

ENGL 435 The English Bible and English Literature

Trimester 2 2011

11 July to 12 November 2011

30 Points

TRIMESTER DATES

Teaching dates: 11 July to 14 October 2011
Mid-trimester break: 22 August to 4 September 2011
Study week: 17 to 21 October 2011
Examination/Assessment period: 21 October to 12 November 2011

Note: Students who enrol in courses with examinations are expected to be able to attend an examination at the University at any time during the formal examination period.

WITHDRAWAL DATES

Information on withdrawals and refunds may be found at
<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/admisenrol/payments/withdrawalsrefunds.aspx>

NAME AND CONTACT DETAILS

| Staff | Email | Phone | Room |
|--------------|--|----------|--------|
| David Norton | david.norton@vuw.ac.nz | 463 6811 | VZ 810 |

CLASS TIMES AND LOCATIONS

Seminars

| | | |
|----------|-------------------|--------|
| Thursday | 1.10 pm – 4.00 pm | VZ 802 |
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COURSE DELIVERY

Seminars, some of them led by the students.

COMMUNICATION OF ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

In class and by email. If you are not going to use the Victoria email address set up for you, we strongly encourage you to set a forward from the Victoria email system to the email address you do use.

COURSE PRESCRIPTION

This course will concentrate on connections between the Bible and English literature. This is a very large subject so the course is essentially introductory. Previous knowledge of the Bible is not essential. About two thirds of the course will be on the Bible, about one third on a selection of English works in relation to the Bible. Discussion of the Bible will include qualities common to most versions, and qualities, especially qualities of language, particular to the King James Bible (or

Authorised Version, 1611), which is the version used by most English writers since the seventeenth century.

COURSE CONTENT

This course will concentrate on the literary and linguistic qualities of the King James Bible (1611), how those qualities have influenced some English writers, and how some writers have used the Bible. Among the biblical topics and books to be considered will be: narrative (Genesis, the story of David, the gospel story), poetry and poetic form (Psalms, Song of Solomon), prophecy, Job, imagery, the influence of biblical language on the English language, the history of Bible translation and the Bible and Shakespeare. Texts from English literature will be introduced at various points.

The set text is the King James Bible or Authorised Version; recommended edition is David Norton, ed., *The Bible: King James Version with The Apocrypha*, Penguin Classics, 2006 (other editions are acceptable but should include the Apocrypha). You are required to have one other version for comparative purposes; this will be discussed in the first class.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Enhanced understanding of the nature of the Bible and its presence in English literature and language.

EXPECTED WORKLOAD

The expected workload for a 30 point course is 300 hours spread evenly over the 12 week trimester and breaks, or 20 hours per teaching week.

READINGS

See under Course Content, Programme and Select List of Resources

ASSESSMENT REQUIREMENTS

By a combination of written work (60%) and final 3-hour exam (40%).

You will not be allowed on material you used for course essays in the exam.

WRITTEN WORK: Two essays on the Bible, approximately 1,500 words each (15 marks each), one long essay on the Bible and literature, 3,000 words (30 marks).

Essay 1. Due August 1. 1,500 words. 15 marks.

There is no possibility of considering the literary impact of the Authorised Version apart from that of the Bible in general.... What is common, even from the literary point of view, to the originals and all the versions is after all far more important than what is peculiar.

C.S. Lewis, 'The Literary Impact of the Authorised Version'

With particular reference to **either** Ecclesiastes 3 **or** Matthew 6, and using another version of the Bible for comparison, write an essay on the language of the King James Bible, paying special attention to the question of the importance of the language.

Essay 2. Due August 19. 1,500 words. 15 marks.

[The Bible] is, if you like to put it that way, not merely a sacred book but a book so remorselessly and continuously sacred that it does not invite, it excludes or repels, the merely aesthetic approach. You can read it as literature only by a *tour de force*.

C.S. Lewis, 'The Literary Impact of the Authorised Version'

In the light of Lewis's comment, write a literary reading of **either** Genesis 37-50 (the story of Joseph) **or** Tobit **or** 1 Corinthians **or** another section of the Bible of similar length. Your essay must be based on the King James Bible.

Essay 3. Due October 14. 3,000 words. 30 marks.

The King James Bible has been described as 'the most powerful factor in the history of English literature' (William Rosenau). Write a detailed analysis of the connections between a work of literature in English and the English Bible, showing what may be learnt about the Bible and literature in English from these connections.

Note: please consult with me about your intended topic before beginning this essay.

PROGRAMME

What follows is a draft. The programme is open to revision as we see fit (so only the first half is outlined at this point). Please feel free to make suggestions: this course is an opportunity for you to explore what interests you most from an enormous subject.

- July 14 Introduction. What is the Bible? English versions; resources. English literature and the Bible. Genesis 1-3.
- July 21 Narrative and teaching: Matthew.
The sermon on the mount; familiar quotations; parables.
D.H. Lawrence, 'The Escaped Cock' (handout).
- July 28 Stories from Adam to Moses (Genesis 1 to Exodus 20).
Background reading: Julian Barnes, 'The Stowaway'; Erich Auerbach, *Mimesis*, ch. 1, Isaac Bashevis Singer, 'Genesis', in David Rosenberg, ed., *Congregation* (handout).
- August 4 Stories from Adam to Moses (Genesis 1 to Exodus 20) continued.
Background reading: C.S. Lewis, 'The literary impact of the Authorised Version' (handout).
- August 11 Poetry. In what ways (if any) do biblical poems appear poetic in the KJB? Psalms (especially 8, 22-4, 69, 114, 127, 137), poetic form and verse adaptations; Song of Solomon; Macpherson and Lawrence (handout).
Background reading: Robert Alter, *The Art of Biblical Poetry*; Norton, *A History of the Bible as Literature*, 1: 15, or *A History of the English Bible as Literature*, ch. 6.
- August 18 Prophecy. Preparatory work: research the idea of a 'prophet' in the Bible. Key chapters will include Isaiah 40, 42 and 60, Jeremiah 1-4, Ezekiel 37. Eliot, *The Waste Land*.
Background reading: George Saintsbury, *A History of English Prose Rhythm* (London: Macmillan, 1912), c. pp. 142 ff; Rudyard Kipling, "'Proofs of Holy Writ'" (handout).

Remainder to be arranged.

SELECT LIST OF RESOURCES

Reading of the basic biblical and literary texts is the essential work. The background reading, for which suggestions follow, can easily make undue demands on your time. These works represent a very small selection of available material but are more than you can reasonably cope with. Some have already been noted as recommended background reading.

Older Bibles

- The New Testament Octapla*. NY, n.d. Tyndale, Great, Geneva, Bishops', Rheims, KJB, RV, RSV. BS2025 1962 W419. This is the easiest resource for comparing versions.
- Tyndale, William. *Tyndale's Old Testament*. Ed. David Daniell. New Haven and London, 1992. Modern spelling edition of 1534 Pentateuch and some other books from 1537. BS140 1992.
- Tyndale's New Testament*. Ed. David Daniell. New Haven and London, 1989. Modern spelling edition of 1530 edition. BS140 1989.
- Coverdale, Myles. *The Bible*. 1535. Reprinted London, 1838. aBS145 1838 (stackroom).
- The New Testament*. Geneva, 1557. Facsimile London, 1842. BS2070 1842.
- The Bible*. Geneva, 1560. 1585 Barker, London, edition held by Beaglehole Room.
- The Geneva Bible. A facsimile of the 1599 edition with undated Sternhold & Hopkins Psalms*. Intro.: Michael H. Brown. Buena Park, Calif.: The Geneva Publishing Company, 1990. BS170 G328 (Big Book).

Electronic Bibles

- The Bible in English* CD-ROM, Chadwyck-Healey, available electronically from the library; see under Online Resources (Databases). Texts of all major English translations through to the KJB, plus some more recent versions.
- Electronic texts of the KJB are available on the internet (e.g. <http://www.blueletterbible.org/>).

Concordance

- Strong, James. *The Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible*. 1894. This is the best of many available but not held by VUW library.

Background

- Translating for King James*. Ed. Ward Allen. Nashville, 1969. BS186 B682 T. Facsimile and transcription of notes made by the translators while revising the Epistles.
- The Coming of the King James Gospels: a collation of the translators' work-in-progress*. Ed. Ward S. Allen and Edward C. Jacobs. Fayetteville, 1995. BS2555.2 A432 C. A transcript of the translators' handwritten revisions of parts of the Bishops' Bible Gospels.
- Daniell, David. *William Tyndale: a Biography*. New Haven & London, 1994. BR350 T8 D185 W.
- The Bible in English: its history and influence*. New Haven and London, 2003. BS455 D185 B.
- Hammond, Gerald. *The Making of the English Bible*. Manchester, 1982. BS455 H226 M.
- Nicolson, Adam. *Power and Glory: Jacobean England and the Making of the King James Bible*. London : HarperCollins, 2003. BR757 N653 P.
- Norton, David. *The King James Bible: a Short History from Tyndale to Today*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011.
- A Textual History of the King James Bible*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005. BS186 N883 T.
- The Cambridge History of the Bible*. 3 vols. Cambridge, 1963-70. BS475.2 C178.

Bible as Literature

- Alter, Robert. *The Art of Biblical Narrative*. NY, 1981. BS1171.2 A466 A.
The Art of Biblical Poetry. NY, 1985. BS1405.2 A466 A.
The World of Biblical Literature. New York, 1992. BS 535 A466 W.
- Alter, Robert and Frank Kermode, eds. *The Literary Guide to the Bible*. Cambridge, Mass., 1987. BS535 L776.
- The King James Bible after 400 years : literary, linguistic, and cultural influences*. Eds Hannibal Hamlin and Norman W. Jones. Cambridge, 2010. BS186 K56 2010.
- Kermode, Frank. *The Genesis of Secresy*. Cambridge, Mass., 1979. PN81 K39 G.
- Lewis, C.S. 'The literary impact of the Authorised Version'. In *Selected Literary Essays*, ed. Walter Hooper. London, 1969. PR6023 E926 A16 H788. Or *They Asked for a Paper*. London, 1962. PR6023 E926 T5.
- Moulton, R.G. *The Literary Study of the Bible*. 2nd ed. Boston, 1899. a BS535 M927 L 2ed.
- Norton, David. *A History of the Bible as Literature*. 2 volumes. Cambridge, 1993. BS585 N883 H.
A History of the English Bible as Literature. Cambridge, 2000. BS585 N883 2000.
- PN Review 13: Crisis for Cranmer and King James*. Ed. David Martin. 6: 5 (1979). o PN6101 P745.
- Wiley, Basil. 'On translating the Bible into modern English'. *Essays and Studies*, new series (1970), 23: 1-17. p PR5 E58 E7.

ASSIGNMENT COVER SHEETS

Assignment cover sheets are not mandatory for this course.

EXTENSIONS AND PENALTIES

Extensions will be granted only in exceptional and unforeseen circumstances. Issues of workload do not constitute exceptional and unforeseen circumstances. If you require an extension, discuss this with me in advance.

SEFTMS policy is that work submitted after the deadline will be penalised by a 2.5 percent deduction from your total mark per work day. Late work also receives only minimal comments from your marker.

MANDATORY COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Attendance at the seminars (health permitting, you are expected to attend all the seminars), completion of written work, examination. If you miss a seminar, please check with me for handouts and reading for the next seminar.

CLASS REPRESENTATIVES

A class representative may be elected in the first class if the students wish. That person's name and contact details will be available to VUWSA, the Course Coordinator and the class. The class representative provides a communication channel to liaise with the Course Coordinator on behalf of students.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AND PLAGIARISM

Academic integrity means that university staff and students, in their teaching and learning are expected to treat others honestly, fairly and with respect at all times. It is not acceptable to mistreat academic, intellectual or creative work that has been done by other people by representing it as your own original work.

Academic integrity is important because it is the core value on which the University's learning, teaching and research activities are based. Victoria University's reputation for academic integrity adds value to your qualification.

The University defines plagiarism as presenting someone else's work as if it were your own, whether you mean to or not. 'Someone else's work' means anything that is not your own idea. Even if it is presented in your own style, you must acknowledge your sources fully and appropriately. This includes:

- Material from books, journals or any other printed source
- The work of other students or staff
- Information from the internet
- Software programs and other electronic material
- Designs and ideas
- The organisation or structuring of any such material

Find out more about plagiarism, how to avoid it and penalties, on the University's website: <http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/plagiarism.aspx>

WHERE TO FIND MORE DETAILED INFORMATION

Find key dates, explanations of grades and other useful information at www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study. Find out how academic progress is monitored and how enrolment can be restricted at www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/academic-progress. Most statutes and policies are available at www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/policy, except qualification statutes, which are available via the *Calendar* webpage at www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/calendar.aspx (See Section C).

Other useful information for students may be found at the website of the Assistant Vice-Chancellor (Academic), at www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about_victoria/avcacademic.