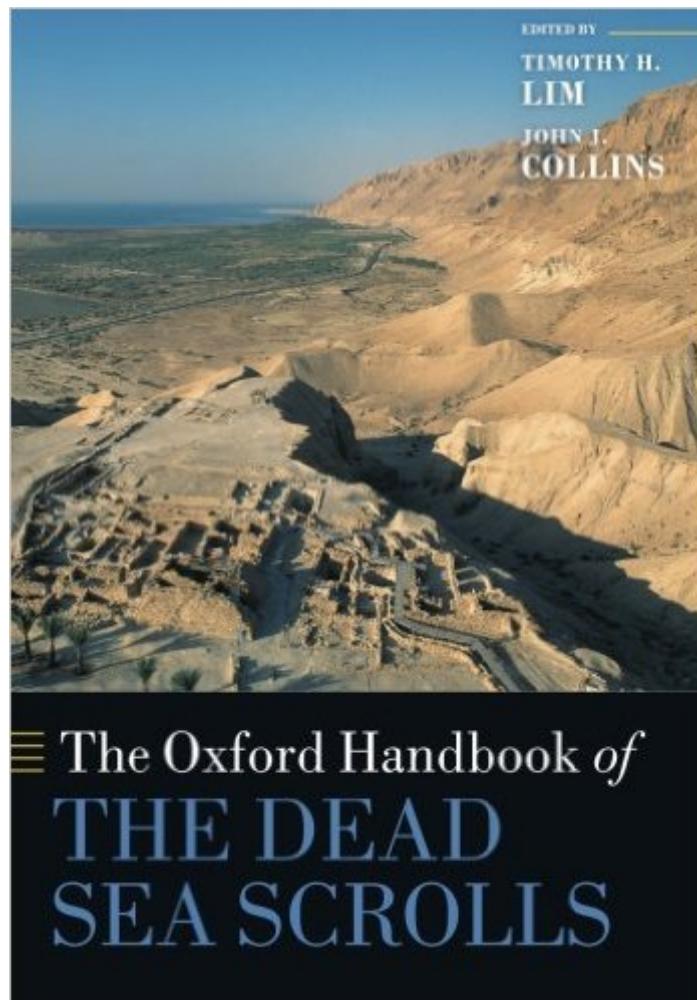


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# The Oxford Handbook Of The Dead Sea Scrolls (Oxford Handbooks)



## **Synopsis**

In 1946 the first of the Dead Sea Scroll discoveries was made near the site of Qumran, at the northern end of the Dead Sea. Despite the much publicized delays in the publication and editing of the Scrolls, practically all of them had been made public by the time of the fiftieth anniversary of the first discovery. That occasion was marked by a spate of major publications that attempted to sum up the state of scholarship at the end of the twentieth century, including *The Encyclopedia of the Dead Sea Scrolls* (OUP 2000). These publications produced an authoritative synthesis to which the majority of scholars in the field subscribed, granted disagreements in detail. A decade or so later, *The Oxford Handbook of the Dead Sea Scrolls* has a different objective and character. It seeks to probe the main disputed issues in the study of the Scrolls. Lively debate continues over the archaeology and history of the site, the nature and identity of the sect, and its relation to the broader world of Second Temple Judaism and to later Jewish and Christian tradition. It is the Handbook's intention here to reflect on diverse opinions and viewpoints, highlight the points of disagreement, and point to promising directions for future research.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

Several fine scholars participated in this collection of essays that provides mostly good assessments and information, information largely already available elsewhere, but in scattered publications. The editorial process, apparently, was lengthy; some important relatively recent

developments go unnoticed. For example there's a very clear account of the legal issues raised by the 4QMMT text copyright case, but no mention of the convictions (now on appeal) in the Golb sockpuppet identity theft and harassment case. Scientific research is unfortunately underrepresented, e.g., missing is notice of Ira Rabin et al. DSD 2009, 97-106, showing the ink of 1QH has high bromine levels characteristic of the Dead Sea region, indicating the ink was mixed and penned near the Dead Sea. Also missing, e.g., is the DNA evidence that some skin used for writing surface was from the Nubian ibex, native to the Dead Sea region, but not to Jerusalem. Of course many scrolls were brought to Qumran (probably from Jerusalem and elsewhere)--as was always recognized--but attempts to separate the scrolls from the caves and the settlement are mere distortions of history. Speaking of history, Maxine Grossman has an essay that follows a good contribution by Carol Newsom, both theory-oriented. Max offered a sentence (p. 719) that puzzles: "Where we leave the story will depend on the particular evidence for any given scenario and our reading of it; the result is not. as some critics would have it, a relativistic soup (Magness, forthcoming), at least not by the time the project is complete." When "the project is complete"--what does that mean in this context?--and you have history to offer, Max, please drop me a line. Perhaps the most overreaching and unreliable essay is by Michael Wise.

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