Baesick Choi, *Leviticus and Its Reception in the Dead Sea Scrolls from Qumran.* Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2020. Hardback. Pp. ix + 229. €36/$49. isbn 9781532692239.

This volume publishes a revised version of the author’s Ph.D. dissertation supervised by George Brooke at the University of Manchester. The purpose of this volume is to point to the use of Leviticus material in the Dead Sea Scrolls and “to show how closely Leviticus influenced the composition of texts in both the Qumran and pre-Qumranic communities or the wider movements of which they were a part” (8–9). Choi effectively achieved this purpose, systematically pointing to quotations, allusions, and interpretations of the text of Leviticus in several late Second Temple period works. He demonstrates how Leviticus, especially the Holiness Code of Lev 16–27, has influenced the structures, theologies, and ideologies of these works.

The volume is clearly written and well-organized. After a brief introduction, discussing methodological issues and approaches, the second chapter presents the manuscripts from the Judean Desert that contain complete or partial copies of Leviticus. Each manuscript is accompanied by a description of its content, physical characteristics, scribal features, and textual affiliation. In this chapter, Choi rightly considers 4QReworked Pentateuch manuscripts as copies of the Pentateuch, in accordance with the growing consensus about their scriptural status. Leviticus Scroll from Nahal Arugot and Mur/ḤevLev are not included, following Tigchelaar, who described them as unprovenanced (10–11). However, the classification of the cryptic texts 4Q249j-l as scriptural manuscripts, as well as the identification of 2Q9 with Lev 23:1–3, rather than Num 18:8–9 as suggested by Baillet in DJD III, which has been followed by Tov, Kugler and Baek, Himbaza, and others, seems to be doubtful.

Choi concludes that “there was probably a single edition of Leviticus in circulation” (47), confirming the assertion that the text of Leviticus is relatively stable (Ulrich; Kugler and Baek). As most of the data in Chapter II are already accessible elsewhere, Choi stresses that its main contribution is to point to the functions of the manuscripts (11). The evaluation of these functions is based on their material features, such as size, layout, and script, relying upon the principal editions of the various manuscripts. Unfortunately, in certain cases, as e.g. in 4QLevc (24–25), Choi cites the material considerations offered in the respective principal editions without explication or reevaluation.

Choi concludes that many of the Leviticus manuscripts can be classified as large or very large scrolls. These scrolls are prestigious copies that are suitable for public cultic settings, indicating that Leviticus was treated as important in Second Temple Judaism. However, Choi does not consider the possibility that large-format manuscripts, notably those that included not only Leviticus but also Exodus or Numbers, may have contained the entire Pentateuch. If so, these copies attest to the use of the Pentateuch as a whole, and not only of Leviticus.

Chapters III–VII comprise a systematic discussion on secondary uses of Leviticus in non-scriptural compositions. Following a short survey of the history of the research of each composition, Choi points to the reuse of Leviticus in these texts, accompanied by brief discussions.

Chapter III-IV focuses on two Rewritten Bible texts – the book of Jubilees and the Temple Scroll, respectively. Chapter III demonstrates that Leviticus, notably the Holiness Code, highly influenced themes in Jubilees, such as Shabbat, Jubilee, and other themes derived from the laws, covenant, chronology, and priestly ideology of Leviticus. Chapter IV points to the influence of Leviticus on the Temple Scroll, in respect to theology (reestablishment of the covenant: Lev 26:42 / 11QTa 29:9–10); rewriting strategy (the first person singular in reference to the Lord is especially dominant in Leviticus, as well as in the Temple Scroll); and the use of Leviticus motifs (cultic practices; places of lamp and lights; themes of land and sacrifice). Choi demonstrates that passages from Leviticus served as a base text for the Temple Scroll (93–104), implying that the compiler of the Temple Scroll has the final form of Leviticus in mind in its composition. In my view, Choi fails to interact with the complexity of the textual and reception history of Jubilees and the Temple Scroll. Thus, for instance, he does not consider the possibility that these texts, which themselves claim to scriptural status, were possibly reused in later compositions just as Leviticus.

Chapters V and VI explore the reuse of Leviticus in two key sectarian texts, Damascus Document and MMT. They point to textual evidence that stresses how the Holiness Code influenced the ideology of these texts. However, some of the uses of Leviticus in Damascus Document and MMT have been already discussed by previous scholars, especially many of the cases in MMT section B. Moreover, although the data provided is generally accurate, some minor mistakes have occurred. In page 109, Choi argues that the appearance of the expression ועתה שמעו in CD (1:1; 2:2; 2:14) is influenced by Lev 26. He states that “this expression occurs in the Hebrew Bible in singular” (109), and “even Exodus uses only the imperative of שמע in the singular form” (109, n.13). Nevertheless, this statement is not correct for the case of Exod 19:5, which Choi does not consider in his discussion. In addition, the expression ועתה שמעו is mistakenly spelled in its two occurrences in this page.

Finally, Chapter VII treats briefly several fragmentary texts that offer more evidence for the influence of Leviticus on the Qumran literary corpus. Choi discusses both early or pre-sectarian tradition (Aramaic Levi Document; Genesis Apocryphon; Apocryphon of Jeremiah) and works whose final form belongs to the first century BCE (4QTohorot A; War Scroll; 4QHalakah A; 1QS). Thus, he offers evidence for the significance of Leviticus in these texts in relation to sacrificial laws, purity laws, sexual laws, judgment, and covenant. Leviticus 26 is again a major source behind the composition of these texts.

Choi has to be credited for creating a volume that provides a quick reference and useful tool for scholars seeking to understand the reuse and reception of Leviticus in Late Second Temple period works. The collection of the various secondary uses of Leviticus in these works stimulates new questions about the role of Leviticus in Second Temple Judaism and is a fruitful source for future research.

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