



# Course Syllabus

## HEB 620

### Hebrew Exegesis I

### Fall 2025

#### Class Information

**Day and Time:** Monday 7:30-10:00 pm

**Room Number:** E204

#### Contact Information

**Instructor Name:** Kevin R. Warstler, Ph.D.

**Instructor Email:** [kwarstler@criswell.edu](mailto:kwarstler@criswell.edu)

**Instructor Phone:** 214-818-1331

**Instructor Office Hours:** Tuesday 1-4 pm; Thursday 1-4 pm

#### Course Description and Prerequisites

A continuation study of Hebrew grammar, emphasizing exegetical method in Hebrew prose literature. Special attention will be given to syntax, textual criticism, literary analysis, and lexical studies. (Prerequisite: HEB 302 or equivalent)

#### Course Objectives

At the end of this course, the student should demonstrate the following:

1. Explain the BHS textual apparatus for specific textual problems and provide a tentative solution to those problems;
2. Lexically analyze Hebrew words and identify legitimate and distinguishable categories of meaning;
3. Classify Hebrew nouns, verbs, and other grammatical constructions into appropriate syntactical categories;
4. Use structural analysis to develop a clausal layout of a Hebrew prose text;
5. Identify and explain specific exegetical and interpretive issues in a Hebrew text and articulate solutions that are both rational and consistent with the biblical context;
6. Use literary analysis to identify literary characteristics of a biblical Hebrew narrative and to explain these characteristics and their significance for understanding the text;
7. Apply the various exegetical tools learned in the course to one specific and complete narrative book in the Old Testament (the book of Ruth); and
8. Write an exegetical paper on a narrative text in the Hebrew Bible.

## Required Textbooks

1. Berlin, Adele. *Poetics and Interpretation of Biblical Narrative*. Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1994. (978-1575060026)
2. Brotzman, Ellis R. *Old Testament Textual Criticism: A Practical Introduction*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 1994. (978-0801010651)
3. Chisholm, Robert B. Jr. *From Exegesis to Exposition: A Practical Guide to Using Biblical Hebrew*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1999. (978-0801021718)
4. Chisholm, Robert B. Jr. *A Workbook for Intermediate Hebrew: Grammar, Exegesis, and Commentary on Jonah and Ruth*. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2006. (978-0825423901)
5. Elliger, K., and W. Rudolph. *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1997, 2006. (paperback: 978-1598561623; or hardback: 978-1598561630)

## Course Requirements and Assignments

1. Textbook and Supplemental Reading  
You are responsible to read Brotzmann, *OT Textual Criticism*; Chisholm *From Exegesis to Exposition*; and Berlin, *Poetics and Interp. of Biblical Narrative* You will report your reading on the percentage of completion of the reading of the textbooks at the end of the course. There is no reading portion in the final grade but there will be a penalty deducted from the final grade if the reading is not completed based on the following scale: 85-95% = 1 point deducted, 75-85% = 2 points deducted, 65-75% = 3 points deducted, 50-65% = 4 points deducted, <50% = 5 points deducted.
2. Assignments
  - a. Textual Criticism and Lexical Analysis (20%)  
There will be one assignment over textual criticism and one over lexical analysis both of which are mandatory (i.e., no drops). Each of these will count as 10% of your final grade in the course.
  - b. Ruth Assignments (40%)  
You will select four out of eight exegetical assignments over the book of Ruth (two assignments per chapter). If you choose to turn in more than five assignments, only the highest five grades will be counted. Each of these assignments will count as 8% of your final grade in the course.
  - c. Chisholm Workbook (10%)  
You are to complete 50% of the Ruth sections in Chisholm's *Workbook for Intermediate Hebrew*. This is 50% of each section and not 50% of the total. The workbook includes answers in the back so you may check your own work.
3. Exegetical Paper (30%)  
You will select a passage of narrative text from the Hebrew Bible that does not include Jonah or Ruth. The length of the passage may vary based on the fact that it must include a complete scene or clearly divided section within a longer scene.

The paper will consist of two different assignments that will be handed in separately. The first of these will be the preliminary paper, which will include a translation of the text in a structural layout form with identifications of the categories of clauses (see Chisholm, *From Exegesis to Exposition*, 135-142 as an example). The second part will include questions that will need to be answered in the final paper. The

questions should include text-critical, lexical, grammatical, and interpretive issues relevant to the passage. You are not answering these questions in the preliminary paper, but it is expected that the answers will be integrated into your final paper.

The final paper will include the following: 1) a dynamic translation of the text in structural layout form that demonstrates your text-critical, lexical, and syntactical decisions on the text, 2) footnotes under the translation on the rationale for specific text-critical decisions as well as relevant lexical and syntactical choices, 3) an introduction to the setting and structure of the passage, 4) a verse-by-verse exposition of the text with specific exegetical details as well as interaction with commentaries and other scholarly sources included in footnotes, 5) a summary of the main literary-theological theme or lesson that can be derived from the text (Chisholm's Step 6, *From Exegesis to Exposition*, 190-191), and 6) a specific application to your own life or ministry from the message of the text.

## Course/Classroom Policies and Information

### Video Recording

To ensure FERPA compliance when a course is live-streamed or recorded, students can opt out of video recordings by requesting seating in a designated area off camera. Students who sit outside of this area are giving implicit permission to be recorded.

### Class Attendance:

Students should only enroll in courses they are able to attend regularly.

- **On-campus** students are expected to attend class **in person** according to the course syllabus.
- Students enrolled in the **online section** must pay any applicable online course fees.
- Online students are expected to attend class **synchronously** at the scheduled time via the designated video conferencing platform, Zoom, found in the left-hand global menu in Canvas.
- Online students must have their **cameras turned on with sound muted** during class, and actively participate in discussions and activities. In order to be properly identified, students must upload a picture ID to their Canvas Account Profile *prior to the first online meeting*. For instructions on how to upload a profile picture, [click here](#).

### Missed Classes:

- Each instructor may decide how attendance impacts your grade and learning objectives. Details are provided within the course syllabus.
- Students are responsible for catching up on any material missed due to absence or tardiness.
  - Instructors are **not required** to allow make-up work for missed classes.

### Attendance & Financial Aid:

- Students receiving **grants, loans, or scholarships** must meet participation requirements set by the college.
- It is the student's responsibility to:
  - Review relevant sections of the Academic Catalog.
  - Contact the **Financial Aid Office** for details on how attendance affects aid.
  - Understand the consequences of non-participation.

### Census Period Attendance Requirement:

- Though Criswell College does not officially take attendance, it must verify that students **begin their courses** to meet federal aid regulations.
- **During the census period** (first two weeks of a 16-week semester or first week of shorter terms), students must participate in **academically related activities**, or they may be dropped from the course.

### Examples of Qualifying Activities:

- Attending class in person or via live video with the instructor present
- Submitting an assignment, quiz, or exam
- Taking part in assigned tutorials, study groups, or discussion boards
- Having documented communication with the instructor about course content

**Important Note:**

Simply logging into Canvas or a Zoom session without participating (e.g., camera off, no interaction) **does not count** as attendance.

**Canvas:**

- Criswell College uses Canvas as its web-based Learning Management System (LMS).
- **For online courses** at Criswell College, instructors use Canvas to:
  - Organize course content on a module basis using organizational tools within Canvas
  - Control the timing of course requirements through module control or assignment due dates to ensure that students are engaged for the full length of the semester or term
  - Accept assignments from students only inside the Canvas course (emailed assignments are not acceptable)
  - Provide written feedback on assignments only within Canvas, preferably through Speedgrader
  - Use the Announcement or e-mail feature in Canvas to communicate with the students rather than by broadcasting to a class email listserv outside of canvas
  - Use Zoom in Canvas for all “live” (synchronous) class sessions

**Important Note:**

Students needing assistance with Canvas should contact the Canvas Help Support line at 844-358-6140. Tech support is available at this number, twenty-four hours a day.

## Campus Closure

To ensure the health and safety of students and employees, college administrators may decide it is necessary on rare occasions to close the campus. Once this decision is announced, instructors will contact students to provide further details regarding the campus closure’s impact on those courses. Students are responsible to watch for communication from their instructors and respond appropriately. (Unless otherwise specified by the instructor in this syllabus, this communication will be sent to the student’s Criswell College e-mail account.)

In order to make progress toward the courses’ objectives, instructors have the freedom during most campus closures to require students to participate in activities as alternatives to meeting on campus. An instructor may, for example, hold class remotely (through Zoom) at the scheduled time, provide a recording of a class or presentation for students to watch independently, or assign other activities that students are to accomplish before returning to campus. Students are responsible for accomplishing these alternative activities as well as any course requirements listed in this syllabus during the period of the campus closure. If, during the period of the campus closure, personal circumstances prohibit a student from accomplishing these alternative activities or course requirements and assignment listed in the syllabus during the campus closure, the student is responsible for communicating with the instructor as soon as possible. Instructors will not penalize students who do not have the means to accomplish the alternative activities during the period of the campus’s closure and will work with students whose circumstances during the campus closure prohibited their timely completion of course requirements and assignments in the syllabus.

## Grading Scale

A	93-100	4.0 grade points per semester hour
A-	90-92	3.7 grade points per semester hour
B+	87-89	3.3 grade points per semester hour
B	83-86	3.0 grade points per semester hour
B-	80-82	2.7 grade points per semester hour
C+	77-79	2.3 grade points per semester hour
C	73-76	2.0 grade points per semester hour
C-	70-72	1.7 grade points per semester hour
D+	67-69	1.3 grade points per semester hour
D	63-66	1.0 grade point per semester hour
D-	60-62	0.7 grade points per semester hour
F	0-59	0.0 grade points per semester hour

## Incomplete Grades

Students requesting a grade of Incomplete (I) must understand that incomplete grades may be given only upon approval of the faculty member involved. An "I" may be assigned only when a student is currently passing a course and in situations involving extended illness, serious injury, death in the family, or employment or government reassignment, not student neglect.

Students are responsible for contacting their instructors prior to the end of the semester, plus filing the appropriate completed and approved academic request form with the Registrar's Office. The "I" must be removed (by completing the remaining course requirements) no later than 60 calendar days after the close of the term or semester in which the grade was awarded, or the "I" will become an "F."

## Academic Honesty

Absolute truth is an essential belief and basis of behavior for those who believe in a God who cannot lie and forbids falsehood. Academic honesty is the application of the principle of truth in the classroom setting. Academic honesty includes the basic premise that all work submitted by students must be their own and any ideas derived or copied from elsewhere must be carefully documented.

Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to:

- cheating of any kind,
- submitting, without proper approval, work originally prepared by the student for another course,
- plagiarism, which is the submitting of work prepared by someone else as if it were his own, and
- failing to credit sources properly in written work.

## Course Policy on the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI)

Examples of AI-related functions you **may not use** without permission:

- Text Generation – You may not use AI to generate text for use in an assignment.
- Outline Generation – You may not use AI to generate an outline for an assignment.

AI-related tools you **may use** without permission:

- Spellcheck and grammar – built into Word, Pages, and Google Docs
- AI re-writing tools – tools that take what you’ve written and help make it clearer, such as what Grammarly offers. However, you must cite Grammarly or other sources in your assignment/paper and submit both original draft of paper and the final paper.
- AI research and summarize – tools that help you find sources to cite, such as the new AI tools built into Logos Bible Software.)

## **Institutional Assessment**

Material submitted by students in this course may be used for assessment of the college’s academic programs. Since programmatic and institutional assessment is done without reference to specific students, the results of these assessments have no effect on a student’s course grade or academic standing at the college. Before submitting a student’s work for this type of assessment, the course instructor redacts the work to remove anything that identifies the student.

## **Institutional Email Policy**

All official college email communications to students enrolled in this course will be sent exclusively to students’ institutional email accounts. Students are expected to check their student email accounts regularly and to respond in an appropriate and timely manner to all communications from faculty and administrative departments.

Students are permitted to setup automatic forwarding of emails from their student email accounts to one or more personal email accounts. The student is responsible to setup and maintain email forwarding without assistance from college staff. If a student chooses to use this forwarding option, he/she will continue to be responsible for responding appropriately to all communications from faculty and administrative departments of the college. Criswell College bears no responsibility for the use of emails that have been forwarded from student email accounts to other email accounts.

## **Disabilities**

Criswell College recognizes and supports the standards set forth in Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, and similar state laws, which are designed to eliminate discrimination against qualified individuals with disabilities. Criswell College is committed to making reasonable accommodations for qualifying students, faculty, and employees with disabilities as required by applicable laws. For more information, please contact the Student Services Office.

## **Intellectual Property Rights**

Unless otherwise specifically instructed in writing by the instructor, students must neither materially nor digitally reproduce materials from any course offered by Criswell College for or with the significant possibility of distribution.

## Research and Writing Standards

The default writing style for written assignments in Criswell College Courses is the latest edition of *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses and Dissertations* by Kate Turabian. However, instructors are free to require alternative writing styles in their courses. These styles include but are not limited to the American Psychological Association (APA), Chicago Manual of Style, Modern Language Association (MLA), and Society of Biblical Literature (SBL) writing guides.

## Resources and Supports

Canvas and SONIS: Criswell College uses Canvas as its web-based learning tool and SONIS for student data. Students needing assistance with Canvas should contact the Canvas Help Support line at (844) 358-6140. Tech support is available at this number, twenty-four hours a day. Students needing help with SONIS should contact the Campus Software Manager at [studenttechsupport@criswell.edu](mailto:studenttechsupport@criswell.edu).

Student Services: The Student Services Office exists to foster and encourage success in all areas of life—physical, intellectual, spiritual, social, and emotional. Students are encouraged to reach out for assistance by contacting the office at 214.818.1332 or [studentservices@criswell.edu](mailto:studentservices@criswell.edu). The Student Services Office also works with local counseling centers to ensure that every student has access to helpful mental health resources. More information is located on the college website at [Criswell College Mental Health Resources](#), and students may contact the Director of Student Services if they have any questions.

Wallace Library: Students can access a wide range of academic resources and receive research assistance by contacting or visiting the Wallace Library, located on the second floor of the Education Building.

Login credentials for accessing the library's databases are emailed to students near the beginning of each semester.

For more information or assistance, email the Wallace Library at [library@criswell.edu](mailto:library@criswell.edu) or visit [www.criswell.edu/academics/wallace-library/](http://www.criswell.edu/academics/wallace-library/).

Tutoring Center: Students are encouraged to consult with tutors to enhance their skills and build confidence. All tutors are recommended by faculty to ensure they are qualified to support the student body. To meet with a tutor, students can schedule an appointment through Calendly at <https://calendly.com/criswell-tutoringcenter>. The Tutoring Center is located in room E203 of the Education Building.

For questions, email [tutoringcenter@criswell.edu](mailto:tutoringcenter@criswell.edu).

## Course Outline/Calendar

(The calendar will be discussed and decided after our first meeting on Monday, August 18.)

## Selected Bibliography

### Resources for Textual Criticism

Brotzman, Ellis R. *Old Testament Textual Criticism: A Practical Introduction*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1994.

Kelley, Page H., Daniel S. Mynatt, and Timothy G. Crawford. *The Masorah of Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998.

McCarter, P. Kyle Jr. *Textual Criticism: Recovering the Text of the Hebrew Bible*. Guides to Biblical Scholarship, ed. Gene M. Tucker. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1986.

Scott, William R. *A Simplified Guide to BHS*, 3d ed. North Richland Hills, TX: BIBAL, 1995.

Tov, Emanuel. *Text-critical Use of the Septuagint in Biblical Research*. Jerusalem: Simor, 1981.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible*. 2d edition. Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2001.

#### Resources for Lexical Analysis

Armstrong, Terry A., Douglas L. Busby, and Cyril F. Carr. *A Reader's Hebrew-English Lexicon of the Old Testament*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1989.

Barr, James. *Comparative Philology and the Text of the Old Testament*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Semantics of Biblical Language*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1961.

Botterweck, G. Johannes, Helmer Ringgren, and Heinz-Josef Fabry, eds. *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*. 13 volumes. Translated by John T. Willis, Geoffrey W. Bromiley, David E. Green, and Douglas W. Stott. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1974-. (TDOT)

Clines, David J. A. *The Dictionary of Classical Hebrew*. 8 vols. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1993–2011. (DCH)

Jenni, Ernst, and Claus Westermann. *Theological Lexicon of the Old Testament*. Translated by Mark E. Biddle. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1997. (TLOT)

Karni, Schlomo. *Dictionary of Basic Biblical Hebrew*. Jerusalem: Carta, 2002.

Köhler, Ludwig, and Walter Baumgartner. *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*. Revised by Walter Baumgartner and Johann J. Stamm. Translated and edited by M. E. J. Richardson *et al.* 5 vols. Leiden: Brill, 1994-2000. (HALOT)

Pratico, Gary D. and Miles Van Pelt. *Vocabulary Guide to Biblical Hebrew*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2003.

VanGemeren, Willem, ed. *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology and Exegesis*. 5 vols. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1997. (NIDOTTE)

#### Resources for Hebrew Language and Syntactical Analysis

Arnold, Bill T. and John H. Choi. *A Guide to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003.

Bergen, Robert D. *Biblical Hebrew and Discourse Linguistics*. Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1994.

Bodine, Walter R., editor. *Linguistics and Biblical Hebrew*. Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1992.

Driver, S. R. *A Treatise on the Use of the Tenses in Hebrew and Some Other Syntactical Questions*. The Biblical Resource Series, ed. Astrid B. Beck and David Noel Freedman. London: Oxford University Press, 1874. Reprint, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998.

Garrett, Duane A. *A Modern Grammar for Classical Hebrew*. Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2002.

Joüon, Paul. *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*. 2 vols. Trans. T. Muraoka. Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1996.

Kautsch, E., ed. *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar*. 2d ed. Trans. A. E. Cowley. Oxford: Clarendon, 1910. (GKC)

Lambdin, Thomas O. *Introduction to Biblical Hebrew*. NY: Scribner's, 1971.

Murphy, Todd J. *Pocket Dictionary for the Study of Biblical Hebrew*. Downer's Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2003.

Price, James D. *The Syntax of Masoretic Accents in the Hebrew Bible*. Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellin, 1990.

Putnam, Frederic Clarke. *A Cumulative Index to the Grammar and Syntax of Biblical Hebrew*. Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1996.

van der Merwe, Christo H. J., Jackie A. Naudé, and Jan H. Kroeze. *Biblical Hebrew Reference Grammar*. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1999.

Waltke, Bruce K., and M. O'Connor. *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*. Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1990.

- Wegner, Paul D. *Using Old Testament Hebrew in Preaching: A Guide for Students and Pastors*. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2009.
- Wickes, William. *Two Treatises on the Accentuation of the Old Testament*. The Library of Biblical Studies, edited by Harry M. Orlinsky. New York: Ktav, 1970.
- Williams, Ronald J. *Hebrew Syntax: An Outline*. 2d edition. Toronto: University of Toronto, 1976.

#### Resources for Narrative Analysis

- Alter, Robert. *The Art of Biblical Narrative*. New York: Basic Books, 1983.
- Amit, Yairah. *Reading Biblical Narratives*. Minneapolis: Augsburg Press, 2001.
- Bar-Efrat, Shimon. *Narrative Art in the Bible: Understanding the Bible and Its World*. New York: T. & T. Clark International, 2004.
- Beck, John. *God as Storyteller: Seeking Meaning in Biblical Narrative*. St. Louis: Chalice Press, 2008.
- Berlin, Adele. *Poetics and Interpretation of Biblical Narrative*. Bible and Literature Series, ed. David M. Gunn, no. 9. Sheffield: Almond, 1983.
- Exum, J. Cheryl. *Tragedy and Biblical Narrative: Arrows of the Almighty*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996.
- Fokkelman, J.P. *Reading Biblical Narrative: An Introductory Guide*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2000.
- Longman, Tremper III. *Literary Approaches to Biblical Interpretation*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1987.
- Mathewson, Steven D. "Guidelines for Understanding and Proclaiming Old Testament Narratives." *Bibliotheca Sacra* 154 (Oct-Dec 1997): 410-435.
- Ryken, Leland. *How to Read the Bible as Literature*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1984.
- Sternberg, Meir. *The Poetics of Biblical Narrative: Ideological Literature and the Drama of Reading*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1987.

#### Resources for Exegetical Method

- Boer, Pieter Arie Hendrik de. *Select Studies in Old Testament Exegesis*. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1991.
- Chisholm, Robert B. Jr. *From Exegesis to Exposition: A Practical Guide to Using Biblical Hebrew*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1998.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *A Workbook for Intermediate Hebrew: Grammar, Exegesis, and Commentary on Jonah and Ruth*. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2006.
- Gorman, Michael J. *Elements of Biblical Exegesis: A Basic Guide for Students and Ministers*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2001.
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- Hayes, John H., and Carl R. Holladay. *Biblical Exegesis: A Beginner's Handbook*. 3d ed. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2007.
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- Steck, Odil Hannes. *Old Testament Exegesis: A Guide to the Methodology*. 2d edition. Trans. James D. Nogalski. Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1998.
- Stuart, Douglas K. *Old Testament Exegesis: A Handbook for Students and Pastors*. 3rd edition. Westminster John Knox Press, 2001.

#### Ruth Commentaries

- Block, Daniel I. *Judges, Ruth*. (NAC) Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1999.
- Bush, Frederic William. *Ruth, Esther*. (WBC) Waco, TX: Word Books, 1996.

- Campbell, Edward Fay Jr. *Ruth: A New Translation with Introduction, Notes, and Commentary*. (ABC) Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1978.
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- Goslinga, C. J. *Joshua, Judges, Ruth*. Grand Rapids, Zondervan, 1987.
- Harris, J. Gordon. *Joshua, Judges, Ruth*. New International Biblical Commentary. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2000.
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- Matthews, Victor Harold. *Judges and Ruth*. New Cambridge Bible Commentary. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004.
- Nielson, Kirsten. *Ruth: A Commentary*. (WCOT) Translated by Edward Broadbridge. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1997.
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- Sasson, Jack M. *Ruth: A New Translation with a Philological Commentary and a Formalist-Folklorist Interpretation*, 2d ed. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1989.
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