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Sectarianism and the Search for Apocalyptic Origins in Isaiah 56–66

Brian R. Doak

Abstract

This essay re-examines the difficult questions concerning the origins of apocalyptic literature and the rise of Jewish sectarianism. Since the publication of O. Plöger's *Theokratie und Eschatologie* and P. Hanson's *The Dawn of Apocalyptic*, the search for proto-apocalyptic origins in early post-exilic period sectarian conflict has generated a fair amount of debate. The most cogent and sustained response to Hanson's and Plöger's theories, S. Cook's *Prophecy & Apocalypticism* (1995), attempted to purge the influence of "deprivation theory" from the field of biblical studies, and, more broadly, social anthropology. The present essay makes a fresh study of some central lines of thought in these works, especially as they relate to the issue of sectarianism and the social framework used for drawing exegetical conclusions. In particular, one prominent theory of the symbolic—in this case, textual—expression of sectarian groups, that of the anthropologist Mary Douglas, is applied to a series of enigmatic and highly debated texts in Trito-Isaiah in order to show the continued viability of the "sectarian" interpretation of these passages.

Key words: Apocalypticism; Isaiah; Mary Douglas; Sectarianism; Trito-Isaiah

Of paramount importance to our understanding of the still-obscure shape of early post-exilic Israelite religion are the difficult questions that pertain to the origins of apocalyptic literature and to the rise of Jewish sectarianism. Since the publication of Otto Plöger's *Theokratie und Eschatologie* (1959) and Paul Hanson's *The Dawn of Apocalyptic* (1979), the search for apocalyptic origins in early post-exilic period sectarian conflict has generated a fair amount of debate. Both Plöger and Hanson posited a decisive rupture between two basic elements of post-exilic society, broadly categorized as "legalists" (Plöger's "theocrats" and Hanson's "hierocrats") and "visionaries" (the "proto-apocalypticists"), and, according to both authors, the birth of apocalyptic literature can be attributed to the efforts of the "visionary" contingent, whose political, social, and religious alienation predisposed them to apocalyptic expressions.

These ideas, however, have not gone unchallenged; the most cogent and sustained response, Stephen Cook's *Prophecy & Apocalypticism* (1995), came nearly twenty years af-

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ter Hanson's work and attempted to purge the influence of what he calls "deprivation theory" (i.e., the idea that only marginalized or deprived groups would engage in apocalyptic expressions) from the field of biblical studies, and, more broadly, social anthropology (see also Cook 2003, and cf. Berquist: 177–92).

Despite the fact that Cook's work represents some definite theoretical advances in the field, several aspects of this ongoing discussion warrant critical re-investigation. One must question whether, despite the frenzy to discredit old or outmoded theories, some elements of the older studies can (or should) be rescued (see Grabbe 2004: 256–61). Since there have been few sustained, formal attempts to directly engage Plöger's, Hanson's, or Cook's theses in the past decade, I attempt in this essay to make a fresh study of some central lines of thought in these works, especially as they relate to the issue of sectarianism and the sociological framework used for drawing exegetical conclusions. My goal here will not be to explicate all the nuances of early post-exilic sectarianism, nor to posit a new theory for the origins of the proto-apocalyptic material *per se*, but rather to explore the very difficult question of a possible *interrelationship* between emerging sectarian phenomena and the material in Isaiah 56–66 (chapters that formed the core of Hanson's [1979: 32–208] study). In particular, I will review one prominent theory of the symbolic—in this case, textual—expression of sectarian groups, that of the anthropologist Mary Douglas, and then apply this model to a series of enigmatic and highly debated texts in Trito-Isaiah in order to show the continued viability of the "sectarian" interpretation of these passages.

Before delving into the interpretation of biblical materials, however, I will provide a background for understanding the possible historical setting behind Isaiah 56–66, i.e., the period of Achaemenid rule in 6th–5th century BCE Yehud. We will also find it necessary to develop a fresh understanding of some theoretical treatments of "deprivation theory" and sectarianism, as one major weakness of some earlier treatments is the failure to suitably use and explain important methodological studies. Although Cook's study utilized contemporary theoretical materials to a much greater degree than had been previously attempted, there are still several important issues—such as the issue of whether we have a genuine "sectarian" phenomenon present in Isaiah 56–66 and whether these chapters belong within the corpus of "proto-apocalyptic" texts—that need to be explained in terms of

specific texts and historical reconstructions. Toward these objectives, this article is one attempt to examine a broad and complex problem, the relationship between sectarian impulses and early apocalyptic texts, through a few specific lenses; in the end, this combination of historical, theoretical, and textual/exegetical approaches can help us understand something of the peculiarities and complexities of early post-exilic Israelite religion and hopefully contribute something to the ongoing discussion of the early development of Jewish sectarianism before Qumran and the Maccabean period (see Piovanelli).

Defining the Sect

Given all the discussion that has taken place over the last several years regarding the appearance of sectarian groups in the Hebrew Bible and, more prominently, at Qumran, one may well desire to know exactly what a "sect" is. Oddly enough, a majority of studies conducted by biblical scholars that employ the terminology of "sect" and "sectarian" give no definition—not even a minimal or provisional one—of what a "sect" might be, and show little evidence of having considered the vast and lively literature produced in sociological circles in the last fifty years or so describing sectarianism and its social causes and consequences. There are, of course, some notable exceptions within biblical and Qumran studies—especially recently—such as the work done by Philip Davies, Eyal Regev (33–58), Lester Grabbe, and indeed all of the authors whose work is represented in the new volume edited by David Chalcraft (2007a).

Still, the prevailing method in biblical studies has been to use the word "sect" as a vague synonym for "some kind of group within a group," and thus it would seem prudent to say something about how one can go about the task of identifying a "sect" before delving too deeply into the question of whether the authors or tradents of Trito-Isaiah display "sectarian tendencies" or comprise a discrete "sect." Further complicating the issue, of course, is the problem of identifying a sectarian *text*: are all texts authored by sect members "sectarian texts" by definition? Can the product of a single individual text display "sectarian characteristics," and thus be labeled a "sectarian text"? And if a completed, "non-sectarian" document receives a *redaction* by sectarian redactors—or if a sectarian group simply adopts an originally non-sectarian text *tout court* and exalts it as a paragon

of their own sectarian beliefs—can this document be rightly called "sectarian"?

I will return to these issues shortly; first, a word on identifying and defining the sect. The pioneer in this regard is Max Weber, especially in his well known work in *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* and his *Sociology of Religion*, though substantial treatments and definitions occur also in *Economy and Society*, *Ancient Judaism*, and many other works (see Chalcraft 2007b, 2007c, 2007d, 2007e, as well as Swedberg: 242–44). From Weber, one gets the distinct impression that the formation (and subsequent secularization) of sects is decisive in the growth and evolution of a society; in his first major treatment of the topic in *The Protestant Ethic* (1904–05), a sect was defined in opposition to a "church," the latter including "both the just and the unjust" while the sect is comprised of only of "personal believers," the reborn. One is born into the church, but a sect is "a voluntary association of only those who, according to principle, are religiously and morally qualified" (Weber 2002: 130). These core definitional elements, at least, were carried on into the work of Bryan Wilson (1967: 23–24), who, in his landmark studies of sect development, continued to define the sect along similar lines:

> [I]t is a voluntary association; membership is by proof to sect authorities of some claim to personal merit...or recommendation of members in good standing; exclusiveness is emphasized...its self-conception is of an elect, a gathered remnant, possessing special enlightenment...it accepts, at least as an idea, the priesthood of all believers...[and] there is a high level of lay participation...the sect is hostile or indifferent to the secular society and to the state.

Thus, for our purposes here, we may define a "sect" broadly as a group where membership is voluntary, members are recruited by conversion, and the outside world is viewed through the lenses of separatism and hostility (Scott: 587; Dillon: 64–65; Swatos: 4136–39; Robbins & Lucas: 238–40).

The Historical Setting

Much could be said regarding the dating of the textual materials in Isaiah that I will be discussing presently; simply, and briefly, put, I adopt two traditional ideas—neither of which is without problems—regarding Isaiah chapters 56–66, viz.: first, that, despite some continuity with Isaiah 40–55, these chapters mark a significant literary, thematic, and stylistic break with Second Isaiah; and second, the references to the Temple in Isaiah 56–66, as well as other factors, indicate a situation in which the building and control of the new/second Temple are a pressing concern, thus pointing toward a date in the late 6th—early 5th centuries BCE for these materials. The recognition of definable and distinct historical settings within the book of Isaiah itself was the fundamental contribution of B. Duhm's (14–15, 18–19, 418ff.) seminal *Das Buch Jesaia* (first published in 1892). By formally recognizing three discrete blocks of material (chapters 1–39, 40–55, and 56–66), Duhm was able to initiate a century's worth of critical debate on the nature of the Isaian prophetic tradition. While the separation of chapters 1–39 (dealing, for the most part, with the late 8th century BCE experiences of the prophet Isaiah of Jerusalem) from chapters 40–66 (perhaps exilic, but at least post-exilic) has been widely accepted (see the summary in Childs: 289–91), the idea of an internal division within chapters 40–66 has been the source of great contention (see Torrey, and the summaries in Hanson 1979: 32ff. and Blenkinsopp 2003: 27–28; not to mention the issue of the redactional insertion of later materials back into the supposedly earlier sections; see, e.g., Pope: 236–37; Sweeney 1988; Reddit: 330–33). Several have recently argued, for example, that chapters 56–66 do *not* in fact represent a socio-historical setting distinct from chapters 40–55, but rather are an example of Second-Isaiah reusing and reinterpreting his older materials for a new situation after the return from exile (Holladay: 216–17; Steck 1991, 1997; Elliger).

Nevertheless, some distinctive aspects of chapters 56–66 suggest viewing Trito-Isaiah as a unit separate from chapters 40–55 (see Blenkinsopp 2003: 30–34, Hanson 1979: 36–37):

- The physical setting of the speaker in chapters 56–66 is in Israel, and these chapters assume a situation in which the Temple is in the process of being rebuilt or is already rebuilt (56:5,7; 57:13; 60:13; 63:18; 65:11?; 65:25?; 66:1–4; 66:20–21). In Isaiah 40–55, the speaker seems to be located in Babylon (43:14; 44:28; 45:1; 46:1; 47:1,5; 48:14, 20).
- Whereas chapters 40–55 exhibit a pervasive focus on restoration and forgiveness, chapters 56–66 revert to a strong condemnation of sin and a harsh indict-

ment of both the disobedient within the community and the community's leaders (e.g. 56:9–12; 63:16,18; 66:3–5,24).

- The religious polemics in chapters 56–66 (e.g. 57:7–12; 65:1–7,11; 66:17–18) are far more bitter in tone than the satirical jabs at idol-making in chapters 40–55 (44:9–20), perhaps suggesting an author who has adopted Second-Isaiah's use of the idol polemic but transformed its character into something more radical and abusive.

- The two blocks of material exhibit some linguistic discontinuities, and certain imagery used in chapters 40–55 is significantly readapted with clearly different meanings in chapters 56–66. For example, Blenkinsopp (2003: 32) points to 65:17–18 and the changed sense of *hrsnt* ("the former things"), used prominently in chapters 40–55 to refer to the nation's past, which in chapters 56–66 refers to the cosmic existence of the *current* earth and heavens only as opposed to the *new* heaven and earth. Other terms, such as *sdq* ("righteousness"), are used in chapters 56–66 in ways that seem not to be fully congruent with their use in chapters 40–55 (Oswalt; but cf. Brettler).

- Note also the changed sense of the theologically loaded figure of the "servant"; in Isaiah 40–55, the term appears twenty times—nineteen of which are in the singular (41:8–9; 42:1,19; 43:10; 44:1,2,21[2x],26; 45:4; 48:20; 49:3,5,6,7; 50:10; 52:13; 53:11), and only once in the plural (54:17). However, in Isaiah 56–66, the servant appears ten times—always in the plural, as "my servants" or "his servants" (63:11, in the singular, refers to Moses). This shift is significant and intentional, and seems to reflect a changed sense of the referent of the servant image—from the nation of Israel or an individual in Isaiah 40–55 to a *group* of individuals in chapters 56–66.

At any rate, such distinctions do not, of course, override the importance of the literary and thematic *continuity* between chapters 40–55 and 56–66; yet they do suggest that we understand these two sets of chapters as arriving in different historical and/or social settings, the latter applying to the situation after the return from Babylon and subsequent to the material in Second-Isaiah (see below). We probably cannot, however, maintain authorial unity for all of chapters 56–66; whether one accepts the extreme fragmentation sus-

pected by P. Volz (207ff.; see also Lau) or opts for a view like that of C. Westermann (303–04) in his commentary, where, for example, it is argued only certain oracles (e.g. 56:9–12, 57:3–6, and 57:7–13) do not fit in with the rest of the material, it seems that most scholars agree that we must accept some diversity of authorship and historical setting within Trito-Isaiah.

The exact boundaries of this "historical setting," however are not easily ascertained. To many interpreters, the references to the Temple (noted above) indicate a situation where issues regarding the building and control of the new Temple are a pressing concern, and are thus to be dated to c. 530–500 BCE (e.g., Westermann [296] is willing to specifically date Trito-Isaiah's prophetic career to 537–21 BCE). The great social and historical upheavals lurking between the lines of Trito-Isaiah's message would seem to fit appropriately into the late 6th – early 5th centuries BCE, when, under the first three Persian kings (Cyrus, Cambyses, and Darius I), the shape of the ancient Near East and the Israelite community in Yehud dramatically changed (Briant: 31–164; Kuhrt: 647–701; Sancisi-Weerdenburg: 1035–50; Miller & Hayes: 500ff.). Under Darius I (522–486 BCE), particularly, the structure of Achaemenid politics and administrative districts took on an increasingly elaborate and formal structure. Judah was incorporated into the satrapy "Beyond the River," an area encompassing a relatively large tract of land west of the Euphrates whose exact boundaries are the matter of considerable debate (Elayi & Sapin: 17ff.; Klinkott; Briant: 487–88). The texts of Trito-Isaiah may stand as a scarce and thus especially important witness to this late 6th and early 5th centuries BCE context, when the rebuilding and partial repopulation of the destroyed Judahite state would have been in an early, unorganized, and perhaps highly factious condition.

The Theoretical Setting

If modern interpreters, perhaps caught up in what C. Geertz (88) has called "arbitrary eclecticism, superficial theory-mongering, and sheer intellectual confusion," have had a difficult time understanding the social matrix within which apocalyptic expressions first came to fruition, then it should come as no surprise that even arriving at a suitable definition of the terms "apocalyptic" and "proto-apocalyptic"— whether as social or literary phenomena, which should be

distinguished—has been a source of great vexation (Grabbe 2003; Bedenbender: 32–61; Collins 1979, 1998: 2–23, 2003; Hanson 1976: 29–31; Webb 1990). L. Grabbe (2003: 127), in particular, has been highly critical of the use the term "apocalyptic" at all, and has recently attempted to demonstrate the need for new definitions. Most interpreters, however, do agree on the validity of using the term "apocalyptic," and it is now generally acknowledged that no individual *sine qua non* can function as the arbiter of inclusion within the genre; rather, a text may qualify on a continuum as "apocalyptic" depending on how closely it adheres to several of the main themes and motifs that frequently appear in the genre (Cook 1995: 23–35). These themes would include, but are not limited to, such elements as references to persecution, primordial events, eschatological upheavals, the mediation of messages by divine beings/angels, final judgment/destruction of the wicked, cosmic transformation, resurrection, or other forms of afterlife (Collins 1998: 7).

If we are to use the term "proto-apocalyptic," however, then our duty must be to show how particular texts can function under such a label, and this will be at least part of our task in the discussion of certain passages in Trito-Isaiah below. For now, I will be content to use "proto-apocalyptic" to describe texts produced during the early Achaemenid period where some of the prominent themes of later, full-blown apocalyptic can be found in muted or inchoate forms (see also Cook 1995: 34–35; Sweeney 2003). Limiting the discussion of "apocalyptic" to Daniel alone in the Hebrew Bible (as Collins [2003: 53] suggests) ignores the clearly apocalyptic-like material in Ezekiel, Isaiah, Zechariah and other books, material that must be accounted for as neither in complete continuity with, or distinction from, the pre-exilic prophetic texts.

In addition to the current debate regarding definition, sociological and anthropological theory has played a significant role in the question of early apocalypticism and its relationship to post-exilic factions. This is at least partly because of the rise of "interdisciplinary work" in biblical studies; but the usefulness of methodological considerations also arises out of the extreme ambiguity of many key texts, and therefore helps to provide fresh avenues for understanding obscure problems. We must bear in mind that theoretical models are only tools to aid understanding, not one-to-one correlations of reality; thus, as L. Stager (625) has asserted, a model can really only be

a heuristic device for organizing data into an intelligible whole. It must be in constant interaction with empirical data, reinterpreted according to new information, and discarded when anomalies can no longer be incorporated. It is suggestive and, at its best, predictive, but never sacrosanct.

Since sociological theories of sectarianism and apocalypticism have played such a prominent role in the present debate over the nature of the early post-exilic Yehudian social matrix, it is useful to retrace some key reconstructions and theoretical arguments of the past century.

The modern discussion of the origins of Jewish apocalypticism in a sectarian battle began with a bold, provocative, and problematic thesis: in his *Theokratie und Eschatologie* (1959), Otto Plöger sought to understand the roots of two different 2nd century BCE groups, the Hasidim and Maccabeans, as having their origins in an earlier conflict of the 6th century BCE. To his credit, Plöger was one of the first to effectively dismiss the idea that the rise of apocalyptic expressions can be attributed primarily to foreign influence (such as Iranian dualistic cosmologies), and to seek "certain presuppositions within the Jewish community that may explain the ready acceptance and appropriation of foreign ideas" (1968: 26; see also Hanson 1979: 5ff., and Cook 1995: 7). Plöger begins moving toward his "two party" theory by comparing priests and prophets as an analogy for the intrareligious conflicts from which apocalyptic expressions would blossom; for Plöger, priesthood exists in a "fairly unified world," while prophecy assumes a "many-sided, differentiated world" (1968: 27). This alleged conflict, which Plöger admits is a "terrible simplification" (1968: 109), would blossom into full-blown sectarianism, pitting the "visionaries" of the prophetic/apocalyptic movement ("eschatology") against the views of the Chronicler, Ezra, Nehemiah, and the Priestly source ("theocracy").

For Plöger, this process of internal schism began in the time of Ezra–Nehemiah, when "specific occasions" brought out "hidden contrasts" between the two groups, i.e. those of "Pharasaic outlook" and those "still convinced of the validity of the prophetic word" (1968: 45–46). Elsewhere, Plöger clearly reveals his underlying theological assumptions:

But hope, waiting on God, is an integral part of faith, and when faith is limited to the purely cultic sphere, without a vital relationship to historical events, it cannot find full expression.

Israel was only able to express its deepest religious experiences when it found itself *in statu promissionis* [1968: 44].

If indeed the (putatively) 5th century Priestly source (P) represents an essentially *ahistorical* approach to Israel's self-understanding, as Plöger maintains, and if "hope," expressed through "waiting on God," is indeed the most "integral part of faith," then there is no other conclusion for Plöger than to imply that P fails to allow Israel's religion to reach "full expression," a task achieved by the visionaries.

Some of these very same ideas, expressed in different ways, appear in Paul Hanson's *The Dawn of Apocalyptic* (rev. ed. 1979) (see also Hanson 1976a, 1976b, 1987, the review by Carroll 1979, and Hanson's response, 1980). Initially, Hanson rejects Plöger's central thesis outright—though at times his arguments appear very similar to Plöger's—and asserts that "no party within Judaism was bereft of the vision we associate with apocalyptic, nor did any sect or party fail to feel the tug of responsibility to the mundane realm" (1979: 20). Like Plöger, Hanson eschews pitting the "apocalyptic" and "prophetic" against one another, and uses the terms "apocalyptic eschatology" and "prophetic eschatology" to emphasize both the continuity and the difference evident between the two types of eschatological expression (1979: 10–11). Hanson sees Isaiah 56–66 as an "ideal body of literature" through which to test his theories of apocalyptic eschatology, and proceeds to analyze Trito-Isaiah as evidence of a "rival program of restoration" written "in conscious opposition" to Ezekiel chapters 40–48, where we see the "hierocratic," Zadokite vision of the post-exilic cult (1979: 21, 71).

Specifically, Hanson attempts to show how Trito-Isaiah represents the views of the non-exiled Levites who voice their bitter complaints against the returning, exiled Zadokite contingent. Thus, for Hanson (1979: 96–97), the enigmatic reference in Isaiah 63:18, to give but one example, bespeaks the Levitical position: "For a brief time your holy people have held possession, but our adversaries have desecrated your sanctuary." This "brief time," then, refers to the exilic period, and perhaps some time afterward (?), when the Levites would have controlled the sanctuary site and carried out cultic functions (cf. Halpern: 641–43). Hanson offers several pieces of evidence that point toward the Levitical background of Trito-Isaiah's message, including a hymnic passage in 63:11–13 celebrating the "days of old" when the people, under Moses's leadership, walked under the guid-

ance of YHWH's "holy spirit." If one accepts Hanson's assertion that the Mushites were removed from their position in the Solomonic Temple and were subsequently "amalgamated with the ranks of Levites" (see 1 Kgs 2:26–35), then we would have an explanation for the appeals in chapter 63 to a Mosaic "golden age" (1979: 94–96). Consequently, Hanson suggests that "disenfranchised Levites allied themselves with the visionary followers of Second-Isaiah in a coalition dedicated to a restoration of the Jerusalem cult along non-Zadokite lines" (1979: 225).

As should be clear, common to both Plöger's and Hanson's reconstructions is an explicit assumption about the social position of the "visionary," proto-apocalyptic group: they are *marginalized* by a more powerful group, *oppressed* by "legalists," who, from a position of power, shut the visionaries out of prominent positions in the revived Temple cult. This viewpoint is but one example of an overarching social theory of apocalyptic origins, often referred to as "deprivation theory," which basically posits that apocalyptic movements are the direct result of situations of political, religious, cultural, and economic deprivation and marginalization (Cook 1995; see Blenkinsopp 1983; Morton Smith; R. Wilson: 292, 285–86, 290, 308; Wolff: 10–12, 82–85, etc.; Barber: 667; Firth: 113; Lewis: 307–29; Linton: 230–40). Apocalyptic social movements and texts, then, are the product of relatively lower social classes. Against this understanding of apocalypticism's earliest tradents, Stephen Cook offers an alternative picture of what counts as genuinely "proto-apocalyptic." By re-examining the materials in Zechariah 1–9, Ezekiel 38–39 and the book of Joel, Cook claims to be able to demonstrate the use of apocalyptic expressions by *elite and powerful elements* of the post-exilic Zadokite priesthood, thus problematizing the earlier reconstructions formed along the lines of sectarian conflict and the supposedly peripheral social position of early apocalyptic adherents. For example, Cook claims that Zechariah 1–8 shows that "Zechariah emphasized Zadokite prominence and participation in the highest levels of authority." Evidence of this comes through the prominence of the golden lampstand vision in Zechariah 4, and from Zechariah's focus on Jeshua/Joshua, a descendant of the pre-exilic Zadokite community (Cook 1995: 143ff., 199ff., 107; see also Sweeney 2005: 245).

For Cook, it is "too simple to characterize the postexilic period as a time rife with factional conflict"; in fact, he claims that the majority of the proto-apocalyptic expressions "did

not alienate other groups but rallied various factions around rebuilding the Temple" (1995: 218). In place of a reliance on deprivation theory, Cook attempts to draw on various sociological/anthropological studies describing millennial groups *in power*, and historical examples of such groups, as a method of showing the non-universality of the deprivation theme in apocalyptic movements and to discredit deprivation as a causal theory of apocalypticism (1995: 35–40). These examples then serve as a background to an exegesis of the biblical materials mentioned above (Ezek 38–39, Joel, and Zech 1–8) which attempt to demonstrate the adoption of apocalyptic writings by centrally located priests.

Cook's critique, however, while duly sophisticated, often fails to consider the nuances and methodological flexibility of the earlier sociological studies. For example, a close reading of some of these theorists (and also of Hanson's study) reveals more complexity than Cook would have us believe existed in previous formulations of deprivation theory. The mid-20th century sociologist B. Barber did indeed connect millennialism to "deprivation," but came to the following modest conclusion regarding the forms such movements might take:

> Thus we have tested the hypotheses that the primitive messianic movement is correlated with the occurrence of widespread deprivation and [concluded] *that it is only one of several alternative responses*. There is a need for further studies, especially in regard to the *specific sociocultural conditions which produce each of the possible responses* [668, emphasis added; see also Rayner: 250–52 on this point].

Moreover, since most of the criticized studies never really attempted to "predict" the future appearance of apocalyptic expressions based on a domineering deprivation-based formula, and since, in the end, Cook himself does not offer any overarching model for understanding how or why millennialism does actually appear in any historical situation (except see briefly Cook 1995: 49–54, 219–20), it is unclear why he would ultimately fault the deprivation model (especially when applied to ancient texts) for being unable to predict apocalypticism.

Despite these problems, Cook raises an important point that cannot be denied by theoretical considerations: the proto-apocalyptic expressions were probably composed by a variety of individuals, representing different social classes and religious positions. Still, this leaves us with several un-answered questions. Did marginalization and sectarianism combine to serve as *one source*, among others, of apocalyptic expression? In which texts can we detect a sectarian phenomenon? Cook does not answer these questions directly, but his lengthy arguments against the deprivation hypothesis lead one to believe that he has basically ruled out marginalization and a concomitant sectarianism as a cause for any apocalyptic writings. Some of Cook's critiques against older studies are indeed well-founded and engaging; yet, since he only deals with texts that he sees as being composed by a powerful, Zadokite priestly group, questions remain as to what we are to make of Isaiah 56–66. All of this brings us back to the central tenets of Plöger's and (particularly) Hanson's studies: Can we find a "hierocrat"/"visionary" dichotomy in Trito-Isaiah? What *would* be necessary for us to posit a "sectarian" phenomenon in these chapters?

One strategy involves reading the biblical texts through the lens of a sociological model. Pivotal to Hanson's understanding of sectarianism, for example, are the writings of Max Weber (Weber 1993: 106–09, 140, 175; 1978: vol. 1, pp. 456–57 and vol. 2, pp. 1204–10; Talmon: 165–201; Hanson 1979: 213–15; Stark & Bainbridge; Wilson 1959, 1990; Regev: 33–45). In his use of Weber's work (along with that of K. Mannheim and, to a greater extent, E. Troeltsch), Hanson was one of the first to explicitly ground exegetical considerations regarding the proto-apocalyptic materials in a formally expressed sociological framework, an achievement for which he deserves ample credit. However, Weber's work, built on contrasts and "ideal types," often posits sweeping and bold dichotomies between social groups and modes of existence, and, without a nuanced understanding of Weber's broader sociological technique, could lead to errors of reductionism and oversimplification in the study of a particularized historical situation (Talmon: 165–69; Weber 1978: xxxvi–xxxix). To cite but one example: Weber's study of sectarianism (particularly in *Economy and Society*) is steeped in the study of 17th–19th century Christian church splits, which is perhaps instructive for some purposes, but, with its strongly drawn divisions between two (and only two) rival groups, imposes an unnecessarily heavy-handed interpretive framework upon other, disparate materials (Weber 1978: 1206–08).

For these reasons, many have now questioned the use of Weber's constructs for understanding specific historical instances in the biblical narrative (Cook 1995: 8–17). To

find another framework for understanding the materials in Trito-Isaiah, then, it may prove useful to explore a different approach for understanding sects and their symbolic productions. Though it is not significantly invoked in any discussion of emergent sectarianism in Achaemenid period Yehud (see, however, the excellent studies of Baumgarten 1997, 1998), one of the more stimulating treatments of the psychology and sociology of sectarian phenomena can be found in Mary Douglas's *Natural Symbols* (1996; see also Douglas's discussion of "enclave culture" in Douglas 2001).

Douglas, one of the 20th century's pre-eminent anthropologists, sought to explain how certain modes of social organization, such as hierarchy, sect, and individualism, could produce regular, predictable symbolic responses. Although she does not present a radically new view of sectarian behavior, the level on which she posits the connection between a group's organization and its symbolic productions is provocative. For Douglas, the very "process of organizing," necessary for the long-term survival of all groups, will itself produce observable ideas, classifications, and values (1996: xxiv–xxv). Different types of social experience also inevitably result in different views on the nature of "evil," and therefore the issue of theodicy becomes a point of distinction between various organizational structures. Furthermore, Douglas does not solely rely on notions of "deprivation" or "marginalization" in constructing her theory of sects and social organization, thus releasing us from the pressure to come up with reconstructions involving the severe alienation of any particular group.

In Douglas's terminology, sectarian organizations are characterized by a "strong group boundary and weak internal distinctions" (i.e., low-grid/high-group; 1996: xix; 54–68; see also Douglas 1982: 1–8). In other words, sects tend to downplay differences between members on the "inside," while maintaining strong (even if exaggerated) boundaries against those on the "outside." Admittedly, it could easily be argued that all groups, of any organizational structure and in texts from as early as the 3rd millennium BCE, employ a similar type of social strategy (Machinist: 189–90). To a greater degree than other types of organization, however, sects exhibit a "tendency to cherish irreconcilable enemies and to see moral issues in rigid black and white" (1996: xxi). According to Douglas (1996: xx), "neither smallness nor intimacy is enough to explain the peculiarities of enclave culture" (see also Weber 1978: 1204; cf. Carter

1999: 42–44, 256ff.). Rather, its distinctive form can be ascribed to its "egalitarian organization," which is the "result of its weakness in holding its membership and resisting the seductions of the larger society" (Douglas 1996: xx). Ultimately, for Douglas, this "weakness" is explained by the sect's "principled opposition to the larger society in which it keeps itself as an enclave. The more that such a community has dissident views…the less can it count on outside help" (ibid.). Since the members of the sect stand outside advantageous economic structures and do not have primary access to positions of power, the sect must constantly guard against defection; in fact, Douglas views the loss of members as "the big organizational problem and…distinctive anxiety" of the sect. "If they all defect, the group is doomed. There can be no show of power, and authority has to be exerted with great care: hence the insistence on equality" (Douglas 1996: xxi; see also Berger: 164–65; Weber 1978: 1207–08). Thus, as a strategy to prevent defection, a sect will often "adopt a rule of rigorous equality" (Douglas 1996: xxi), which is not a universalistic equality offered to everyone in the entire world, but rather is only for those *inside* the organization.

Interestingly, in Douglas's scheme, this same type of organizational structure is also evident in "witchcraft cosmologies," where we find a set of characteristics that coincide with those in sectarian organizational structures in surprising yet enlightening ways (1996: 111–14; Wilson 1967: 336). For example, both groups

- seek to emphasize "the idea of the bad outside and the good inside,"
- portray "the inside under attack and in need of protection,"
- envision "human wickedness on a cosmic scale," and
- use "these ideas…in political manipulation" (Douglas 1996: 113).

Although it could be argued that these very traits can be detected, at some level, in a wide variety of sources, their appearance in prominent or exaggerated forms can serve as a helpful baseline from which to judge the possibility that a given expression is consistent with sectarian social organization. Therefore, in what follows I will attempt to use Douglas's four characteristics as a guide in evaluating some difficult texts in Trito-Isaiah. Since the examination of isolated passages can hardly get us over the impasse regarding the issue of whether certain materials are born out of a rising, post-exilic sectarianism, a survey of these chapters in light of the four charac-

teristics mentioned above may provide a productive vista for understanding Trito-Isaiah's specific viewpoint.

A Sectarian Reading of Isaiah 56–66

Before a perusal of some texts that may be suggestive of sectarian identity, I would like to point out that Isaiah chapter 56 begins with a strong emphasis on a certain kind of "egalitarianism," which, we will recall, is a primary component of Douglas' understanding of sectarian movements. In 56:3–8, for example, the foreigner and the eunuch are guaranteed full inclusion within the community (note that it is not specified in chapter 56 whether this is a reconstituted Israelite community broadly or a more restricted group within this body); in fact, their "monument" (literally, "hand"; see also 1 Sam. 15:12) and "name" will even be "greater than sons or daughters" (v 5). It is not made exactly clear how these eunuchs will receive "an everlasting name" within the Temple, nor does the author specify how the foreigners will "minister" (*šrt*) to YHWH (v. 6). This exact terminology (*lšrtw*), appears only five other times in the HB: Deuteronomy 10:8 and 21:5, in reference to the Levites and their service; in 1 Chronicles 23:13, 29:11, for those who burn incense before YHWH; and in Ezekiel 40:46 as an explicit reference to the Zadokites (see also Ezek. 44:9ff.; cf. Deut. 23:2–4).

This insistence on the inclusion of apparently marginal groups within the service or recognition of the Temple appears as a striking opening note to these chapters. In fact, some have been willing to go so far as to assert that these foreigners will also serve as priests and thus be eligible to offer the very sacrifices at the altar mentioned in 56:7 (Blenkinsopp 2003: 140). If this is the case, then what we have here is a radical call for *inclusion* within the cult, one that is in conspicuous opposition to the idea expressed in Ezekiel 40:46, for example, where the *Zadokites alone* will approach the altar: "The room that faces north is for the priests, the ones who keep charge of the altar; they are the sons of Zadok, the ones who draw near among the sons of Levi to YHWH to minister to him."

Although it is conceivable that the speaker here means the foreigners and eunuchs will be accepted into the reconstituted Israelite community *broadly*, it seems more likely that we are to imagine a more restricted group within this community represented by Trito-Isaiah. Recalling Douglas' emphasis on the problem of defection for sects, one is hard-pressed to imagine foreigners attempting to "defect" from the Trito-Isaian group and become Zadokites, but the striking proclamation of cultic inclusion in 56:3–8 may have been offered in contradistinction to the prevailing Zadokite vision of service to YHWH (as represented, e.g., in Ezekiel 40:46; see Rofé 1988: 42). If so, we can interpret this passage as the expression of an *intra-group egalitarian ideal*, a viewpoint that serves to attract new adherents into the Trito-Isaian circle. Chapter 66 returns to a similar egalitarian kind of theme, and closes the book of Isaiah by yet again referencing "the nations," thus forming an *inclusio* around Trio-Isaiah as a whole. In 66:18–21, we have again the (potentially) startling claim that some of those brought in from "the nations" (66:20) will serve as "priests and Levites" (or, "as priests, as Levites," *lkhnym llwym*; 1QIsaᵃ and the MT lack a *waw* here, although the conjunction appears in the Greek, Vulgate, and Targum). Blenkinsopp (2003: 309) takes the priests and Levites in apposition, "as priests, as Levites," whereas Westermann (1969: 424) and Childs (2001: 531) simply supply the *waw*. We should probably not, however, translate here "Levitical priests," as does Koole (524), as if the text reads *hkhnym hlwym* (as in Deuteronomy 17:9, 18:1, Joshua 3:3, etc.). We can only speculate as to whether these bold pronouncements were formulated in conscious opposition to Zadokite ideals, although, if our reading here has any value, then an element of conscious opposition would be difficult to deny.

The egalitarianism often emphasized by sectarian groups is expressed in a competitive marketplace of ideas, where belonging and the definition of the "true" or "righteous" community are at stake on every level, and are indeed the social material out of which the sect is created and solidified. Having briefly discussed some suggestive materials in Isaiah 56–66 toward this end, we may now proceed to use Douglas's four characteristics of sectarian group organization and subsequent symbolic expression as a kind of heuristic tool to understand the goals and mentality behind the Trito-Isaian materials.

The Bad Outside and the Good Inside

We may rightly expect that a sect must insist on the fundamental nature of its community as "good" and "holy" vis-à-vis the "outside," which is "evil" and "corrupt" on every level. Even though this tendency is arguably the basis

for most social distinctions (i.e., even where sects are not involved), a heightened sense of the bad outside and good inside can indicate a flashpoint of conflict and serve as evidence of sectarian meaning-construction. The idol-polemics in chapters 56–66 exhibit a bitter tone that, ultimately, serves to distinguish between two (or more) groups inside the post-exilic community (as opposed to Second-Isaiah's emphasis on *foreign* idol-making practices). In 57:1–13, the author begins by lamenting the fate of the "righteous" and "pious men," presumably the author, his audience, or at least those to whom the author is highly sympathetic, who suffer at the hands of an unnamed evil (v 1).

Rather than contenting himself with lament, however, the author launches into a string of scathing epithets and accusations against some rival group; the enemies are characterized in vv 3–4 as "sons of a sorceress," "seed of an adulterer and a whore," "seed of a lie" (i. e., "bastards"), and so forth. Their deeds are said to be violent and abhorrent in several ways; they "slaughter children in the wadis" (v 5), conduct illicit sacrificial and worship practices (vv 7–8), and tell lies (v 11) (Mark Smith: 180–81; Zevit: 528–30). The exact content of these illicit practices is a matter of some confusion, but it seems quite clear that the transgressors are *within* the post-exilic community—and nowhere is it said that these individuals are worshipping "other gods" or deities other than YHWH. Consequently, in 57:13 we see the contrast between those who currently possess the land and the Temple and those who apparently do not, i.e., the "idolaters" and the speaker, respectively.

Later on in chapter 57, terminology and motifs central to Second-Isaiah are re-used in vv 14–21 to give what appears, at first, to be a hopeful picture of an *entire nation* on the path of restoration (Childs: 469–73). However, after YHWH declares in v 19 that "I will heal them," the text immediately provides a caveat, namely, that "the wicked" cannot find rest (i.e., the "rest" envisioned in vv 14–19), and indeed there turns out to be no safety (or "peace") for these individuals. As one expects, commentators are quick to read v 20 ("there is no peace, says my God, for the wicked") as a later addition (Blenkinsopp 2003: 172–73; Westermann: 330–31). Admittedly, the appearance of the nearly identical phrase in Isaiah 48:22 does seem somewhat out of place with its preceding material in chapter 48, which exhorts the people to leave Babylon. It is thus possible that the material is original to chapter 48 and then adopted in 57:21. Westermann (331),

at least, sees the addition as an important clue regarding the composition of Isaiah 56–66, and asserts that the "original" Trito-Isaiah "still promised salvation to the entire nation," while later tradents no longer saw this as a possibility and redacted the material in such a way as to dole out punishment to their opponents. At any rate, we should seriously consider the possibility that here, as earlier in the chapter, the author has intentionally drawn up a line between his own tradents and the transgressing "other"—the clarion call for national salvation and restoration offered by Second-Isaiah is now re-appropriated, with all of its beauty and comfort, as a promise for *only a select group* within the community. At the same time, no single individual or personified "servant" within this circumscribed community will suffer and receive compensation; as noted earlier, we now have *servants*, in the plural (56:6, 63:17; 65:8,9,13,14; 65:15; 66:14), to whom salvation is promised.

Moving back again toward the end of Trito-Isaiah, in chapter 65:1–15 we find a polemic of similar tone to the one in 57:1–13. Here, the opponents "burn incense on the tiles" (v 3), or possibly something more sexually explicit; see 1QIsaᵃ *wynqw ydym 'l h'bnym*, literally, "and they suck hands upon the stones," where both *ydym* and *'bnym* must be euphemisms for penises and testicles, respectively (see Isaiah 57:8 for an earlier use of *yd* with this connotation, and Exodus 1:16 for an example of "stones" possibly used in reference to testicles; Hanson 1979: 140–41, Blenkinsopp 2003: 270–71, Rubenstein 94–95). Moreover, these idolaters offer illegal sacrifices (v 3), eat unclean foods (v. 4), and participate in chthonic rituals (vv 5–6) (Zevit: 531–33). The author assures his audience that recompense will surely be paid; YHWH would destroy everything, but the presence of his chosen elect (65:9) will preserve the whole, at least for a little while. In 65:11–16, the righteous will no longer be able to save the wicked, all of whom will be slaughtered (v 12). The author even feels that the two groups had so little in common that in v 15 he claims the "servants" must receive a "different name" altogether; this call for differentiation through a "new name" is also found in several other Trito-Isaian passages, most notably in 62:2–4.

In sum, 57:1–21 and 65:1–15 clearly reveal the voice of a group that sees itself as a pure remnant vis-à-vis another contingent. The fact that, in the end, the speaker sees that possession of the land and the Temple (57:13, 65:9) is at stake, further indicates that we are not dealing with an "en-

emy" that is peripheral, but rather that this enemy is, in the mind of Trito-Isaiah, a group of apostates who hold political and religious power. That the Zadokites (or another specific group) are not named specifically should not surprise us, as later apocalyptic authors would come to speak of their enemies almost exclusively in some kind of coded form. One might compare, e.g., the way "Babylon" is used as a cipher for the ultimate enemy in Daniel, The Sibylline Oracles, Revelation, and several other texts (Collins 1998: 200–01, 234–38) and also IQM ("The War Scroll"), where the eschatological enemy is repeatedly called the "sons of darkness"; here, the act of *not naming*—as possibly in Isaiah 56–66—invests the authors' struggle with a sense of cosmic significance as opposed to mundane finger-pointing.

This opposition to the Zadokite hierarchy also involves a longing for the past; here we may note the hymnic passage in 63:11–13 celebrating the "days of old" when the people, under Moses's leadership, walked under the guidance of YHWH's "holy spirit." If one accepts the assertion that the Mushites were removed from their position in the Solomonic Temple and were subsequently "amalgamated with the ranks of Levites" (see 1 Kgs 2:26–35), then we would have an explanation for the appeals in chapter 63 to a Mosaic "golden age" (Hanson 1979: 94–96). Indeed, as B. Wilson noted in his *Religion in Sociological Perspective*, sects are often concerned with such meditations on the passing of time, and imagine the restoration of lost times "in attempting to revive what they regard as uncorrupted religious performances, or an earlier pattern of organization which they believe to have been divinely warranted" (quoted in Fenn: 302–03). This collective foreshortening of historical time, combined with a compression of geographical space, has even been adduced as a "logical condition" of millenarian groups, and in fact "knowledge of the future in low-grid sects is likely to be as certain and as immediate as knowledge of the past" (Rayner: 261).

The Inside under Attack and in Need of Protection

The fact that the author of the texts cited above perceives himself to be under attack and in need of protection may be obvious from the mere fact that he goes to such lengths to demonstrate the fundamental threat of the wicked "outside." Nevertheless, a brief discussion of two passages may suffice to show "the inside under attack." In 63:16, we read a surprising claim:

But you are our Father,
though Abraham does not remember (or: recognize) us,
and Israel does not acknowledge us.
You are YHWH our Father,
"Our Redeemer from of Old" is your name.

This is the likely, straightforward rendering of these phrases. Blenkinsopp (2003: 262), however, rejects the rendering in the indicative, adopted here, and prefers to read the *ky* as counterfactual (citing Gesenius 159a–b; "Were Abraham not to know us..."). Blenkinsopp seems perplexed as to why the author would claim Abraham and Israel have rejected him, when he seems to be speaking for the community as a whole in 64:8. As I will suggest below, however, it is quite possible that the author is *not* speaking for *everyone* in 64:8 (or in chapters 60–62). Even if Blenkinsopp's rendering were correct, what could the author mean by hypothetically suggesting that Israel or Abraham *could* reject him? Who/what are this "Abraham" and this "Israel"? What can the author mean by expressing this sense of rejection by Abraham and Israel? It is not clear whether these statements would be tantamount to a rejection of Israel and Abraham as legitimate titles; but, if such important historic labels were, according to the author, still valid but only *illegitimately appropriated* by the opposition group(s), then it stands to reason that the speaker in 63:16 would re-affirm the identity of a *true* Israel and a *true* Abraham, as embodied in his own contingent, over and against those who would abuse these titles. Conversely, the speaker immediately turns to a completely separate appellative, that of YHWH as "father." The national title "Israel" does appear in an apparently positive sense elsewhere in Trito-Isaiah (56:8, 60:9,14, 63:7, 66:20), though dramatically far less so than in chapters 40–55 (where it occurs multiple times in almost every chapter). The name "Abraham," on the other hand, is used only here in chapters 56–66, and appears rather sparsely in the Isaian corpus as a whole. See Isaiah 29:22, 41:8, and 51:2; conversely, note the prominent invocation of Abraham in Nehemiah 9:7, 1 Chronicles 1:27–34, 16:16, 29:18, 2 Chronicles 20:7, 30:6. How Isaiah 63:16 might be related to a passage like Ezekiel 33:24 (where appeal is made by the inhabitants of the land to the precedent of Abraham) is unclear. It seems that this radical disruption of previously accepted labels serves as evidence of the discontinuity and frustration experienced by the community represented here.

Along with the other passages calling for a "new name," this text gives us a glimpse, albeit in obscure forms, into the complex and divisive intra-community religious politics of Achaemenid period Yehud and at the same time reveals the emergence of a crucial element at the core of apocalyptic literary expressions, namely, the desire for complete *reversal* and cosmic reinvention (Hanson 1979: 92–93).

A less disputable instance of the community under attack occurs in 66:5–6. Here, we learn of a group of "kinsmen" (cf. 66:20) who openly mock the addressees of the oracle, "the ones who tremble at his word" (v 5) (see Blenkinsopp 1981, 1990, 2003). We can reasonably assume their mockery amounts to more than simply a few sarcastic comments ("Let YHWH show his glory, so that we can look upon your joy!" v 5), for the author calls for "thunder from the Temple" to destroy the foes. Notably, this passage occurs just after the famously enigmatic 66:1–4, where the author presumably displays his displeasure with the current practice of the Temple cult, though it should be insisted that this cannot be evidence of a "visionary" (*qua* "anti-priestly") attitude; the author seeks *change and purification*, not the abolition of the cultus (Rofé 1985: 212; Hanson 1979: 109; Stein). In this respect, the Trito-Isaian group perceives itself as under attack, and seeks to rally its tradents around the threat.

Human Wickedness on a Cosmic Scale

The material in 66:22–24, long troubling to both Jewish and Christian interpretive traditions (Blenkinsopp 2003: 317), represents what might be characterized as a source for the emergence of a conception of human wickedness on a "cosmic scale." In later apocalyptic sources, this wickedness would call for eternal punishment (e.g., Daniel 12:2), while the righteous secure eternal reward (Daniel 12:2,13; Isaiah 26:1–19). After the universalistic call for "all the nations" in 66:18b–21, we are presented with a stark duality: the world will be remade (v 22), and "all flesh" will gather to worship YHWH (v 23). The ominous ending in 66:24 then reads:

> They will go out and look upon the corpses
> of the ones who rebelled against me
> for their worm will not die,
> and their fire will not go out,
> and they will be a horror to all flesh.

A few comments must be made here regarding the passage's implications for our sectarian reading. An apparent contradiction immediately arises as we move from v 22 to 23; if indeed "all flesh," taken literally as "everyone in the entire world," will come to worship YHWH every Sabbath and new moon, then who exactly are the rebels whose corpses will burn as a gruesome witness to YHWH's vengeance? It seems that we are to read the destruction and burning of the corpses as necessary to the creation of the "new heaven and new earth" in v 22, at which point the rebellious are removed from the scene and serve only as an example to the righteous. That this "horror" will be allowed to exist in the new creation—even to be an integral part of it?—is unlike anything that we find in Isaiah 40–55 or elsewhere in the pre-exilic prophetic corpus.

Although, in comparison to the more developed apocalyptic materials, the presentation of punishment and hint of an "eternal" notion of evil appears inchoately and with tantalizing brevity, we may still discern a strong note of dualism: the elect, purified in the new creation, will worship forever while the bodies of the wicked suffer in everlasting physical decomposition. We are given no suggestion that these rebels comprise individuals from *outside* Israel—in fact, every indication in chapters 65–66 would seem point toward the identification of these rebels with the group(s) *within* the "Israel" polemicized by Trito-Isaiah. That the enemy's misdeeds are elevated even to something approaching a cosmic level in 66:24 is not surprising in light of the later apocalyptic developments and of a sectarian tendency toward utter vilification of the "bad outside." A text like Isaiah 66:22–24, although clearly not fully apocalyptic in nature, would allow later prophetic movements (as embodied in the apocalyptic writings) to claim precedent for their ideas.

These Ideas Used in Political Manipulation

In the end, we cannot be exactly sure how or when these oracles or writings were actually used; this simple but bedeviling fact is at the center of the difficulties one must face when correlating Isaiah 56–66 to a specific socio-historical situation. The attack on the leaders in 56:9–12 ("his watchman/men," v 10; "shepherds," v 11), for example, certainly seems to be an attempt to engender some kind of political response from its audience, and the same could be said of the polemics in chapters 56–57 and 65. As several commentators

have noticed, the contents of chapters 56–59 and 63–66 form a frame around chapters 60–62, with chapters 60–62 being the "nucleus" of the Trito-Isaian message (Westermann: 296; Childs: 448–49). But what is this message?

The bulk of chapter 60 contains a promise of blessing and recognition by the nations (vv 1–20), and in v 21 we learn that "your people, all of them righteous, will possess the land forever." A series of utopian ideals appears in 60:19–22, and 61:1–62:12 follow with more Second-Isaian rhetoric of the servant (61:1–11), Zion (62:1ff.), and the Exodus (62:8–10). Because of these expressions, interpreters have been quick to point out the essential continuity between chapters 40–55 and 56–66, centered around this core proclamation of hope and blessing for all.

The placement of these universalistic-sounding materials in the middle of the Trito-Isaiah corpus, surrounded as they are with the sectarian-sounding passages in chapters 56–58 and 65–66, however, could serve as a significant interpretive clue regarding the unity and meaning of chapters 56–66 as a redacted whole: chapters 60–62 may not, in the end, be intended for "everyone" as such, but may rather be addressed to—or better, re-appropriated for—the *limited group* (i.e., the speaker of the polemics in chapters 56–58 and 65–66), who now consider *themselves* to be the *totality* of the "true" restored nation and the true inheritors of Second-Isaiah's prophetic heritage. As L. Ruszkowski (26) points out, chapters 60–62 contain no apparent call for conversion; this may be explained by the fact that the message here is for the "inside," which understands itself as the recipient of the hopeful message.

Thus, chapters 60–62 marshal some of Second-Isaiah's key politico-religious imagery toward a new goal, namely, the solidification and encouragement of a *new, more exclusive community* within the broader confines of what Second-Isaiah had previously considered "Israel" (cf. Hanson 1979: 62–63). If this interpretation has any merit, then we must conclude that the four sectarian characteristics that I have used to understand chapters 56–66 are not isolated to a few specific "interpolations" into the corpus; rather, *they are woven into the structure of Trito-Isaiah at the broadest level, and serve to organize and interpret the sum literary context in which they appear.* This fact suggests something of both the essential and final *unity* of chapters 56–66 within the full Isaian corpus and re-emphasizes Trito-Isaiah's fundamental *discontinuity* with Second-Isaiah (where these sec-

tarian characteristics do not appear). Briefly put, then, in order to posit the "sectarian" nature of Trito-Isaiah, I would tentatively conclude that what we have here is a sectarian redaction of chapters 56–66, which, in the spirit of the Isaian corpus as a whole, uses and transforms earlier Isaianic materials. In the form these eleven chapters currently take, the sectarian redaction transforms texts that would appear to be gracious and "universalistic" in Second-Isaiah into something socially exclusive and bitter.

Conclusions

If the majority of 20th century scholars have been, in the oft-quoted title of K. Koch's (1970) review, "*Ratlos vor der Apokalyptic,*" it is because they succumbed to the tendency (so prevalent in the older literature) to characterize apocalyptic writings as evidence of an irrational, *fin-de-siècle* religious madness. As a corrective measure, an understanding of sectarian behavior and literary expression in light of M. Douglas's broad model allows us to see the development of what some have categorized as "proto-apocalyptic" materials and, at least in this case, their exclusivistic, sectarian tradents as comprising a "normal," rational human response to a particular set of social and religious crises in the 6th–5th centuries BCE. By way of summary, then, I will end by offering some conclusions and thoughts arising from this study.

First, there is no reason why we cannot believe that there may actually have been more than two broad groups competing for political and religious hegemony in the early post-exilic period, and that the materials in Isaiah 56–66 represent the views of only one of these groups as they are formulated against the others. There is nothing in Isaiah 56–66 that suggests Trito-Isaiah's opponents were specifically "legalists," and there is no overwhelming reason why we may not suppose the Trito-Isaian prophetic circle itself was obsessed with a variety of rules and cultic matters (Plöger 1968: 48; Cook 1995: 32). Even if Isaiah 56–66 emphasizes certain religious divisions and discontinuities, calling this group "visionaries," a decidedly positive designation, does not give adequate credit to the priests who undertook the complex task of re-invigorating (or even-reformulating) the Second Temple cult. We must conclude that both the Temple leadership and their opponents (as represented in Isaiah) were "visionaries," as it was simply impossible for anyone to preserve the old ways along all of the old lines after 586 BCE.

Moreover, there is nothing in Isaiah 56–66 that demands an interpretation positing a necessary and direct correlation between sectarianism and apocalyptic expressions; here, one may retreat into Weber's notoriously difficult notion of *Wahlverwandschaften*, "elective affinities," a term usually used to posit the gravitational pull between "two sets of social facts or mentalities," even in situations where scientific criteria of causality cannot be found (Swedberg: 83ff.). At best, we can say that insofar as we have shown the validity of both sectarianism and (to a lesser extent) proto-apocalypticism in these chapters, the two phenomena seem inextricably bound up in Trito-Isaiah. To claim sectarianism is a *necessary cause* of apocalypticism, one would have to conduct a very different type of study, and it is difficult at any rate to imagine how one might come to such a conclusion.

In the second place, my use of Douglas's model for understanding Isaiah 56–66 has some notable advantages and limitations. On the one hand, the use of the four-point grid for organizing sectarian symbolic expression serves as one plausible avenue through which we might come to a decision regarding whether or not certain expressions fit our expectation of what sectarian groups typically produce. Although I have attempted to make the case that Isaiah 56–66 fits into this framework, we are left with the very difficult and, in this study, ultimately unanswered questions regarding the specific shape of the Trito-Isaian community and regarding exactly how the word "sect" might be defined for the early post-exilic period. The individuals who produced Isaiah 56–66, however, seem to have viewed themselves as a distinct, "pure" social unit vis-à-vis others, and it is this aspect of self-identity, as perceived by those on the "inside," that ultimately serves as the beginning of the definition of the sect; these concepts of "restricted association" and *ecclesia pura* were already suggested by Weber (1978: 456, 1204), and should continue to be important factors in these discussions today.

To whatever extent the community who wrote and treasured the Trito-Isaian corpus belonged to an identifiable sect, the material we have in Isaiah chapters 56–66 is not quite what one could call a sectarian "textual community," e.g., along the lines of the Qumran group, early Christians, Gnostics, or the various heretical movements of the Middle Ages (Assmann: 100; Stock: 88–240). Isaiah 56–66 is not a freestanding document. Rather, the composite, canonical shape of the book of Isaiah as we now have it fundamentally *obscures* the location of such a community; at the very most,

we can assert that tradents of a community whose formation and expression are consistent with specifically sectarian communities throughout history became caretakers of, and contributors to, the nearly two-hundred year old Isaiah tradition in the mid-6th century BCE and continued to redact that textual corpus in terms of both the historic Isaianic themes and their own sectarian emphases.

Third, the material in these chapters, rooted in early-post exilic experience, could plausibly represent a kind of *Ursprung* from which later apocalypticists drew inspiration. Some prominent themes of later apocalyptic (as evidenced even within the Hebrew Bible in Daniel), such as the desire for complete reversal, cosmic re-creation, eternal punishment or reward, and the use and transformation of mythic materials for new purposes can all be detected, even if in muted forms, in the Trito-Isaian (and even Second-Isaian) corpus. Thus, the label "proto-apocalyptic," though vague, is not completely unfounded or unusable.

Fourth, rather than faulting Hanson and Plöger for the relatively strong and reasonable conclusion that the rise of oppositionalist factions in the early post-exilic period served as one important source of developing apocalyptic expressions, we should take issue with the way they have attributed a diminishing concern for history to the proto-apocalyptic materials (Hanson 1979: 210–11). Although the search for identity in most post-exilic texts is not rooted in a search for literal kingship, this does not constitute a complete rejection of the historical process, nor do we have a wooden literalizing of mythic motifs in the service of a purely vindictive theology of retribution (cf. Hanson 1979: 62). In its earliest stages, the seeds of apocalypticism in a text like Isaiah 56–66 encapsulate an explicitly historical concern with some elements of correct cultic practice (e.g., Sabbath observance in 56:2–6, 58:13, etc.) and social justice (59:1–8).

The post-exilic prophet is still mediating between the people and YHWH; he continues to relate this message in a historical circumstance, and he still hopes for responses from human actors during his lifetime. If Jewish apocalypticism later developed into a complete rejection of mundane history, where the faithful must be content to merely "wait it out" while enemy forces sin and plunder toward their own doom, then it must be maintained that this is not an *inevitable* development from the proto-apocalyptic texts. Trito-Isaiah does not always seem to consider the present order to be irrevocably far from the ideal world that he envisions, although

some of his ideals would require a complete overhaul of *all* injustice (60:1–22, 65:17–25) and the final defeat of *all* enemies (66:24). Such emphases push us toward identifying the Trito-Isaian sect along the lines of B. Wilson's (1967: 24–29) category of the "revolutionist" or "transformative" sect, though characteristics of the "utopian" sect type (again, in Wilson's categorization) are also present in the desire for the return of a pristine past.

While it has been argued that Isaiah 56–66 can provide a good model for understanding some of the broader, looming issues mentioned at the beginning of this essay, Trito-Isaiah certainly does not provide the only model. In the end, we may not be able to locate a single, encompassing theory of apocalyptic or sectarian origins; indeed, the project of finding any origin for such phenomena in post-exilic Yehud may prove untenable, or, to some, even unnecessary. Especially in the last several decades, scholarship has increasingly turned away from attempts to discover "origins," and thus one is careful to avoid statements by which one might appear, in T. Eagleton's words, to be acting as a "meaning of the universe merchant." And yet the growing appreciation for the importance of the Persian period for understanding Israel's formative traditions and the earliest history of Judaism demands that we continually re-examine all possible avenues of historical inquiry into the relevant literary and sociological phenomena, even where this involves the question of origins. If apocalyptic expressions have made their way into the writings of very different groups, then this should not primarily be viewed as proof of the impossibility of discovering any one source for apocalypticism in a particular social setting. Rather, this diversity of usage stands as a testament to the dizzying historical and political crises brought on by the Babylonian destruction and subsequent Achaemenid rulership, and to the complex and varied responses of the Jewish community in Yehud.

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