This new volume is a welcome addition to the expanding library of books which explore how the field of Dead Sea Scrolls studies came to be. The book, as indicated in the preface, was inspired by the deaths of the majority of the first generation of scrolls scholars and the desire to collect memories of them and their work while still relatively fresh in the minds of their students.


The essays in the section “Dead Sea Scrolls Scholarship in Israel” include “Israeli scholarship on the Qumran community” by Devorah Dimant; “Israeli research on the ideology of the Qumran community” by Bilhah Nitzan; “Israeli scholarship on the biblical texts from the Judean Desert” by Emanuel Tov; “Qumran research in Israel: rewritten Bible and biblical interpretation” by Michael Segal; “The liturgical texts from Qumran in Israeli research” by Bilhah Nitzan; “Trends and themes in Israeli research of the halakhah in the Dead Sea Scrolls” by Aharon Shemesh; “Israeli research into Hebrew and Aramaic at Qumran” by Steven E. Fassberg; and “Excavations in the Judean Desert and at Qumran under Israeli jurisdiction” by Hanan Eshel.

The section devoted to “Dead Sea Scrolls Scholarship in Europe” includes “Qumran research: contribution of the École biblique et archéologique française in Jerusalem” by Émile Puech; “Qumran research in France” by André Lemaire; “Dead Sea scrolls scholarship in the United Kingdom” by George J. Brooke; “Research of Qumran scrolls in the Netherlands” by Eibert J. C. Tigchelaar; “A history of Qumran scrolls research in Spain” by Florentino García Martínez and Julio Trebolle Barrera; “Qumran research and biblical scholarship in Germany” by Jörg Frey; “Basic research, methods and approaches to the Qumran scrolls in German-speaking countries” by Annette Steudel; “Qumran research in Italy” by
Corrado Martone; “Qumran research in Nordic countries” by Sarianna Metso; and “Qumran research in Eastern and Central Europe” by Ida Fröhlich.

By and large this collection successfully captures for posterity both the history and the state of the field. It provides a very thorough survey of major developments in Dead Sea Scrolls scholarship and people who made them happen (in many cases helpful biographies are also provided). In addition to discussing the history of research, several articles also discuss the excavation of the caves and Qumran, and the discovery, acquisition, and distribution of the scrolls (see, for example, Brooke on the role of Manchester and Schuller on McGill University).

Among the highlights of the volume is Jassen’s article which puts some early scholars of the scrolls like Saul Lieberman back in the spotlight. The discussion of his work is an important reminder of what was lost by the exclusion of Jews from the field after the establishment of the international team of editors and the limited access provided to scholars of all persuasions. Similarly, the essays of Frey and Steudel open the door to asking more questions about the impact of Nazi-sympathizing and the denazification process on the way Karl Georg Kuhn and others read “Jewish” texts during and after World War II.

Several issues with the organization of the book do not undermine the excellent quality of the individual components but need to be highlighted because they affect how this field (or any field for that matter) is perceived by both participants and observers. In this context the issues of nationalism and location prove awkward and do not provide a meaningful way to describe the field. First, identifying what should count as a national contribution is difficult to ascertain. Discussion of the contribution of Florentino García Martínez is included in his own article on research in Spain and, since he directed a center at Groningen, he also receives extensive attention in Tigchelaar’s essay on research in the Netherlands. Marty Abegg produced several books while living in the United States but has spent the better part of his career engaged in research and writing in Canada. Whether his contributions are Canadian or American is not clear but they are no less significant if described as one, the other, or both.

Second, the volume makes no mention of work done in the Middle East (outside of Israel), Africa, or Australia (or other overlooked places). By way of an example, Peter Flint is mentioned approximately 20 times, but his teachers and former classmates in South Africa are left out of the volume. Johann Cook at the University of Stellenbosch has published more than a dozen articles on biblical scrolls, Hebrew orthography, and the Dead Sea Scrolls database. He studied with Charles Fensham, a South African who earned his Ph.D. with William Albright. John Clifton Lübbe at the University of South Africa wrote his dissertation on 11QtgJob and has published approximately a dozen articles on Qumran materials in Revue de Qumran and elsewhere. The Journal for Semitics published by the Southern Africa Society for Near Eastern Studies has published two dozen articles...