Issue title:

Materiality and Textuality in the Dead Sea Scrolls: Essays in honour of Eibert J. C. Tigchelaar.

Introduction

This issue of Dead Sea Discoveries is dedicated to Eibert J. C. Tigchelaar. We want to honor in this issue his seminal and programmatic work on the material culture of the manuscripts from the Qumran caves. Even though he has contributed to this set of essays as a co-author, the editors of this thematic issue and the other contributors together with the editorial board of *Dead Sea Discoveries* offer this work to Eibert Tigchelaar in appreciation of all he has contributed in so many ways over a long career. His editorial work both for DJD and for the collaborative *Dead Sea Scrolls Study Edition* has been exemplary, his own monographs have indicated in a rigorous manner how larger ideas should always be controlled by attention to multiple levels of detail, and his ability to find items that need a fresh consideration has made him the contemporary master in our field in the production of meritorious short notes.

This thematic issue of *Dead Sea Discoveries* is devoted to the material culture of some of the manuscripts from the Judean desert. It is not an overstatement to claim that the discoveries of the Dead Sea Scrolls have been the single most important factor in turning the concerns of some, even many biblical scholars back to asking questions about how knowledge of the material of manuscripts might change the way in which the character of any text might be perceived and its transmission appreciated in greater depth. Of course, there has long been awareness amongst students of the Hebrew Bible that Codex Leningradensis or the Ben Asher manuscript tradition are important witnesses in themselves to the state of the text at certain historical moments, but too often discussion of material evidence has been and continues to be skipped over and students make all kinds of assumptions about the final form of the text in some abstract setting in antiquity. For New Testament scholars, interest in the early scriptural papyri and even in the great uncials often seems to be seen as the hobby of a small group of marginalized (or should that be marginal!) specialists, rather than as the fundamental starting point for all engagement with the text. But the Scrolls have changed things. They provide us with first hand primary material evidence from the time of the Hasmoneans and Hillel, from the period from before Judas Maccabee to Jesus and Josephus and then beyond. And this primary material evidence is now recognized as just that: primary, the necessary starting point.

The changes brought about by the Scrolls to the understanding of material concerns lying behind any and all texts is evident in four generations of scholarship. In the first generation, the concerns with materiality were obviously prompted by all that was coming to light from the Caves at and near Qumran and elsewhere. Even if there was an immediate fascination with the textual contents of the manuscripts, both those better preserved and those in a very fragmentary state, those scholars who first handled and worked on the Scrolls knew they had to consider material evidence, even if only at a basic level, as they engaged with fragile remains and tried to assemble manuscripts, sometimes from dozens of fragments, some of which were very small indeed. The earliest photographic records indicate how important material considerations were from the outset. Nevertheless, the first generation left plenty of work for others to do.

The work of the second generation of scholars is neatly summarized by the reconstructions of the Cave 1 manuscript of the Hodayot. By the mid-1980s two of the scholars of that generation most active in material reconstruction had independently come up with remarkably similar proposals for the reordering and placement of the principal sheets and of some of the smaller fragments of 1QH^{a}. One was Hartmut Stegemann who was so influential that his name is now widely used to represent a method for the reconstruction of manuscripts from partial remains; the other was Émile Puech who became best known for his masterly reconstruction of various scripts, detailed and convincing work done in its first and most difficult stages without computer aids. Stegemann, Puech and others of the generation encouraged and trained up a group of younger scholars to develop the application of their methodologies. The dissertations by Carol Newsom and Eileen Schuller were landmarks as previously unpublished manuscripts from Cave 4 were presented editorially for the first time with explicit attention to material data.

The third generation has included an increasing number of scholars, particularly those entrusted with the production of the editions of Cave 4 and Cave 11 manuscripts for the DJD series under the editorship of Emanuel Tov. Amongst those editors a good proportion have engaged with the material remains of the manuscripts, often with the lenses provided by the earlier generations of scholars. As well as editions of previously unedited fragmentary scrolls, several scholars have engaged in the reconsideration of the editorial work of others, reappraising their insights often with closer attention to detail, both material and textual-philological. Émile Puech has spanned this generation too in his multiple studies. Another leader of the reappraisal of the evidence has been Eibert Tigchelaar who has become well known for a string of short notes and lengthier studies which have reconsidered all the photographic evidence as well as the material data.

The five articles in this theme issue indicate something of the direction of travel for what we might label the fourth generation of scholars engaged with the material remains of the Dead Sea Scrolls. The recent monograph co-authored by Jonathan Ben-Dov, Asaf Gayer, and Eshbal Ratzon has both summarized the state of play concerning the materiality of the Scrolls as brought to fruition by the first three generations of scholars and also has indicated what needs to be done variously for each manuscript in a programmatic fashion, not least through its attention to digitization.[1] The following studies engage with what has been achieved, reconsider the evidence from a variety of perspectives in subtle combinations, and work with various methodologies, electronic and otherwise, to make significant advances in our appreciation of the material culture reflected in the Scrolls from the Qumran caves.

Mladen Popović and Eibert Tigchelaar provide a significant study which challenges widely held ideas about so-called “deluxe” manuscripts. The category of deluxe manuscripts has been constructed largely upon criteria to do with size and layout. The key and much-cited contribution on this was made by Emanuel Tov in his landmark study on scribal practices.[2] However, in this essay by Popović and Tigchelaar, scholars are reminded that, though size might be a significant feature in some or even several cases, more important for establishing deluxe status is the style of the penmanship. Their argument has a striking implication for all engagement with manuscripts, namely that the ink on the skin is as much

[1] Jonathan Ben-Dov, Asaf Gayer and Eshbal Ratzon, with the assistance of Anna Shirav and Einat Tamir, *Material and Digital Reconstruction of Fragmentary Dead Sea Scrolls: The Case of 4Q418a*, STDJ 136 (Leiden: Brill, 2022).

[2] Emanuel Tov, *Scribal Practices and Approaches Reflected in the Texts Found in the Judean Desert*, STDJ 54 (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 125–29.

part of the material evidence as is the size and preparation of the animal skin or papyrus sheet. An important part of their argument is based upon how some of the bookrolls in the Oxyrhynchus finds have been assessed.[3]

For their calligraphic analysis Popović and Tigchelaar engage with a group of ninety-six Hasmonaean biblical manuscripts. Building on earlier work by Popović on the Isaiah and Rule of Community manuscripts, they propose the categorization of handwriting styles into three types: elegant, professional, or substandard.[4] Particular attention is paid to how elegant and professional hands can be differentiated in order to establish which manuscripts might most securely be described as in an elegant hand. They consider those manuscripts to be elegant which could have been "more appealing to the reader than everyday professional manuscripts because of their higher degree of writing consistency and legibility, or a sustained calligraphic enhancement of the standard letter forms of the entire script." Within an overview of ninety-six manuscripts with Hebrew/Aramaic Archaic or Hasmonaean script, only eleven manuscripts qualify as elegant and even some of them may belong in the category of professional: 4Q83? (Archaic/Archaic Hasmonaean), 4Q15, 4Q69?, 4Q99, 5Q2 (Middle Hasmonaean), 4Q4, 4Q73, 4Q92 (Late Hasmonaean), and 1Q8?, 4Q14?, and 4Q51 (Late Hasmonaean/Early Herodian).

Three important issues arise from the study. First, the article is an object lesson in the need for scholars constantly to review the earlier work of others and wonder about the criteria that have been used. Second, the article is a valuable reflection of comparative ideas in the consideration of contemporary material. Third, the implications of the study are drawn out cautiously. Most importantly, it becomes apparent that most high-quality Hasmonaean-type biblical manuscripts have differences textually from the MT. As a result, the authors see "no reason to correlate these manuscripts's textual characteristics with a specific location of production or to argue for different social or cultural backgrounds."

Another issue, how material evidence might indicate a manuscript's function, is brought to the fore in the article by Hila Dayfani. She reconsiders 4Q37 and some other manuscripts from the Qumran caves with groups of excerpted scriptural texts. She outlines how they share certain features, notably the size of writing block. She offers a very careful reconsideration of the material evidence of 4Q37 itself to confirm certain features of the manuscript and its likely textual content. Although 4Q37 is very commonly categorized as a manuscript copy of Deuteronomy, two points undermine this over-simplified view, namely that the manuscript contains excerpts, not the whole book, and that alongside Deuteronomy there is also an excerpt of Exodus. Dayfani provides a close analysis of the fragments of the manuscript as they display five textual units. With careful diagrammatic overlaying of the extant fragments, common damage patterns become readily discernible, making a convincing case that the sections of Exodus and Deuteronomy most likely do indeed come from the same manuscript. That observation is confirmed by the distances between corresponding points of damage which indicate incremental increases towards the start of the scroll. More precisely for content she indicates that some of the texts that are selected in the manuscript (Exod 12–13; Deut 5–6 and 11) are cited in several phylacteries and even Deut 32 is also documented in 4QPhyl N.

[3] See William A. Johnson, *Bookrolls and Scribes in Oxyrhyncus* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004).
[4] Mladen Popović, "Book Production and Circulation in Ancient Judaea as Evidenced by Writing Style, Quality and Skills in the Dead Sea Scroll Isaiah and Serekh Manuscripts," in *The Dead Sea Scrolls and Ancient Media Culture*, ed. Travis B. Williams, Chris Keith and Loren Stuckenbruck, STDJ 144 (Leiden: Brill, 2023), 199–265.

A major contribution of Dayfani's study is to focus on the possible place of liturgy in how 4Q37 should best be understood. There are at least two aspects to this. On the one hand, thinking about liturgy as the context for the use of 4Q37 and the reason behind its production moves attention away from a straightforward description of the contents of the manuscript in relation to its text-critical value towards a more suggestive view of its function and, therefore, of function as a key criterion in the definition of the various material aspects of the manuscript and also its textual contents. On the other hand, liturgy as the setting in life for the use of the manuscript indicates how the manuscript plays a part in the better reconstruction of the reception history of the Pentateuch in Second Temple times, not just as a legal text at the heart of intellectual debate but as something used and interpreted for cultic or ritual purposes. The material evidence of the manuscript reconsidered with attention to its details can help broaden our understanding of the manuscript and its function.

The essay by Ayhan Aksu poses a fresh question as he asks about whether the material evidence of one set of manuscripts with certain key shared features might enable the identification and compilation of criteria for identifying groups of manuscripts which were produced or circulated within the same scribal context. Aksu's article focuses on four papyrus opisthographs: 4Q433a/4Q255, 4Q499/4Q497, 4Q503/4Q512, and 4Q509/4Q496/4Q506. Opisthographs are not common among the finds that have come from the caves at and near Qumran. A first distinctive characteristic of this group of manuscripts is that they are all written on papyrus. All four opisthographs have literary compositions on each side; the manuscripts were not simply reused for documentary jottings. While Dayfani's study gives fresh focus to the role of the criterion of function for the better understanding of 4Q37 and other similar manuscripts, Aksu's essay gives greater focus on the setting of this group of opisthographs. It is not a matter of arguing that the manuscripts were penned by the same scribe, but rather that they seem to belong to or reflect a similar socio-religious context. In describing such a context Aksu takes both material and textual data into consideration.

After brief introductory comments about each manuscript, Aksu proceeds to describe and assess their material features such as writing style, columnisation, and scribal markings. Such descriptive work is then combined with the analysis of the textual information contained on each manuscript. From a paleographic perspective 4Q433a, 4Q499, 4Q497, 4Q503, 4Q512, 4Q509, and 4Q496 seem to share several features, notably being in a semi-formal hand and containing scribal corrections. Aksu describes 4Q255 and 4Q506 as "outliers;" 4Q255 is penned cursively, while 4Q506 can be dated to a more recent period. The seven compositions which can be seen to share various characteristics most probably were produced for everyday use, their informality reflecting personal use or use by those familiar with such a writing style, such as professional colleagues. The material evidence supports such a conclusion: irregular columns, marginal signs and corrections, blank spaces—all seem to indicate a smaller circle of scribes working amongst themselves for private or personal reasons. Consideration of the contents of the compositions on this set of opisthographs also indicates a common focus on liturgical themes. The juxtaposition of material and textual information allows the conclusion that this set of manuscripts is indeed a cluster of some kind, even though such a cluster is not to be defined in a tight, narrow or exclusive fashion.

Michael Johnson's article on the War Rule (1QM) is an important material presentation which attempts to resolve the placement of fragments that remain debated.

The article's importance lies in three factors: it provides a comprehensive overview of information about the fragments both from the first and also from subsequent studies of the War Rule, it combines that information with clear analyses of multiple statements about the location of various fragments, and it explains and justifies its own fresh conclusions through the combined methods presented in sum in the work of Ben-Dov, Gayer and Ratzon, enhanced through the novel application of 3-D modelling.

The article pays particular attention to those fragments (1QM 3, 9, and 10) that were detached from the scroll when it arrived with Eleazer Sukenik in Jerusalem. Johnson's 3-D visualization of the placement of Frag. 3, together with the presentation of the undulating damage patterns and correlated biological damage, confirms the location of the fragment proposed by Émile Puech. For Frag. 9 3-D visualization of the surrounding layers shows that Sukenik's original proposal for placing it in 1QM 15 is to be preferred to other proposals; the pattern of the discoloration of the verso also supports the placement. The debate about the placement of Frag. 10 is settled in favor of Col. 14 by analysis of both the overall damage pattern and the preferred reading of the surviving letters. One fragment cluster (1QM 2, 8; 1Q33 2) is also discussed; that cluster has been assigned to 1QM 19–20 by some, to 1QM 20–21 by others, and to a different scroll altogether (1QM^{a}) by yet others, but Johnson provides several arguments that enable the conclusion that the fragments do indeed belong with the rest of 1QM as 1QM 19–20 as Sukenik proposed; visualization forms an important part of Johnson's clarificatory argumentation. Johnson then draws out the implications of such a location for the better understanding of 1QM as a composite document. In this way Johnson's study nicely complements those of Dayfani on the character of 4Q37 with its collection of excerpted texts and of Aksu on the nature of opisthographs containing more than one composition.

The closing contribution by Asaf Gayer is a detailed consideration of the two small papyrus fragments assigned to 4Q69 (4QpapIsa^{p}). The fragments exhibit distinctive material traits which Gayer sets alongside its scribal features to present a holistic view of the scroll and its purpose. The choice of papyrus, the layout of the text on the scroll, the use of semi-cursive script and other calligraphic matters all together strongly indicate that 4Q69 was not a complete copy of the book of Isaiah, but a partial copy which was probably a mid-level scribal exercise. Just as William Johnson has provided some key notions from the Graeco-Roman world in the study by Popović and Tigchelaar in this theme issue, so Gayer acknowledges the important role in his thinking of the approach to scribal exercises of Raffaella Cribiore.[5] At intermediary levels of scribal training authoritative texts such as Homer's *Iliad* were used to hone a scribe's skills. Within the Qumran community the book of Isaiah held a similarly esteemed place; it is quite probable that the use of Isaiah 5 in 4Q162 indicates the particular significance for the community of that chapter and thus its suitability as the basis for a scribal exercise.

For 4Q69 Gayer considers four factors. First its medium is papyrus, a material relatively rarely used for "biblical" texts (and later proscribed by the rabbis: y. Meg. 1.71d). Furthermore, the papyrus is of a quality akin to that associated with Egyptian school exercises, though the nature of the surviving remains makes it difficult to be precise on this matter; at least the existence of Isaiah in a sole papyrus copy likely indicates a specific use. An element of subjective speculation certainly remains, but that can be tempered by consideration of other factors. So, second, digital reconstruction of the column width results

[5] Raffaella Cribiore, *Writing, Teachers, and Students in Graeco-Roman Egypt*, ASP 36 (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1996).

in a width of about thirty letter spaces, a column of roughly 8 cms. Through comparison with other similar scrolls it is most likely that the manuscript was not a copy of the whole book of Isaiah. Third, Gayer describes closely the instability of the scribal hand and argues that its irregularities are akin to what might be expected with a medium level of expertise. And, fourth, there are the multiple textual variants the frequency of which reliably indicates the text's origin in an educational setting.

In conclusion. The impact of Eibert Tigchelaar's work can be felt in several different areas in Dead Sea Scrolls research. His editions and identifications are exemplary for future work in our field. The methods of his work on fragments and the material reconstruction of texts have been passed on to a range of younger scholars, many of whom have been inspired by his seminal publications. Eibert Tigchelaar's scholarship has consistently demonstrated the need to combine detailed work on actual fragments and texts with the larger interpretative analysis of the formation, transmission, transformation, and scholarly interpretation of both biblical and nonbiblical, canonical and deuterocanonical texts. Foundational, for example, are his co-authored article on ancient and modern nomenclature, his extensive work on pseudepigraphy, authorship, and pseudo-prophetic texts, or his broad discussion of the concept of the spirit. His emphasis on a wide approach, including the Hellenistic world, has been taken up by his students, and is now widely adopted among younger scholars.

Equally important for the field are his leadership and mentorship, and his building of networks of junior scholars and fresh research collaborations. Crucial is the way in which he has articulated, in the past and in the present, what needs to be done for the field of Dead Sea Scrolls research. His clarity and implementation of that vision has created and formed a new generation of scholars. It is because of Eibert Tigchelaar, perhaps more than any other scholar of his generation, that the Dead Sea Scrolls have been increasingly integrated into the study of antiquity in a way that has radically changed our understanding of scribal activity and the literary imagination of antiquity.

Eibert Tigchelaar's contributions have shaped and defined the field in creative, lasting and profound ways. We thank you, Eibert, for all you have contributed to our better understanding of the material evidence from the Qumran caves; may you continue to enlighten us for years to come.

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