101 [cf. Charlesworth, *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha* I, pp. 380-386]). Persia's rule is distinguished from the previous one by a universal dominion (*Dn.* 2.39, 7.6). Later, Persia was promoted to second position, because Rome had been placed fourth and Greece third; this is probably reflected in the (Pseudo-Danielic?) vision found in Four Kingdoms[a-b] (4Q552 and 4Q553, respectively; cf. *4 Ezr.* 11 and later Jewish-Christian *Daniel* interpretation).

The pro-Persian attitude is also dominant in a pseudepigraphon found at Qumran. Proto-Esther[a-e] (4Q550), perhaps somewhat misleadingly named, narrates how a Persian king, faithful to the legacy of his father Darius, appointed a Judean named Bagasro to the highest office of the empire. Anyone who uttered an evil word against him was to be killed. At the same time, the king confessed that only the Most High venerated by Bagasro governed the whole earth.

Between Iran and Judah good relations were maintained in the time of the Parthian kingdom as well. [*See* Parthian Empire.] The indirect influence of Persian culture is also visible in the use of Persian architectural terminology in the Temple Scroll (e.g., *parvar* in 11Q19 v.13).

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KLAUS KOCH

PESAH. *See* Passover.

PESHARIM. A type of biblical interpretation found in the Qumran scrolls in which selected biblical texts are applied to the contemporary sectarian setting by means of various literary devices, the word *pesher* (pl. *pesharim*) may refer either to the employment of the technique itself or to a genre comprised of a series of such interpretations. In either case, the appearance of the word *pesher* is essential to the designation.

The Hebrew *pesher* is related to the root *ptr* and its cognates, the Aramaic *ptr* and the Akkadian *pasharu*. Already in Akkadian, the root meaning "to unbind" or "release" specifically came to denote the unbinding of dreams. The biblical *pitaron* refers to dream interpretation, and in the *Book of Daniel pshr* denotes the deciphering of prophetic or predictive writing. The Qumran community perceived biblical prophecy, in itself revelation, as analogous to a dream the mystery of which might only be unraveled by a specially endowed individual. The coded prophetic messages were deciphered by the author of the *pesher*. However, his own expression of the newly revealed "true meaning" also was effected in veiled terms. *Pesher* interpretations were meaningful revelations for their intended sectarian audience. However, the modern reader is often challenged to identify the historical realities reflected in the allusions and sobriquets found in these interpretations.

Perhaps the most instructive description of *pesher* comes from one of the *pesharim* itself, Pesher Habakkuk (1QpHab), which comments upon the biblical *Book of Habakkuk*. The *pesher* cites *Habakkuk* 2.2: "The Lord answered me and said: 'Write the vision; inscribe it clearly on the tablets so that he who reads it may run.'" The *pesher* comments: "And God told Habakkuk to write that which was going to happen to the last generation but he did not let him know the final age ... Its *pesher* is upon the Teacher of Righteousness, that God revealed to him all the mysteries of the words of his servants, the prophets."

This self-defining citation from Pesher Habakkuk also serves as an illustration of the basic structure of *pesharim*: citation of a biblical text (the *lemma*); an introductory formula typically using the word *pesher*, such as "its *pesher* is upon ..."; and an application of the text to a contemporary reality outside of its original context. These formal elements are common to all *pesharim*, but they also may serve to highlight variability among particular *pesher* compositions.

Continuous Pesharim. Standard *pesher*, which Jean Carmignac termed "continuous" or "running," takes a biblical composition as a starting point and adapts it to a purported eschatological fulfillment. The documents published as a group in Maurya Horgan's *Pesharim: Qumran Interpretations of Biblical Books* (1979) represent

the existing corpus of continuous *pesharim*, which cover five, or possibly six, of the twelve biblical Minor Prophets, as well as parts of *Isaiah* and *Psalms*. The best preserved specimen is Pesher Habakkuk, which contains consecutive *pesher* to the first two of the three chapters of the *Book of Habakkuk* and has long been regarded as paradigmatic of the genre. However, the continuity of continuous *pesharim* is not entirely consistent. Pesher Psalms" (4Q171) proceeds directly from Psalm 37 to Psalm 45. Pesher Isaiah[b] (4Q162) omits *Isaiah* 5.15-24. Pesher Isaiah[c] (4Q163) includes a citation from *Zechariah*, and apparently one from *Jeremiah*, and its current reconstruction presumes an irregular order of earlier and later chapters of *Isaiah*. Other *pesharim* are too poorly preserved to determine their scope.

Citation. It is the citation of the biblical text that qualifies *pesher* as a type of explicit biblical interpretation, in contrast to other, implicit forms such as rewritten narrative. The selected text generally pertains to sectarian interests and is typically of an eschatologically prophetic or poetic nature. Cited texts in continuous *pesharim* generally follow the sequence of a particular book but exhibit varying degrees of selectivity.

Formula. The biblical citation is followed by a formula that alerts the reader that the interpretation is at hand, serving a purpose similar to that of quotation marks. Some of the *pesharim* tend to leave a space between the citation and the introductory formula. The introductory phrase usually contains a form of the word *pesher* itself and often includes a pronoun, a particular element (or substantive) of the *lemma*, and the word *asher* or *'al*. At times, the word *pesher* is not used, and the formula is of the sort "for the [cited element] is the [identification]." These formulas preceding the interpretation are consistently employed in the continuous *pesharim*. Less frequently, a formula such as "for this is as it is said" may precede the *lemma*.

Pesher Habakkuk and Pesher Isaiah[a] (1Q161) use such citation formulas before secondary repetitions of biblical text. Pesher Isaiah[a,c], and ' (4Q165) also introduce primary citations with formulas. The selective citation of biblical texts in these latter *pesharim* may have created a greater need for the flagging of citations.

Application. The *pesharim* contemporize biblical verses, identifying their referents in history through "inspired" application. The application relies upon linguistic or literary associations between the interpretation and the *lemma*. In the Pesher Habakkuk example, the prophet's recording of events for a future individual is applied to a sectarian leader who, through *pesher*, will "run" with the text and reveal its true meaning. The author(s) of *pesher* believed the value of the biblical text to lie in its contemporary meaning(s), revealed to the *pesher* author

but unknown to the original biblical composer. The relationship of the base text to its *pesher* interpretation most plausibly is viewed as a combination of eisegesis and exegesis. The tendentious reading of the text removes this form from the category of simple explanation, *peshat*. The composer of *pesher* relied upon hermeneutic principles and employed exegetical devices closely related to those used in rabbinic *midrash*.

The exegetical techniques that correlate the base text with its interpretation include paraphrase, allegory, polyvalence, atomization, and allusion to other biblical passages (see Nitzan, 1986; pp. 29-79; cf. Horgan, 1979, pp. 244-249). The term *polyvalence* ("multiple meanings") refers to the employment of wordplays to expand or change the original context. These often depend upon textual variants, real or hypothetical, such as homographs or homophones, as well as anagrams or abbreviations. The similarity of this technique to the rabbinic device of *al tiqra'* (do not read) often has been noted. *Atomization* is K. Elliger's term for the way in which he perceived *pesharim* as approaching each detail of the base text, ignoring the original biblical structural content or context. This approach sometimes is in evidence, but Nitzan has demonstrated a greater adherence to biblical structure than previously had been assumed. Further, the very selection of appropriate biblical texts shows that the *pesharim* are appreciative of the original context.

The least degree of atomization and a generally low incidence of literary devices characterize Pesher Isaiah[b,a], and [e]. In these *pesharim*, long citations are followed by brief interpretations, which at times consist merely of an identification, such as "these are the scoffers who are in Jerusalem." Many of the selected *Isaiah* texts themselves contain terminology that is typical of the Qumran sect. Pesher Habakkuk and Pesher Nahum (4Q169) exhibit the most highly developed exegesis and are characterized by well-balanced lengths of cited text and interpretation. These works recast primarily historical biblical passages to reflect their eschatologically significant fulfillment in the contemporary setting. In a similar fashion, Pesher Psalms[a] applies the dualistic theology of Psalm 37 to an eschatological understanding of sectarian history. In general, the End of Days (*aharit ha-yamin*) is a recurring concept in the *pesharim*. The concern with final judgment and salvation for the elect is intensified by the sectarian belief that the eschatological age already had begun.

It has been suggested that the *pesharim* were revised over time to accommodate emerging historical realities, especially those that were at variance with *pesher* assumptions or predictions. The fact that each of the extant *pesharim* is represented by a single copy may strengthen the hypothesis that only a single authoritative version of *pesher* was in effect at any one time.

Thematic Pesharim. So-called thematic *pesharim* take an eschatological concept as a structural theme and weave in citations from distinct biblical works. This subgenre is represented by Melchizedek (11Q13), Florilegium (4Q174), and Catena[a] (4Q177). Thematic *pesher* may be evaluated in relation to the same formal criteria as continuous *pesher*.

Citation. Diverse biblical texts are cited in thematic *pesher*, where the unifying element is the central concept, such as the restoration of the Temple and of the Davidic dynasty in Florilegium. Florilegium has been described by some as revolving around a central ("frame") text, 2 *Samuel* 7, but all agree that it relies heavily upon verses from other books, particularly *Psalms*, for support. Unlike the extant continuous *pesharim*, the thematic *pesharim* also cite verses from the Pentateuch as well as from prophetic books and *Psalms*, though the latter sources remain dominant. Nearly all the cited text is poetic. The Qumran community's perception of the prophetic nature of the Psalter is apparently indicative of a general attitude to biblical poetry as veiled communication.

Formula. Thematic *pesher* is characterized by the regular usage of citation formulas, which appear in far greater proportion than the interpretation formulas that typify continuous *pesher*. In Florilegium only the *Psalms* citations are introduced with the word *pesher*. Apparently, the flagged text is that which is seen as more external to the composition. In continuous *pesher*, the interpretations are seen as the explanatory notations, while in thematic *pesher*, the proof texts play this role. The occurrence of even one interpretation formula containing the word *pesher* may provide a basis for classifying a composition as *pesher*.

Application. In thematic *pesher*, the biblical text is not so much applied to a newly described reality as it is used to corroborate a previous statement. This style, which appears too in Isaiah[a,c], may be associated with the preference for citation formulas.

Annette Steudel sees the Florilegium and Catena[a] as two copies of a single composition and renames them Midrash Eschatologie[a,b], classifying them as thematic *midrash* rather than thematic *pesher*. Steudel also places Catena[b] (4Q182), unclassified fragments 4Q178, and historical work 4Q183 (Midrash Eschatologie[c,?]) in this same category and suggests that they may also be from the same work. These latter manuscripts cite biblical texts as eschatological proof texts, using citation formulas, but the word *pesher* does not appear in the extant fragments. The joint grouping of Midrash Eschatologie[a,c] seems plausible, despite the disregard for the presence or absence of the word *pesher* in the extant portions of these texts. The singularity or multiplicity of compositions

should be viewed as indeterminate, and the nomenclature has not been definitively established. Steudel also classifies Melchizedek, Commentary on Genesis A (4Q252), and Tanhumim (4Q176) as thematic *midrash*. Melchizedek clearly belongs with the works Steudel terms Midrash Eschatologie[a,c]; 4QCommentary on Genesis A and Tanhumim are more problematic. I share Steudel's sense that the looseness of form exhibited in some of the continuous *pesharim* (e.g., 4Q163) indicates that those works, as well as thematic *midrash*, represent a stage of Qumran biblical interpretation prior to that in which the more developed texts were produced. These apparently earlier works also contain fewer examples of complex literary devices than later continuous *pesharim*.

Such midrashic techniques often are more evident in the isolated examples of *pesher* found in works of other genres. Damascus Document (CD) iv.13–19 is an example of such embedded *pesher* exegesis, complete with the word *pesher* in its introductory formula. Other instances of *pesher*-style interpretation, which lack the word itself, include Damascus Document (CD) iii.20–44, vi.3–11, vii.10–21, viii.8–15, and xix.7–13 and, from Cave 1 at Qumran, Rule of the Community viii.14–16 (1QS; alluded to again in 1QS ix.20). The War Scroll (1QM xi.11–12) foretells the defeat of the Kittim on the basis of a quotation about Assyria.

The biblical orientation of the sectarian vocabulary and mind-set produces many allusive and derivative phrases throughout Qumran compositions. Devorah Dimant refers to implicit *pesharim*, such as the sobriquets, or biblically based code names, by which Qumran authors called contemporary individuals or groups. For example, the title Teacher of Righteousness for the group's leader was derived from exegesis of *Hosea* 10.12 and *Joel* 2.23. A related phenomenon is seen in the inscriptions on the banners of the eschatological army described in the War Scroll (1QM iii.2–iv.5). These phrases are associated with their bearers by the same techniques as *pesher* identifications. Thus, the banner of an ambushing group refers to the "hidden mysteries" of God; the banner of a group of ten anticipates a victory celebration upon a "ten-stringed harp."

Related Texts. Testimonia (4Q175), Tanhumim, Ages of Creation (4Q180, 4Q181; called Pesher on the Periods by Milik), (4Q464) and Exposition on the Patriarchs are related to the *pesher* genre. Words of Moses (1Q22), liturgical text? 1Q30, and pesher on the true Israel (4Q239) contain the word *pesher* but are too fragmentary to characterize. Fragment 5 of Ordinances[a] (4Q159) also contains two occurrences of the word *pesher*. Special mention must be made of Commentary on Genesis A–D (4Q252–254a). Commentary on Genesis A also has been known as Pesher Genesis[a] and as Patriarchal Blessings. It

is now agreed that Commentary on Genesis A, B, C, and D are not *pesharim*, but the attempt to classify Commentary Genesis A has been pivotal in renewed debates over genres of biblical interpretation.

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SHANI L. BERRIN

PESHER GENESIS. *See* Genesis, Commentary on.

PESHER HABAKKUK (1QpHab) is one of the "original" seven Dead Sea Scrolls discovered in Cave 1 in 1947 and published in 1951 Its importance among the *pesharim*, and the Qumran literature as a whole, is due in part to its chronological primacy, in part to its relative completeness, and in part to the length of time it has been available for study. First among the prophetic *pesharim* to be discovered, Pesher Habakkuk has long served as the paradigm by which other examples of this genre are evaluated.

The *pesher* was written on thirteen columns of seventeen lines each, ending in the middle of the thirteenth column at the conclusion of chapter 2 of *Habakkuk*. The first column survives only at its right edge, as the left side has been lost, and the second column is seriously damaged in the center, although the text can be reconstructed with some confidence. The bottom of each column appears to be lacking the last line or two of the seventeen in most cases. The scroll is written in a Herodian script and is generally assigned to the second half of the first century BCE. It is one of the scrolls distinguished by the Tetragrammaton being written in paleo-Hebrew characters, unlike the rest of the text.

The orthography of the *pesher* is fuller than the orthography of the Masoretic Text of *Habakkuk*, in particular in its use of *vav* as a vowel letter, a feature typical of many of the Qumran scrolls. *Vav* is used for long and short vowels of the o and u groups. The plene spelling of words like *ki* with *alef* at the end, of the second masculine singular suffix on verbs as *th*, of the second masculine singular object suffix as *kh*, and of *y* > ' in words like *kiy'ym* (although *gwym* is usual rather than *gw'ym*) is also characteristic of many of the Qumran scrolls.

The scriptural text of *Habakkuk* on which the *pesher* is based appears to be at variance from time to time with the Masoretic Text, and thus may have independent value for text-critical purposes. Some of these variants are of a fairly insignificant nature, but others are more important and at times agree with other ancient textual traditions of *Habakkuk*. Among them are the following: The *pesher* at 1QpHab ii.1 implies the reading *bogedim*, "traitors" (= Septuagint), at *Habakkuk* 1.5, where the Masoretic Text has *bag-goyim*, "among the nations." At *Habakkuk* 1.17, the *pesher* (vi.8) reads *harbo*, "his sword," for the Masoretic Text's *hermo*, "his net." At *Habakkuk* 2.5, in place of the Masoretic Text's *ve'af ki hay-yayin boged*, "wine, too, is treacherous," the *pesher* (viii.3) has *ve'af ki' hon yigod*, "wealth, too, is treacherous."

In several passages, however, the *pesher* cites the verse in the lemma in one form and appears to comment on it