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Methods of Investigation of the Dead Sea Scrolls and the Khirbet Qumran Site: Present Realities and Future Prospects, eds. Michael O. Wise, Norman Golb, John J. Collins, and Dennis G. Pardee. Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences 722. New York: New York Academy of Sciences. 514 pp.

This volume brings together the papers given at a conference on the Dead Sea Scrolls held under the sponsorship of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago and the New York Academy of Sciences in New York December 14–17, 1992. The conference was unusual for an American Dead Sea Scrolls conference, inasmuch as it brought together scholars from the United States and a dozen other countries. This and the fact that the papers cover an extremely broad range of Qumran topics make the volume a valuable addition for college and university libraries and for scholarly reference shelves.

The volume is divided into five sections: Archaeology and History of the Khirbet Qumran Site; Studies on Texts, Methodologies, and New Perspectives; The Scrolls in the Context of Early Judaism; Books, Language, and History; and Texts and the Origin of the Scrolls. Since the readers of the *Bulletin* will probably find the papers on archaeology of the most interest, I will give a brief idea of their contents here.

Pauline Donceel-Voûte and Robert Donceel, Belgian archaeologists responsible for publishing Roland de Vaux's excavations at Khirbet Qumran, gave a paper entitled "The Archaeology of Khirbet Qumran." They outlined the enormous difficulties of reconstructing the excavation after 40 years; among other problems the chief one is the disappearance of some of the excavated material, including almost the entire coin collection. Some of their findings indicate possible disagreements with de Vaux's original interpretation of the evidence. For example, Donceel-Voûte interprets the plastered furniture in Locus 30 not as writing tables for scribes, but as dining couches in a triclinium. This hypothesis is provoking sharp debate among Qumran scholars.

Jodi Magness, in her paper entitled "The Community at Qumran in Light of its Pottery," analyzes the published corpus of pottery from Qumran. She finds that the majority is plain, undecorated pottery and that there is a striking absence of fine ware vis-à-vis other contemporaneous collections. She speculates that this may indicate "a deliberate and selective isolation on the part of the inhabitants" (p. 46), a view more in accord with de Vaux's original interpretation of the site.

"Khirbet Qumran and the Manuscript Finds of the Judaean Wilderness," by Norman Golb, continues Golb's criticism of the prevailing "Qumran-Essene" hypothesis. He points out several difficulties with the hypothesis, e.g., the presence of women's and children's graves in a supposedly celibate community. While some of Golb's criticisms are cogent, the solution he proposes—that Qumran was a Jewish fortress without connection to the Scrolls—presents difficulties of its own. For example, what military group inhabited it during the Roman period? If it was a fortress, why is there no evidence for military habitation prior to its destruction? If de Vaux's original thesis is no longer entirely satisfactory, Golb's is less so.

Both Joseph Patrich, in "Khirbet Qumran in Light of New Archaeological Explorations in the Qumran Caves," and Jan Kapera, in "Some Remarks on the Qumran Cemetery," point out difficulties with de Vaux's Essene settlement hypothesis; but neither calls for the radical rethinking of the site that Donceel and Donceel-Voûte and Golb do. Patrich, in discussing a survey of the Qumran caves that turned up disappointingly little new data, points out that there is no evidence for dwellings (huts or tents) outside the buildings, as de Vaux proposed. Patrich suggests that the inhabitants lived ***inside*** the settlement, possibly on the upper stories. Kapera's paper, regarding the cemetery (for which, as he points out, no complete report has ever been published), reaches three conclusions: that the cemetery is Jewish, from the same period as the settlement, and with the same types of pottery; that the atypical character of the burials may indicate sectarian practice; and that some incomplete, charred, or broken skeletons indicate burial after a conflagration or a battle, possibly related to the Great Jewish Revolt of 66–70 C.E. Both authors attempt to reach cautious conclusions based on the evidence at hand, a practice that must be applauded, given some of the wild theories that circulate concerning Qumran.

What all these papers point to is the break-up, after 40 years, of the unquestioning acceptance of de Vaux's original hypothesis and the crying need for the complete publication of the excavation evidence. Archaeology is one of the most exciting topics in Qumran research today and I, for one, am glad that professional archaeologists are taking a renewed interest in the subject.

The rest of the volume consists of papers having to do with textual studies. Of chief interest here is the fact that new broad, synthetic treatments of a variety of topics are beginning to emerge: Eileen Schuller's excellent paper on women in the Dead Sea Scrolls is a good example of this.

The volume itself is attractively and thoughtfully put together. One particularly helpful feature is the inclusion, at the end of each paper, of the discussion that followed, which brings to light areas of disagreement that may not be transparent to the novice reader. However, the editors may come to regret the inclusion of the transcript of a debate that was held at the conference: "Ethics of Publication of the Dead Sea Scrolls: Panel Discussion." This panel discussion was unusually acrimonious and vindictive, and disclosed deep fissures of mistrust and misunderstanding among Qumran scholars. This type of acrimony, which has marked Qumran scholarship for the past decade, has no place in academic debate, and is best left behind and forgotten.

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