

Comments on Companion to the Dead Sea Scrolls (T. & T. Clark, 2019, G. Brooke and C. Hempel, eds.)

I recommend this book for university libraries (I requested it for Duke). It is rather well edited and offers 75 mostly-fine chapters. The volume provides a good opportunity to survey a wide swath of current Qumran studies. I comment selectively, non-comprehensively, in sequence. The Table of Contents is available here:

<https://www.bloomsbury.com/us/tt-clark-companion-to-the-dead-sea-scrolls-9780567352057/>

There are 14 illustrations, two of the same ms, 4QTestimonia, in color and b/w.

The editors allowed authors leeway. For example, chapter bibliographies range from two items to 90 (Calendars).

On page 8 (and in the index) the name of Kando is misspelled as Shanin, rather than Shahin.

Later (p. 51) it is right.

p.8 The story of bedouin going to Kando to offer old, deteriorating skins for sandal straps is probably false myth, as Magen Broshi said. Bedouin were more familiar with animal products than that. And wasn't Kando already dealing in antiquities?

p.8 It is good to read of the possibility that there might have been two scroll caves later conflated into one "Cave One," as it is one of the more interesting proposals in Weston Fields' DSS; A Full History, volume 1, even if F. M. Cross dismissed it, and Occam's razor looms.

p.9 and p. 51 Who (I don't know) were the Hebrew U. scholars (librarians?) who, early on, did not realize the importance of the scrolls? This may not be relevant, but the great Gershom Scholem oddly later seemed little interested, dismissing Essenes as a "happy hunting-ground for those who delight in hypotheses"--before Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifices was published, though.

p.10 De Vaux and G. (William) L. Harding (see p. 53 for G. W. L. H.) apparently did not decide on a real dig at Kh. Qumran in 1949. Dupont-Sommer and others may have persuaded them circa 1950 for their return in 1951. They were not predisposed to connect the site and caves.

pp.15-16 The mention of recently-marketed ms fragments, of course, is a developing sad story.

pp.17-50 Archaeology of Qumran is one of the best chapters in the book. If you have time to read only a few chapters, I suggest you include this one for a judicious provisional sorting out of proposed interpretations.

pp.51-58 A bit can be added to the history of seeking open access to the then-unpublished mss. Robert Eisenman (Breaking... 2018, p. 29) revealed the source of the photos he received that were published in the Facsimile Edition (2 vols.,1991). It was Robert Schlosser, a photographer who worked for Elizabeth Bechtel, who deposited a copy in the Huntington Library. How he got the Strugnell/Qimron/Reed era computer printout inventory is less clear, though physicist Yuval Ne'eman, who publicly took an interest in publication, may have played a role; he was a cabinet minister with supervision over Museums and Antiquities.

pp.139-148 Did Philo inform us that Essenes were named by outsiders? I don't think so. Writers who used Essaioi or Essenoi or Ossaioi etc. tell us something about who did use those Greek names (and who avoided them), but that does not exclude a Semitic self-designation, one we read in pesharim, 'osey hatorah (a name not accepted by Sadducees nor Pharisees). Aramaic for healers, formerly a popular guess, need not detain us, unless anyone still affirms Allegro's 4QTherapeia reading. Then there is the Aramaic cognate of Hasidim, which no known ancient text used for Essenes. And, in fact, this was not (as claimed, p. 142) Lightfoot's proposal; he explicitly preferred a different, and Hebrew, source; one can look it up in the 1875 work

inaccurately represented (p. 119). The guess goes back as far as G. Genebrard (1537-1597), I suppose--maybe even in a sense back to the mixed-up use in Sefer Yossipon.

Philo did (Quod 88) tell us Essenes esteemed deeds (compare ma'asim, what IQS initiates were evaluated on) more than words. Then (89-91) he tells us they endured two types of bad (Hasmonean) rulers: the cruel type (think Jannaeus) and those who used soft-worded flattery, hypocrisy (e.g., Jannaeus' wife). This parallels the *biased* Essene view of Sadducees and Pharisees. Coincidence?

The observers of Torah etymology in its linguistically clipped form is declared "meaningless." But are Tannaim mere general repeaters like parrots (Polly want a cracker?)? Amoraim, general speakers? Kabbalists, tradents of whatnot? Samaritans, in the folk-etymology this time, claiming to be general keepers? Are Haredim afraid of heights and spiders and such? The (pre-Qumran discovery predicted) etymology may help explain the origin as well as why it was and is not universally credited. (Cf. Sota 22a on the separatist who boasts "what is my duty that I may do it?")

pp.228-236 The Historiography section apparently attempted to be provocative; would that it were more helpful. Of course history is not the main concern of the scroll writers, but they were not oblivious to it (even in mss selected for caves), nor beyond history comment. For instance, dismissing the Teacher--there were no plural Teachers mentioned--as "emphatically not the arena of history" is extreme. We read of the Furious Lion [Jannaeus] of Peshet Nahum murdering only to be informed that "we cannot be sure...that it mattered to them." Why, then, did they actually record this? A counsel of despair is not what I look for in a Companion. I think Jannaeus was the Wicked Priest; Judah was the Teacher of Righteousness; and Absalom was the brother of Jannaeus who could have helped Judah but did not. Inconceivable?

p.305 The 3QCopper bibliography could add archaeology, J. Patrich, Excavations and Surveys in Israel 6 (1988) 66-70. A notion recorded (as an option, not necessarily advocated here) that the 3Q15 deposit was perhaps unrelated to the other manuscripts in Cave 3 posits a quite unlikely hiding place in a cave with visible putatively-unrelated sectarian deposits. That would be unsecure deposit; unsecure speculation. There was hope at Tabernacle-like Qumran awaiting for a purified Jerusalem Temple, and withheld payment is possible. That would be sectarian. Some Qumran mss were carefully stored—(pace several, neither all quickly deposited from war-hiding nor all for permanent burial—apparently so they could be reused.

pp.395-404 The Halakhah chapter is good--except for its title. If this anachronism call seems pedantic or picky, maybe ask yourself: have you ever encountered unjustified retrojection of Rabbinic views in Qumran studies? Say, that the group may be Essenes as long as they are regarded more basically as a Sadducee splinter? Sort of proto-minim? About sectarian 4QMMT (that verb again) Joseph M. Baumgarten was, I think, first to publish Sadducee legal parallels, but it is sometimes forgotten that he retained the Essene identification as most probable.

p.590 R. Kratz, et al., Hebräisches und aramäisches Wörterbuch zu den Texten vom Toten Meer (2017-) is no doubt inadvertently absent in Appendix D: Major Reference Works.

The book is generally quite well indexed. One slip: K. Kenyon appears based on bibliography, but F. G. Kenyon is absent even though he is quoted in the main text (pp. 7, 16). Names one might have expected to encounter in the book include E.-M. Laperrousaz and S. Zeitlin.

An interesting and worthwhile book. Thanks.

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