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**Syllabus for NT 805—
THE EARLY CHURCH FATHERS AND THE FORMATION OF THE CANON
(DOCTORAL SEMINAR)
July 8-17 2008**

Dr. J. Warren Smith, Associate Professor of Historical Theology, Duke University
(Before the seminar, call 919-401-2461; during seminar, 919-270-6739)
Dr. Ben Witherington, III, Professor of NT, Asbury Theological Seminary

Required Textbooks:

- 1) Behr, John. The Nicene Faith Part 1. Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2004.
- 2) Chadwick, Henry. Early Christian Thought and the Classical Tradition. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1966.
- 3) Dawson, David. Christian Figural Reading and the Fashioning of Identity. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1992.
- 4) Gavriilyuk, Paul. The Sufferings of the Impassible God: The Dialectics of Patristic Thought. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004
- 5) Grant, Robert. Augustus to Constantine. Louisville: Westminster/J. Knox, 2004)
- 6) Gorday, Peter J. Principles of Patristic Exegesis: Romans 9-11 in Origen, John Chrysostom, and Augustine. New York: Mellen Press, 1983.
- 7) MacDonald, Lee. The Biblical Canon. Peabody: Hendrickson, 2007.
- 8) MacMullen, R. Voting about God, (New Haven: Yale U. Press, 2006)
- 9) Malherbe, Abraham J. Paul and the Popular Philosophers. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1989.
- 10) Mitchell, M. and Young, F. eds. The Cambridge History of Christianity: Origins to Constantine (Cambridge: C.U. Press, 2006)
- 11) Mitchell, M. The Heavenly Trumpet. John Chrysostom and the Art of Pauline Interpretation. Louisville: Westminster/J. Knox, 2002.
- 12) Stark, R. Cities of God. San Francisco: Harper, 2006.
- 13) Whitacre, R.A. A Patristic Greek Reader. Peabody: Hendrickson Press, 2007.
- 14) Young, Frances. Biblical Exegesis and the Formation of Christian Culture. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997. Repr. Peabody, Mass.: Hendrikson, 2002.

Primary Source Reading and Discussion

THE STUDENT WILL NEED TO HAVE A COPY OF R. A. Whitacre, A Patristic Greek Reader, (Peabody: Hendrickson Press, 2007). We will begin each class with assigned readings from this textbook, including selections from the Didache up through the section on Chrysostom.

COURSE PROCEDURE

This is an intensive class (four hours a day, for two weeks) and will include the following components:

- 1) 50 minutes of introductory lecture followed by 15 min. Q&A;
- 2) 30 minutes of translation of primary source texts, by the students;
- 3) 45 minutes of short reports on assignments from the required reading. Each student will **sign up** for at least **one** short report before **July 1**. The reports should include a summary of the thesis of the text and a summary of the author's main arguments and supporting evidence. At the end the student should give some evaluation of the author's thesis and argument and how useful it is for our study of early Christianity and the interpretation of Scripture and the formation of the canon. Although a written copy of the report should be given to each member of the class, the oral presentation (15-20 min) should take the form of a mini-lecture, just as if one were teaching the text to a class of students.
- 4) 1 hour and 30 min discussion of the text assigned as "Common Reading for Discussion" together with the primary sources assigned as "Common Reading for Lecture" by the class and the professors. Each student is responsible for presenting an introduction to the "Common Reading for Discussion" **once** during the two weeks. The introduction (15 min.) should provide a) summary of the thesis of the text, b) summary of the key arguments that the author uses to support his thesis, and c) 5 questions about the author's argument to jump start our discussion of the text. The questions would be in the following form: "On pages 72-3, McMullen claims X, Y, and Z. However, the textual evidence for claim Y is doubtful because of A and B. If we reject claim Y, do we also have to reject claims X and Z?" **Sign up** for the presentation by **July 1**.
- 5) During the second week of the class, instead of short papers on the assigned readings, each student will be responsible for presenting a major paper (15 pages) on some topic germane to the persons and issues covered in this class, followed by discussion. Papers as presented are not expected to be the final product, but an advanced draft. Then in the week following the class, the student should revise the paper in light of our conversation about the paper in class. Email the final copy to me (wsmith@div.duke.edu) by July 25.

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

The assignments for this course are as follows: 1) translation and discussion of primary source texts in the seminar—30%; 2) short papers presented the first week of class—30%; 3) major paper on topics TBA—40%

Weekly Schedule

Monday, July 7

Lecture: A Question of Identity: Israel and The Church

Common Reading for Lecture:

- 1) Epistle of Barnabas
- 2) Epistle to Flora (Gnostic Scriptures)
- 3) Hymn of the Pearl (Gnostic Scriptures)

Common Reading for Discussion:

R. Stark, Cities of God

Short Reports:

- 1) Hurtado, Larry W. Lord Jesus Christ. Devotion to Jesus in Earliest Christianity (Intro, Ch.1, 7-9)
- 2) Babcock, William S. Paul and the Legacies of Paul (pp.265-307)

Translation:

Didache 7, 8, 9-10, 11-13

Tuesday, July 8

Lecture: A Question of Identity: Christians and A Non-Christian Empire

Common Reading for Lecture:

- 1) Irenaeus of Antioch, Epistles
- 2) Justin Martyr, Second Apology

Common Reading for Discussion:

- 1) A.J. Malherbe, Paul among the Philosophers
- 2) H. Chadwick, Early Christian Thought and the Classical Tradition

Short Reports:

- 1) Hauser, Alan J. and Watson, Duane F. A History of Biblical Interpretation Volume 1 The Ancient Period.(ch. 11, 15-16)
- 2) Blowers, Paul M. The Bible in Greek Christian Antiquity. The Bible Through the Ages (ch. 2-4)

Translation: Ignatius, To the Romans Salutation-par. 5 (pp. 37-42)

Wednesday, July 9

Lecture: Hyper-Hellenized Christianity: Marcion and the Gnostics

Common Reading for Lecture:

- 1) Apocryphon of John, Bentley Layton, Gnostic Scriptures
- 2) Gospel of Truth
- 3) Gospel acc. to Thomas

Common Reading for Discussion:

Ehrman, Bart D. Lost Christianities. The Battles for Scripture and the Faiths We Never Knew

Short Reports:

- 1) Babcock, William S. Paul and the Legacies of Paul (pp.3-77)
- 2) Robert M. Grant, Heresy and Criticism (ch. 1-4,7)

Translation: Martyrdom of Polycarp, 8.1-12.3

Thursday, 10 July

Lecture: Irenaeus and the Rule of Faith

Common Reading for Lecture:

Against Heresies in Robert Grant, Irenaeus of Lyons (Books II-III)

Common Reading for Discussion:

Lee MacDonald, The Biblical Canon

Short Reports:

1) Babcock, William S. Paul and the Legacies of Paul (pp.79-98)

2) Eric Osborn, Irenaeus of Lyons (ch. 7-8)

3) John Behr, The Way to Nicaea (ch. 1, 3-5)

Translation: Justin Martyr, First Apology 61

Friday, 11 July

Lecture: Origen and Alexandrian Exegesis

Common Reading for Lecture:

Origen, Prologue to Commentary on Song of Songs in R. Greer Origen

Origen, Homily 27 on Numbers, in Greer

Common Reading for Discussion:

Young, Frances. Biblical Exegesis and the Formation of Christian Culture

Short Reports:

1) Blowers, Paul M. The Bible in Greek Christian Antiquity. The Bible Through the Ages (Ch. 6-7)

2) Rowan Greer, Captain of Our Salvation: Patristic Exegesis of Hebrews (ch.1)

3) John Behr, The Way to Nicaea (ch. 7-8)

Translation: Justin Martyr, First Apology 65-67

Monday, 14 July

Lecture: Origen and Early Views of the Trinity

Common Reading for Lecture:

Origen, Commentary on John Books I-II

Common Reading for Discussion:

Dawson, David. Christian Figural Reading and the Fashioning of Identity.

Translation: Clement of Alexandria, Miscellanies 1.5, 1.20, 6.13

Tuesday, 15 July

Lecture: Nicaea and Athanasius

Common Reading for Lecture:

Athanasius, On the Incarnation (in Hardy's Christology of the Later Fathers)

Common Reading for Discussion:

1) R. MacMullen, Voting about God

2) John Behr, The Nicene Faith (ch. 1, 3, 4)

Translation: Athanasius, On the Incarnation, 3, 8-9, 13, and 20

Wednesday, 16 July

Lecture: The Cappadocian Triumph

Common Reading for Lecture:

Gregory of Nazianzus, First and Fourth Theological Oration (in Hardy's Christology of the Later Fathers)

Common Reading for Discussion: On the Incarnation, 3, 8-9, and 13 con't

M. Mitchell, The Heavenly Trumpet. John Chrysostom and the Art of Pauline Interpretation

Translation: On the Incarnation, 3, 8-9, 13, and 20 con't

Thursday, 17 July

Lecture: Christological Controversy: Cyril and Nestorius

Common Reading for Lecture:

Norman Russell, Cyril of Alexandria (pp.96-129)

Common Reading for Discussion:

Paul Gavriluk, The Sufferings of the Impassible God: The Dialectics of Patristic Thought

Translation: Chrysostom, Homiliae in Matthaicum 50.2-4

Friday, July 18

Lecture: Augustine, Pelagius, and Free Will

Common Reading for Lecture:

Augustine, Spirit and the Letter

Common Reading for Discussion:

Gorday, Peter J. Principles of Patristic Exegesis: Romans 9-11 in Origen, John Chrysostom, and Augustine.

Translation: Chrysostom, Homiliae in Matthaicum 50.2-4 con't

SELECT COURSE BIBLIOGRAPHY (supplementing the already listed items)

Ayres, Lewis. *Nicaea and its Legacy: An Approach to Fourth-Century Trinitarian Theology*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004.

Babcock, William S. *Paul and the Legacies of Paul*. Dallas: Southern Methodist University Press, 1990.

Behr, John. The Way to Nicaea. Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2001.

_____. The Nicene Faith Part 1. Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2004.

Blowers, Paul M. *The Bible in Greek Christian Antiquity*. The Bible Through the Ages Volume 1. Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1997.

Brown, Peter. *Power and Persuasion in Late Antiquity: Towards a Christian Empire*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1992

Cameron, Averil. *Christianity and the Rhetoric of Empire: The Development of Christian Discourse*. Sather Classical Lectures 55. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1991.

Clark, Elizabeth A. *Reading Renunciation: Asceticism and Scripture in Early Christianity*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1999.

Dawson, David. *Allegorical Readers and Cultural Revision in Ancient Alexandria*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1992.

_____. *Christian Figural Reading and the Fashioning of Identity*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1992.

Ehrman, Bart D. *Lost Christianities. The Battles for Scripture and the Faiths We Never Knew*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003.

Gaca, Kathy L. and Welborn, L.L. *Early Patristic Readings of Romans*. Romans Through History and Cultures Series. New York: T and T Clark International, 2005.

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Grant, Robert M. *Heresy and Criticism The Search for Authenticity in Early Christian Literature*. Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1993.

Greer, Rowan A. *The Captain of Our Salvation. A Study of the Patristic Exegesis of Hebrews*. Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1973.

_____. *Origen in Classics of Western Spirituality*. Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1979.

Greer, Rowan A. and Mitchell, Margaret M. *The "Belly-Myther" of Endor Interpretations of 1 Kings 28 in the Early Church*. Writings from the Greco-Roman World 16. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2007.

Greenman, Jeffrey and Larson, Timothy. *Reading Romans through the Centuries: From the Early Church to Karl Barth*. Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2005.

Hardy, Edward R. Christologies of the Later Fathers. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1954.

Hauser, Alan J. and Watson, Duane F. *A History of Biblical Interpretation Volume 1 The Ancient Period*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2003.

Hurtado, Larry W. *Lord Jesus Christ. Devotion to Jesus in Earliest Christianity*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2003.

Osborn, Eric. *Irenaeus of Lyons*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001.

Patte, Daniel and TeSelle, Eugene. *Engaging Augustine on Romans. Self, Context, and Theology in Interpretation*. Romans Through History and Cultures Series. Harrisburg: Trinity Press International, 2002.

Simonetti, Manlio. *Biblical Interpretation in the Early Church: An Historical Introduction to Patristic Exegesis*. Translation by John A. Hughes. Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1994.

Trigg, Joseph W. *Origen: The Bible and Philosophy in the Third-Century Church*. Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1983.

Wliken, Robert. L. *John Chrysostom and the Jews: Rhetoric and Reality in Late Fourth Century*. The Transformation of the Classical Heritage 4. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1983.

Windens, J. C. M. *An Early Christian Philosopher: Justin Martyr's Dialogue with Trypho Chapters One to Nine*. *Philosophia patrum* 1. Leiden: Brill, 1971.

Young, Frances. *The Art of Performance: Towards a Theology of Holy Scripture*. London: Darton, Longman, & Todd, 1990.

_____. *Biblical Exegesis and the Formation of Christian Culture*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997. Repr. Peabody, Mass.: Hendrikson, 2002.