

**Ph.D./M.A. Seminar: Textual Traditions of the Old Testament**  
**CHTH G105 – C03/ OT 6ZT6 (draft)**  
**McMaster Divinity College**  
**Fall Semester 2015**  
**Mondays 3:30pm-5:20pm**

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## **I. Description**

A study of the various scribal traditions which preserved the Old Testament with attention to the disciplines of textual, redaction and canonical criticism. The variety of ancient witnesses to Old Testament texts will be analyzed and evaluated for their contribution to the establishment of the original text of the Old Testament, to the elucidation of the development of the texts of the Old Testament, and to the role of particular texts and manuscripts as canonical texts.

## **II. Purpose**

**A. Knowing:** To have a thorough knowledge of the character and development of the full spectrum of ancient scribal traditions which preserved the Old Testament text with special attention to Hebrew, Greek, Aramaic, and Latin sources; To have a thorough knowledge of the historical and social contexts in and for which the various works were originally translated; To know the canons of lower (textual) criticism; To understand the relationship between lower and higher criticism and identify the ambiguity in the distinction between them.

**B. Being:** To gain a deeper appreciation for the role of scribes and translators in the preservation of the Bible; To locate oneself within this enduring tradition; To appreciate the impact of ancient textual forms on communities of faith.

**C. Doing:** To learn how to access the textual witnesses to the Old Testament text; To refine one's ability to work sensitively with the ancient scribal traditions, for the purposes of textual, redaction, and canonical criticism; To develop clear and creative presentations (written and oral form) of the textual traditions of the Old Testament.

### III. Reading Resources

Jobes, Karen H., and Moisés Silva. *Invitation to the Septuagint*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2000.

McCarter, P. Kyle. *Textual Criticism: Recovering the text of the Hebrew Bible*. Guides to Biblical scholarship. Old Testament guides. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1986.

Tov, Emanuel. *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible* (3<sup>rd</sup> edition). Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 2012.

Ulrich, Eugene C. *The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Origins of the Bible*. Studies in the Dead Sea Scrolls and Related Literature. Grand Rapids/Leiden: Eerdmans/Brill, 1999.

Articles distributed in class and on course website.

All required textbooks for this class are available from the College's book service, READ On Bookstore, Room 145, McMaster Divinity College. Texts may be purchased on the first day of class. For advance purchase, you may contact READ On Bookstore, 304 The East Mall, Suite 100, Etobicoke, ON M9B 6E2: phone 416-620-2934; fax 416-622-2308; e-mail [books@readon.ca](mailto:books@readon.ca). Other book services may also carry the texts.

### IV. Schedule

#### **A. Phase 1: Orientation to Textual Criticism, Textual Traditions, and the Shape of the Old Testament**

The first phase of this course is a combination of reading and discussion to orient students to the relationship between the textual traditions of the Old Testament and the traditional practice of textual criticism.

#### **B. Phase 2: Presentations of Textual Criticism Papers**

During this second phase of the course each student will produce an orientation to the textual traditions available for their particular project and provide a text critical analysis of key passages.

#### **C. Phase 3: Orientation to Textual Tradition Research**

The third phase of this course is a combination of reading, discussion and presentation to orient students to the stream of textual tradition research on the Old Testament.

#### **D. Phase 4: Presentations of Textual Tradition Papers**

In the fourth phase of this course each student will present a paper on the literary development and canonical shape of the textual traditions related to their corpus within the Old Testament.

#### **E. Phase 5: Reflection on Textual Traditions and Canon**

The final phase of this course encourages reflection on the impact of textual traditions research on the canonical shape of the Old Testament with reference to canonical approaches to the Old Testament.

## September

14 Orientation

21 Class:

- Text Tradition: Masoretic (Tov 21-79; Würthwein 12-41)
- Text Criticism: Discussion on McCarter (see also Würthwein 103-119), produce initial text critical example from your corpus. Report on progress of gathering textual witnesses for your corpus

28 Class:

- Text Tradition: Samaritan/Qumran (Tov 80-121)
- Text Criticism: Discussion on Text Criticism (Tov 155-311, 351-70; Waltke article), revise text critical example in light of this reading, bring a second example.

## October

5 Class

- Text Tradition: OG and Daughter/Sub-Versions (Tov 121-148; Jobes-Silva chs. Intro, 1, 2, 4, 7, 8; Würthwein 49-74)
- Text Criticism: Discussion on Text Criticism

12 No Class: Thanksgiving

19 Class:

- Text Tradition: Aramaic (Targum, Peshitta), Latin (Old Latin, Vulgate), Arabic (Tov 148-155; Würthwein 75-100; Flesher-Chilton 3-264; Weitzman)
- Text Criticism: Discussion on Text Criticism

*Text critical Papers due by Fri, Oct 23, 11:59 pm for posting on internet*

26 Class:

- Text Criticism Papers

## November

2 Class:

- Text Traditions: Discussion on Text Traditions (Sweeney, Bodner, Walters, Pola)

9 Class:

- Textual Traditions: Discussion on Text Traditions (Tov ch. 7; Ulrich part 1)

16 Class:

- Textual Traditions: Discussion on Text Traditions (Jobes-Silva chs. 9-10, 14)

23 No Class: SBL

*Text tradition Papers due by Fri, Nov 27, 11:59 pm for posting on internet*

30 Class: Textual Tradition Papers

## December

7 Class: Textual Tradition Papers

14 Class: Reflections on Text Traditions and Canon

## V. Course Internet Resources

This semester we will be sharing a Dropbox folder for distributing course materials and papers. Papers will not be distributed in paper form, but only digitally.

## VI. Learning Experiences

### A. Class Experiences

This is a graduate seminar style class of collaborative learning in which professor and students are engaged in active learning together. Learning to critically (in its positive sense) engage material is essential to functioning in a graduate program and is expected of all students in our MA/PhD. It is expected that all students will not only attend these sessions, but also that they will assume responsibility for contributing to and learning from the experience. This means that readings will be completed prior to arrival in class and that student and presenter alike will pursue the acquisition of knowledge in the learning environment. It is expected that ALL members of the class will ask questions and contribute insights whenever opportunity is given, during and following presentations by professor or student alike. Students are graded on their level of preparation and contribution. During the first month of the course each student will provide a visual presentation which summarizes one of the key traditions for the text of the OT (Sept 21, 28, Oct 5, 19).

**Value:** 15%

### B. Textual Criticism Paper

For this paper the student will choose a particular corpus in the Old Testament that is related to their thesis/dissertation topic. They will then write a minimum 15 page research essay which first of all provides an overview of the main textual witness traditions for this corpus, including for example Hebrew (e.g., MT, Samaritan Pentateuch, Qumran manuscripts, Nash Papyrus), Greek (e.g., LXX), Aramaic (e.g., Targums, Peshitta), and Latin (e.g., Old Latin, Vulgate). Identify the main traditions, extant witnesses, and an initial description of the character and development of each tradition and their temporal, spatial, and sociological provenance. Secondly, the paper will identify key text critical issues for their corpus and, following text critical methodology, make appropriate decisions on the best reading. Papers are due in .pdf format by October 12, 11:59 p.m. (send to professor by email) to be posted on the course web site and discussed on October 21.

**Value:** 30%

**Due:** October 23, 11:59 p.m.

**Submission:** PDF via email to professor and placed in Dropbox

### C. Textual Tradition Paper

For this learning experience the student will write a minimum 25 page research paper comparing and contrasting at least the Hebrew and Greek traditions of their chosen corpus in the Old Testament. The concern in this paper is not on text critical issues but rather on the way the Hebrew and Greek traditions provide evidence for the final stage(s) in the development of the text. The paper should offer reflection on the impact this has on canonical analysis of the Old Testament. Papers are due in .pdf format by November 13 or 27 at 11:59 p.m. (send to professor by email) to be posted on the course web site. Discussions on papers will begin November 18 or December 2.

**Value:** 40%

**Due:** November 13 or 27, 11:59 p.m.

**Submission:** PDF via email to professor and placed in Dropbox.

## D. Canonical Reflection

In a final written reflection (minimum 5 pages) the student will provide reflection on the impact of the course and research on the student's view of canon with reference to canonical approaches (see subfolder in Dropbox for specific articles).

**Value:** 15%

**Due:** December 13, 11:59 p.m.

**Submission:** PDF via email to professor and placed in Dropbox.

## VII. Format and Evaluation

**So I can properly evaluate your work the following style guide is to be used for papers in this class.**

- **Medium for Submission:** All material in this class is to be submitted in digital format to me via email. Please use .pdf format and ensure that what you send is what you want me to read. If you need a free program for creating .pdfs go to <http://primopdf.com>.
- **Layout:** All material which is submitted should be double spaced with 1" margins utilizing a readable font (10-12 pts). It must have a title page, footnoting where appropriate and bibliography, all of which are not included in the length required. It should be written in excellent modern literary English with proper grammar, spelling, punctuation and rhetoric (including an introduction, conclusion and logical flow of argument). If it helps an outline may accompany the "paper" but this is not included in the length of the "paper." Secondary and Primary sources should be used, cited and footnoted appropriately and the paper should follow the "MDC Writing Style Guide" available at:  
<http://www.mcmasterdivinity.ca/programs/resources>.
- **Gender Inclusive Language:** McMaster Divinity College uses inclusive language for human beings in worship services, student written materials, and all of its publications. In reference to biblical texts, the integrity of the original expressions and the names of God should be respected. The NRSV and TNIV are examples of the use of inclusive language for human beings. It is expected that inclusive language will be used in chapel services and all MDC assignments. For policy see: <http://www.mcmasterdivinity.ca/programs/rules-regulations>.
- **Citations:** You must cite the source of your material very carefully using a consistent system, not only when quoting from a section, but also when drawing from it as resource. Quotations should be kept to a minimum as I favour integration of secondary literature (footnoted).
- **Statement on Academic Honesty:** Academic dishonesty is a serious offence that may take any number of forms, including plagiarism, the submission of work that is not one's own or for which previous credit has been obtained,<sup>\*\*\*</sup> and/or unauthorized collaboration with other students. Academic dishonesty can result in severe consequences, e.g., failure of the assignment, failure of the course, a notation on one's academic transcript, and/or suspension or expulsion from the College. Students are responsible for understanding what constitutes academic dishonesty. If you are a Divinity College student please refer to the Divinity College Statement on Academic Honesty ~  
<http://www.mcmasterdivinity.ca/programs/rules-regulations>

\*\*\*this is a special issue for those pursuing second and third degrees in theology. It is understood that students will be building on earlier ideas and work, but it is expected that students will not hand in material that is merely “warmed over” previous work. If there is reason for concern speak with the professor about this.

**So I can properly evaluate your work and help you grow in your biblical and writing skills the following evaluation guide should be kept in mind as you write:**

- **Presentation:** Is the spelling correct? Does the grammar/syntax reflect proper English? Is the paper laid out properly?
- **Argumentation:** Is there a good introduction and conclusion? Does the argument flow with ample support? Is the question answered
- **Content:** Are all the points considered? Is there proper documentation of sources used?

### **VIII. Dropbox**

We'll be using Dropbox ([www.dropbox.com](http://www.dropbox.com)) this semester for sharing resources for reading as well as distributing papers for evaluation. You will receive an invitation to Dropbox early in the semester which will lead you through the process for signing up and gaining access to our shared Dropbox.

## IX. Accountability

**Note on Timeliness of Submissions:** Since this is a seminar style course all participants must be timely in their submission of material. People will need to read the various submissions and once the schedule is set there is no room to switch dates. For that reason there are considerable penalties for late materials in this course. Each **DAY** a paper is late will mean the loss of half a letter grade (5%). Take this into account when planning out your semester.

**Note on Timeliness of Attendance:** From time to time you may find that you are late for class. Late arrivals, hereafter called “tardies,” are unacceptable and will lead to a negative disposition in the professor and your classmates. Such “tardies,” however, can be redeemed at the rate of Timbits for the entire class at the session following the second tardy as well as a coffee for the professor.

**Rule of the Timbits** (הלכה התמבתיים): Because “tardies” raise the ire of the covenant community (bound by this covenantal syllabus document delivered here at the foot of the “Mountain”), those who are late for class must have a means by which to atone for such “accidental sins” (בשגגה, if they are defiant sins, בְּיַד רָמָה, then the offender will be “cut off” from the community, see Num 15:27-31).<sup>1</sup> which means anyone late for class will need to bring Timbits for the entire class (מִנְחָה) no later than the next class meeting plus a Tim Hortons coffee (נֶסֶד) for the professor (cream, no sugar). This מִנְחָה and נֶסֶד will function simultaneously as both a sin offering (חֲטָאת, Leviticus 4) atoning for the accidental sin of the offender and a peace offering (שְׁלָמִים, Leviticus 3) enhancing the fellowship of the covenant community. See the high professor for further details and any torah-rulings (see Haggai 2:10-14) regarding specific situations.

Especially important is to take seriously the cry of Joel of old in 1:13:

חַגְרוּ וְסַפְדוּ הַכֹּהֲנִים	Gird yourselves <i>with sackcloth</i>
הִילֵלוּ מִשְׁרְתֵי מִזְבֵּחַ	And lament, O priests;
בָּאוּ לֵינוּ בַשָּׂקִים מִשְׁרְתֵי אֱלֹהֵי	Wail, O ministers of the altar!
כִּי נִמְנַע מִבַּיִת אֱלֹהֵיכֶם מִנְחָה וְנֶסֶד:	Come, spend the night in sackcloth
	O ministers of my God,
	For <u>the grain offering and the drink offering</u>
	Are withheld from the house of your God.

And note his promise of a reward to those who repent in 2:14:

מִי יוֹדַע יִשׁוּב וְנָחַם	Who knows whether He will turn and relent
וְהִשְׁאִיר אַחֲרָיו בְּרָכָה	And leave a blessing behind Him,
מִנְחָה וְנֶסֶד לַיהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם	<u>Even a grain offering and a drink offering</u>
	For the LORD your God?

<sup>1</sup> Of course, see the “definitive” work on this: Mark J. Boda, *A Severe Mercy: Sin and Its Remedy in the Old Testament* (Siphrut: Literature and Theology of the Hebrew Scriptures 1. Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2009), 53-54. For specific torah ruling also see the fuller הלכה התמבתיים in our Dropbox.

## IX. Bibliography:

For bibliography for books with primary texts of the major witnesses to the OT, see:

Bazylinski, Stanislaw. *A Guide to Biblical Research: Introductory Notes* (subsidia biblica 28). Roma: Editrice Pontificio Istituto Biblico, 2006.

Adair, J. R. "Light from Below: Canonical and Theological Implications of Textual Criticism." *Old Testament Essays: Journal of the Old Testament Society of South Africa* ii, no. 1 (1998): 9-23.

Albrektson, B. "Difficilior Lectio Probabilior - A Rule of Textual Criticism and Its Use in Old Testament Studies." *OTS* 21 (1981): 5-18.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Masoretic or Mixed: On Choosing a Textual Basis for a Translation of the Hebrew Bible," *Textus* 23 (2007): 33-49.

Barr, J. "Vocalization and the Analysis of Hebrew among the Ancient Translators." In *Festschrift Walter Baumgartner*. Vetus Testamentum Supplement no. 16, 1-11. Leiden: Brill, 1967.

Barthelemy, D. *Les Devanciers de Aquila*. VTSup 10. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1963.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Etudes d'histoire du texte de l'Ancien Testament*. Gottingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, OBO, 1978.

Barthelemy, D. et al., *The Story of David and Goliath*. OBO 73; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1986.

Barthélemy, Dominique, Gerard J. Norton, and Stephen Pisano. *Tradition of the text: studies offered to Dominique Barthélemy in celebration of his 70th birthday*. Orbis biblicus et orientalis ; 109. Freiburg, Schweiz/Göttingen: Universitätsverlag/Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1991.

Brown, William P. *Structure, Role, and Ideology in the Hebrew and Greek Texts of Genesis 1:1-2:3*. Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series, no. 132. Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1993.

Christiansen, D. L. "In Quest of the Autograph of the Book of Jeremiah: A Study of Jeremiah 25 in Relation to Jeremiah 46-51," *JETS* 33 (1990) 145-154.

Colwell, E. C. "Method in Evaluating Scribal Habits: A Study of P45, P66, P75." In *Studies in Methodology in Textual Criticism of the New Testament*. NTTs no. 9. 106-24. Leiden: Brill, 1969.

Cook, J. "Questions of Textual Criticism. To Reconstruct or Not?" Chap. in *Colloque "Bible et Informatique: HerméNeutique" Tübingen, 26-30 August, 1991*. 515-22. Paris & Genève: Champion & Slatkine, 1992.

Cross, Frank Moore. "Problems of Method in Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible." In *The Critical Study of Sacred Texts*. ed. W. Doniger O'Flaherty. Berkeley Religious Studies Series, Berkeley: Graduate Theological Union Berkeley, 1979.

\_\_\_\_\_. *From Epic to Canon*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998.

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Cross, F. & Talmon, S. *Qumran and the History of the Biblical Text*. Cambridge: Harvard, 1975.

David, Robert, Manuel Jinbachian. *Traduire la Bible hébraïque: de la Septante à la Nouvelle Bible Segond = Translating the Hebrew Bible: from the Septuagint to the Nouvelle Bible Segond*. Montréal: Médiaspaul, 2005.

De Troyer, Kristin. *Rewriting the Sacred Text: What the Old Greek Texts Tell Us about the Literary Growth of the Bible* (Text-Critical Studies 4). Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2003.

Deist, Ferdinand E. "Text, Textuality, and Textual Criticism." *JNSL* 21, no. 1 (1995): 59-67.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Toward the Text of the Old Testament*. 1978.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Witness to the Old Testament*. Pretoria: Ng Kerkboekhandel, 1988.



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- Ehrman, Bart D. "The Text of Mark in the Hands of the Orthodox." In *Biblical Hermeneutics in Historical Perspective*, ed. Mark Burrows and Paul Rorem, 19-31. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1991.
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- Fernández Marcos, Natalio. *The Septuagint in context: Introduction to the Greek version of the Bible*. Boston: Brill Academic, 2001.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Scribes and translators: Septuagint and Old Latin in the Books of Kings*. Supplements to Vetus Testamentum, v. 54. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1994.
- Flesher, Paul V. M., and Bruce Chilton. *The Targums: A Critical Introduction*. Waco: Baylor University Press, 2011.
- Flint, Peter. "Scriptures in the Dead Sea Scrolls: The Evidence from Qumran." Pp. 269-304 in *Studies in the Hebrew Bible, Septuagint, and Dead Sea Scrolls in Honor of Emanuel Tov*. Edited by Shalom Paul et al.. VTSup 94; Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2003.
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- Gordis, T. "On Methodology in Biblical Exegesis." *JQR* 61 (1970): 93-118.
- Goshen-Gottstein, M. H. "The Development of the Hebrew Text of the Bible: Theories and Practice of Textual Criticism." *VT* 42 (1992): 204-13.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Editions of the Hebrew Bible—Past and Present." Pp. 221-42 in M. Fishbane and E. Tov (eds.), *'Shar'arei Talmon': Studies in the Bible, Qumran and the Ancient Near East Presented to Shemaryahu Talmon*. Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1992.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Textual Criticism of the Old Testament: Rise, Decline, Rebirth." *JBL* 102, no. 3 (1983): 365-99.
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