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OT 710 Text and Canon of the Old Testament

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TEXT AND CANON OF THE OLD TESTAMENT  OT710  
COURSE SYLLABUS  
Spring, 1999  
Instructor: J. N. Oswalt  

I. Course Goals  
A. To acquaint students with the nature of the Qumran community and with the circumstances of its rediscovery.  
B. To acquaint students with the general content of the non-Biblical writing at Qumran.  
C. To provide students with experience in the theory and practice of text-criticism as it is applied to Old Testament materials, especially in the light of Qumran.  
D. To enable students to gain first-hand knowledge of the contributions of the Qumran scrolls to present theories of the development of Hebrew text.  
E. To acquaint students with current theories of the process of canonization of the Old Testament, especially as this relates to what is currently known as canonical criticism.  
F. To strengthen the student’s grasp upon Hebrew (and the Greek of the Septuagint).  

II. Plan for Conducting the Course  
A. Method of Instruction: A modified seminar approach, including lectures on introductory topics, student presentations, and daily assignments.  

B. Types of Assignments:  
1. Each student will prepare two papers not to exceed 2000 words each. The first will discuss the nature and content of one of the non-Biblical scrolls, and the second will deal with some aspect of the formation of the OT canon. Both papers will be presented in class on the dates indicated in the attached schedule.  
2. The reading and translation of certain passages in the Biblical scrolls. In addition, students will be expected to compare these with their counterparts in the Massoretic Text and in the Septuagint and to reach conclusions concerning the most probable original reading. A collection of duplicated copies of the primary readings will be made available in class for a nominal charge.  
3. Readings from secondary sources as noted on the schedule below.  
   Required texts are:  
   Bruce, F. F., The Canon of Scripture, Downers Grove, IL: IVP,  

A recommended text is:  
Students should also own critical editions of the Massoretic Text and the Septuagint, such as *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia* and *Septuaginta* (Rahlfs).

Other helpful readings may be found in the select bibliography below.

C. **Evaluation:** The final course grade will be computed on the basis of the following:
   1. Class performance 1/3
   2. Papers 1/3
   3. Examinations 1/3

III. **Tentative Schedule**

Feb. 9  Introduction

11  The Finds: The Historical Context  Vanderbilt pp. 1-27  Wise pp. 3-13, 36-37
     (Trever pp. 13-113)

     (Tushingham pp. 785-808)

18  The Community and Christianity  Vanderbilt pp. 121-185
     (Brotzman pp. 87-96)

23  Text Criticism  Brotzman pp. 9-24; 97-132

25  Text Criticism, Paleography  Brotzman pp. 133-170
     (Cross pp. 170-264)

Mar. 2  Reports  Vanderbilt pp. 29-70
     (Wise)

4  Reports  (Wise)

9  Isaiah 6

11  Isaiah 6  Brotzman pp. 25-35

16  Isaiah 58

18  Isaiah 58

23  Isaiah 58  Brotzman pp. 37-62
25 Examination

30 Pss. 131, 141

Apr. 1 Pss. 141-144 Brotzman pp. 63-85

13 1 Sam. 1:22-2:6

15 1 Samuel 2:16-25

20 Exodus 32:10-30

22 Exodus 32:10-30; Jeremiah 48:25-39

27 Jeremiah 48:25-39

29 Growth of the Canon Bruce

May 4 Growth of the Canon Bruce

6 Papers

11 Papers

13 Papers

17 Final examination

IV. Select Bibliography

Barthelemy, D. *Critique Textuelle de L'Ancien Testament*. Gottingen. 1982-. (Two volumes completed; others in progress.)


This series (DJD, or DJDJ), now running to 14 volumes, is the official publication of the Scrolls.


“The Significance of the Scrolls,”


Items marked with an asterisk (*) may be found on the reserve shelf.

The bibliography on the Dead Sea Scrolls now runs into the thousands. Wise offers a helpful selection.