A. Steudel, Der Midrasch zur Eschatologie aus der Qumrangemeinde (4QMidrEscha\textsuperscript{a,b}): Materielle Rekonstruktion, Textbestand, Gattung und traditionsgeschichtliche Einordnung des durch 4Q174 ("Florilegium") und 4Q177 ("Catena A\textsuperscript{'}") repräsentierten Werkes aus den Qumranfundten (Studies on the Texts of the Desert of Judah 13), E.J. Brill, Leiden 1994, xi and 235 pp., 3 Plates and 2 loose folded photographic reconstructions, cloth Dfl.150,—. ISBN 90 04 09763 5.

This is a slightly revised form of a dissertation completed under the supervision of Hartmut Stegemann and submitted at the University of Göttingen in 1990. It is an important piece of work for several reasons.

To begin with, Steudel provides an exhaustive and comprehensive rereading of two significant fragmentary manuscripts which were prepared for their principal edition, published in 1968, by J.M. Allegro (with the assistance of A.A. Anderson). Through working with the actual manuscripts themselves, Steudel has acquired a first hand acquaintance with the evidence and a feel for suitable readings which those who write about the scrolls at second hand often lack. Amongst cruces Steudel suitably renders mqds 'dm (4Q174 3:6) as ‘Heiligtum von Menschen’ (p. 31; also ‘Menschetempel’ and ‘Menschenheiligtum’, p. 165), and she sides with J. Strugnell (RevQ 7 [1969-71], 221: ‘peut être’) and myself (Exegesis at Qumran [Sheffield, 1985], 108), in tandem with E. Puech (La croyance des Esséniens en la vie future [Paris, 1993], 34), in reading m\textsuperscript{c}şy twdh in 4Q174 3:7, over against m\textsuperscript{c}şy twrk; m\textsuperscript{c}şy twdh has been argued for again most recently by H.-W. Kuhn (‘Die Bedeutung der Qumrantexte für das Verständnis des Galaterbriefes,’ New Qumran Texts and Studies [ed. G.J. Brooke; Leiden, 1994], 205-209). In 4Q174 3:16 she restores the text as if from Ezek. 37:23, which is surely correct, though both the recent translations in English (F. García Martínez, 1994; G. Vermes, 1995\textsuperscript{b}) still persist in making reference to Ezek. 44:10. Overall the readings are judicious, the renderings apt, and the reconstructions cautious and justifiable.

Steudel’s work is also significant because it is based on a rigorous description and application of the methodology for scroll reconstruction which her Doktorvater has long advocated. The benefits and limits of the methodology are both strikingly exemplified. Many of the first generation of editors were satisfied simply to allocate fragments to various manuscripts and apart from some obvious features of content often organised...
the presentation of the material on the basis of the size of the fragments, from largest to smallest. Stegemann, more than anyone else, has convinced us all that much more attention should be paid to the material remains themselves. It is not just a matter of noticing the shape of the edges of fragments in order to propose suitable joins, but to use the various shapes to suggest common experiences of damage, as is successfully suggested by Steudel even for quite small fragments, e.g., 4Q174, frags 5 and 12. Such common features may permit proposals concerning where fragments may have rested on top of each other; in particular, a repeated pattern of damage may allow the placing of fragments in order once some detailed calculation of the increasing or decreasing width of the turn of the scroll is taken into account. Steudel's reconstruction of 4Q177 uses most clearly the vertical damage of fragments 5, 6 + 8, 9, 11 + 7, 2, 3, and 12 to place them in a fully justifiable order which can then be confirmed on other grounds. Other patterns of damage have to be taken into account too, such as the common way in which the central tie will cause a stress fracture along the middle of the manuscript. It is striking in the photographic representation of both 4Q174 and 4Q177 how much damage occurs along the middle of the manuscripts. Overall Steudel's work allows us to see for the first time that for 4Q174 we most likely have remains of at least six columns and for 4Q177 the remains of five.

The methodology has limits, however, and Steudel's work has demonstrated these too. Without internal signals based on content, the location of small fragments remains difficult in any manuscript which is already highly fragmentary. Decisions about how many columns might have preceded and might have followed those which exist are somewhat arbitrary unless there is a combination of physical evidence and something in the contents indicating limits. The identification of 4Q174 and 4Q177 as two copies of the same composition remains problematic; as Steudel acknowledges, they have some obviously different characteristics, such as the palaeography of their hands (4Q174 'formal'; 4Q177: 'rustic semiformal'), and their orthography. They cannot be two parts of the same manuscript. Because there are no overlaps between the two manuscripts, it is on the basis of the overall character of their content, supported by the similarity in their dimensions, that she feels obliged to conclude that 174 and 177 are two copies of the same work; so, even once all the attention to detailed reconstruction is undertaken, the identification of compositions depends chiefly, indeed almost exclusively, upon analysis of their content. Overall, since there can be no complete certainty that we are dealing with two copies of the same work, it is a little misleading for Steudel to have designated the remains of 4Q174 as columns 1 to 6 and the remains of 4Q177 as columns 8 to 12, as if she can be so confident of the nature of the original text from which they were copied.