

example, in his conclusion he argues that the scribes did not understand that God “lost control of history” (202), an idea today considered ‘apocalyptic.’ However, God’s inability to hear the cries of a suffering humanity in the Story of the Watchers implies that God had lost control temporarily. Similarly, in the Animal Vision, God abandons the nation to the shepherds, whom he knows will afflict the nation more than He wants them to. The faith of the authors of the apocalypses is that God will retake control and set the world right. Their noble call to action reflects this faith.

Canada’s Big Biblical Bargain: How McGill University Bought the Dead Sea Scrolls

Jason Kalman and Jaqueline S. du Toit. Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2010.

ISBN: 978-0773536883. Pp. 424.

Reviewed by Andrew B. Perrin, McMaster University

With the Dead Sea Scrolls leaving Toronto’s Royal Ontario Museum just months ago, Jason Kalman and Jaqueline S. du Toit’s *Canada’s Big Biblical Bargain: How McGill University Bought the Dead Sea Scrolls* is a timely and valuable account of Canada’s instrumental role in bringing the Qumran discoveries to the world and McGill University’s dashed hopes of having a substantial amount of the Cave 4 materials housed on campus. The volume comes along at a time noted for increased academic interest in the modern historiography of the finds.

The book opens with a brief forward by one of Canada’s prized Dead Sea Scrolls scholars, McMaster University’s Dr. Eileen Schuller. Following this, *Canada’s Big Biblical Bargain* is presented in two parts. The first, comprised of four chapters, tells the tale of the discovery of the Scrolls largely from the perspective of McGill’s Professor R. B. Y. Scott, who arranged for the purchase of some of the materials for the university between 1954–56 for \$20,000 (14). In the introduction the authors state that their goal is to contextualize McGill’s crucial role in the unfolding Scrolls saga within the changing world of Canadian academia in the post WWII years as well as broach the thorny issue of the ownership of objects of cultural heritage. Bemoaning that most accounts of the discovery are disappointingly brief and merely draw on “the personal recollection[s] of the people directly involved” (12–13), the authors assert that their history will rest primarily on personal correspondences and related documentary materials in the archival collections of McGill, the United Church of Canada, and the Israel Antiquities Authority. However, to be sure, Kalman and du Toit at points also rely on personal interviews or recollections and few academic accounts of the discoveries are tarnished by nostalgia.

The second chapter reconstructs the storyline of how Scott answered the fundraising call of Roland de Vaux (then director of the *École biblique et archéologique française de Jérusalem*) and subsequently negotiated purchase terms with G. Lankaster Harding (then director of Antiquities of the Palestine Archaeological Museum, PAM). The detailed account of this chapter moves away from the Indiana Jones-like story that has become so closely linked with the discovery, and gives readers a sense of how McGill's early financial commitments saved the scrolls from falling into the hands of tourists or antiquities dealers on the black market. One of the most valuable elements of the chapter is the publication of the first official list of McGill's extensive allotment compiled by Harding (81). Canadian Scrolls scholars are certain to swoon when they see the impressive list of compositions that could have been housed in Montreal!

Chapter 3 tracks the slow unraveling of the original purchase agreement in light of several complicating factors: the Cave 11 finds, increasing nationalism in the Jordanian government, the removal of Harding from his position at the PAM, Scott's move to Princeton, the Suez crisis, and the building political tensions that eventually erupted in the Six Day War in June of 1967. Out of the rollercoaster of optimism and political realities that marked the years of 1956–63, Kalman and du Toit single out a number of intriguing details relating to the McGill purchase. For example, they cite a candid interview of de Vaux by a Montreal reporter in 1960 in which de Vaux stated, "the Bedouin might grow impatient with us and sell fragments to unauthorized buyers. *Quelle catastrophe!*... McGill University bought some scrolls ... Wouldn't others in Canada like some too?" (103). Despite de Vaux's plea and Scott's hopes, however, the move towards the nationalization of the Scrolls could not be halted, and the monies provided by McGill a decade earlier were reimbursed in April 1963 (121).

The final chapter of part one is devoted to the topic of ownership of the Scrolls and the authors offer some reflections on how Jordanian policy shifts, attitudes towards nationalization and the outcomes of the Six Day War complicated the matter. Drawing on John Merryman's work on the legalities of ownership and movement of cultural objects, Kalman and du Toit focus the discussion on the "interdependent considerations of preservation, truth, and access" (130). While they do not adopt a hard stance on contemporary ownership of the Scrolls (and who can blame them), they do underscore that McGill's purchase did not "in spirit" violate the terms of the later established UNESCO *Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property* (129). They also point out the different criterion one might appeal to when defining ownership: "historical and cultural patrimony" (Israel) and "territorial link" (Jordan) (131).

The second section runs for 167 pages and contains annotated correspondence from R. B. Y. Scott and other parties involved in negotiating McGill's purchase of

Cave 4 texts. By nature these records are a dense read and the most salient pieces of information are already integrated into the body and notes of part one; however, they do provide some contour to the characters involved, and one gains a better sense of the human emotions, hopes, and disappointments of the McGill purchase. While Scrolls scholars are less likely to give this section more than a cursory read, historians of the Scrolls will find its contents illuminating.

The dual contribution of this book is immediately apparent: not only does it provide an account of the Scrolls' discovery from a fresh perspective, it also elucidates the details of a hitherto unwritten chapter of Canadian history. At times the authors' fondness for their *alma mater* and warm adoration for Scott bleeds through, but on the whole the history is noted for its candor, effective integration of unknown or unused documentation, and ultimately does justice to an integral facet of the story of the Scrolls that is all too often glossed over. Despite the fact that the "McGill Scrolls" never found their home on Canadian soil, certainly the efforts of R. B. Y. Scott and McGill ensured that the collection remained a unity to be studied by scholars of the Bible, early Judaism, and Christian origins for generations to come.

Making Transcendents: Ascetics and Social Memory in Medieval China

Robert Ford Campany. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2009.

ISBN 978-0-8248-3333-6. Pp. xviii + 300.

Reviewed by Dominic Steavu, Heidelberg University

In this captivating inquiry into the religious landscape of early medieval China, Robert Campany elucidates the social and rhetorical mechanisms that made transcendents (*xian* 仙; 僊) and their claims possible.¹ *Making Transcendents* breaks with traditional scholarship on the topic by shifting attention away from practices of self-cultivation, and focusing instead on the processes whereby the successful transcendent was constructed within the religious *imaginaire* of the period.² Divided into eight chapters, this study rests on the analysis of a loosely cohesive collection of

1. Campany's previous monograph, *To Live as Long as Heaven and Earth: A Translation and Study of Ge Hong's Traditions of Divine Transcendents* (Berkeley: University of California Press 2002), dealt with the textual and historical dimensions of the quest for transcendence. In many respects, *Making Transcendents* constitutes a companion to this volume.

2. Earlier studies on transcendents, or "immortals" as they were sometimes referred to, defined the figures in relation to the techniques and methods they performed. We may cite here the works of Maxime Kaltenmark, Henri Maspero, Isabelle Robinet, Ngo Van Xuyet, Yamada Toshiaki and Robert Campany himself.