

Editing Dead Sea Scrolls in the Scripta Qumranica Electronica VRE
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The Dead Sea Scrolls are comprised of several hundred scrolls in various states of preservation from numerous sites in the Judean desert. The history of their publication is rather long and fraught with serious issues regarding access to the collection. The Scripta Qumranica Electronica (SQE) project is a DFG/DIP funded international project, composed of Georg-August-Universität Göttingen, Haifa University, Tel Aviv University, and the Israel Antiquities Authority, with the aim to provide online tools for exploring the Dead Sea Scrolls and for sharing new findings based upon that research.

It remains challenging to provide access to large amounts of sundry information within a virtual (or physical) research environment, while also offering streamlined, purpose-guided tools that enhance the research process. The virtual environment does indeed break the constraints of the book binding, but it must acknowledge new boundaries of its own. Too often a desire for everything to be accessible in every place leads to a cluttered and counterproductive digital work space.

An examination of work flows and research approaches has generally led the SQE project to develop highly modular tools that can be targeted for very specific use-cases. With this as a background, I would like to reflect on the experience of developing a virtual research environment within the context of a project where the collaborators desire an *Agile* approach and the end product lacks a definitive, fixed set of specifications. I will also discuss the promise such a resource holds for the dissemination of scholarly argumentation in a way that promotes the critical engagement of the scholarly community as well as of the general public.