The discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls, now generally assigned to a date prior to A.D. 70, and the identification of the Qumran sect with the ancient Essenes (which I think is correct), has given a fresh impetus to the study of pre-Christian Judaism, in the different forms it had come to assume in the century before and after the beginning of the Christian era. The main sources for such a study—next to the scrolls themselves—are the reports of pre-Christian Jewish "sects" in the works of the first-century historian of Palestine, Josephus, and of his contemporary, the Alexandrian philosopher, Philo Judaeus. Hebrew sources, Talmud, Mishnah, etc., come next, and Jewish scholars are making their own distinctive contribution to this subject.

There is a third type of evidence available—I would not say always as valuable—in the reports of Jewish "sects" or "heresies" in the early Fathers of the Church.

Among more recent discussions of this evidence is a Paper read at the Patristic Conference in Oxford in 1955, entitled Les sectes juives d'après les témoignages patristiques, by Professor M. Simon of Strasbourg. M. Simon confines himself for the most part to the second-century lists of Justin Martyr and Hegesippus; the later lists and accounts of Jewish "heresies", such as those in the Apostolic Constitutions, Ephrem Syrus, Isodore of Seville, Epiphanius and the Pseudo-Jerome, are set aside as largely dependent on the second-century catalogues, supplemented by information drawn from Josephus and the Gospels. Justin and Hegesippus themselves appear to get their

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1 A lecture delivered in the John Rylands Library on Wednesday, the 10th of December, 1958.
material about the older pre-Christian "sects", Pharisees, Sadducees and Essenes, either from Josephus or the Gospels (though it is surprising to find Justin omitting the Essenes altogether). When we subtract these older and well-known groups (including the Samaritans), and suspend judgement on the Galilaeans and Meristai (possibly a Gnostic group), what is left consists, for the most part, of very general descriptions of tendencies within the Judaism of Justin's own period, but not "heresies" in the strict ecclesiological sense of unorthodox bodies existing on the margin of the Synagogue and under its ban; they are only "heresies" for the Fathers, who interpret "la réalité juive à travers une optique chrétienne" (p. 538).

The passage in Justin's *Dialogue with Trypho* (Ixxx) opens with a question from Trypho whether all Christians really believed in the Parousia. Justin's reply is that all Christians do so believe, but that even among Christians there are godless and unbelieving heretics, ἀσπέρ οὐδὲ Ἰουδαίους, ἀν τις ὄρθως ἐξετάσῃ, ὡμολογήσειν εἶναι τοὺς Σαδδουκαίους ἡ τὰς ὀμοίας αἱρέσεις Γενιστῶν καὶ Μεριστῶν καὶ Γαλιλαίων καὶ Ἑλληνιστῶν καὶ Φαρισαίων [καὶ] Βαπτιστῶν (just as, if one were to look into the matter rightly, one would not acknowledge to be Jews those who are Saddoukaioi or similar sects of Genistai and Meristai and Galilaeans, and Hellenians and Pharisees (and) Baptists.)

It is clear that Justin believed himself to be describing Jewish heretics; if his argument was to carry any weight with Jews (and that seems to have been its intention), it is unlikely that he would destroy his case by including respectable Jewish groups in such a list, even though he himself may have looked at all such groups à travers une optique chrétienne. There is also his general trustworthiness in this connection to be considered; Lukyn Williams writes of him: "The more the Dialogue is studied, the deeper becomes the impression of the general accuracy of Justin's presentation of Judaism, as well as the width of his knowledge of it."¹ M. Simon, moreover, favours the view that Justin's Genistai is simply a Greek translation of the Hebrew word Minim, a general term for all "heretics". He does not,

however, mention the Birkath ha-Minim in Hadrian’s time. The Minim were banned by the Synagogue in the early second century, and though the ban was especially directed against Jewish Christians, it was intended for all Jewish “heretics”.

Such groups, however general the description applied to them, may well have all constituted dangerous “heresies” or sects on the margin of the Synagogue and under its ban. (If Simon is correct in his explanation of the Meristai as Jewish Gnostics who “divided” the person of the deity, then we have to do with an intolerable “heresy” in Judaism, involving the denial of its central tenet of monotheism.)

The Galilaeans are not discussed, but a reference is made to the views of Père Milik that they were Jewish Christians. The only evidence produced for this view is the statement in the recently discovered letter of Bar Cochba that the Jews were to break off all relations with the Galilaeans, with whom they had apparently been previously allied in the war with the Romans. It is improbable in the extreme that Bar Cochba would ever have contracted an alliance with Jewish Christians. We have no reason to doubt that they too were a Jewish schismatic group.

There does not seem to be much to add about the Galilaeans that is not already well-known. Judas the Galilaean (or the Gaulonite) is reputed to have been the founder of the movement. At Acts v, 37, Gamaliel mentions him as the leader of a popular revolt “in the days of the enrolment” (conducted by Quirinius in A.D. 6 or 7), and which ended in his destruction and the dispersion of his followers. The movement appears to have been a considerable one to judge from the frequency of Josephus’s references (Antiq. xviii, i, 1, 6; xx, v, 2; B.J. ii, viii, 1; xvii, 8, 9; vii, viii, 1). Josephus tells us it was from this group the Party of the Zealots arose, but Galilaeans appear to have had a reputation for violent action in even earlier times; a massacre of Galilaeans by Pilate is reported in the Gospels (Luke xiii. 1). The movement deserves much more attention than is given to it in the recent discussion of Maccabees Zealots and Josephus of W. R. Farmer (New York, 1956), especially in view of the Gospel

evidence for the association of Jesus and his disciples with Galilee and Galilaeans.

I shall have something to say about the Hellenians and the Baptists presently: meantime there remain the Pharisees and the Sadducees.

The most extraordinary feature of the list, among other curious things, is not only Justin’s omission of the Essenes, especially if he is dependent on Josephus, but his inclusion of the Pharisees in a list of Minim or heretics. The fact is all the more incomprehensible, not only (as Lukyn Williams pointed out) because of the irreproachable orthodoxy of Pharisaism in post-Biblical sources, but in view of what Justin himself has to say later (cxxxvii. 2), where the Pharisees are referred to as the “chiefs of the synagogues”, that is to say, as the pillars of orthodox Judaism.

M. Simon meets this difficulty by the suggestion that the term αἱρεσίας is used in this connection ambiguously by Justin; it has the later sense of Christian heresy as well as the meaning of Jewish heresy or sect. “Cette équivoque explique une curieuse contradiction de Justin. Il écrit d’un côté: ‘Un bon juge ne reconnaîtra pas pour Juifs des Sadduceens, ou ces hérésies similaires . . . des Pharisiens et des Baptistes.’ Mais comme il a tout de même quelque idée de la situation du judaïsme, il reconnaît un peu plus loin les Pharisiens pour ce qu’ils sont en réalité: ‘Les didascales pharisiens . . . les chefs des synagogues’” (op. cit. p. 530). In a context, however, where it was important not to misrepresent Judaism, it seems very unlikely that Justin would have brought in the Pharisees, the pillars of orthodox Judaism, just because he himself regarded them as “heretical” from his Christian standpoint.

The simplest solution is to explain the Φαρισαίων (as Harnack did) as the insertion of a copyist; it may well be a later gloss (it brings the number up to an even seven) added by a learned scribe familiar with the Gospels.

Simple solutions, however, are not always correct ones. The

2 Judentum und Judenchristentum in Justin’s Dialog mit Trypho, T.U. xxxix (1913), 57.
reading Φαρισαῖοι would seem to be an integral element in Justin’s original text. The same, however, cannot be claimed for καὶ before Βαπτιστῶν; it is a purely conjectural insertion, the original text reading “Pharisees, Baptists”. It is possible to take the two words closely together, the second in apposition and qualifying the first; Justin’s “sect” may have been one of “baptizing Pharisees”. Harnack admits this possibility, but is inclined to consider it an unlikely combination. We are now, however, in a much better position to judge: recent investigations have shown that so extensive was the baptismal cult in Judaism in the first two Christian centuries, in particular in the Diaspora (possibly not uninfluenced by Christian practice and example), that it spread even among the orthodox and into the ranks of the Pharisaic teachers themselves. This situation is reflected for the orthodox Judaism of the period in other passages in Justin’s Dialogue (xiv. 1, xix. 2). Professor David Daube refers to it and cites instances of the practice among leading Hillelites, some of whom were even prepared to go so far as to accept proselyte baptism as alone that which constituted a convert, a Jew: “Joshua ben Hananiah claimed that baptism alone was sufficient to make even a male gentile Jewish. They did not go quite so far as Paul: they did not deny that it was the duty of a male convert to be circumcized. But they did consider him fully Jewish as soon as he was baptized. It is interesting that their argument was that baptism was the decisive rite in the case of a woman, so it should be the same in that of man.”¹ Such views were almost bound to be pronounced heretical. (In this same connection the conjecture should be mentioned that Justin’s Ἑλληνισμὸν should be read as Ἑλληνισμόν (from Ἑλλῆν, Hillel; cf. Epiphanius, Panarion, 30. 4) and J. C. T. Otto, Justini Opera, in loc.).

It is not without significance that Justin finds it necessary to apologize at this point for what he has just said: “pray do not be vexed with me as I say all I think” (Williams). He clearly felt it necessary to say this in view of his mention of Pharisees, even heretical Pharisees, in such disrespectful company as the other Minim listed.

What about the Sadducees? The identification of Justin's Σαδδουκαίων with the ancient Sadducees, and their classification as "heretics", raises problems as intractable as the presence of "Pharisees" in such a list, for the ancient Sadducees almost certainly disappeared from the scene with the Temple. I would suggest that the possibility is worthy of serious consideration that what Justin really meant by his heretical "Sadducees" were the Zadokites, the Bene Zadok or Qumran Essenes; so far from omitting the Essenes, they would then figure at the top of Justin's list. Obviously the identity of name was bound to lead to confusion, and something of this sort appears to have happened in rabbinical sources as well. When the Rabbis place Saddoukim among the Minim and equate them with the Qaraite Jews, they can only be referring to the Zadokite sect. Maimonides for instance, tells us, in his Commentary on Pirqe Aboth I, that the Qaraites called themselves Saddoukim, and were known by this name to their rabbis. Arabic sources of the tenth century make a clear distinction between the ancient Sadducees and the Zadokite sect. This explanation has been given more than once for Ephrem's "Sadducees", whom he connects with John the Baptist. (There is no longer any reason for pronouncing Ephrem confused when he speaks of a Jewish sect of Ebionites, for Ebhjonim is now well-attested as a name for the Qumran sectarians.)

We conclude then that there is more in Justin's list than a few generalizing descriptions of innocuous tendencies in second-century Judaism: Justin is describing, as he himself tells us, Jewish heretical or sectarian movements, some of them (like the Galilaeans) pre-Christian groups.

M. Simon is on firmer ground when he comes to deal with Hegesippus, though in some respects Hegesippus's list is even more interesting than Justin's. It is quoted in Eusebius's

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1 The Qaraites are described as istae sectae maledictae haereticorum, et vocabantur in hisce terris, nempe in Aegypto, Karraei. Nomina autem ipsorum sunt, id est nominatur apud sapientes Tzaducae et Bejetsa (cited in Buxtorf, Lex. Talm. s.v. Qaraites).
2 Cf. S. Schechter, Documents of Jewish Sectaries, i, pp. xviii ff.
Ecclesiastical History iv. 22: ἵσαν δὲ γνώμαι διάφοροί ἐν τῇ περιτουμή, ἐν νοῦς Ἰσραήλ, τῶν κατὰ τῆς φυλῆς Ἰουδα καὶ τοῦ Χριστοῦ: αὐται Ἑσσαῖοι, Γαλιλαῖοι, Ἰμεροβαπτισταῖ, Μασβοθέοι, Σαμαρεῖται, Σαδδουκαῖοι, Φαρισαῖοι. As with Justin, M. Simon believes that what we have in Hegesippus is not a list of Jewish “heresies”, but one of the first patristic catalogues of heresies of the Church; and in this case he is probably right.

Professor Simon has not given a quite accurate rendering of the text: “Il y avait des opinions différentes dans la circoncision parmi les fils d’Israël, contre la tribu de Juda et contre le Christ.” The words should be construed: “There used to be (schools of) thought deviating in the Circumcision (I mean among Israelites) from the (school of thought) in the ‘tribe’ of Judah and Christ, namely Essenes, Galilaeans, Hemerobaptists, Masbotheans, Samaritans, Sadducees, Pharisees.” The “tribe” of Judah and (of) Christ might be understood to refer to Jews and Christians respectively. In that case Hegesippus is listing “sects” differing in their tenets from orthodox Jews as well as from Christians. The words, however, probably belong together as the description of a single group, namely Hebrew Christians, possibly converts to Christianity from Judaism, to which Hegesippus himself belonged. The Christian Father is then describing, not Jewish “sects” but Jewish groups à travers une optique chrétienne. It is not then surprising to find Pharisees and Sadducees in such company, especially as Hegesippus is describing Jewish sects in the past, not, like Justin, heretical Jewish groups in the present. He may well have got his Pharisees and Sadducees from the Gospels or from Josephus.

More important than any of these observations, however, is the interesting fact that a Hebrew Christian, probably a convert from Judaism, can include Samaritans in a list of Israelites. Whatever his source here, in listing the Samaritans as a Jewish “sect”, even though he does so from the point of view of a Christian heresiologist, he is taking us back into ancient history.

The one thing that we cannot do, in discussing Jewish “sects” or “heresies” in the Fathers, is to overlook the Samaritans; and to this point I shall return later.
A more positive assessment of the patristic evidence as a whole is to be found in the studies of Père Joseph Thomas, whose book *Le Mouvement Baptiste en Palestine et Syrie* was published exactly ten years before the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls.\(^1\) Thomas carried forward the patristic researches of Brandt and others into the special problem of the existence of a wide-spread Jewish *mouvement baptiste* in Palestine (and beyond) before A.D. 70. It was a movement (Thomas thought) of baptizing non-conformity, as it were, in opposition and conflict with the Pharisaic authorities in Jerusalem, substituting baptizing rites for the observance of Temple sacrifice. With the help of the ancient historians and the testimony of the Fathers, Thomas concludes that such a sectarian movement existed in pockets or splinter-groups from Samaria to Judaea, consisting of sects among the Samaritans—Dositheans, Sabaeans, Gorothenes—of Essenes, in Samaria as well as Judaea, Nasarenes, Masbuthaeans, etc.

So far as the ancient historians are concerned, the existence of a group of Essene sectarians who practised baptizing rites is not in doubt. What is still in question is whether, as Thomas maintains, the main characteristics of this group (or groups) were their baptizing rites as a substitute for Temple sacrifice. The Qumran Essenes were undoubtedly a baptizing cult; and the large and prominent baptisteries in the excavated settlement at Qumran are impressive evidence for the importance of lustrations for the sect. The relation of the group to the Temple and the sacrificial cultus is still a matter of debate (as is the conflicting testimony of Philo and Josephus on the point), but, in general, it is now widely recognized that the Qumran Essenes represented an opposition Party to the established Pharisaic and Sadducaean authorities in Jerusalem; important evidence has now come to light in the Qumran texts which shows that, in the matter of the Festival Calendar, these Essenes were out of step with the official Parties. There is no evidence that they were heretics in the usual sense of the term (they did not, for example, reject the central tenet of Jewish monotheism), but they certainly indulged in a very large measure of heteropraxis.

\(^1\) Gembloux, 1935.
The view that the Essenes were not an isolated pocket or "resistance group" within Judaism, but existed in different and diverse but related splinter-groups throughout Palestine, rests mainly on the evidence of the Fathers. Josephus, it is true, tells us that the Essenes were to be found in every town of Palestine, but the impression this statement gives is of the existence in different places of outposts of the same Essene sect. According to Thomas's interpretation of the Fathers, however, this *mouvement baptiste* existed in a whole complex of interrelated but different groups, practising, like the Judaean Essenes, their baptizing cult from Samaria to Judaea.

*Prima facie* the garbled and disjointed reports of the Fathers do not inspire confidence. The Samaritans were certainly a schismatic group, but there must be genuine doubt, so far as the patristic evidence takes us, about the separate existence of Samaritan sects in pre-Christian times. The Dositheans are probably the most important of the names, and I shall come back to them shortly. The Sabaeans and the Masbotheans are difficult to identify with any actual groups or "sects", and they may have existed as such only in the minds of the Fathers; in both cases we know practically nothing but their names: both names may refer to baptism and the second certainly does, but, as Brandt pointed out, they may be no more than general terms to describe people who practised baptizing rites to excess, representing the Aramaic equivalent names for the Baptistai and Hemerobaptistai of Justin and Hegesippus. Epiphanius's Go
tothenes (Γο
toθηνοι) also looks like a generalizing name; I would derive it from the Hebrew gere 'arayoth (or its Aramaic equivalent), "the proselytes of the lions", a name applied by the rabbis from 2 Kings xvii. 25 ff. to Samaritan proselytes to Judaism. The Jewish Nasarenes of Epiphanius are generally believed to be an entirely fictitious entity which the Christian Father has invented out of his Jewish-Christian sect of the Nazorenes.

We are thus left with two very broad groupings only, Essenes and Samaritans, as quite certainly pre-Christian schismatics or sectarians.

1 *B.J.* ii. 8, 4.  
2 *Die jüdischen Baptismen*, p. 113.
Do the Fathers add any information to what we already know about the Essenes? For our knowledge of the Samaritans we are mainly dependent on patristic sources; and, in both cases, the star witness is the fourth-century Epiphanius, who has not generally enjoyed a high reputation for reliability.

According to Epiphanius the Essenes were a Samaritan sect, located in Samaria in times before the destruction of Jerusalem. He has no information about Judaean Essenes on the Dead Sea, a surprising fact if he is dependent on Josephus or Pliny. His Samaritan Essenes agreed, he tells us, in most fundamentals with their Samaritan neighbours, the "Dositheans", "Sabaeans", "Gorothenes", etc.; they disagreed with all of them, and even came to blows at one time with the Gorothenes, while the latter were on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, on the subject of the dates of the festivals. The story of a fight with the Gorothenes supports the rabbinical evidence that these were Samaritan proselytes adhering to Judaism; and it has the ring of truth about it.

If we could believe in Epiphanius's Samaritan Essenes as a pre-Christian sect, then these disputes about the calendar would be a link with Judaean heteropraxis; there would then be at least two closely related groups, Samaritan Essenes and Judaean Essenes, lined up against Samaritan proselytes and the Jerusalem Jews.

Epiphanius goes on to speak about another 'Jewish' sect called Ossenes, living in Trans-Jordan, south of his 'Jewish sect' of "Nasarenes". Thomas identifies Epiphanius's Ossenes with Essenes, and suggests that they represented the remnant of the Dead Sea Essenes, who had migrated to Trans-Jordan after the Jewish War. If this is correct, it would explain Epiphanius's ignorance about the Dead Sea Essenes; they no longer existed in his day at Qumran. But in that case he is simply reporting the existence of Jewish groups in his own time; he tells us further that the Ossenes were later merged in other Jewish sects. His reports about Samaritan Essenes may also be correct, but they too may hold only for the period of Epiphanius. Some of the Dead Sea Essenes may have found a refuge in Samaria as well as in Trans-Jordan. The Dositheans are another enigmatic group, though we are not dependent solely
on Epiphanius for information about them. We cannot, however, be certain that they were a pre-Christian group, and, in any case, their close resemblance to the Judaean Essenes suggests that they are the same group in Samaria; their ‘founder’ Dositheus is a purely fictitious character, and it may perhaps be suggested that their name, like that of the Boethusians, is connected with the name Essenes (the name Boethusians has been explained as meaning Beth Essaioi). Some of their main features as reported by Epiphanius suggest that by the time he came to know them they had become even stricter ascetics than the ancient Essenes; they not only rejected marriage (or at least one group of them), but they were vegetarians—and they also believed in the resurrection.

Thomas’s pre-Christian mouvement baptiste appears to be disappearing in the light of closer analysis: we are still not beyond the point of having two main schismatic groups only, the Samaritans and the Judaean Essenes, with no demonstrable connection between them.

The question might be left there were it not for two sets of important facts, some of them entirely new. The first is well-known, and I simply propose to draw attention to it and to recent discussion of it.

The origins of Essenism in the ancient tribal asceticism of Israel is declared by one of the most recent authorities on the subject to be in the realm of starke Möglichkeiten. Hilgenfeld traced Essenes to their origin in a Rechabite clan; and this has been thought to have formed the basis of the later Essene order. Patristic tradition supports the connection: the Abbot Nilus of Ancyra (c. A.D. 490) takes it for well established that the Essenes were descendants of Jonadab ben Rechab. The reader is further referred to the long discussion on Rechabitene-Essäer-Ebioniten in H. J. Schoeps’s Theologie und Geschichte des Judenchristentums, 1 For literature on them, see H. H. Rowley, The Zado^ite Fragments and the Dead Sea Scrolls, p. 79.
4 Cf. Schoeps, p. 250.
5 De monastica exercitatione, 3.
If the Essenes had an ancient Israelite origin, there may be something after all in Epiphanius’s tradition about pre-Christian Samaritan Essenes.

More striking evidence is the discovery of a Samaritan Pentateuch in old Hebrew, not Samaritan, script at Qumran; and this, together with accumulating evidence of affinities between the Qumran Essenes and the Samaritan schismatics,—in language, religious tenets, customs and practice—again points to the existence of a vital link in pre-Christian times between Qumran and Samaria, the Samaritans and the Essenes.

The most characteristic possession of the Samaritans was their special recension of the Pentateuch—the one and only form of Scripture the majority of Samaritans were prepared to accept. A Samaritan recension of the Book of Exodus has now been found at Qumran among the treasures of Cave 4 (4Q Ex.a). It contains a substantial portion of the text of Exodus vi, 25—xxxvii. 15, extensive enough to show its essential characteristics; and it contains all the distinctive features of the much fuller Samaritan recension of the Pentateuch—its repetitious style (e.g. in the recounting of the Plague episodes at Exodus viii-ix), its borrowings from Deuteronomy—the Israelite document—(Deuteronomy i. 9-18 in place of Exodus xviii. 25 (?), Deuteronomy v. 24 to follow Exodus xx. 19, both as in the Samaritan Pentateuch), its transpositions and expansions (Exodus vii. 18 followed by an expansion describing the fulfilment of Moses of a command at Exodus vii. 16-18, viii. 19, followed by a similar expansion fulfilling Exodus viii. 16-19, etc. etc.) The scroll is not in the Samaritan script, but in an old Hebrew hand; and texts in this form of script were apparently being produced in the first and second centuries B.C.

No discovery could make plainer the affinities of the Qumran sectarians, for it is quite certain that no Pharisaic or Judaean group ever possessed or used such a Pentateuch. If such texts were being written at Qumran for use in the first and second centuries B.C., then it was for circulation among Samaritan or affiliated sectarian groups, such as the Qumran Essenes. The

fact that the document is written in palaeo-Hebrew points to use among Judaean sectarians.

In addition to the scrolls, recent studies of the Pseudo-Clementines have been underlining the same strong connection between the Samaritans and the Judaean Essenes.¹

In the study and elucidation of the Qumran texts, Mlle. A. Jaubert has drawn attention to similarities between the Qumran Calendar and that of the Samaritans²; in this respect, like the Samaritans, the Qumran sectarians were at odds with the Pharisees. As striking is the asceticism of these sects, their rejection of marriage (or the imposition of restrictions connected with it), the ritual bath, and their attitude to sacrifice and to the Temple. Such affinities do not oblige us to conclude that the Essenes were Samaritans, but they point to the same general movement of puritanical non-conformity. "One thing is certain", Schechter wrote in his editio princeps of the Damascus Document (and the scrolls have reinforced his conclusions), "that we have here to do with a sect decidedly hostile to the bulk of the Jews as represented by the Pharisees. It is a sect equipped with additional sacred books of its own, a calendar of its own, and a set of laws of its own, bearing upon various commandments of the Scriptures. It is at variance with the nation at large in its interpretation of the past, abusing its heroes, as in the case of David. . . ."³ That the Qumran sect looked for a Messiah of Israel points perhaps decisively to the place of its origin.

As we have already seen, the affinities between the Dositheans and the Judaean Essenes are so close that they seem to be the same sect at different periods in its history. That may still be correct, but, in the light of the new facts, we may require to revise our ideas about the relationship, for the explanation of the connection is not necessarily that a Judaean sect found its way into Samaria after the Roman War; a Samaritan sect of Essenes may have settled at an earlier period in Judaea; and in that case

³ S. Schechter, Documents of Jewish Sectaries, i. 28.
the Samaritan Essenes or Dositheans have a very long history indeed behind them. Montgomery traced the influences producing the Samaritan Dositheans to the Judaean Essenes: we may have to reverse this and look for the formative influences in Judaean sectarianism in the ancient religion of Israel, or rather in its remanent descendants in Samaria.

These connections with Samaria and the North certainly point to an origin for Essenism (and Palestinian sectarianism) in the ancient religion of the Northern Kingdom, or, at any rate, in what was left of Israelite religion after the Exile and before the (supposedly) sweeping reforms of Ezra and Nehemiah.

It may be suggested, as a working hypothesis, that this first-century sectarianism is descended from a pre-Ezra type of Hebrew religion, pressed back into the peripheral areas by the Judaism, predominantly Pharisaic, of the Second Temple.

To come back to the patristic evidence: such considerations are important for our estimate of the testimony of the Fathers, and in particular Epiphanius. In his statements about pre-Christian Samaritan Essenes he may have drawn on a genuinely ancient tradition. In that case it is worth looking again at some of his other statements about pre-Christian Jewish sects.

Special interest attaches to Epiphanius's Jewish sect of the Nasarenes, located by him in the ancient Gilead and Bashan. They display some of the same characteristics as their neighbours, the Dositheans, and, like the Samaritans, had a variant, if not a different, form of Pentateuch from the Jewish Pentateuch. The only other report about such a sect is to be found in Philaster (Div. her. lib., ed. Marx, p. 4) who informs us that they were Nazirites—like Samson, they allowed their hair to grow, and this is the explanation of their name.

The existence of such a sect is denied altogether by Schmidtke.

1 The Samaritans (Philadelphia, 1907), p. 263.
2 For some of the references to Epiphanius in this section I am indebted to my student Miss C. Olds, who is engaged on a special study of this subject.
3 A. Schmidtke, Neue Fragmente zu den Judenchristlichen Evangelien (T.U., xxxvii, 1), pp. 199 ff. Schmidtke's conclusions and general estimate of the evidence of the Fathers for Jewish "sects" appear to have been widely accepted. The most recent discussion of these problems by Georg Strecker, Das Judenthristentum in den Pseudoklementinen (Berlin, 1958 T.U. lxx) follows this line;
followed by Schoeps 1; both regard this section of Epiphanius's work as a parallel elaboration of his account of the Christian Nazorenes (ch. 30, pp. 18 ff.); and, as, according to these scholars, all the reports of Epiphanius about the Nazorenes are secondary material "woven together out of personal knowledge and groundless speculations", no importance at all can be attached to these later fabrications. A less sceptical estimate has been formed by other scholars, such as G. Höltscher 2 and H. Gressman. 3 The debate has assumed importance in view of the claim that this reputed Jewish sect was connected with the description given to the primitive Church in Acts xxiv. 5, as "the sect of the Nazorenes". Some idea of the extent of the literature on the subject may be obtained from a recent discussion of the name by Paul Winter. 4

Epiphanius appears to be well informed about Nasarenes and Nazorenes; more than once he carefully distinguishes the Jewish sect, which he places before A.D. 70 (there were even survivors in his own day 5) from the Christian Nazorenes. 6 The two presbyters at whose request he wrote his Panarion came from Coele-Syria where Christian Nazorenes are located and Epiphanius had himself been there. 7 The contentions of Schmidtke and Schoeps that the earlier Jewish Nasarenes are a fabrication of Epiphanius's imagination, and that his descriptions come from his information about the later Christian sect are not borne out by a comparison of the two passages. One of the main characteristics of the Jewish sect is their rejection of beliefs in fate and astronomy (possibly directed, like similar Sadducaean doctrines, against the Pharisees). There appears to be nothing corresponding to this in Epiphanius's accounts of the Christian sects of Nazorenes or Ebionites. It seems a little

Epiphanius is an untrustworthy witness. Yet Schmidtke did not receive much notice at the time of the appearance of his book; Holl (editor of the Panarion in Griechische Christliche Schriftsteller der ersten drei Jahrhunderte), referring to Schmidtke's views on the Ebionites, gave as his opinion that "die wilden Aufstellungen von A. Schmidtke (T.U. xxxvii) bleiben überall ausser Betracht" (Epiphanius, Panarion, i. 337).

inconsistent to trace this feature of Epiphanius's account of the Nasarenes to the Pseudo-Clementines (Hom. iv. 12), when there is again nothing corresponding in the parallel account of the Nazorenes, from which, ex hypothesi, the Nasarenes are derived (cf. Schmidtke, p. 202). The Christian Nazorenes recognized the Law and the Prophets; the Nasarenes accepted parts of the Pentateuch only. The Nasarenes held in special reverence the oak of Mambre (traditionally located in the area of Hebron); there is nothing about this in the accounts of the Nazorenes or Ebionites. The geographical locations do not entirely agree. And their conformity to the general pattern of sectarianism argues further for their existence, thus accounting for much in the later Jewish Christian Palestinian sects.

Some importance must, no doubt, be assigned to the statement of the Elder Pliny (H.N. v. 23, 19) that there was a tetrarchy of Nazerini in Coele Syria. If this is a reference to the same group, then it must have been a large one. The most important recent evidence, however, is contained in a Mandaean text to which attention has been drawn by Dr. Rudolf Macuch. Macuch, on the basis of a critical examination of the text, traces Mandaean origins to the emigration from Palestine about the year A.D. 37 of a Jewish sect of Nasoraeans, obviously baptizing sectarians; they were driven from Palestine by Jewish persecution. (The text mentions the number as 60,000.) Dr. Macuch does not identify the sect further, and in view of the position of John the Baptist in Mandaeism, the Nasoraeans may have been adherents of the Baptism of John. But it is at any rate a pre-Christian group, and, even if this is a Johannite sect, its origins may lie in an earlier sect of Nasarenes. There cannot have been two different sects with this name in pre-Christian Judaism.

Granted such a possibility, who then were these Nasarenes? We do not know what happened to the ancient Israelite institution of the life-long Nazirate, the descendants of Jonadab ben Rechab (2 Kings x. 15; cf. Jer. xxxv). Numbers vi deals with the temporary Nazirate (familiar to us also in the Acts of the Apostles).

1 Alter und Heimat des Mandäismus nach neuer schlossenen Quellen, Th. Ltz., 82, 6.
but there is nothing in the Pentateuch about this more ancient Israelite institution. It is at least arguable that this ancient Israelite asceticism survived into New Testament times in the Samaritan and Jewish sects of the Essenes and Nasarenes. The Nazi rates of 1 Maccabees iv. 9, are called Nasaraei in the Old Latin Version.

If this is one possibility, a second is suggested by examination of the name Νασαραιοί: it could be Aramaic, as M. Lidzbarski recognized, meaning "the guardians" or "the keepers". Now this is, of course, how the Samaritans have explained their name, deriving it, not from the name of the original owner of Samaria and his clan, Shemer (1 Kings, xvi. 24), but from shamar, "to guard or keep"; and Samaritans explain that they are the guardians and keepers of the (true) Law. When once the conflict arose between the Jews of the Return and the Samaritans, it would be natural for them later to adopt such an explanation of their name; they were the "keepers" or "guardians" of the true Law and inheritance of Israel. The Aramaic equivalent of Shomerim is Naṭarin or Naṭarayya, and, since Samaria was Aramaic-speaking, it would not be surprising to find an Aramaic name either for Samaritans in general or for a sect or group of Samaritans.

On the whole, this explanation has probably most to be said in its favour: it is in keeping with the other names for "sects" in the Fathers, e.g. the Genistai, Gorothenes, Sabaeans and Masbotheans. Like all these, "Nasarenes" is a general name applied to Samaritans or to those who shared their views. The characteristic features of the group as described by Epiphanius also support such a connection, in particular their bowdlerized form of Pentateuch.

If this is the correct explanation, then Epiphanius's reputation can be thus far vindicated that his "heresy" did exist in pre-Christian times; he was referring simply to Samaritans or a group of Samaritans by their Aramaic name. One can understand

3 For a study of the position of the Samaritans at the Return, see especially Adam Welch, Post-Exilic Judaism, (Edinburgh, 1935), pp. 17 ff.
better too the use of the term Nazorene in the Gospels both as referring to Jesus and to the early Church: whether the term was derived from Nazareth or not, the opprobrious use made of it suggests that, in the ears of an Aramaic-speaking Jew, Jesus Naṭara or the sect of the Naṭaraya would at once convey the idea that they were Samaritans, and therefore "heretics" or "schismatics"; and people in Judaea would not always make nice distinctions between Samaritans and Galilaeans. Something of such a tradition is preserved at John viii. 48, ἀντικρέθησαν οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι καὶ εἶπον αὐτῷ ὦ καλῶς λέγομεν ἡμεῖς Σαμαρείτης εἰς συ...γ.; Jesus goes on to point out who the true "Samaritans" are (v. 51) ἀμὴν ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν, εάν τις τὸν λόγον τὸν ἐμὸν τηρήσῃ, θάνατον οὐ μὴ θεωρήσῃ εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα... ("Verily, verily, I say unto you, if a man keep my saying (doctrine), he shall never see death.")

Such an explanation of the Nasarenes points unequivocally to the origins of these sectarian movements in the remanent Israel of the North.

In conclusion, I would content myself now with the general point that there is more than meets the eye in these patristic accounts. They deserve as careful and exhaustive study as any of the other sources of information at our disposal. If we are prepared to accept their evidence, we are led to a conclusion very close to that of Père Thomas, and I would summarize my two main points briefly as follows:

(1) There is credible patristic evidence for the existence in pre-70 Palestine and beyond of a wide-spread movement of Jewish or para-Jewish non-conformity, characterized by its ascetic or puritanical tendencies and manner of life and its baptizing cult, holding to a different canon of Scripture and different customs from the orthodoxy or orthopraxis of the official Pharisaic-dominated religion of Torah and Temple in Jerusalem. It was a sectarian movement in the proper sense of the term, though its deviation from normative Judaism in the period was probably more in the realm of heteropraxis rather than of heterodoxy.

(2) This movement of "Jewish" sectarianism may represent
the survival into New Testament times of the old pre-Ezra type of Hebrew religion, with a strong ascetic element; and its puritanism may stem from the ancient asceticism of the religion of Israel. Its *fons et origo* was the Samaritan Schism.