

Bible Area Exam Bibliographies, Rationales and Procedures

There are two major examinations concentrating on the New Testament. Students in the Bible area who specialize in New Testament must take both; those in Hebrew Bible must take one of the two. Both are on the New Testament, but broadly speaking Bible III emphasizes history and Bible IV literature.

Bible III. New Testament Context

Rationale and Purpose:

This examination tests students' essential handbook knowledge of the Jewish and Greco-Roman world of the first century Mediterranean and Christian figures, movements, and events, such that they are able to discuss intelligently the major pieces of evidence bearing on the essential historiographical problems involved in the emergence, diversity and identity of Christian cults and communities in the first and early second century.

Preparation:

Coursework: Students outside of the Bible area are strongly urged to take BS 32500, Introduction to the New Testament, and at least one seminar (such as the ECL Seminars offered each spring) in which early Christian texts are read in relation to their broader religious and cultural contexts. Students in the Bible area should take several more.

Reading:

1. Everyone is expected to have read the basic bibliography listed below
2. Each student will agree with her/his examiner (Prof. Klauck, Martinez or Mitchell) on 4 broad areas of discussion, or rubrics to focus their reading for the exam (examples: method in the study of the historical Jesus, reasons for early Christian missionary success and failures, means, modes and limits of "cultural adaption" of the kerygma, Paul and Jesus in continuity/discontinuity, Paul and the Law/Judaism, Christians and Jews – when was there a "parting of the ways"? the social functions of apocalyptic, the development of christology, forms and functions of early Christian liturgical practice, was early Christianity a mystery cult? etc.). Specialized bibliography, in primary and secondary sources, can be added as needed. Students are responsible for compiling their final bibliographies and receiving approval from their examiner.

Language Study and Use: Greek is not required for this examination. Those who have Greek skills will of course be encouraged and expected to use them in the preparation and writing of the exam.

Exam Format:

Each student will be given a list of 3 questions, from which they are to choose 2. Students are allowed 4 hours to complete the 2 essays.

Bibliography, Bible Qualifying Exam III: New Testament Context

Careful reading and knowledge of the New Testament and Apostolic Fathers is assumed.

Primary Sources (read in translation):

Josephus, *Bellum Judaicum, Vita, c. Apion, Antiquitates Judaicae*, at least bks. 1-4 (LCL)

Philo, *de vita contemplativa, legatio ad Gaium*

Dead Sea Scrolls (recommended translation: García Martínez, The Dead Sea Scrolls Translated)

Cicero, *de natura deorum* (LCL)

Suetonius, *de vita Caesarum* (LCL)

Plutarch, *moralia* (pick 2 treatises), *vitae* (pick 2 pairs and the *comparatio* to each) (LCL)

Greek Magical Papyri in Translation (ed. H.D. Betz)

Diogenes Laertius (LCL)

Secondary Sources:

General:

William Baird, History of New Testament Research (2 vols)

Mary Beard, John A. North, Simon Price, Religions of Rome

Hans Dieter Betz, Hellenismus und Urchristentum

Walter Burkert, Greek Religion

Shaye Cohen, From the Maccabees to the Mishnah

John J. Collins, The Apocalyptic Imagination: an Introduction to the Jewish Matrix of Christianity

John J. Collins, Between Athens and Jerusalem: Jewish Identity in the Hellenistic Diaspora

Frederick C. Grant, Hellenistic Religions

Robert M. Grant, Augustus to Constantine (rev. ed.)

Martin Hengel, Hellenism and Judaism

Hans-Josef Klauck, The Religious Context of Early Christianity

Hans-Josef Klauck, "The Roman Empire," in Cambridge History of Christianity, vol. 1

Helmut Koester, Introduction to the New Testament, vol. 1: History, Culture and Religion of the Hellenistic Age

A.A. Long and D. Sedley, eds.; The Hellenistic Philosophers (vol. 1) or A.A. Long, Hellenistic Philosophy: Stoics, Epicureans, Sceptics

Margaret M. Mitchell, "Biblical Literature in its Historical Context: The Apocrypha and New Testament," pp. 39-49 in HarperCollins Bible Commentary, ed. J.L. Mays

E.P. Sanders, Judaism: Practice and Belief, 63 BCE to 66 CE
Emil Schürer, rev. Geza Vermes and Fergus Millar, The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ (175 B.C. – A.D. 135)
Jo-Ann Shelton, As the Romans Did: A Sourcebook in Roman Social History

Selected articles in The Anchor Bible Dictionary (ed. D.N. Freedman), The Encyclopedia of Early Christianity (ed. E. Ferguson), and Encyclopedia of the Early Church (ed. A. Berardino) and other reference works

On Jesus:

John Dominic Crossan, The Historical Jesus: The Life of a Mediterranean Jewish Peasant
Richard A. Horsley and John S. Hanson, Bandits, Prophets, and Messiahs: Popular Movements at the Time of Jesus
Paula Fredriksen, From Jesus to Christ
John P. Meier, A Marginal Jew, vol 1: Rethinking the Historical Jesus
E.P. Sanders, Jesus and Judaism
Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, In Memory of Her: A Feminist Theological Reconstruction of Christian Origins (10th anniversary ed., 1994)
Albert Schweitzer, The Quest of the Historical Jesus: a Critical Study of its Progress from Reimarus to Wrede (new ed. 1998)

On Paul:

Hans Dieter Betz, Paulinische Studien, essays VI, VII, X, XI and XII
Troels Engberg-Pedersen, ed., Paul Beyond the Judaism/Hellenism Divide
Joseph Fitzmyer, Paul and His Theology
Hans-Josef Klauck, “The Lord’s Supper,” ABD 4.362-372
John Knox, Chapters in a Life of Paul
Wayne A. Meeks, The First Urban Christians
E.P. Sanders, Paul and Palestinian Judaism
Gerd Theissen, The Social Setting of Pauline Christianity
Samuel Vollenweider, “Paulus,” RGG4

On “Jewish” and “Gentile Christianity”

James Carleton-Paget, “Jewish Christianity” in Cambridge History of Judaism III, pp. 731-75.
Craig C. Hill, Hellenists and Hebrews: Reappraising Division within Earliest Christianity
Margaret M. Mitchell, “Gentile Christianity” in Cambridge History of Christianity, vol. 1
Georg Strecker, “Jewish Christianity,” in Walter Bauer, Orthodoxy and Heresy in Earliest Christianity, 241-85

Bible IV: The New Testament and Related Literature

Rationale and Purpose:

This examination tests a student's thoroughness of knowledge of the literature of early Christianity and ability to interpret it with sophistication, accuracy, and insight. Such competence depends upon the acquisition of literary, linguistic and creative skills for translation and interpretation of specific passages, on the one hand, and, on the other, the ability to bring a range of texts to bear on the chief analytical issues involved in the composition, dissemination and significance of the earliest Christian texts on the landscape of the wider literary cultures of Jews, Greeks and Romans in the first and early second centuries.

Preparation:

Coursework: Exegetical courses and other advanced seminars are essential for learning these skills. Especially for students outside of the Bible Area, at least 2 Greek exegesis courses should be considered a minimal prerequisite for taking this exam. Students in the Bible Area will normally have at least 4.

Language Study and Use: Greek proficiency is necessary for this exam. Students should consult with the examining professor (Prof. Klauck, Martinez, or Mitchell) about their formal study in the Greek language and depth of translation experience. Students in the Bible Area (both NT and HB) must have completed a separate departmental Greek exam prior to the qualifying examination.

Reading: All students will read the bibliography provided below as general background. In addition, each student, in consultation with faculty, will pick 4 primary texts to concentrate upon for the exam: 3 from the New Testament (normally a letter, a gospel and something else) and 1 from other early Christian literature (often, but not always, the Apostolic Fathers). Then in consultation with the examining faculty member they will develop a list of useful commentaries and key studies on those 4 books as an aid to their study which will be added to the standard bibliography.

Exam Format:

This qualifying exam has 2 parts, to be completed in 4 hours total:

1. Exegesis: students will be given a passage in Greek from one of their chosen 4 books for them to translate and write a "guided exegesis" essay upon. The essay will discuss questions provided by the examiner as well as the matters the student thinks are of most significance to an interpretation of that text.
2. Synthetic Essay: one question requiring students to bring their knowledge of ancient literature and the place of early Christian texts within it to bear on a general problem (examples: were early Christians literary innovators, or not?)

What is paraenesis and how does it make an impact on ECL? What functions did the earliest Christians perform via texts? Are there myths in ECL? Were early Christians innovative interpreters of the HB/LXX? What is apologetics in the ancient world, and where does it appear in ECL? How did early Christian scriptural interpretation compare with Jewish and Greco-Roman contemporaries' readings of their sacred texts? Was Luke an historian by ancient standards? Is ECL "street literature" "Kleinliteratur," or some other category?)

2 hours per question; use of Greek New Testament allowed (but no other tools)

Bibliography Bible IV: New Testament and Related Literature

Careful reading and knowledge of the entire New Testament is presumed. Students specializing in New Testament studies will have read the New Testament in its entirety in the Greek before their departmental Greek exam. Others should have mastery of the Greek text of their 4 chosen texts, and a good acquaintance with the other 23 texts of the New Testament in English.

Primary Sources (to be read in English):

The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha (2 vols.; ed. J. Charlesworth)
New Testament Apocrypha (2 vols.; ed. Hennecke-Schneemelcher)
The Apostolic Fathers (LCL, new ed. B. Ehrman)
Nag Hammadi Library (rev. ed., James M. Robinson)
Epictetus, *Dissertationes* (LCL, 2 vols.)
Seneca, *Epistulae morales* (LCL, 3 vols.)
Collected Ancient Greek Novels (ed. B.P. Reardon)
Ancient Epistolary Theorists (ed. A.J. Malherbe)
Light from Ancient Letters, John White
Menander Rhetor (ed. Russell and Wilson)
Lucian of Samosata, *de morte Peregrini, quomodo historia conscribenda sit*
Moral Exhortation: A Greco-Roman Sourcebook (A.J. Malherbe)

Secondary Sources:

General:

Kurt and Barbara Aland, The Text of the New Testament
David E. Aune, The New Testament in its Literary Environment
David E. Aune, Westminster Dictionary of New Testament and Early Christian Literature and Rhetoric
Harry Y. Gamble, Books and Readers in the Early Church
Edgar J. Goodspeed, A History of Early Christian Literature
Hans-Josef Klauck, Apocryphal Gospels: An Introduction

Helmut Koester, Introduction to the New Testament, vol. 2: History and Literature of Early Christianity
Bruce M. Metzger, The Canon of the New Testament
Margaret M. Mitchell, "The Emergence of the Written Record," in Cambridge History of Christianity, vol. 1
George W. Nickelsburg, Jewish Literature between the Bible and the Mishnah: a Historical and Literary Introduction
Marius Reiser, Sprache und literarische Formen des Neuen Testaments
Philip Vielhauer, Geschichte der urchristlichen Literatur

Epistolography and Rhetoric:

Hans Dieter Betz, Paulinische Studien, essays IV, V, VII
James D.G. Dunn, ed., The Cambridge Companion to Paul
Hans-Josef Klauck, Die antike Briefliteratur und das Neue Testament
Margaret M. Mitchell, "Brief I: Form und Gattung," "Brief II: Schrifttum," RGG 4th ed. 1.1757-62
Margaret M. Mitchell, Paul and the Rhetoric of Reconciliation

Gospels and Other Narrative Literature:

Hans Dieter Betz, Synoptische Studien, essays VI, IX, XV, XVI
Rudolf Bultmann, History of the Synoptic Tradition
Richard A. Burridge, What Are the Gospels?
Martin Dibelius, From Tradition to Gospel
Paula Fredriksen, From Jesus to Christ
Robert M. Grant, Earliest Lives of Jesus
Helmut Koester, Ancient Christian Gospels
George Nickelsburg, "The Genre and Function of the Markan Passion Narrative," HTR 73 (1980) 153-84.
Semeia 14 (1979) (on the genre apocalypse)
Gregory Sterling, Historiography and Self-Definition: Josephos, Luke-Acts, and Apologetic Historiography
Gerd Theissen, Miracle Stories of the Early Christian Tradition

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