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Einführung in die Qumranliteratur

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This book is a translation and reworking by Porzig of a 2008 Hungarian original by Xeravits. The result is a refreshing and up-to-date introduction to the Qumran Dead Sea Scrolls.

Chapter 1 serves as an introduction to the book. Xeravits and Porzig's treatment of key issues, such as the connection between the Qumran scrolls and the site or the character of the Qumran scrolls collection, is concise and illuminating. The authors strike a convincing balance between neither abandoning nor taking for granted the unity of the collection and the connection between the scrolls and the site. In so doing, Xeravits and Porzig exhibit their familiarity with current debates on these topics among Qumran scholars. The second half of the chapter offers a short bibliography of Qumran studies and introduces the names given to Qumran writings and the presentation of fragments in editions.

Even if they recognize an overall unity in the Qumran collection, Xeravits and Porzig's *Einführung* yields the overall impression that "die Handschriften aus Qumran ein breites Spektrum unterschiedlichster Inhalte und verschiedenster Textgattungen [repräsentieren]" (1). After the general introduction in chapter 1, each chapter that follows discusses a specific subset of the broad spectrum represented by the Qumran scrolls.

Chapter 2, which was absent from the Hungarian original, is devoted to the “biblical” Qumran manuscripts. The first half of the chapter gives an overview of the different kinds of biblical manuscripts, including *tefillin*, *mezuzot*, Aramaic translations (no mention is made of the Greek translations from Qumran Caves 4 and 7), and manuscripts of the “reworked” Pentateuch. Xeravits and Porzig helpfully outline the problems that surround classifications of the biblical manuscripts into text-types. The second half of the chapter presents four case studies that illustrate the problems faced by students of the biblical Qumran manuscripts.

Chapter 3, which deals with the broad category of “parabiblical” texts, is divided into three sections: texts based on the Pentateuch; texts based on the Prophets; and testamentary literature. The first section offers treatments of the Enoch literature, Jubilees, and the Temple Scroll, as well as several minor compositions. The second section covers the pseudo-Ezekiel, pseudo-Jeremiah, and pseudo-Daniel material. The third section deals with the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs, the Aramaic Levi Document, and the Testaments of Qahat, Amram, and Levi found at Qumran.

In chapter 4 Xeravits and Porzig discuss “exegetical texts.” A large part of the chapter deals with the (continuous) pesharim, peshar as a hermeneutical method, and historical references in the Qumran commentaries. The final part of the chapter discusses thematic commentaries and the presence of messianic figures in the Qumran scrolls.

Chapter 5 is concerned with rule texts and halakic writings. Particular attention is paid to the S(erekh) and D(amascus Document) traditions and their relationship. Xeravits and Porzig clearly demarcate the problems that surround this complicated issue and carefully offer some solutions. The second section of the chapter deals with halakic texts, of which 4QMMT takes pride of place.

The sixth chapter treats calendrical texts. It offers a broad introduction to the importance of calendars in Second Temple Judaism and discusses Qumran texts that concern themselves with calendrical issues.

Chapter 7 offers an overview of liturgical and poetic texts from Qumran. The distinction between these two types of writings tends to be blurry, thus Xeravits and Porzig’s decision to discuss them in tandem. The texts most elaborately discussed are Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice and the Hodayot.

The Qumran wisdom texts are the topic of chapter 8. After a short treatment of biblical wisdom (including relevant passages from the Great Psalms Scroll [11Q5]), special attention is paid to Instruction, Mysteries, Beatitudes, and Wiles of the Wicked Woman.

Chapter 9 is devoted to historical texts. The first part of the chapter treats some historical texts and historical narratives (including Tobit); the second part offers a case study by discussing the representation of the Hasmonaean dynasty in the Qumran scrolls collection.

Finally, chapter 10 turns attention to eschatological and apocalyptic texts. After a short introduction of the terms *eschatology* and *apocalypticism*, Xeravits and Porzig discuss eschatological and apocalyptic Qumran texts. Particular attention is paid to the M(ilhama) traditions.

An appendix lists all Qumran manuscripts and their editions.

Xeravits and Porzig have produced an excellent introduction to the Qumran scrolls. The authors outline the most pressing issues in the interpretation of the Qumran fragments and manuscripts clearly and concisely. Particularly helpful is their decision to focus on the description of individual writings. As a result, this *Einführung* does not engage in elaborate discussions of the Qumran movement or the Qumran-Essene hypothesis, and Xeravits and Porzig present the Qumran scrolls collection as a pluriform cross-section of Jewish literature from the Second Temple period. This is a welcome improvement over many previous introductions to the Dead Sea Scrolls.

As always, room remains for disagreement on particulars. For instance, the treatment of Qumran hermeneutics in chapter 4 is not entirely in line with the most recent developments in the field. Xeravits and Porzig interpret the key passage 1QpHab 7 to say that “der *eigentliche* Sinn des jeweiligen prophetischen Wortes ... dem biblischen Propheten in seiner Wirkungszeit gar nicht offenbart worden [ist]” and that the Teacher of Righteousness “dank einer *zusätzlichen Offenbarung* der *alleinige* wahre Ausleger ist” (107). More elaborate engagement with the recent work of Jutta Jokiranta, Shani Tzoref, and others would presumably have led to a different interpretation of this passage in Peshar Habakkuk, which understands the Teacher of Righteousness and the Peshar commentators as continuing the revelation bestowed upon the ancient prophet rather than receiving a new one.

This shows that, where there is disagreement, it is not vital, and it should not distract from the major contribution to the study of the scrolls that Xeravits and Porzig make. This *Einführung* is a highly commendable introduction to the Qumran collection that offers a lively and in-depth survey of the scrolls and the most important issues in their interpretation.