

NT 320: Social Analysis of the Greek New Testament
(Formerly known as "Exegesis of the Greek New Testament")
Fall 2008

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COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Social Analysis of the Greek New Testament will have a double focus: (1) Translation of Greek narratives from the New Testament and similar texts of the period; and (2) theoretical discussion of the fields of social and cultural analysis and practical analysis of the New Testament and similar texts from this theoretical point of view.

COURSE GOALS:

1. Gain proficiency in reading Greek narratives of the late Second Temple Period, including the canonical gospels.
2. Contextualize these narratives within their ancient social and cultural contexts.
3. Gain a solid understanding of the theoretical perspective of social and cultural analysis as it applies to the ancient world.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

1. To gain the facility to translate most any passage from the New Testament gospels with the use of a lexicon.
2. To interpret any passage in the New Testament with a focus on the social dimensions and dynamics of the ancient world.

COURSE EXPECTATIONS:

1. Attendance at all class sessions (see the Student Handbook for MTSO's attendance policy).
2. Careful preparation of the translation assignment due for each class session.
2. Careful preparation of all assigned reading.
3. Attentive and active participation in all class sessions.

GRADING:

Your final grade will consist of the following assignments:

1. Weekly translation prepared for class sessions: 20%
2. Weekly quizzes on previous week's translations: 20%
3. Class participation: 20%
4. Final Exam (oral): 20%
5. Final translation paper: 20%

GRADING SCALE:

- 94%-100% **A** (Outstanding work in all areas of the course)
- 90%-93% **A-** (Outstanding work in most of the areas of the course)
- 87%-89% **B+** (Very good work in all areas of the course)
- 84%-86% **B** (Good work in all areas of the course)
- 80%-83% **B-** (Average work in most areas of the course)
- 77%-79% **C+** (Below average work in most areas of the course but good in some; meets the minimum standards of the course)
- 74%-76% **C** (Below average work in most areas of the course; meets the minimum standards of the course)
- 70%-73% **C-** (Below average work in all areas of the course; meets the minimum standards of the course)
- 60%-69% **D** (Unacceptable work in all areas of the course, but passing)
- Below 60% **F** (Failing work; requires repeating the course)

NOTE: Although a grade above 60% constitutes a passing grade in this course, you should consider anything below 80% as an unsatisfactory grade as a graduate student of theological studies. You should consider a **B** good graduate work, i.e. if you engage in the course in a consistent way and do all the assignments in a competent way, you will have learned the baseline of what you should learn in a graduate level course. However, you should push yourself to go beyond the baseline level of knowledge and strive for excellence.

COMMUNICATION WITH STUDENTS:

The primary way that I will communicate with the class is through email. I may change the assignment that is due for a particular class, or I will notify you regarding a change in the schedule for the class. Therefore, it is very important that you CHECK YOUR EMAIL EVERY DAY for notices

regarding the class. If there is a change of assignment that I communicate through email, it is the student's responsibility to complete this assignment on time.

SHAREPOINT SITE:

The class website is found on the school's Sharepoint site (academics.mtso.edu). **Facility with this site is imperative for the successful completion of this course** because all the readings not from the required books will be on this site and you will be submitting all assignments through this site. All course materials will be posted on this site in various sections. **IMPORTANT: Although I have the capability of opening most document formats, please submit your assignments in MSWord format (either 1997-2003 [.doc] or the newest 2007 [.docx]).**

YOUR FOLDER: Each student has a folder under the "Submit Assignments" link. Unless there is a problem with the Sharepoint site, you will be expected to submit all your assignments (short papers, reviews, and essays) by uploading them into your folder.

To upload an assignment:

- a. click on your name on the folder
- b. click on the "Upload" button on the blue bar
- c. click on the "Browse" button on the right side of the screen
- d. choose the document you want to upload
- e. click on the "Open", "Choose", or other such button at the bottom of your browsing window
- f. click on "OK" at the bottom of the "Upload Document" window

No one but you and I will be able to see your documents. Once the document is uploaded, I will read it, insert any comments using the MSWord "Comments" function and assign a grade at the bottom of the page. I will then upload it into your folder. When my name replaces yours under "Modified By" then you will know that I have graded the assignment.

To access an electronic reading or other document posted on the Sharepoint site:

- a. click on the appropriate link in the menu on the left side of the page
- b. click on the document or folder for the particular week
- c. choose your download option ("Save", "View", etc.)

Note: You must have Adobe Reader or some similar PDF viewing software installed on your computer to read most of the documents available on the Sharepoint site. This is standard in most computers purchased in the last five years.

INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE

In accordance with MTSO's policy on inclusive language, all students are expected to use gender inclusive or gender neutral language in their writing AND in the classroom discussions when referring to human beings. In all written assignments, it will be considered a mechanical error, and an appropriate deduction for each instance will result.

REQUIRED BOOKS AND RESOURCES:

1. *Nestle-Aland Greek New Testament , 27th Edition – 8th Corrected Edition with Papyri 98-116* (American Bible Society) ISBN 9783438051004. OR *The Greek New Testament, 4th Revised Edition, Revised Printing with Newly Published Papyri 98-116* (United Bible Society) ISBN 9783438051103.
2. Bauer, et al., *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 3rd Edition (University of Chicago Press, 1999) ISBN 978-0-226-03933-6.
3. There will be other readings assigned throughout the semester that will be available on the class website. You will be able to download and/or print out these readings at your convenience.

FONTS

In order to read the weekly quizzes, you will need to download the font SPIonic from the Society of Biblical Literature website (www.sbl-site.org). Click on the “Educational Resources” link on the left hand menu, the click on the “Biblical Fonts” link in the upper right hand corner of the home page. Then scroll to the bottom of the page and click on “SP fonts.” The next page will have a link at the bottom of the page for SPIonic. Follow the instructions for download and installation on whatever system your computer uses.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Assigned work is in boldface type.

August 26th Introduction and Discussion of Social and Cultural Analysis

Bring lexicon and Greek NT to class.

September 2nd How to Study Religion

Translation:

John 1:1-28

Reading:

Christoph Auffarth and Hubert Mohr, “Introduction: The Academic Study of Religion – Historical and Contemporary Issues,” in *The Brill Dictionary of Religion*, Volume 1 (ed., Kocku von Stuckrad; Leiden: Brill, 2007), pp. xi-xxxvi.

Jonathan Z. Smith, “On Comparison,” in *Drudgery Divine: On the Comparison of Early Christianities and the Religions of Late Antiquity* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), pp. 36-53.

September 9th Theories of Culture

Translation:

Mark 1:1-31

Reading:

- Bruce Lincoln, "Culture," in *Guide to the Study of Religion* (ed. Willi Braun and Russell T. McCutcheon; London: Continuum, 2000), pp. 409-422.
- Tomoko Masuzawa, "Culture," in *Critical Terms for Religious Studies* (ed. Mark C. Taylor; University of Chicago Press, 1998), pp. 70-93.
- Zander Navarro, "In Search of a Cultural Interpretation of Power: The Contribution of Pierre Bourdieu," *Institute of Developmental Studies Bulletin* 37 (2006): 11-22.

September 16th Theories of Ritual

Translation:

Luke 2:22-35; 4:14-30

Reading:

- Paul Bradshaw and John Melloh, "Nathan D. Mitchell: New Directions in Ritual Research," *Foundations in Ritual Studies* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007), pp. 103-130.
- Mark D. Stansbury-O'Donnell, "Ritual Theory," in *Vase Painting, Gender, and Social Identity in Archaic Athens* (Cambridge University Press, 2007), pp. 96-102.
- Nancy Jay, "From Throughout Your Generations Forever: Sacrifice, Religion, and Paternity," in *Understanding Religious Sacrifice: A Reader* (ed., Jeffrey Carter; London: Continuum, 2003), pp. 370-383.

September 23rd Gender

Translation :

John 20:1-31

Reading:

- Randi R. Warne, "Gender," in *Guide to the Study of Religion* (ed. Willi Braun and Russell T. McCutcheon; London: Continuum, 2000), 140-154.
- William R. LaFleur, "Body," in *Critical Terms for Religious Studies* (ed. Mark C. Taylor; University of Chicago, 1998), pp. 36-54.

September 30th Family and Domestic Structures

Translation:

Luke 7:11-17; 15:11-32

Reading:

- John M. G. Barclay, (1997), "The Family as Bearer of Religion in Judaism and Early Christianity," in *Constructing Early Christian Families: Family as Social Reality and Metaphor* (ed., Halvor Moxnes, 1997), pp. 66-80.

Santiago Guijarro, "The Family in First-Century Galilee," in *Constructing Early Christian Families: Family as Social Reality and Metaphor* (ed., Halvor Moxnes, 1997), pp. 42-65.

Ross Kraemer, (2003), "Typical and Atypical Jewish Family Dynamics: The Cases of Babatha and Berenice," in *Early Christian Families in Context: An Interdisciplinary Dialogue* (eds., Carolyn Osiek and David L. Balch; Eerdmans, 2003), pp. 130-56.

October 7th Midterm Break: No Class

October 14th Social Location I

Translation:

Luke 16:1-31

Reading:

Hermas, *The Shepherd*, Mandate 4

Clement of Alexandria, *The Pedagogue* and *Miscellanies* (selections)

1QS 1-3

J. Albert Harrill, *Slaves in the New Testament: Literary, Social, and Moral Dimensions* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2006), ch. 3.

October 21st Social Location II

Translation:

Matthew 18:23-35; Mark 6:1-13

Reading:

Dale Martin, *Slavery as Salvation: The Metaphor of Slavery in Pauline Christianity* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990), pp. 1-50.

Serafina Cuomo, *Technology and Culture in Greek and Roman Antiquity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), ch. 1.

October 28th Sacrifice I

Translation:

John 19:1-16; Numbers 28:1-15 (LXX) (on Sharepoint)

Reading:

Homer, *Odyssey* XI: 18-50 (<http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/cgi-bin/ptext?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.01.0136&query=book%3D%2311>)

Excerpts about religion from the Hellenistic and Roman periods:

<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/ancient/personalrelig.html>

Mary Beard, John North, and Simon Price, *Religions of Rome: Volume 2: A Sourcebook* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), pp. 148-165.

November 4th Sacrifice II

Translation:

Mark 14:22-25, 32-36
2 Maccabees 7 excerpts (on Sharepoint)

Reading:

Genesis 22:1-19.
Homer, *Iliad* I.428-476; XVI.220-256.
(SCAN) Joseph Madrzejewski, *The Jews of Egypt: From Ramses II to Emperor Hadrian* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995), pp. 36-44.
(SCAN) Jon D. Levenson, "From *The Death and Resurrection of the Beloved Son: The Transformation of Child Sacrifice in Judaism and Early Christianity*" in *Understanding Religious Sacrifice: A Reader* (ed. Jeffrey Carter; London: Continuum, 2003), pp. 421-448.

November 11th Purity/Pollution

Translation:

Mark 7:1-23
Leviticus 14:48-53

Reading:

Harold W. Attridge, "Pollution, Sin, Atonement, Salvation," in *Ancient Religions* (ed. Sarah Iles Johnston; Cambridge: Belknap/Harvard University Press, 2007), pp. 71-83.
Jonathan Klawans, "Moral and Ritual Purity," in *The Historical Jesus in Context* (ed. Amy-Jill Levine, Dale C. Allison, and John Dominic Crossan; Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006), pp. 266-284.
Review readings on Gender.

November 18th Power and Empire I

Translation:

Luke 23:1-30

Reading:

Michel Foucault, "The Subject and Power," in *The Essential Foucault: Selections from the Essential Works of Foucault 1954-1984* (ed. Paul Rabinow and Nikolas Rose; New York: The New Press, 2003), pp. 128-144.

December 2nd Power and Empire II

Translation:

Martyrdom of Polycarp 17-18

Reading:

Warren Carter, *The Roman Empire and the New Testament: An Essential Guide* (Nashville: Abingdon, 2006), chs. 1-2.

December 9th **Final Exam and Final Paper Due**

Description of Assignments

1. Weekly Translations:

Each week you will be required to translate approximately 30 verses from the NT gospels or from a comparable text from the ancient world. The basic idea is that you should translate the Greek as accurately and literally as possible while staying in the confines of idiomatic English (at times this will be more difficult than it sounds).

The progression of your preparation throughout the semester should look something like this:

- a. First few weeks: write out a translation of the passage, list all vocabulary that you do not know, and parse all verbs. Expect to spend 15-20 hours per week on the translation for this stage.
- b. Middle few weeks: write out the phrases that are tricky and hard to remember, list all vocabulary that you do not know, and parse all verbs that you cannot parse off the top of your head. Expect to spend 10-15 hours on the translation for this stage.
- c. Last few weeks: list all vocabulary that you do not know. Expect to spend 5-10 hours (or maybe less) on the translation for this stage.

Here are some suggestions for preparing for class translation sessions each week:

- a. Days 1-4: spend an equal number of hours each day on preparing a written translation for class. You will work more efficiently spending shorter chunks of time every day than spending large chunks of time on one or two days.
- b. Day 5: read over the passage several times using your translation as a guide. Do this at least three times in succession. The first time through will take over an hour; the second time through will take half the time; the third time will take even less.
- c. Days 6-7: read other assigned readings and generate questions for class discussion. Just before class, go over your translation one more time.

Your goal (and my expectation) is for you to be able to come to class and translate the text orally without recourse to your written translation. I understand that this will be a work in progress.

The translation portion of each class will be as follows:

- a. I will ask one student at a time to read a verse or two in Greek out loud.
- b. Each student will take a turn translating orally.
- c. During the translation, I will then ask questions about syntax and ask you to parse one or two verbs from the sentence you translate orally.
- d. We will spend the first half of each class on translation issues.

IMPORTANT:

1. If you have questions about a translation as you work through the week on the translation, post your question on the discussion board on the Sharepoint site. I will check daily and respond to the questions posted there.
2. **WORK IN GROUPS** on your translations. Meet at least one time during the week to go over what you have done and to discuss questions. Help each other out to work through these translations.

2. Weekly Quizzes:

- a. On Thursday at noon each week, I will post a quiz on the Sharepoint site under “About Assignments.” You will download the quiz, complete it and upload it into your Sharepoint folder by midnight that day (this is negotiable based upon your schedules).
 - b. You will be asked to translate one or two verses from the passage completed during the previous class, parse several words from those verses, and perhaps answer questions about syntax.
 - c. You will have 20 minutes to complete the quiz, and you will be on your honor to stick to the time limit.
 - d. The quiz will be closed-book; you will not be allowed to use lexicons, BibleWorks, grammar books, or other resources. Again, you will be on your honor to stick to these requirements.
3. Translation Paper:

In the second half of the semester, you will work towards completing a detailed translation of Luke 1:1-25 that will be 3000-3600 words in length. The translation must include the following:

- An accurate translation of the Greek expressed in idiomatic English.
- A full analysis of the verbal forms in the passage, which means that you should parse all verbs giving person, number, tense, voice, mood, and lexical form.
- A full analysis of all significant syntactical features in the passage, which means that you should explain what the effect of each feature is for the sentence in which it resides. For example, if you have a participle in the sentence, you should explain how the participle is functioning in the sentence. If you have a subjunctive in the sentence, you should explain how it is functioning in the sentence. And so on.

Each paper will be judged on accuracy of translation, thoroughness and accuracy of verbal and syntactical analysis, and clarity of expression.

4. Oral Final Exam:

All students will take a 20-minute oral final exam that will test the two aspects of the course:

- Understanding of Greek: I will ask questions about the Greek of Luke 1:1-25, the same passage for your final paper to see how well you can articulate your understanding of the language. The types of questions will not vary from what you will have prepared for the paper and for each week’s class, but you will not have recourse to any notes or other materials.
- Understanding of social and cultural analysis: I will ask questions about Luke 1:1-25 and another passage that you will not have prepared ahead of time regarding what sort of lines of thought and analysis one might pursue in order to interpret the passages using social and cultural analysis. For example, if I ask you about Mark 5:21-43 (the synagogue official’s sick daughter and the hemorrhaging woman), you would need to mention something about purity, social location, sickness, death, family dynamics, or the like, in order to adequately complete the exam.

Bibliographical Resources:

These are invaluable reference resources in deepening your knowledge of Greek in and outside the New Testament:

Blass, F., A. Debrunner, and R. W. Funk. *A Greek Grammar of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961.

Liddell, H. G. and R. Scott. *A Greek English Lexicon*. Ninth Edition with Revised Supplement. Oxford: Clarendon, 1996. (A.k.a. LSJ)

There is also an online edition of LSJ that is almost as complete as the print edition:
<http://archimedes.fas.harvard.edu/pollux/>

Smyth, Herbert Weir. *Greek Grammar*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1920, 1956.