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## Review of Schiffman & VanderKam, eds., *Encyclopedia of the Dead Sea Scrolls*

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BOOK REVIEW

## Encyclopedia of the Dead Sea Scrolls

Lawrence Schiffman & James VanderKam, editors  
(Oxford University Press, 2000), 2 vols., 1152 pp. \$340.00

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Before beginning this review a confession needs to be made. I am myself a contributor to this encyclopedia, being the author of eight articles: "Court Tales," "Esther, Book of," "Five Scrolls," "Pseudo-Jeremiah," "Miriam," "Reworked Pentateuch," "Sarah," and "Simon (Hasmonean)." Thus I approved of this project at its inception, and I still approve of it in its final form. The following review, therefore, is not so much a critique as it is a description; the reader is left to judge the merit of both the overall project and its individual articles.

The aim of the *Encyclopedia of the Dead Sea Scrolls*, according to its editors, is "to encompass all scholarship on the scrolls to date, making use of the research of many scholars of international reputation" (x). The word "scrolls" is used here in its broad meaning to refer to all the collections of ancient manuscripts found in the region of the Dead Sea and the Judaeian wilderness in the twentieth century. These collections include the Qumran Scrolls, the Samaria Papyri, the Bar Kokhba texts, Masada and Khirbet Mird. Thus, although

the *Encyclopedia* is more limited in geographical and chronological scope than, say, a biblical encyclopedia, a wider variety of topics is covered than would be the case if the editors had chosen to limit the *Encyclopedia* to the Qumran Scrolls. To produce the entries on this wider range of topics, the editors have assembled a group of contributors who are, as they state, of international repute, coming not only from the United States, Canada, Australia and the United Kingdom (as would be expected in an English-language encyclopedia), but also Germany, Israel, France, the Netherlands, Denmark, Italy, Russia, Spain and Switzerland. Although many of these contributors are known as specialists in Qumran studies, others are from unrelated fields such as the morphological sciences or ethnobotany. The resulting collection of articles is truly "encyclopedic" in scope, ranging from expected topics such as "Essenes," to the unexpected "Flora of Judea."

The articles fall under eight conceptual categories (xii):

1. places and archaeological sites
2. material remains
3. written materials discovered in the Judean Desert
4. related ancient texts
5. history
6. beliefs, institutions, and practices
7. figures
8. scrolls research

Category 8 contains an interesting subset: short articles on the original scholars (such as Roland de Vaux, Eliezer Sukenik, and Frank Moore Cross) and institutions (such as the *École Biblique et Archéologique Française*) involved in scrolls research. All topics are cross-referenced, and both a "Synoptic Outline of Contents" and an index appear at the end of volume two.

The intended audience for the *Encyclopedia* is "educated readers, clergy and scholars" (xi). The articles, therefore, are not highly technical, but are meant to introduce the reader to the major issues concerned with the topic. Each article contains a brief, annotated bibliography, which will lead the reader into more technical books and articles.

As an illustration of the scope of the entries in this encyclopedia, I will review the articles having to do with or touching on archaeology. According to my count there are fifty-three articles that concern archaeology, which can be divided into the following sub-categories: major survey articles (e.g., "Archaeology" by Joseph Patrich); single site articles (e.g., "Daliyeh, Wadi Ed-: Archaeology" by Nancy L. Lapp); articles concerning a single type of material remains or archaeological/architectural feature (e.g., "Leather Goods" by Ann E. Killebrew and "Synagogues" by Lee I. Levine); more general articles, which use archaeological data (e.g., "Judea: Economy" by Ze'ev Safrai); and articles concerning contemporary persons or institutions involved in archaeology or related fields (e.g., "Museums and Collections" by Weston Fields). I will review one article from each of these sub-categories. One weakness of this reference work, as of any reference work, is that it becomes outdated as scholars continue their work. This will inevitably be the case with the *Encyclopedia of the Dead Sea Scrolls*, since the field is a volatile and fast-moving one.

This weakness is already evident and will be noted in the articles I review in the scant two years since its publication. This is the fault of neither the authors nor the editors, but the accepted consequence of producing a reference work in a relatively new area of scholarship, as the editors acknowledge: "The volumes of this encyclopedia are meant to establish a reciprocal relationship between the synthesis of scholarship assembled herein and future study" (vol. 1, xiii). In the case of many of these articles the future is already with us!

The article on "Archaeological Surveys," by Stephen J. Pfann, is meant to introduce the reader to the various excavations that have taken place in the Judean Desert from the mid-twentieth century to the present. It would have been useful if Pfann had begun his survey even earlier and included some of the nineteenth-century archaeological soundings, which still yield important data (for example, C. Clermont-Ganneau, in 1873, made a brief survey of the site of Qumran and excavated one of the tombs). Pfann does make a distinction between excavations carried out by archaeologists in controlled circumstances and those conducted by the bedouin, who were chiefly motivated by a desire to find more written material. He includes a helpful table, including the name of the site, whether uncontrolled excavations took place there, the name of the excavation director, the date, and the sponsoring institutions. Pfann then goes on to summarize the various discoveries by historical periods: First Temple period, Persian-Hellenistic period, Hasmonean-Hellenistic period, the period of the Second Revolt, and the Byzantine-Islamic periods. One can discover useful information in these summaries beyond the bare-bones lists of finds; for example, in the Hasmonean-Hellenistic period Pfann notes that in the excavations of Cave 4, the major scroll cave from Qumran, one quarter of the manuscript fragments were discovered under controlled circumstances, not by the bedouin. The weakness which was discussed above, i.e., the danger of not being up-to-date, is evident; in his discussion of the Cave of Letters Pfann does not mention the most recent excavations, led by Richard Freund of the University of Hartford and Rami Arav of the University of Nebraska at Omaha, probably because they had not taken place when the article was written.

After reading the survey article, the reader who is interested in a specific site should go to the article for that particular site, such as the article on "Qumran: Archaeology," by Magen Broshi. Broshi surveys the excavation history of the Qumran area, beginning with the caves, moving on to the site itself, the small finds, the cemeteries, and finishing with Ein Feshkha. Broshi adheres to what is known as the "consensus" position on Qumran archaeology, first proposed by Roland de Vaux: that Qumran, in its major phases of occupation, was a communal establishment inhabited by the Essenes. While accepting de Vaux's theory in its main outlines, he argues for some revisions to de Vaux's work, especially in stratigraphy and chronology (following the work of J. Magness). In stratigraphy, Broshi argues that de Vaux's Periods Ia and Ib are actually one continuous entity rather than two separate phases. He also revises de Vaux's chronology to claim that Period 1 was not founded until sometime in the first half of the first century BCE and was not abandoned after the earthquake in 31 BCE, but ended in some kind of violent episode in 4 BCE.

Since de Vaux's excavations (1951-1956) have not yet been finally published, there are always interesting tidbits of information to discover in de Vaux's published excavation notes, and every archaeologist who uses them reveals something that sheds new light on the old debates. Broshi is no exception; he mentions that in cave 8 "some one hundred leather thongs and leather tabs with eyelets to be used for the fastening of scrolls" were found (vol. 2, 734). He suggests that Cave 8, which was dug into the marl terrace adjacent to the settlement, was part of a workshop for producing scrolls, thus bolstering the theory that scrolls were produced at Qumran.

Broshi ends his article by summarizing five theories concerning the Qumran site that he terms "non-consensual." While it is clear that Broshi is quick to dismiss these theories, it is also fair to say that they have found few adherents in the scholarly community. Since an encyclopedia is meant to convey the scholarly consensus on any given topic, the rather short shrift Broshi gives to these theories is justified.

Once again, if the reader is interested in a particular aspect of Broshi's article, he or she should then turn to the appropriate entry in the *Encyclopedia*, such as "Skeletal Remains: Human Remains" by Pa-

tricia Smith. Smith notes that three sites associated with the Judaeian Desert finds have yielded human skeletal remains: skeletons from the Hellenistic (*sic*) period were found in the caves at Wadi ed-Daliyeh and possibly at Ketef Jericho; skeletons of the Hellenistic and Roman periods were found at Qumran and other cemeteries; and skeletons from the time of the Second Revolt were found in the caves at Nahal Hever and Nahal Se'elim (Wadi Seiyal). The first and third sets of human remains are probably those of fugitives, the former from the army of Artaxerxes III, and the latter from the Romans.

Smith relates the burials at the sites of Hiam el-Sagha and Ein el-Ghweir to the burials at Qumran, an assessment with which not all scholars agree. She seems to base her identification on the type of tomb found at all three sites: cist tombs with north-south orientation. All three sites contain the skeletons of men, women and children. On this basis, Smith concludes, "It seems then that the Qumran cemetery, like the other Essene cemeteries known from the Judean Desert, contained graves of families rather than members of a monastic community" (vol. 2, 881). This is another example of how recent research has outstripped the articles in this encyclopedia. In 2000, J. Zias challenged the antiquity of some of the skeletons from the Qumran cemetery (the "Munich" collection), particularly those of the women and children (that is, thirteen out of twenty-two), arguing instead that they were bedouin burials from the modern period. If Zias is correct, it would reduce the number of female skeletons among those excavated from the Qumran cemeteries to three. Further, even more recently S. Sheridan has examined all of the extant skeletal remains from Qumran found now in Paris and Jerusalem and concluded that only one (out of eighteen) can be certainly identified as female. These recent investigations certainly change the parameters of the debate; it is no longer possible to base a case for female habitation or family life at Qumran exclusively, or even primarily, on the evidence from the cemetery. Therefore, Smith's conclusion cited above is called into question.

The inclusion of topics that relate to the contemporary study of the Dead Sea Scrolls makes this work a true encyclopedia. An example of this is the article on the "Palestine Archaeological Museum"

by Joseph Zias. Zias first gives a brief history of the museum: it was established by a generous grant from John D. Rockefeller in 1927; the cornerstone of the building was laid in 1930; and the museum was opened to the public in 1938. All this took place under the British Mandate. Since the Museum is located in East Jerusalem, it came under Jordanian control in 1948. The Jordanian government nationalized the museum in 1966. In 1967, after the Israeli conquest of East Jerusalem, the Palestine Archaeological Museum (PAM) was made the headquarters of the Israel Antiquities Authority and renamed the Rockefeller Museum.

This article earns its place in the *Encyclopedia* by virtue of the PAM's leading role in the collection, preservation, and restoration of the majority of the material remains from the Judaeen Desert, including scroll fragments, from 1949 on, regardless of the governing authority. Zias discusses the collection and storage of the scroll fragments, devoting a full paragraph to improved methods of conservation undertaken since 1991. He neglects to mention, however, the role of the PAM in making the original series of infrared photographs taken by PAM photographer N. Albina in the 1950s. These photographs have proven to be an invaluable record of the Qumran fragments especially and are certainly of interest to anyone who has wondered what the mysterious PAM numbers attached to the photographs of the scrolls were. For a brief discussion of these photographs, one must turn to the article on "Photography and Computer Imaging" by Bruce and Kenneth Zuckerman. Unfortunately this article is not cross-referenced at the end of Zias' article. This points up a difficulty with the *Encyclopedia*: the cross-referencing is often not sufficient, and the index is not arranged in a transparent way. For an example not related to photography, one might expect the article on pottery to be listed in the index under the more general heading "archaeology," but it is not, receiving instead only an individual listing.

An example of a more general article which uses archaeological data is the article on "Economic Life" by Ze'ev Safrai and Hanan Eshel. Safrai and Eshel concentrate their discussion on the Qumran community. In their article they assume the identity of the community with the Essenes, and that

the reports concerning the Essenes in the classical sources (Josephus, Philo and Pliny) are basically accurate and can be used in their reconstruction. This is, of course, a point of contention among Dead Sea Scrolls scholars, although it reflects the majority position. Safrai and Eshel likewise assume, with very little discussion, that Qumran was a communal center in which property was held in common, and not, e.g., a fortress or a villa; once again this is the majority opinion in scrolls scholarship.

Safrai and Eshel give an overall picture of economic production in the Dead Sea region, which they describe as thriving. They also emphasize the importance of water collection in this arid region, and the salient fact that even much of the spring water was brackish. The main products were balsam, salt, and bitumen. While Qumran itself did not produce any of these items, the authors claim that the "economy at Qumran was based on commercial relations with the surrounding nonsectarian environment" (vol. 1, 230). The main crop at Qumran was dates, actually grown at its satellite settlement of Ein Feshkha, and used to produce date honey. They also grew barley, raised sheep, produced pottery, and possibly manufactured scrolls for copying.

Eshel and Safrai conclude by discussing the lifestyle of the Qumran sectarians, concerning which they emphasize that community of goods does not necessitate poverty. In fact, the Qumranites lived a simple life, but with a high standard of communal living, as demonstrated by the coin hoards, remains of meat meals, and the number of pottery vessels. This article is an excellent example of "second-level" research on the finds from the Judaeen Desert, which is the future of Dead Sea Scrolls studies.

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