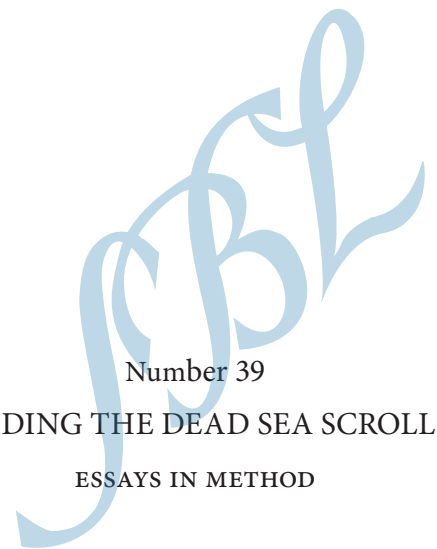
READING THE DEAD SEA SCROLLS

ESSAYS IN METHOD

Society of Biblical Literature

Early Judaism and Its Literature



Number 39

READING THE DEAD SEA SCROLLS

ESSAYS IN METHOD

READING THE DEAD SEA SCROLLS

ESSAYS IN METHOD

George J. Brooke

with the assistance of
Nathalie LaCoste

Society of Biblical Literature
Atlanta

READING THE DEAD SEA SCROLLS

ESSAYS IN METHOD

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Brooke, George J.
Reading the Dead Sea scrolls : essays in method / by George J. Brooke.
pages cm. — (Early Judaism and its literature ; number 39)
Includes bibliographical references and index.
ISBN 978-1-58983-901-4 (paper binding : alk. paper) — ISBN 978-1-58983-902-1 (electronic format) — ISBN 978-1-58983-903-8 (hardcover binding : alk. paper) 1. Dead Sea scrolls. I. Title.
BM487.B76 2013
296.1'55—dc23

2013022945

Printed on acid-free, recycled paper conforming to
ANSI /NISO Z39.48–1992 (R1997) and ISO 9706:1994
standards for paper permanence.

For Peter and Sonia,
David and Louise,
Rachel and Leon

Contents

Abbreviations

AB	Anchor Bible
ATDan	Acta theologica danica
BA	*Biblical Archaeologist*
BASOR	*Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research*
BETL	Bibliotheca ephemeridum theologicarum lovaniensium
BHT	Beiträge zur historischen Theologie
BibInt	*Biblical Interpretation*
BibOr	Biblica et orientalia
BJS	Brown Judaic Studies
BSOAS	*Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*
BZAW	Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft
CBC	Cambridge Bible Commentary
CBET	Contributions to Biblical Exegesis and Theology
CBQ	*Catholic Biblical Quarterly*
CBQMS	Catholic Biblical Quarterly Monograph Series
CQS	Companion to the Qumran Scrolls
DJD	Discoveries in the Judaean Desert
DSD	*Dead Sea Discoveries*
EBib	Etudes biblique
FAT	Forschungen zum Alten Testament
FOTL	Forms of the Old Testament Literature
HeyJ	*Heythrop Journal*
HBT	*Horizons in Biblical Theology*
HSS	Harvard Semitic Studies
HTR	*Harvard Theological Review*
ICC	International Critical Commentary
IOS	*Israel Oriental Studies*
JJS	*Journal of Jewish Studies*
JNSL	*Journal of Northwest Semitic Languages*
JQR	*Jewish Quarterly Review*
JSJ	*Journal for the Study of Judaism*
JSJSup	Supplements to the Journal for the Study of Judaism
JSOT	*Journal for the Study of the Old Testament*
JSOTSup	Journal for the Study of the Old Testament: Supplement Series
JSPSup	Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha: Supplement Series
JSS	*Journal of Semitic Studies*
LHBOTS	Library of Hebrew Bible/Old Testament Studies

LNTS	Library of New Testament Studies
LSTS	Library of Second Temple Studies
MSU	Mitteilungen des Septuaginta-Unternehmens
NIDB	*New Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible.* Edited by Katharine Doob Sakenfeld et al. 5 vols. Nashville: Abingdon, 2006–9.
OLA	Orientalia lovaniensia analecta
OTL	Old Testament Library
OTP	*The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha.* Edited by James H. Charlesworth. 2 vols. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1983–85.
RevQ	*Revue de Qumrân*
SBLMS	Society of Biblical Literature Monograph Series
SBLRBS	Society of Biblical Literature Resources for Biblical Study
SBLSCS	Society of Biblical Literature Septuagint and Cognate Studies
SBLSP	*Society of Biblical Literature Seminar Papers*
SBLSymS	Society of Biblical Literature Symposium Series
SBT	Studies in Biblical Theology
SJLA	Studies in Judaism in Late Antiquity
SOTS	Society for Old Testament Studies
StPB	Studia post-biblica
STDJ	Studies on Texts of the Desert of Judah
TBN	Themes in Biblical Narrative
ThWQ	*Theologisches Wörterbuch zu den Qumranschriften*
TSAJ	Texts und Studien zum antiken Judentum
UTB	Uni-Taschenbücher
VTSup	Supplements to Vetus Testamentum
WUNT	Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament
ZTK	*Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche*

Previous Publications

Apart from chapter 10, which has not been published before, the essays in this book are reprinted from several different sources where they first appeared as listed below. They are reprinted here with permission as indicated.

Chapter 1: "The Qumran Scrolls and the Demise of the Distinction between Higher and Lower Criticism." Pages 26–42 in *New Directions in Qumran Studies: Proceedings of the Bristol Colloquium on the Dead Sea Scrolls, 8–10 September 2003*. Edited by Jonathan G. Campbell, William John Lyons, and Lloyd K. Pietersen. Library of Second Temple Studies 52. London: T&T Clark International, 2005. Republished with the permission of Bloomsbury Publishing Plc.

Chapter 2: "The Formation and Renewal of Scriptural Tradition." Pages 39–59 in *Biblical Traditions in Transmission: Essays in Honour of Michael A. Knibb*. Edited by Charlotte Hempel and Judith M. Lieu. Journal for the Study of Judaism Supplements 111. Leiden: Brill, 2006. Republished with the permission of Koninklijke Brill NV.

Chapter 3: "Justifying Deviance: The Place of Scripture in Converting to a Qumran Self-Understanding." Pages 73–87 in *Reading the Present in the Qumran Library: The Perception of the Contemporary by Means of Scriptural Interpretation*. Edited by Kristin De Troyer and Armin Lange. SBLSymS 30. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2005. Republished with the permission of the Society of Biblical Literature.

Chapter 4: "Memory, Cultural Memory, and Rewriting Scripture." Forthcoming in *"Rewritten Bible" after Fifty Years*. Edited by József Zsengellér. Leiden: Brill. Republished with the permission of Koninklijke Brill NV.

Chapter 5: "Hypertextuality and the 'Parabiblical' Dead Sea Scrolls." Pages 43–64 in *In the Second Degree: Paratextual Literature in Ancient Near Eastern and Ancient Mediterranean Culture and Its Reflections in Medieval Literature*. Edited by Philip S. Alexander, Armin Lange, and Renate J. Pillinger. Leiden: Brill, 2010. Republished with the permission of Koninklijke Brill NV.

Chapter 6: "Controlling Intertexts and Hierarchies of Echo in Two Thematic Eschatological Commentaries from Qumran." Pages 181–95 in *Between Text and Text: The Hermeneutics of Intertextuality in Ancient Cultures and Their Afterlife*

in Medieval and Modern Times. Edited by Michaela Bauks, Wayne Horowitz, and Armin Lange. Journal of Ancient Judaism Supplements 6. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2013. Republished with the permission of Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht.

Chapter 7: "*Pesher* and *Midrash* in Qumran Literature: Issues for Lexicography." *Revue de Qumrân* 24 (2009–10): 79–95. Republished with the permission of Les Editions Gabalda.

Chapter 8: "Genre Theory, Rewritten Bible, and Pesher." *Dead Sea Discoveries* 17 (2010): 332–57. Republished with the permission of Koninklijke Brill NV.

Chapter 9: "Room for Interpretation: An Analysis of Spatial Imagery in the Qumran Pesharim." Pages 309–24 in *The Dead Sea Scrolls: Texts and Context*. Edited by Charlotte Hempel. Studies on the Texts of the Desert of Judah 90. Leiden: Brill, 2010. Republished with the permission of Koninklijke Brill NV.

Chapter 11: "Types of Historiography in the Qumran Scrolls." Pages 211–30 in *Ancient and Modern Scriptural Historiography–L'Historiographie biblique, ancienne et moderne*. Edited by George J. Brooke and Thomas Römer. Bibliotheca Ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovaniensium 207. Leuven: Peeters; University Press, 2007. Republished with the permission of Uitgeverij Peeters.

Chapter 12: "What Makes a Text Historical? Assumptions behind the Classification of Some Dead Sea Scrolls." Pages 207–25 in *The Historian and the Bible: Essays in Honour of Lester L. Grabbe*. Edited by Philip R. Davies and Diana V. Edelman. Library of Hebrew Bible/Old Testament Studies 530. London: T&T Clark International, 2010. Republished with the permission of Bloomsbury Publishing Plc.

Chapter 13: "The Scrolls from Qumran and Old Testament Theology." Pages 59–75 in *Problems in Biblical Theology: Essays in Honor of Rolf Knierim*. Edited by Henry T. C. Sun and Keith L. Eades with James M. Robinson and Garth I. Moller. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997. Republished with the permission of Wm B. Eerdmans Publishing.

Preface

Several people have helped me over the years to formulate my ideas on how the Dead Sea Scrolls might be read. It is always invidious to name names, lest someone important be forgotten, but I think that any book that attempts to make a contribution to debates about method should in some way name those who have been significant influences or sparring partners, so that the reader can all the more readily see where much of what is written in this book is coming from.

Two Philips deserve a special mention. In a long-standing academic friendship Philip Davies has forced me to stand back from the details that have often interested me most to ask questions about questions; he is a master at posing good questions based in sound method, and many of his methodological insights are all the more enduring as a result. A collegial friendship of almost equal length with Philip Alexander has challenged me from the other end of the spectrum; an expert philologist and reader of texts, as well as a major religious historian, in fact a walking encyclopedia on the Bible and its reception in both Judaism and Christianity, he has challenged methodological superficiality with encouragement to look again at texts in context. Though it is not always apparent in the footnotes in what follows, I owe both of them much as I have tried to make my own way with the study of the Dead Sea Scrolls and related compositions from antiquity.

The list of editors of the books and journals where many of the studies were first published indicates those who have invited me to make contributions of various kinds and to them all I am grateful. Several of the papers in this book were first presented in conferences or symposia, and the numerous conversations that followed often sharpened and improved my thinking; my interlocutors all helped bring focus to what is here. Most of the essays are republished with only minor changes and corrections. Chapter 10 is previously unpublished. Chapter 13 has been extensively revised.

The most important and senior contemporary voice of methodological insight into the study of the Dead Sea Scrolls and many other texts is that of Carol Newsom. Though I have often tried to cover topics other than those that she has so incisively treated, I myself and the whole field owe her much. In recent years I have also learned much from a somewhat less senior group of scholars, whose works I admire greatly, not least for their methodological rigor and insight. Among them are Maxine Grossman, Charlotte Hempel, Hindy Najman, and Judith Newman, to name but the most influential.

Judith Newman has been encouraging in several other ways too, not least as the former editor of the SBL series Early Judaism and Its Literature who commis-

sioned this collection. She has also facilitated its preparation through encouraging some of her own students to refine some of the details of what is written here. I owe a special debt of gratitude to Nathalie LaCoste, who has assisted with the overall consistency of the manuscript and compiled the concluding bibliography that makes a contribution of its own for those who want to think a little about what they are doing when they read texts. To my mind it certainly enhances the value of a collection like this, as do the indexes. I am grateful, too, to Rodney Werline, the current editor of the series, for his gentle prodding and encouragement. My thanks, too, to the SBL staff and HK Scriptorium who have been most helpful, prompt, and meticulous.

Other people have challenged me to articulate my ideas clearly too, especially my colleagues in Biblical Studies at the University of Manchester: Adrian Curtis has consistently demanded common sense, Todd Klutz has insisted on sensitivity to lexical choices and the way words work, and Peter Oakes has provided ways for understanding how social contexts are reflected in texts. In addition to the conference venues where several of the chapters were first heard, the Ehrhardt Seminar at the University of Manchester has been a regular forum where many of my ideas have been discussed by kind colleagues, generous honorary research fellows, and inquisitive postgraduate students. Many audiences have listened to me giving either academic or popular lectures on the scrolls and have then posed questions that have helped me clarify what I was trying to say. My wife, Jane, and the family have encouraged and supported, teased and cajoled, and it is to our three children, Peter, David, and Rachel, and their spouses, Sonia, Louise, and Leon, that I dedicate this book.

Manchester
March 2013

Introduction

This book contains a collection of my essays on how some of the Dead Sea Scrolls might be read and analyzed. There was a time when the field of biblical studies was in the vanguard of the formation and application of innovative methodology. Over the last two generations or so, it has tended to be the case that the field more broadly has been a follower rather than a leader. Within the discipline of the study of the Dead Sea Scrolls and its many specialist subdisciplines, this has been even more the case, with the study of the scrolls lagging behind in many ways even the study of the books of the Bible and their contexts.

The majority of members of the first generation of scholars interested in the Dead Sea Scrolls focused primarily on the reading and editing of the many fragmentary manuscripts from the Judean wilderness. Somewhat surprisingly, in my view, they barely kept in mind their formal training in various disciplines of biblical studies as they read and studied the scrolls. This was evident, most obviously, in the tendency to read history straight off the pesharim, as if that was an appropriate way to read texts that did not even pretend to be historiography. It was obvious, too, in the way that few compositions were assessed closely in terms of source and redaction criticism. As with many things, there were significant exceptions, even among first-generation scholars, but it is taking some time for students of the Dead Sea Scrolls to catch up with their colleagues in biblical studies, let alone with students in other areas of the humanities and the social sciences.

More recent exceptions are now there to be seen in relation to many texts. Attention to reading strategies is evident in several publications, most notably, in Carol Newsom's work of several kinds,[1] and in both the monograph and the edited collection of essays by Maxine Grossman,[2] as well as the less innovative but persistent collection of studies edited by Michael T. Davis and Brent Strawn.[3] This volume complements those works and attempts to draw attention both to how the scrolls can be illuminated by various features of methodological practice and also to how in turn those practices can be called into question by the evi-

1. See especially C. A. Newsom, *The Self as Symbolic Space: Constructing Identity and Community at Qumran* (STDJ 52; Leiden: Brill, 2004).

2. M. L. Grossman, *Reading for History in the Damascus Document: A Methodological Study* (STDJ 45; Leiden: Brill, 2002); eadem, ed., *Rediscovering the Dead Sea Scrolls: An Assessment of Old and New Approaches and Methods* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010).

3. M. T. Davis and B. A. Strawn, eds., *Qumran Studies: New Approaches, New Questions* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007).

dence of the scrolls. Nobody can be an expert across multiple approaches, and some of the essays in this volume suffer from my own inadequate appreciation of all the implications of the methods being used; nevertheless, I have concluded that it is better to attempt to bring the scrolls into dynamic interaction with questions and methods, both old and new, than to be confined to ever narrower specialist concerns, even though those of course serve a purpose.

The studies collected here are clearly not exhaustive of what could be said on method and the study of the Dead Sea Scrolls, but they cover a range of topics, often with very specific agendas or worked examples. Several of them concern my long-term grappling with issues having to do with midrash and pesher. These studies could have been ordered in several different ways. I hope in the short remarks that follow to indicate briefly why they are now ordered in the way they are as well as to explain one or two of the most significant features of each essay.

There is no better place to start than with the fragmentary manuscripts from the Judean wilderness and the compositions that they contain. All texts go through processes of composition and have afterlives, sometimes short, sometimes long. The first essay is an attempt to refocus the concern of textual criticism, a discipline that has commonly thought of itself as concerned almost exclusively with the afterlives of compositions, not least as errors creep in during the processes of scribal transmission. As a result, the canons of textual criticism have generally been formulated in relation to manuscript evidence that is many years, if not several centuries, distant from the production of the literary composition itself, and so, as a disciplined approach to manuscript data, it has commonly been understood to function best when largely independent from those literary production processes. Such a distinction applies especially to canonical texts, not least those of Jewish and Christian traditions.

The first essay is really concerned to point out the possible overlapping continuities between the processes of composition and the processes of transmission, and so to request a fully respected place for textual criticism among other critical approaches that are often more concerned with the ways texts are formed rather than transmitted. But there is really no clear or sharp dividing line between the processes of formation, production, and transmission. The essay argues that text critics should not shy away from asking larger literary questions.

Just as textual criticism should be repositioned so as to contribute to the manuscript evidence that belongs to the transmission of texts that are of increasing authority, so it is important to present a frame of reference for understanding how literary traditions form, develop, influence other traditions, and sometimes decay. Thus, in the second essay, I have attempted to indicate some of the complex workings of literary traditions, especially those that seem to accrue a greater authority than others. This complexity is illustrated by considering several compositions that themselves seem to have complicated histories. In particular the chapter pays attention to what might be taking place in such compilations as 1 Enoch and 4 Ezra as well as in some of the sectarian and nonsectarian Dead Sea Scrolls. Little has been written on the overarching character of tradition. The

second essay seeks to plug that hole, in particular by reference to the coherent picture of the topic that emerges when the writings and perspective of one modern scholar are described, assessed, and analyzed.

Inasmuch as the study of tradition is the study of texts within the webs of social history, so a third essay considers how and why it is that any particular individual might be likely to identify with one set of traditions and interpretations of tradition rather than another set. In this study some aspects of deviance theory, as developed in the social sciences, are used to describe and explain how any individual might make the transition from a more common or general attitude to authoritative scriptural texts within widely accepted social norms toward a particular or deviant reading of those same texts. Although commonly concerned with contemporary social contexts, the application of deviance theory enables one to see how individuals, often but not always members of elite groups, come to locate themselves in a particular way in relation to a variety of traditions. It is suggested that a web of social interactions are as important as any particularly convincing interpretation of an authoritative scriptural tradition.

Three essays then develop the idea that traditions can be molded to appeal to various audiences for a wide range of reasons. Deviance theory might help to describe and explain how and why a particular reader comes to identify with a certain tradition and its interpretation. However, another set of ideas can be used to understand some of the processes that are inherent in the transmission and development of literary traditions that are based on earlier authoritative texts and use that authority for their own purposes. Chapter 4 considers the role of memory in the transferral of tradition. Not much has been done from this perspective on the composition of the Dead Sea Scrolls. The concern of this chapter is to underline how both individual scribal memory and also some sense of collective memory play significant roles in such transmission. Individual scribes use their memories in the transmission process, a factor that sometimes lies behind the emergence of some variant readings, but they also pay attention to wider issues of cultural memory as they contribute to the creative adaptation of those compositions on which they work for their own contemporary purposes. The understanding of collective memory as applied to a range of texts in antiquity can also be used to provide some focus concerning why there are certain developments, even embellishments, in the increasing textualization of tradition, and that sometimes those embellishments deliberately distort the tradition. In addition, observations can be made on how and why various institutions use selected traditions to bolster their authority, and on why some aspects of cultural tradition are sometimes forgotten, often perhaps deliberately.

Many factors come into play as those responsible for their composition develop texts that will pay attention to the traditions to which they belong and yet make them contemporary and relevant for a new audience, so that new readers are encouraged to think that it is those they leave behind who are deviant, not they themselves. So the essay that is chapter 5 grapples with the complicated matter of how authors and editors come to construct new compositions that are

closely based on earlier authoritative models. With the notion of literary hypertextuality it is possible to recognize in several of the "parabiblical" compositions that survive from Second Temple times an intense set of concerns that both respect the integrity and authority of the textual tradition that is being reworked and rely on that integrity and authority to move the tradition into a new phase, sometimes both in time and place.

The use of the notion of hypertextuality moves the methodological discussion of this collection of essays toward consideration of the more explicit ways in which literary compositions are created, assembled, and edited. Much of the consideration of the role of memory and of the notion of hypertextuality is related to the so-called rewritten or reworked compositions in which the use of earlier authoritative tradition is generally implicit. In chapter 6 the explicit and implicit uses of literary echoes from the past are the focus of a study on hierarchies within intertextuality. Intertextuality as literary process has been applied in some areas beyond its own usefulness, but if attention is paid to the specifics of citation and allusion, then a case can be made for its methodological retention and application in two respects. On the one hand, it is often possible in Jewish compositions of the Second Temple period to identify earlier texts that are cited or alluded to by a subsequent author. Simply listing citations and allusions is worthy in itself as an indication of what kinds of tradition an author or editor or scriptural interpreter wishes to identify with. But, on the other hand, it is often possible to say more about how such intertexts are being used, since some will appear to have greater authority than others. Sometimes such greater authority is visible in the way a single intertextual pericope can be used several times by a later author, perhaps with a structural purpose in mind or so as to form a thread upon which the beads of other less significant intertexts can be threaded.

In all this it is always necessary for scholars to consider carefully what labels will best describe not only the literary objects that they are studying but also the processes through which they attempt to identify and control their own subjective readings. Chapter 7 considers the specific terms *pesher* and *midrash*. Both terms evidently have a technical role in at least some of the literary compositions in which they are used. In order to appreciate their specific uses, it is necessary to ensure that the terms are placed both within a suitable trajectory of early Jewish traditions and also within a wider map of Semitic philology. As this is done and the sources for comparison are assembled, so a range of choices have to be made about which comparative materials should be given priority. For example, is it more suitable to prioritize Akkadian or Aramaic evidence for the better appreciation of the term *pesher*, and what might a decision for one or the other say about the likely settings that might inform scriptural interpretation? Or, in relation to the term *midrash*, is it more appropriate to work forward from scriptural materials that might have a range of meanings concerning "explanation" or "interrogation," or to work back from subsequent sources and understand the

term as meaning something like "study"? Whatever the case, modern readers need to be sensitive to how they construct meaning.

Chapter 8 follows on elegantly from the semantic discussion of pesher and midrash. It is an essay that considers what advantages might be had from applying to the same categories what some literary theorists have to say about genre, since the terms are often taken in context as describing some kind of interpretative processes but then are used in a more general fashion of the genres of interpretative literature in which they occur. This is problematic, and the chapter attempts to move the discussion forward by analyzing the nature of the problem. For the understanding of genre to be salient, the literary corpus that supposedly defines it needs to be delimited while also being open to the addition of new members that both cause a redefinition and indicate that all genres have porous boundaries; there are few, if any, pure examples of texts, not least because all genres evolve and such evolution introduces instability into generic definition. Perhaps one should begin with a single composition and look for comparable texts or perhaps one should begin with a much larger corpus of compositions that all share an agenda of being concerned with the interpretation of authoritative traditions. If the latter option is the case, which seems reasonable to me, then pesher compositions certainly need to be set in a much larger framework of interpretative texts, such as might include the so-called rewritten scriptures in which the interpretation is largely implicit, so that the significant elements of explicit interpretation become all the clearer. From the broader perspective it then becomes possible to identify aspects of form, content, setting, and function each of which can reflect particular matters of authorial intention, historical or literary contexts, the text as artefact, or the likely assumptions of first readers. In all this, cross-cultural analogies can be of assistance too, just as with lexical definitions.

Two essays then consider features of the functions of texts that have generally been overlooked. One aspect of the function of a text concerns the places where it is or might be used. In chapter 9 I have asked a basic question of the explicit running commentaries from caves 1 and 4 at Qumran, which seem to reflect the views of the group at least part of which lived and worked at Qumran itself. The question concerns whether any of those running commentaries reflect in any way the spaces where they might have been used for various didactic purposes. It seems to me to be worth considering, for those and other compositions, whether the particular places and spaces where the texts were read influenced the content of the interpretation in any way, as preachers might refer to the buildings where they are performing, or influenced the dynamics of the performance and its reception in any discernible way. What size of room was used? How was the seating for teachers and students arranged? Can the texts be linked in any meaningful way to the site where some of them might have been composed, taught, edited, copied, and transmitted? In fact little or no local information of direct influence can be discovered in these compositions. This gives rise to a further set of considerations concerning the absence of such contextual reference, and more

importantly it allows the modern reader to speak more clearly about what spatial features are indeed to be found in the texts. In many ways the continuous running commentaries encourage their students to conceptualize place and space as having to do with things other than where they study; the study of the commentaries from the perspective of space enables the modern reader to perceive how those texts point their students beyond their immediate circumstances. All this is important for those who would read such continuous pesharim as chiefly concerned with the historical circumstances of the Teacher of Righteousness and his flight to Qumran.

In chapter 10 I have asked a rather different set of questions about the function of the continuous running pesharim, questions that have implications for the understanding of several other sectarian compositions too. In this previously unpublished chapter I have attempted a psycho-dynamic reading of the exegesis in the pesharim. Building on common agreements about the date, form, structure, genre, and language of the pesharim, I move to consider other aspects of these interpretative compositions. First, I discuss how they overcome the experience of the silence of God, perhaps even a sense of divine abandonment, in their understanding of the ongoing processes of prophecy. Interpretation not only releases the meaning of earlier prophetic texts, but it also has a prophetic character itself, since it claims to be conveying the secrets of the texts being interpreted, secrets that cannot be read off the surface of the earlier prophetic oracles. Second, the ambivalent attitude to Jerusalem and the temple is, on the one hand, a strong description of all that seems to be wrong with other Jews and their handling of the tradition, but it is also, on the other hand, the locus of eschatological hope, of restoration and the reestablishment of security. The melancholic experience of abuse and abandonment is overcome in part at least through the interpretation of the same prophetic texts that describe the destruction of the maternal Jerusalem and its temple. Third, the human participants in the drama, the sectarians themselves, are full of self-justification in order that in the construction of an alternative view of the world there is a self-understanding that is full of strategies for coping with disenfranchisement.

The literary compositions from the eleven caves at and near Qumran constantly cause modern readers to think again about the categories they use to describe and analyze them. While there has been some considerable debate around the notions of apocalypse, wisdom, prophecy, and liturgy, there has been little observation about the place of history in the compositions found in the Qumran scrolls. Chapters 11 and 12 address issues of historiography. In chapter 11 I have attempted to describe something of the variety of historiographies apparent in both the sectarian and the nonsectarian scrolls; it soon becomes apparent that the events of the past are engaged in many ways, but not in any extensive fashion that attempts to fill out a linear political history of the centuries immediately preceding the establishment of the sect at some time in the second century B.C.E. There are alternative ways of constructing time and of appreciat-

ing the moment for which the elect have been chosen. Chapter 12 is an attempt to expose and expound the assumptions that lie behind the use of the label "historical" to describe both the contents and the genre of a small group of compositions found in the Qumran caves. It soon becomes clear that modern scholars have used and abused the label, imposing a twin set of assumptions on highly fragmentary textual remains. The first assumption is that the label "history" is particularly suitable for people and events arranged in a linear fashion; the second is that the term can be readily applied to those people and events that are seen as elite or pivotal. Both those assumptions can be challenged when the few fragmentary texts that have been assigned the label are set in a broader historiographical context.

A final essay pays particular attention to the way that the Dead Sea Scrolls contribute to, complicate, and qualify the role of the theological reading of the Bible as a whole, especially the Old Testament as a complete unit, about which more theologies have been constructed than for the Hebrew Bible as such. The discipline exercised by Old Testament theologians commonly works with an assumption that it is finely controlled by historical considerations. Those considerations are grounded in historical exegesis that has been characteristic of the last two hundred and fifty years or more in the West and are all to do with the formation of textual traditions, usually many centuries before certain text forms of those traditions became authoritative or canonical. Upon such considerations an edifice is built that seeks to identify the coherence of the collection of compositions that form a scriptural canon. But the scrolls from the eleven caves at and near Qumran show clearly that what is now contained in the Masoretic Text has had a very long compositional and editorial history. It might be possible to describe the developing theological views of any one biblical book as it is passed on in the Second Temple period, but the construction of a theology for the Old Testament as a whole is really possible only as a canonical exercise for a later time.

These essays thus cover a range of topics from textual criticism to the writing of theologies. On the way, there is considerable attention to how texts come to be composed and to the traditions that they re-present. There is consideration of several different aspects of genre, especially matters to do with generic labels and the place of function in appreciating genres. There is also much attention to the readers and writers of the sectarian commentaries. It is the multiple references to the various forms of scriptural interpretation in the sectarian and quasi-sectarian literature that give some overall coherence to this collection of essays and that also indicate that there are still many methodological questions to be asked of those and other sectarian texts for their better understanding.