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BOOK REVIEW

Katharina Galor, Jean-Baptiste Humbert, and Jürgen Zangenberg (eds.), *Qumran, the Site of the Dead Sea Scrolls: Archaeological Interpretations and Debates; Proceedings of a Conference Held at Brown University, November 17-19, 2002* (STDJ 57; Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2006). Pp. x + 308. $147.

The contributions in the volume include "Foreword," by John J. Collins (p. vii); "Introduction: Qumran Archaeology in Search of a Consensus," by Katharina Galor and Jürgen Zangenberg (pp. 1-9); "Some Remarks on the Archaeology of Qumran," by Jean-Baptiste Humbert (pp. 19-39); "The 1996 Excavations at Qumran and the Context of the New Hebrew Ostracon," by James F. Strange (pp. 41-54); "Back to Qumran: Ten Years of Excavation and Research, 1993–2004," by Yizhak Magen and Yuval Peleg (pp. 55-113); "Hedging the Holy at Qumran: Walls as Symbolic Devices," by Joan Branham (pp. 117-31); "Kh. Qumran in Period III," by Joan E. Taylor (pp. 133- 46); "The Legacy of an Error in Archaeological Interpretation: The Dating of the Qumran Cave Scroll Deposits," by Gregory L. Doudna (pp. 147-57); "A Table in the Wilderness: Pantries and Tables, Pure Food and Sacred Space at Qumran," by Stephen J. Pfann (pp. 159-78); "Facts and Results Based on Skeletal Remains from Qumran found in the Collectio Kurth—A Study in Methodology," by Olav Röhrer-Ertl (pp. 181-93); "A Reconsideration of the Human Remains in the French Collection from Qumran," by Susan G. Sheridan and Jaime Ullinger (pp. 195-212); "The Discovery and Excavation of the Khirbet Qazone Cemetery and Its Significance Relative to Qumran," by Konstantinos D. Politis (pp. 213-19); "Qumran in the Second Temple Period: A Reassessment," by Yizhar Hirschfeld (pp. 223-39); "Agricultural Development in Antiquity: Improvements in Cultivation and Production of Balsam," by Joseph Patrich

(pp. 241-48); "Was There Agriculture at Qumran?" by Magen Broshi and Hanan Eshel (pp. 249-52); "The Production of Indigo Dye in the Installations of Ain Feshka," by Mireille Bélis (pp. 253-61); "Qumran and the Hasmonaean and Herodian Winter Palaces of Jericho: The Implication of the Pottery Finds for the Interpretation of the Settlement at Qumran," by Rachel Bar-Nathan (pp. 263-77).

The archaeological site of Khirbet Qumran, with its eleven caves, in which many of the Dead Sea Scrolls were found, was excavated by Roland de Vaux of the École biblique et archéologique française in the 1950s. He developed an interpretation of the archaeological data in conversation with the scrolls' contents; it became known as the "Qumran-Essene hypothesis" and remained the default position of scrolls scholarship for the next forty years. That hypothesis maintains that the scrolls belonged to the Essene community; its main settlement was located at Qumran, in agreement with Pliny's description; the settlement was founded in the late second century B.C.E. and continued (perhaps with interruption) until the Romans destroyed it in 68 C.E.; the architecture and material remains at Qumran reflect Essene values and ideology as described by Josephus and Philo (Galor and Zangenberg, p. 1). Not until the 1990s was this model called into question (see, e.g., Norman Golb, *Who Wrote the Dead Sea Scrolls?* [New York: Scribner, 1995]). Unfortunately, since de Vaux passed away before publishing the results of his excavations, other archaeologists were able to work with only partial information about the site. In 1994, however, Jean-Baptiste Humbert, de Vaux's successor at the École biblique, published a first volume of de Vaux's materials, including his field notes and photographs of the excavations (Jean-Baptiste Humbert and Alain Chambon, *Fouilles de Khirbet Qumrân et de Aïn Feshkha,* vol. 1 [NTOA Series Archaeologica 1; Fribourg: Éditions universitaires; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1994]). Since then, several surveys of Qumran have taken place, as well as salvage excavations under the auspices of the Israel Antiquities Authority, enabling archaeologists to reexamine the Qumran-Essene hypothesis. Some results are presented in this volume, the proceedings of a conference on the archaeology of Qumran (Brown University, November 17–19, 2002). The volume is beautifully published, with high-quality photographs, figures, indexes, and bibliography. The editors are to be congratulated on an excellent, thought-provoking volume.

Those hoping for a new consensus on the archaeology of Qumran will be disappointed, for no such consensus emerges. The volume contains at least four competing theories, with some overlap among them, demonstrating that de Vaux's initial hypothesis no longer holds sway. It is either rejected (Magen and Peleg, Hirschfeld), partially rejected (Humbert), or accepted with revisions (Broshi and Eshel). Unfortunately, one of the most prominent voices for the last position, that of Jodi Magness, is missing from the volume. Evidently the paper she presented at the conference was published elsewhere [Galor and Zangenberg, p. 4]). In the interest of space, I will comment briefly on only one article, although the vol- ume as a whole merits careful study. Magen and Peleg present the results of salvage excavations conducted at Qumran. Their most important discovery was in 2004

(after the date of the conference): in cisterns 71 and 58 they found three tons of clay, which was used for the manufacture of pottery (pp. 56-57, 68). Their interpretation states, "[W]e posit that the main purpose of the entire complex water supply system … was to provide potter's clay" (p. 68). They find six strata of habitation at Qumran: the oldest stratum (Phase A) is Iron Age, consisting of "clay and wood huts built partly on fieldstone foundations" (p. 79). The second stratum (Phase B) is Hasmonean (beginning of the first century B.C.E.), when Qumran was built by the Hasmoneans themselves as a fortified observation point, "an integral element in the chain of fortifications and early warning stations along the Dead Sea" (p. 79). In its third and fourth phases (C and D), during the Roman occupation (after 63 B.C.E. until an earthquake in 31 B.C.E.), Qumran became a pottery production center (pp. 104-7). The difference between Phases C and D is unclear to me; they appear to have the same date. During Phase E, which dates from the earthquake (31 B.C.E.) until the site's destruction by the Romans in 68 C.E., Qumran continued as a pottery production site (p. 107). During Phase F (68–132 C.E.), Qumran was basically uninhabited, except by refugees fleeing the two Jewish revolts against Rome (pp. 107-8). At no time was Qumran a Jewish sectarian settlement, Essene or otherwise.

Magen and Peleg's article gives scrolls scholars much food for thought and may answer an important question: How did the inhabitants at Qumran support themselves? Their reconstruction, however, suffers from a weakness that can be found in every attempt I have read to disprove the Qumran-Essene hypothesis. They refuse to treat the scrolls as archaeological data equal in value to the other archaeological data from the site. Magen and Peleg do not completely ignore the scrolls, but they rely on the easy explanation that the scrolls were hidden in the caves by refugees from Jerusalem and other towns during the Great Jewish Revolt (pp. 112-13). This hypothesis ignores important aspects of the scrolls. First, the scrolls comprise religious documents almost exclusively, some of which are clearly sectarian in nature. This collection differs greatly from other contemporaneous refugee collections, for example, the Wadi Murabbavat and Nahial Hiever collections, the majority of which are business documents. Second, the scrolls exhibit a cohesive ideology that agrees in many (but not all) particulars with the descriptions of the Essenes given by Josephus and Philo. Third, some compositions unique to the Qumran collection were found in more than one cave (e.g., the *Temple Scroll,* in caves 4 and 11), an unlikely occurrence if the scrolls were randomly deposited by fleeing refugees. Fourth, cave 4, the largest cave, located directly across the Wadi Qumran from the ruins, is a manufactured cave, not a randomly chosen hiding place.

Several questions remain: Why was this collection hidden at Qumran and not elsewhere, or in more widely scattered caves in the Judean Desert? And if the so-called scroll jars are a common type of pottery in the Jordan Valley in this period, as argued by Bar-Nathan, why were they found (along with other pottery matches) in caves near Qumran? Magen and Peleg do not satisfactorily account, in my opinion, for the scrolls' presence in the Qumran caves.

Although de Vaux's original Qumran-Essene hypothesis no longer stands in all its details and can be accepted only with revisions, no other hypothesis has arisen that satisfactorily accounts for all the evidence of Qumran and its scroll caves. Consensus is still lacking.

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