are listed in de Vaux's field notes. One, described as made of alabaster, comes from L20. Since L20 belongs to Period III (and existed only in Period III), this spindle whorl is not associated with the sectarian settlement at Qumran. The other spindle whorl comes from L7. This locus represents a sounding made at the beginning of the excavations in 1951. De Vaux's notes provide no indication of the provenience of this spindle whorl in terms of the different occupation levels, al-

though L7 appears in association with Period II in the plan illustrated in Humbert and Chambon's volume. This locus lies on the margins of the settlement to the west of the tower. Therefore, based on the material published to date, only one spindle whorl appears to have been found in association with the sectarian settlement at Qumran, and it comes from an area that lies on the margins of the settlement. For the sake of completeness, I note that one limestone spindle whorl is listed from Ein Feshkha. It comes from L18, which is located in a structure that also showed evidence of Byzantine occupation. No spindle whorls are published from Ein el-Ghuweir.

Is jewelry attested at Qumran? Without illustrations or a final publication, it is impossible to determine whether some of the objects listed in de Vaux's notes, such as "bronze rings," might represent jewelry. The only bracelet (a fragment) listed comes from a Period III locus (L43). Other objects listed, such as fibulae, were also worn or used by men. Without illustrations, it is impossible to determine whether the mother of pearl "ornament" (perhaps an inlay?) listed from L111 and the two bronze "ornaments" from L125 and L130 represent gendered objects. That leaves beads, only five of which are listed in de Vaux's notes. One comes from L43, the Period III locus with the bracelet mentioned above. A globular bead was found in L35, in the southeast corner of the central courtyard of the main building. A large glass bead comes from L41, a room on the north side of the central courtyard of the main building. The fourth bead was found "outside" L44, which is the area of the potters' workshop on the eastern edge of the settlement. The fifth bead, described as cylindrical, was found in the fill above the steps of L48, which is the miqveh on the eastern side of the settlement that was damaged in the earthquake of 31 B.C.E. In other words, only four beads were found in contexts that might be associated with the sectarian settlement, although two come from loci with evidence of later occupation (L35, L41).

The scroll caves at Qumran yielded only three beads (from Caves 11C and B, listed in Humbert and Chambon's volume) and two fragments of a wooden comb (from Cave 1). A bronze earring or nose ring was found in Cave 24, which is located about 50 meters north of Cave 11. The comb fragments and a cooking pot found in Cave 1 point to domestic occupation on a very limited scale. No gendered objects are published from the recently excavated residential caves in the marl terrace to the north of Qumran.

To summarize, the published and identifiable gendered objects associated with the sectarian settlement at Qumran consist of one spindle whorl and no more than four beads. This evidence corresponds with that from the cemetery, which attests to the presence of women, but only very minimally. The evidence from the site is, of course, suggestive rather than definitive, for

the following reasons: (1) the final publication of the material from de Vaux's excavations could reveal the presence of additional gendered objects; and (2) the conclusion that women are only minimally represented at Qumran is based on negative evidence — that is, an argument from silence. It is impossible to prove *on the basis of the archaeological evidence alone* that women were not present and active in various capacities (as bakers and cooks, potters, agricultural laborers, etc.). Nevertheless, this argument from silence is impressive, especially when we compare Qumran with contemporary sites in the Judean Desert where women were undoubtedly present. The sites we shall consider here are Masada and the Judean Desert caves. We shall also examine the archaeological evidence from the Byzantine monastery at Khirbet ed-Deir.

Masada

According to Josephus, the Jewish rebels who occupied Masada during the First Jewish Revolt against the Romans (66/67 to 73/74 C.E.) consisted of families of men, women, and children. For example, Eleazar Ben Yair's speech, as reported by Josephus, includes the following line: "Let our wives thus die undishonoured, our children unacquainted with slavery" (*War* 7.334). In the controversial mass suicide, Josephus reports that the men killed "with their own hands their own wives and children" (*War* 7.393). The archaeological evidence from Yigael Yadin's excavations confirms Josephus's testimony that women and children were present among the rebels. The skeletons from Masada include the remains of what appears to be a rebel family, consisting of a man, woman, and child, in the area of the bathhouse on the lower terrace of the northern palace. Iron arrowheads and bronze scales of armor, a fragment of a prayer shawl (*talith*), a potsherd inscribed with Hebrew letters, and a pair of women's sandals were found near the skeletons. According to Zias, these human remains represent Roman, not Jewish burials. However, Yadin's notes indicate that these individuals were not formally buried (one of Zias's arguments is that the Jews never buried their dead with arrows and sandals), but instead were buried when the northern palace burned and collapsed. This explains why their remains were left there and were not removed or reburied. I see no reason to doubt their identification as Jewish rebels. On the other hand, the number and identity of the skeletons that Yadin found in a cistern on the southeast side of the mountain are disputed (anywhere from five to 25 individuals who could be Jewish rebels, Roman soldiers, or Byzantine monks!). Nine ostraca from Masada bear the names of or references to

women. These are Hebrew ostraca inscribed "the wife of [Ze]baida," "the wife of Tybw," "the daughter of N[]," (or perhaps, "the house of . . ."), "the wife of Jacob," "the daughter of Domli," "Shalom (or Salome) the Gali[lean]," "the daughter of Qatra," and Greek ostraca inscribed "give to Salome, . . . four . . ." "Mariam, the daughter of Kypselos." In contrast, only a small number of ostraca was found at Qumran, and they seem to have no references to women.

Numerous examples of ancient textiles were preserved at Masada. They include fragments of sleeveless tunics and rectangular mantles of a type worn by men and women in Roman Palestine. Some of the brightly-colored clothing probably belonged to women. The Masada finds also include four fragmentary hairnets. Avigail Sheffer and Hero Granger-Taylor have noted that hairnets were associated especially with Greek-style dress and were seldom worn by Roman women. References in rabbinic sources indicate that hairnets were a standard garment worn by Jewish women in Roman Palestine. The beads and jewelry from Masada are unpublished. Three hundred eighty-four spindle whorls made of wood, ivory, bone, stone, and glass were found at Masada. In addition, ten wooden combs are listed in the catalogue of wood remains. In his popular book on Masada, Yadin illustrated examples of cosmetic equipment found in the dwellings of the Jewish rebels, including cosmetic palettes and eyeshadow sticks, and a bronze mirror case (see Fig. 56). In addition, clay loom weights belonging to warp-weighted looms were found in many of the casemate rooms, as well as the remains of at least one wooden loom (see Chapter 9). Most of these objects come from rooms in the casemate wall that were occupied by the Jewish rebels.

The Bar Kokhba Caves in the Judean Desert

Caves in the Judean Desert that were occupied by Jewish rebels at the time of the Bar Kokhba Revolt (132-135 C.E.) have also yielded evidence for the presence of women and children. These caves served as temporary hideouts for bands of rebels who sought refuge from the Roman army. Most of the evidence comes from the Cave of Letters in Naḥal Hever, south of Ein Gedi. In this cave, Yadin found the skeletal remains of four men, nine women, and six children. The documents discovered include the archive of a woman named Babatha who was one of the refugees hiding inside the cave. A bundle of balls of linen thread and a wooden mirror case with a bronze mirror were found with the purse that contained Babatha's archive (in antiquity, mirrors were made of polished bronze instead of glass). A second mirror identical to the

first was discovered elsewhere in the cave (see Fig. 55). Another archive from the Cave of Letters, belonging to a woman named Salome Komaise, indicates that she too took refuge there. Other gendered objects found in the cave include five spindle whorls, fragments belonging to one or two wooden combs, a polished horn spoon for cosmetic use, a wooden cosmetic box containing rouge powder that was found with one of the mirrors, and 22 or 23 beads (17 to 18 beads, some of semi-precious stones, were found together and probably belonged to the same necklace). The numerous, well-preserved textile fragments include fringed scarves that apparently belonged to women, a woman's hairnet, and a linen child's shirt or tunic. A bundle of dyed, unspun wool and balls of woolen thread were also found in the cave.

Other caves in the Judean Desert that were occupied at the time of the Bar Kokhba Revolt have yielded similar finds, though fewer in number and more limited in type. The finds from the Cave of Horror in Naḥal Hever included the skeletons of five adult males, five adult females, and 10 children (including a possible fetus; one more skeleton could not be identified). At least 10 spindle whorls of wood and stone, one wooden spindle shaft, and many fragments of wooden combs were also discovered in this cave. One complete wooden comb and two fragments were found in the Cave of the Pool in Naḥal David, above Ein Gedi, as well as two wooden spindle whorls and a bead of green stone. The caves in Wadi Murabba'at (to the north of Ein Gedi) yielded a number of spindle whorls, most of wood and others of stone, and wooden spindle shafts. There is also a clay loom weight pierced by a hole. Other finds from the caves in Wadi Murabba'at included many wooden combs and a small cosmetic spoon made of iron (see Fig. 57). Among the textiles was a possible hairnet.

More recently, two caves near Jericho yielded evidence for occupation by Jewish rebels at the time of the Bar Kokhba Revolt. These caves, called the Cave of Avior and the Cave of the Sandal are located in Wadi el-Mafjar (the Cave of the Sandal is located ca. 300 meters to the south of the Cave of Avior). The Cave of Avior contained 38 disarticulated skeletons of men, women, and children (23 adults and 15 children) who apparently suffocated when the Roman army built a bonfire at the entrance to the cave. Because of their fragmentary state, the age and gender of many of the skeletons could not be determined, although they included five adult males and three adult females. The tip of a braid of human hair belonging to a woman or girl was also discovered. Ten human skeletons representing three adult males, four adult females, and three children were found in the Cave of the Sandal. Since (unlike the Cave of Avior) this cave had not been disturbed in later periods, it yielded a number of finds. These included two gold rings and a gold earring, a silver cosmetic spoon, and a wooden comb.

The Byzantine Monastery at Khirbet ed-Deir

How does Qumran compare with a settlement that we know was inhabited by adult celibate men? Yizhar Hirschfeld recently published the final report on his excavations at the site of Khirbet ed-Deir in the Judean Desert. There is no doubt that this Byzantine (6th- to 7th-century C.E.) monastery was inhabited by a male population. It is therefore not surprising that no gendered objects are published from the site: no spindle whorls or shafts, beads or jewelry, combs, hairnets, mirrors, or cosmetic items. There are also no references to women in the four Greek inscriptions found at the site. Although a burial recess and burial chapel were excavated, no human skeletal remains were discovered. Presumably, the cooking and baking in the large kitchen attached to the refectory were done by men.

Were There Women at Qumran?

The contrast between the finds from Qumran and the other Judean Desert sites considered here becomes even more pronounced when we compare the duration of their occupation. Whereas Qumran was occupied for about 100 to 150 years, the rebel occupation at Masada lasted no longer than six to seven years. The Judean Desert caves were probably occupied for a much shorter period than the three-and-a-half year duration of the Bar Kokhba Revolt. On the other hand, the Byzantine monastery at Khirbet ed-Deir was occupied for about 150 years. In addition, since Qumran suffered three violent destructions during the course of its existence (in 31 B.C.E., ca. 9/8 B.C.E., and 68 C.E.), we would expect the associated levels to yield finds that were in use at the time of those destructions. That this is the case is indicated by the hundreds of whole or restorable ceramic vessels found at Qumran, as well as the numerous other small finds. If women were present at the site, spindle whorls and other gendered objects should be represented in much greater numbers at Qumran than at Masada and in the Judean Desert caves. Instead, only one spindle whorl was found, on the margins of the settlement, and no more than four beads. Similarly, although female burials are present, they are greatly outnumbered by males in the western sector of the cemetery (and they are present in more proportionate numbers but spatially marginalized if the apparently bedouin burials in the southern extension and southern cemetery are included). In other words, the archaeological evidence attests to only minimal female presence at Qumran.

Taylor has suggested to me that the absence of jewelry and cosmetic

items at Qumran does not necessarily reflect the absence of women, since female Essenes presumably would have "spurned the usual female adornments." Similarly, Maxine Grossman has asked me the following question: "Could the 'erasure of gender' in the ideology of the covenant community ('we are too pious to behave that way', 'no makeup, no dancing, no dates') lead to an erasure of gender in their material remains? What you might have, then, is the presence of men and women, but a different kind of men and women than in other communities. The presence of beads may suggest the presence of women at a site, but the absence of beads need NOT suggest the absence of women." Taylor and Grossman are correct that the absence of gendered objects does not necessarily indicate that women were not present at Qumran. As I noted above, based on the absence of gendered objects alone, it is impossible to prove that women were not present at Qumran, because this is an argument from silence. However, I am unconvinced by Taylor's and Grossman's argument for a number of reasons. First, this argument tries to circumvent the archaeological evidence. Second, Josephus does not describe female Essenes as refraining from wearing jewelry or cosmetics (although in *War* 2.140 he mentions that the men swear never "to outshine his subordinates in his dress or by increased adornment"). In addition, there is no legislation in the sectarian scrolls prohibiting the use or wearing of these items by women. There is also no indication that sectarian or Essene women (even the elderly) refrained from spinning wool. In fact, I wonder whether it is anachronistic (or at least unfounded) to assume that because female Essenes were ascetics they would have refrained from spinning wool and from using cosmetics or any items of personal adornment.

Grossman has asked me another provocative question: "Is the absence of feminine-gendered 'personal objects' paralleled by an absence of MASCULINE-gendered ones, as well? I don't know what sort of 'toys' or 'fripperies' men would have had in antiquity (pins and decorations to hold their clothes together, purses to carry small tools, knives or other implements with decorative handles, etc.), but do we find any of THOSE among the small finds? That is, could it be that a community that avoids frivolousness would avoid the very possessions that we think of as a mark of the presence of women in the first place?" To answer Grossman's question, I reviewed de Vaux's notes and found that there is unequivocal evidence for the presence of men in the archaeological record at Qumran. The first piece of evidence consists of the disproportionately large number of male burials in the cemetery. A second piece of evidence is provided by two ostraca (inscribed potsherds) that were found by James Strange in 1996, during the course of clearing the base of the east face of the eastern boundary wall of the settlement. One ostrakon mentions

that "Honi son of [. . .] gave to Elazar son of Nahmani [. . .] Hisday from Holon" a house and fig trees and olive trees. The second ostrakon, written in a different hand preserves the name of "Jehose]ph son of Nathan[. . . his [s]ons from En [Gedi(?)." We have also seen that a cylindrical jar with the name "Yohanan Hatla" painted in red on the shoulder was found in a basin in L34.

The third piece of evidence consists of various objects listed in de Vaux's notes among the small finds from the settlement. As I noted above, a large amount of pottery and many coins (mostly small bronze coins) as well as other small finds were recovered in the excavations, associated with the three destruction levels. These finds include the following tools and knives listed in de Vaux's notes: a tool or weapon from L2; knife blades from L4 and L34 and an iron knife from L76; a tool from L7; iron blades from L30, L31, L46, L101; three groups of bronze and iron tools from L52; an iron pick from L114; an iron sickle from L126. Other objects listed, such as bronze and iron shafts, points, and plaques could also represent tools or weapons; there are also iron knives from L15 and L16 at Ein Feshkha. Although women could have used these objects at least on some occasions, they are usually associated with men. The same is true of the industrial workshops located throughout the settlement, including a tuyere (the nozzle of a blowpipe for a furnace) in L119 *bis*.

Although the iron arrowheads and other weapons found at Qumran might belong to the Roman soldiers who destroyed the settlement in 68 C.E. and occupied it after that, some could have been used by the male members of the community. As an aside, I note that the question of whether male sectarians engaged in combat or used weapons depends on the interpretation of the literary sources. For example, Philo states that "In vain would one look among them for makers of arrows, or javelins, or swords, or helmets, or armor, or shields; in short, for makers of arms, or military machines, or any instrument of war" (*Every Good Man Is Free* 78). On the other hand, the War Scroll (which contains detailed descriptions of military formations and equipment) indicates that the sect anticipated a prolonged and bloody military engagement at the end of days. At Masada, a workshop was discovered where the Jewish rebels manufactured barbed, trilobate iron arrowheads. This demonstrates that the Jews used and produced weapons of Roman type. Because it is therefore impossible to determine whether the pieces of military equipment from Qumran (which are relatively few in number and limited in repertoire) were used only by the Romans or also by the sectarians, I exclude them from this consideration of masculine objects. The weapons listed in de Vaux's notes include a total of six iron arrowheads from L4, L19, L33, L41, L45c; bronze sheaths from L14 and L91; and a javelin point from L30. Other objects listed in de Vaux's notes could also represent military equipment.

The archaeological evidence reviewed here contradicts the identification of Qumran as a villa or manor house, where females would have been part of the population both as residents and as servants or slaves. This conclusion is supported by the discovery of female skeletal remains, spindle whorls, cosmetic spoons, and ostraca with references to women in the Herodian-period villas in Jerusalem's Jewish Quarter. The contrast between the contemporary Jewish population of Judea and the minimal female presence at Qumran (in an unknown capacity and perhaps only at certain times or occasions?) must have given the impression that the Qumran community consisted entirely of adult men, as described by Pliny, Josephus, and Philo. In other words, although the literary evidence suggests that there were female sectarians, their presence at Qumran was minimal. Geza Vermès has speculated that the few female burials at Qumran represent sectarians who attended the annual Renewal of the Covenant ceremony (which perhaps took place at Qumran), and happened to perish while there. In the sectarian calendar, this ceremony coincided with Pentecost (the Feast of Weeks). Finally, the absence of infants and children among the burials excavated in the western sector of the cemetery at Qumran (that is, among the apparently sectarian burials) indicates that the settlement was not inhabited by families. In contrast, numerous skeletons of children were found in the Judean Desert caves (and the remains of at least one rebel family with a child are represented at Masada). Thus, the archaeological evidence suggests only minimal female presence at Qumran and an absence of families with children.

Bibliographical Notes

This chapter is a modified and updated version of Jodi Magness, "Women at Qumran?" in *What Athens Has to Do with Jerusalem: Essays on Classical, Jewish, and Early Christian Art and Archaeology in Honor of Gideon Foerster*, ed. L. V. Rutgers (Leuven: Peeters, forthcoming) (with bibliography; some of the main references are repeated here with additional bibliography).

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