

Reading the Qumranic Canonicity from the Confucian Context¹⁾

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1. Introduction

Canon originates from the Greek word *kanōn*, referring to reeds, straight branches, or bars. It was used to mean “rule” or “standard.” Canon was later “applied by Christian writers to what became the approved selection of books of the Bible, but it was not used in pagan antiquity in the sense of a list of chosen best authors.”²⁾ The Confucian concept of canon is etymologically different in its origin.

Buddhism, Confucianism, and Christianity all use the same word to refer to their authoritative books in East Asia. The term is *Kyong* (經). The word *Kyong* is derived from sutra in Sanskrit, and this word existed long before the founding of Buddhism. Originally, sutra meant “thread, string.” It was a garland weaving beautiful flowers with a single thread to decorate the head. With this in mind, a compilation of essential and excellent short phrases, which people thought were like flowers, became called sutra. The Chinese character *Kyong* is very similar to express weaving and threads passing through the loom.³⁾ Over

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1) I presented this paper at the workshop co-organized by CISMOR and IKTINOS: *Canon: A Study of Ancient Writings' Ideology* (Jan. 15, 2022).

2) Simon Hornblower, Antony Spawforth, and Esther Eidinow, eds. *The Oxford Classical Dictionary* (Oxford University Press, 2012), 275.

time, sutra and *Kyong* gained supreme authority in their own culture and religion. Within the Confucian tradition, “*Kyong*” is accompanied by “*Jeon*.” The letter *Jeon* has the same sound but can be written in two different Chinese characters, either 典 or 傳. The first orthography, 典,⁴⁾ refers to an authoritative and authorized text written by the sages and wise. The second orthography, 傳, expresses the shape of a person holding a spindle that unwinds the weft while going back and forth between the warp threads by hand. Thus, according to the second orthography, *Jeon* refers to the scene of working with a horizontal line, while *Kyong* means hanging a vertical line from a loom.⁵⁾ The story of the world created by the sage is *Kyong*, and the achievement of the wise understanding and unraveling the feat of the sage is *Jeon*.⁶⁾

Etymologically, canon gives a heavyweight on the rule or standard, whereas *Kyong* derived from threading and weaving allows addition and change. The etymology of the word canon itself tends to imply strictness with some invariant criteria. In contrast, *Kyong* presupposes the concept of interaction and process and consequently opens to addition and expansion.

But we need to examine whether the Christian canon was rigidly fixed to be a rule or standard for the faith community. For biblical scholars, the history of biblical canonization is an intriguing topic. To peruse this history, the definitions of “biblical” and “canonization” respectively should be made first. Are “biblical” and “canonical” the synonym? We have several words to refer to the Bible in English, such as canon and scripture.

3) Shin, Jeong Geun, “A Study on the Establishment Process of Confucian Canons,” *The Study of Confucian Philosophy and Culture* 80 (2020), 104. [신정근, “유교 경전의 확립 과정 연구,” 「유교사상문화연구」 80 (2020), 104, footnote 14].

4) This Chinese character is a hieroglyphic representation of bamboo poles.

5) 신정근, “유교 경전의 확립과 전개,” 「네이버 열린연단: 문화의 안과 밖」 (2020, 5, 16).

6) 신정근, “유교 경전의 확립 과정 연구,” 「유교사상문화연구」 80 (2020), 113.

The three words, the Bible, canon, and scripture, are almost exchangeable synonyms in the religious community. Yet, these words tend to be distinguished, particularly by the scholarly guild. For example, Eugene Ulrich attempts to differentiate between the scriptures and Bible as follows:

The Scriptures are a collection of sacred works considered authoritative for belief and practice within a religious community. The term “Bible,” in the singular, adds the extra factor—linked with the idea of a “canon”—inclusivity and exclusivity: these books are “in,” those books are “out.”⁷⁾

Based on the definition above, scholars insist that the ancient Israelites had no unique idea of the “Bible” until as late as the period of the Qumran community. According to this general notion, it is said that the Qumran scrolls show a canonization process. The Qumran scrolls were simply the scriptures, a collection of authoritative books, not yet canon. The Qumran scrolls are an essential touchstone for examining the canonization process of Judaism, so in this paper, I would like to review the concept of the canonicity of the Qumran community. Right at this point, there arises a question as to whether the Qumran community had no recognition of canon indeed in terms of the crystalized idea of “inclusivity and exclusivity.” For this inquiry, I will first observe the Qumran scrolls whether the Qumran community had the notion of the “Canon.” Then, I will investigate the case of the canonization of Confucianism. By tracing the development history of the Confucian classics, I’d like to gain insight into the Qumranic concept of canon.

7) Eugene Ulrich, “The Bible in the Making: The Scriptures Found at Qumran,” in *The Bible at Qumran: Text, Shape, and Interpretation*, Peter W. Flint, ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2001), 54.

2. The Sense of “Canon” of the Qumran Community

What is canon? In 1968, A. C. Sundberg first suggested the definition of canon as “a fixed, final and closed list of books.”⁸⁾ Since then, many scholars have accepted this definition of canon and the sharp distinction between canon and scriptures: canon as “limited and restricted” and scripture as “fluid and open-ended.” As an ardent advocate of this definition, Ulrich claims that scholarly “talk of an open canon will be confusing and counterproductive.”⁹⁾ This position stands firm in the academic discussion by being dubbed as “the exclusive definition of canon” by Michael Kruger. According to Kruger, however, in stark opposition to the exclusive definition, there is another way of considering the concept of canon in terms of its function in the church.

B. S. Childs and James Sanders, whose canonical criticism led to the functional definition of canon, suggests “Canon as function antedates canon as *shape*.”¹⁰⁾ When approaching the Qumran scrolls from the functional purpose of canon, the community must have already had a solid notion of canon rather than on the way to a process of canonization. The Qumran scrolls performed the function of canon within the community. The Qumran community had its criteria for which texts to be copied and kept safe. The Qumran community had authoritative and normative books that other groups did not accept outside the Qumran community. For example, the Damascus Document (CD), the Rule of Community (1QS), Hodayot (1QH, 4QH),

8) Recited from Michael J. Kruger, *The Question of Canon: Challenging the Status Quo in the New Testament Debate* (InterVarsity Press, 2013), 29.

9) Eugene Ulrich, “The Notion and Definition of Canon,” in *Canon Debate*, Lee M. McDonald and James A. Sanders, eds. (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2002), 34.

10) James Sanders, “Canon: Hebrew Bible,” in *Anchor Bible Dictionary* 1:843. (emphasis his).

and the Temple Scroll (11QT). These scrolls are thus categorized as “sectarian documents,” not found elsewhere. The sectarian texts reveal that the Qumran community had a distinctive identity in “organization, ideology and political and theological controversies.”¹¹⁾ Another example is their strong preference for a 364-day calendric system over the lunar calendar. 1QpHab shows that Qumran and Jerusalem had different calendric systems (1QpHab 11:4-8a). With this criterion, the Qumran community accepted the books of Jubilees and Enoch as their canon. Both books are founded upon the 364-day calendar.

Also, the Qumran community considers 11QT to be the Torah of God. In case of Damascus Document, we can find the phrase such as “the Sealed Book of the Law” (בספר התורה החתום, CD 5:2). Yadin insists that this sealed book refers to 11QT,¹²⁾ saying that “these shall be statutes [forever] throughout your generations before the Lord” (24:8-9). 11QT is thus to be canonical within the Qumran community. The Qumran community had a limited and closed set of books rather than fluid and open-ended. They had their standards of which contents or scrolls are to be canonical. In this sense, the Qumran community had a sense of canon with strict restrictions on which book to be in or out.

If we think of the Qumran scrolls from the functional definition of canon perspective, it is impossible to accept such a claim that the Qumran scrolls were not yet canonized. For example, VanderKam claims that the Qumran scrolls reveal a canonization process when witnessing “textual fluidity and reworked scriptures.”¹³⁾ This seems true from the modern

11) Devorah Dimant, “Sectarian and Non-Sectarian Texts from Qumran: The Pertinence and Usage of a Taxonomy,” *Revue de Qumrân* 24 (2009), 8. According to Dimant, “the sectarian texts account for about 25% of the library, whereas non-sectarian texts constitute 30% of the collection.”

12) Y. Yadin, *The Temple Scroll*, vol. 1 (Jerusalem: The Shrine of the Book, 1983), 392, 394-395.

tendency of canon, according to which canon is a fixed set of lists. Yet, he has no consideration for the function of the scrolls in the Qumran community. Discounting the Qumranic consciousness of the restriction of “in or out,” VanderKam focuses on textual fluidity by which he signifies “not closed, not fixed, and not finalized.” Based on this textual fluidity, he concludes that the Qumran scrolls show a process not canonized yet. However, viewing the Qumran scrolls from the functional definition, the community had a strong sense of canon. They conferred authority on a specific list of scrolls in their archives. García Martínez suggests that the Qumran community had a notion of “authoritative and normative” writings based on the four criteria such as “divine authority, rewriting, interpretation, and the voice of the Teacher.”¹⁴⁾ Accepting the proposal of García Martínez, in this paper, I’d like to focus on three characteristics of Qumran canonicity. First, the Qumran community conferred absolute authority to the interpretation of the Teacher of Righteousness (מורה הצדק). Although the exact identity of the Teacher is unknown, he is identified as a patrilineal progeny of the Zadokite, based on the text of the Rule of Community.¹⁵⁾ Kruger proposes the ontological definition of canon which he explains as follows:

The ontological definition focuses on what the canon is in and of itself, namely *the authoritative books that*

13) James C. VanderKam, “Questions of Canon Viewed through the Dead Sea Scrolls,” in *Canon Debate*, McDonald, Lee Martin, and James A. Sanders, eds. (Baker Academic, 2001).

14) Florentino García Martínez, “Parabiblical Literature from Qumran and Canonical Process,” *Revue de Qumran* (2012), 525-556.

15) The identity of the Teacher of Righteousness is an unsolved question. Stegemann proposes that he was an unnamed Zadokite priest who served in Jerusalem from 159 to 152 BCE. H. Stegemann, *The Library of Qumran: On the Essenes, Qumran, John the Baptist, and Jesus* (Grand Rapids, MI, 1998), 106. 147-148.

God gave his corporate church. One might say that this definition looks at canon from a divine perspective rather than from only an ecclesiological perspective. Books do not *become* canonical—they are canonical because they are the books God has given as a permanent guide for his church.¹⁶⁾

According to Kruger, canon is born to be canonical, for God gives the church canon. Some might be reluctant to agree to take the ontological definition of canon, whatever authority canon has in its usual way. Reluctance to accept the ontological canonicity gives more weight to the church's procedural negotiation and political-religious needs in history. In the case of the Qumran scrolls, the ontological canonicity was derived from the supreme authority of the Teacher of Righteousness, not alone from the divine power. According to CD 1:11, God raised the Teacher of Righteousness to direct them in the path of his heart 390 years after Babylon conquered Judah. Also, CD 20:32 says the community was governed by and listened attentively to the Teacher of Righteousness. Accordingly, we can assume that the Teacher of Righteousness was the chief commander to manage the community. In addition, 1QpMic shows that the Teacher of Righteousness was the one and only one to teach the Torah.

6. This refers t[o the Teacher of Righteousness who himself
7. [shall teach the Law to his par]ty and to all those who are willing to be added to the chosen of
8. [God those that keep the Law] in the party of the Yahad who will be saved on the Day of
9. [Judgement] (1QpMic frags. 8-10:6-9)¹⁷⁾

16) Kruger, *The Question of Canon*, 40.

17) Emanuel Tov, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Electronic Reference Library* (Brill, 1999).

The Teacher of Righteousness to whom God made known was enabled to reveal all the mysterious revelations to the community (1QpHab 7:4-5). But the Qumran scrolls witness that there were people who did not follow the teaching of the Teacher of Righteousness (1QpHab 2:2). Those who did not follow his interpretation would have used other scriptures, supporting a different calendric system. In addition, the Teacher is also cast in an eschatological light in Psalms Peshier (4Q173). There, the author says that he “[is] [...pri]est in the final era.” The prominent role of the Teacher of Righteousness was not restricted only to the Qumran community but also related to the final age with his salvific and eschatological role for all people.¹⁸⁾

Secondly, related to the point above, it is thus known that the Qumran community and Jerusalem conflicted over the interpretation of the authoritative books. And this conflict was turned into a different way of understanding canonicity. The Qumranic sense of canonicity is closely related to the hegemonic and ideological interpretation of the scriptures.¹⁹⁾ This tendency stems from the community’s hostile tension with the Hasmonians and other contemporary groups. At the outset, the Qumran scrolls reveal how they judged the Jerusalem government and temple personnel. Based upon Malachi 1:10, for example, Damascus Document 6:11-12 says that “None who have been brought into the covenant shall enter into the sanctuary to light up His altar in vain.” This connotes strong opposition to the ritual of the Jerusalem temple in operation at that time. Relatedly,

18) Timothy H. Lim, *Holy Scripture in the Qumran Commentaries and Pauline Letters* (New York City, NY: Oxford University Press, 1997), 117.

19) Generally, canonicity is “a collection of texts accepted as inspired and normative by a virtually universal consensus of the religious community and by official designation of its teaching authority.” Thomas A. Hoffman, “Inspiration, Normativeness, Canonicity, and the Unique Sacred Character of the Bible,” *The Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 44/3 (1982), 464.

Damascus Document 6:17-20 also says that the Qumran community should live their life “according to specification and the holiday and the fast day according to the commandments of those entering the new covenant in the land of Damascus.” These references allude that the Qumran community did not participate in the rituals and sacrificial offerings. The community believed that the priests in Jerusalem failed to keep the purity law. This negative evaluation and rejection of Jerusalem temple worship occurred because they had different and disparate interpretations of ritual calendar and purity laws. Jerusalem and Qumran used two separate ritual calendars, proving they used different texts to count the ritual dates. As shown in the book of Daniel 7:25,²⁰⁾ the calendar was a sign of hegemony.²¹⁾ The very fact that they read other scriptural texts led to a divergent understanding of canon and canonicity.

The assumption that the Qumran community and Jerusalem temple personnel had a different idea of canonicity can be typically found in the Pesharim. The Pesharim is one of the literary genres of the Qumran scrolls. The word “*peshar*” is translated as “interpretation.” Peshar is one of the most unique and distinctive methods of interpretation at Qumran. The Pesharim are dated to the late Hasmonean or early Herodian period. All the Pesharim were “composed at Qumran during Phase II (Archaeological Period Ib) or ca. 100 to 40 BCE, with the possibility that one or two pesharim were composed near the end of Phase I (Archaeological Period Ia), probably sometime

20) “He shall speak words against the Most High, shall wear out the holy ones of the Most High, and shall attempt to change the sacred seasons and the law; and they shall be given into his power for a time, two times, and half a time.” (Dan 7:25 NRSV)

21) For the concept of the calendric hegemony, see Bernward Joerges, “*Metropolitan time: Reflections on the Millenium, Calendars, and Gregorian Hegemony.*” No. FS II 00-506. WZB Discussion Paper, 2000.

between approximately 110 and 100 BCE.”²²⁾ As the Pesharim attest, the Qumran community had continued to engage in theological, social, and political realms of the outside world. The conflictual relationship between the Qumran community and the Hasmoneans can be viewed religiously. Concurrently, however, their conflicts and animosities should also be examined against the background of the political situation around the international power dynamics in the late Second Temple period.

What was the primary cause of the separation of the Qumran community from Jerusalem? The Qumran community came into existence due to political and religious conflicts with the Hasmonean dynasty. It can be seen as a clear fact that the Qumran community, which identifies themselves as Zadok priests (CD 4:1, 3; 1QS 5:2, 9; 1QSa 1:2; 2:3; 1QSB 3:22; 4QFlor 1-2i, 21:17; 4Q249e 1 ii:2; 4Q249g 1-2:1, etc.), could not accept the non-Zadokite Hasmonean usurpation of the high priesthood. Their political conflict inevitably led to a religious conflict. For example, they had different dates for the Day of Atonement (1QpHab 11:7). The Pesharim attest that the Qumran community never lost interest in domestic and international politics so that they never dropped the Hasmonean rulers from their agenda. Their relationship must have been more complicated than their disparity in religious and halakhic perspectives. Notably, their relationship continued and developed over time, beyond the periods of the early Maccabean brothers. The scrolls such as 4QMMT, CD, and the Pesharim demonstrate that the power dynamics and relationships between the Qumran community and the Hasmoneans were not dissected at one time. Considering the dates of the compositions, CD and 4QMMT are thought to have been earlier works, while the Pesharim are later Qumranic works. Thus, it seems inevitable that the

22) James H. Charlesworth and Lidija Novakovic, *The Pesharim and Qumran History: Chaos or Consensus?* (William B. Eerdmans, 2002), 118.

relationships between the two entities continued to deteriorate over time.²³⁾

On the other hand, many code names in the Pesharim reveal that the Qumran community had unidentified groups in hostile relationships. From the code names such as “the Wicked Priest” (1QpHab 8:3-13; 12:1-10; 4QpPsa 4:8, etc.), “the Seekers after Smooth Things” (4QpIsa-c 23ii:10; 4QpNah 3-4 i:2-4; 3-4 ii:2), “the Man of the Lie” (1QpHab 5:11; 4QpIsa-c 23ii:14; 1-10 I:26), we can infer that the community had other opponent groups, besides the Hasmoneans. As a representative case, the tension with the Seekers implies that the Qumran community had a certain ideological conflict with the Pharisees.²⁴⁾ The sobriquet “Seekers after Smooth Things” (דורשי החלקות) is derived from Isaiah 30:10, according to which the rebellious Israelites said to the prophet, “Speak to us smooth things, prophesy illusions.” Right from this source material, we can infer why the community employed such a code name as “the Seekers after Smooth things.” It reflects that the community judged the Seekers were the spouters of illusionary interpretations, divergent from the interpretation of the Teacher of Righteousness. Peshar Nahum informs that the Seekers invited the Greek king Demetrius to Jerusalem to oppose Alexander

23) Torleif Elgvin analyzes a “dialectic interaction between the Hasmonean establishment and other groups in Judea in the second and first century BCE,” see his article, “Violence, Apologetics, and Resistance: Hasmonaeon Ideology and Yaḥad Texts in Dialogue,” in *The War Scroll, Violence, War and Peace in the Dead Sea Scrolls and Related Literature: Essays in Honour of Martin G. Abegg on the Occasion of His 65th Birthday*, Kipp Davis, et al. eds. (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 319-40.

24) The identification of the Seekers after Smooth Things with the Pharisees are widely accepted by the Qumran scholars. For more detailed explanation, see Harry Fox, “A New Understanding of the Sobriquet דורשי החלקות: Why Qumranites Rejected Pharisaic Traditions,” in *Law, Literature, and Society in Legal Texts from Qumran*, Jokiranta and Molly Zahn, eds. (Brill, 2019), 65-98.

Janneus (4QpNah 3-4 i:2-4). The Seekers were deluding the people and betraying the nation to the gentiles. To the community, therefore, “not only are the Seekers false interpreters, but they also are traitors, acting contrary to divine plans.”²⁵⁾ Thus, from the textual evidence of the Qumran scrolls, we can infer that the Qumran community had a very distinctive ideological notion of canonicity from their contemporary opponent groups, such as the Hasmoneans and the Seekers after Smooth Things.

Thirdly, the Qumranic reworked scriptures are the most prominent feature of the Qumran canonicity, called “para-biblical” or “rewritten Bible.” If the Bible was not capitalized yet in the Qumran era, as scholars generally assume, it is anachronistic to use it for the Qumran manuscripts. But it is still true that the Qumran community preserved all of the Hebrew Bible we have today except the book of Esther. The Qumran archives show that they already had a conception of the Bible in the sense of authoritative books they had inherited, although they never used the term Bible. VanderKam points out the pitfalls of using the words such as biblical and the Bible for the Qumran scrolls as follows:

In view of the evidence from Qumran, we should avoid using the words *Bible* and *biblical* for this period and this community. This is not to deny the group had authoritative writings; the difficulty is that we, at our remove of a couple of thousand years, cannot always be sure which of those writings were authoritative and which were not. We do not know which books the word *Torah* embraced. Therefore, we should follow the ancient practice of using more general, less suggestive terms such as *scriptures* and *rewritten scriptures* instead

25) Albert I. Baumgarten, “Seekers after Smooth Things,” in *Encyclopedia of the Dead Sea Scrolls*, vol. 2, Lawrence H. Schiffman and James C. VanderKam, eds. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 857-859.

of *Bible* and *rewritten Bible*.²⁶⁾

Recognizing that Vanderkam is cautious about using the term “Rewritten Bible,” here in this paper, it is still kept for the convenience of discussion. Geza Vermes first coined the “Rewritten Bible.”²⁷⁾ The Rewritten Bible is, according to him, “Reworked Bible,” defined “by a close attachment, in narrative and themes, to some book contained in the present Jewish canon of Scripture, and some type of reworking, whether through rearrangement, conflation, or supplementation, of the present canonical biblical text.”²⁸⁾ Thus, Vermes explains that the Rewritten Bible is a combined work of the biblical text with its interpretation in a process.²⁹⁾ Eibert Tigchelaar has categorized para-biblical texts in two groups according to their relationship to Scripture: (1) the first type is “interpretative rewritings of earlier scripture, in the form of ‘rewritten scripture,’ or as a paraphrase, or retelling of either entire books, or sections of books, or even as a pastiche of different passages. These rewritings sometimes have expansions that may go back to older sources or traditions or derive from the interpretation of the author; (2) the second type is not based primarily on the text of Scripture but consists largely of a series of compositions, written in Aramaic, and ascribed to pre-Mosaic figures, from Enoch through Amram.”³⁰⁾

26) James C. VanderKam, “Questions of Canon Viewed through the Dead Sea Scrolls,” in *The Canon Debate*, Lee Martin McDonald and James A. Sanders, eds. (Baker Academic, 2001), 109.

27) Géza Vermès, *Scripture and Tradition in Judaism: Haggadic Studies* (Brill, 1961).

28) Géza Vermès, “Bible Interpretation at Qumran,” *Eretz Israel* 20 (1989), 185-88.

29) Géza Vermès, “The Genesis of the Concept of ‘Rewritten Bible,’” in *Rewritten Bible After Fifty Years: Texts, Terms, Or Techniques?: A Last Dialogue with Geza Vermes*, József Zsengellér, ed. (Brill, 2014), 8.

30) The examples of the first type of rewritten text are the book of Jubilees and the Temple Scroll, the Genesis Apocryphon, and so on. The second type of

The very existence of the Rewritten Bible presupposes that the Qumran community had the concept of the primary sources, which would be open to being rewritten or reworked. Any primary sourcebook which was rewritten proves that it was an authoritative text to the Qumran community. That means the community already regarded it as canon. If so, we should think about what the Qumran community thought about the position of the Rewritten Bible. How did the community understand the relationship between the canonical books and the Rewritten Bible? Did they think of the Rewritten Bible simply as an interpretation? Or did they believe that the Rewritten Bible was rewriting the scriptures as a process to perfection? One thing is clear: the books of Enoch and Jubilee, belonging to this genre, were considered canonical to the community. If we look at the contents of the Rewritten Bible, we can see that this genre is not a simple interpretation. The Rewritten Bible reconciles the conflicting laws within the Bible and fills in gaps in its narrative as perceived by the authors. Also, the parts that need follow-up stories are expanded in the genre of the Rewritten Bible. On the whole, likely, books of this genre were also regarded as scriptures in the Qumran community. To the community, the concept of canonicity is not restricted to a set of texts but instead extended into the rewritten or reworked collection of books.

In conclusion, the Qumran community had a notion of canon as a fixed and closed set of scriptures in terms that they set their boundary for which texts should be in or out. Also, literary genres such as the Pesharim and the Rewritten Bible show that they had a concept of canonicity. The reworked texts show that the Qumran community was open-ended to add their

text is the book of Enoch, the Aramaic Levi Document, and a whole Testaments, etc. E. Tigchelaar, "Dead Sea Scrolls," in *The Eerdmans Dictionary of Early Judaism*, John J. Collins and Daniel C. Harlow, eds. (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2010), 212-213.

interpretation and rewrite the received scriptures. Thus, if allowable by the term “process,” the Qumran scrolls reveal one aspect of the canonization processes of Judaism.

3. The Confucian Notion of Canon

Compared to the Confucian process of canonization in ancient China, we will be able to gain insight into some of the problems that appear in the case of Judaism. Confucianism is well known for its “scriptural tradition.” It is also well known that Confucianism has no belief in the afterlife and no religious institution such as monks like other religions. Because of this aspect, it is believed that Confucianism is an ideology rather than a religion. Yet, it still shares some features of religion, such as rituals, spiritual ideas, and authoritative books. Because of the unique and authoritative status of scriptural texts, Confucianism leaves room for what can be called religion. The Confucian scriptures are typically called “the Five classics and Four books.” Initially, it was Six classics until the Qin dynasty. However, during the transitional period from the Qin dynasty to the Han dynasty, the Book of Music (樂經) got lost and unrecovered. As a result, the Five classics was established under the Doctors of the Five Classics (五經博士). Competing with many political and ideological ideas such as Daoism (道家)³¹⁾ and the School of Law (法家)³²⁾ during the Warring States period,

31) Since the lifetime of Confucius, Taoist intellectuals were at the forefront of criticizing Confucianism.

32) The Qin dynasty adopted the ideology of the School of Law to unify China. The School of Law aimed to eliminate hereditary feudal priests and fill the place with a kind of administrative bureaucracy to handle state administration thoroughly according to the law. Through this, China advances to the era of empire, but from the standpoint of Confucianism, which emphasized the role

the Five classics were finally established in the Han Dynasty.³³⁾ After establishing the Five Classics, four more books emerged and interacted with the existing Five classics during the Song dynasty.³⁴⁾ From the late Tang Dynasty to the Song Dynasty, the reinterpretation of Confucianism called Neo-Confucianism occurred in converging Confucianism and Buddhist mysticism. The Confucian scriptures were then expanded by Four Classification System (四部; 經史子集), classifying various historically accumulated literature during the Ching dynasty. Thus, Confucian scriptures show that these books had grown into the present forms and contents over time. The Confucian canon was established not all at once but through expansion over a long period.

On the other hand, it is argued that what we know as the Confucian classics did not remain unchanged for two thousand years. Instead, they have been constantly renewed, extended, and deepened in the form of annotation, interpretation, and reinterpretation made by each generation of Confucian scholars. The religious and political visions projected in the classics have always been subject to development, and the directions of that development have always been a topic of debate between the different Confucian schools.³⁵⁾

In general, from the Six classics through the Five classics to the Four books, the Confucian classics and books interacted and finally established the Four Classification System. The

of the intellectual class, this was like a death sentence.

33) The Five classics consists of the Book of Odes (詩經), the Book of Documents (書經), the Book of Changes (易經), the Book of Rites (禮記), and the Spring and Autumn Annals (春秋).

34) The Four books are the Great Learning (大學), the Works of Mencius (孟子), the Analects of Confucius (論語), and the Doctrine of the Mean (中庸).

35) Xinzhong Yao and Hsin-Chung Yao, *An Introduction to Confucianism* (Cambridge University Press, 2000), 9.

establishment of the canon of Confucianism and the rise of the status of Confucius resulted from the competition among various schools. Once the status of the Confucian canon was consolidated, there was a tendency to strictly divide the boundaries between the Five classics and other books. In this regard, the classification between the classics and non-classics was made. If it belongs to the classics, it becomes the *Kyong*, and otherwise, it becomes the *Wei shu* (緯書).³⁶⁾ Yet, the *Wei shu* was not fake documents but supplements to the *Kyong*.³⁷⁾ By dint of the existence of the *Wei shu*, the authority of the *Kyong* was reinforced. This is very similar to the canonization of Judaism and Christianity. The canonical and deuterocanonical books are not in opposition. The deuterocanonical and pseudepigraphical writings are supplementary to the canonical books.

The most important aspect of the Confucian classics is that they originated for political reasons. The Hundred Schools of Thought (諸子百家), or the phenomenal expression, the Contention of a Hundred Schools of Thought (百家爭鳴), refers to several thinkers and their schools during the Warring States Period (770-221 BCE). There is a political factor behind the emergence of the Hundred Schools of Thought. They arose during the Spring Autumn Warring States Period. In a turbulent time when the Zhou dynasty collapsed and each feudal lord fought for the unification of the world, numerous scholars and schools appeared to promote the construction of a new society

36) Shin, Jeong Geun, "A Study on the Establishment Process of Confucian Canon II," *The Journal of Asian Philosophy In Korea* 53 (2020), 8. [신정근, "유교 경전의 확립과정 II," 「동양철학」 53 (2020), 8].

37) For the discussion of the evaluation of the *Weishu*, see Shin, Jeon Geun, "A Study on the Establishment Process of Confucian Canon II," particularly, 7-16. Generally, the *Weishu* is under-evaluated in terms of contents and authenticity but Shin attempts to show that the *Weishu* has a role to supplement to the Confucian classics.

and spread their studies and ideas. Active representative thinkers were Confucianism, Daoism, Legalists, and Mohism. Confucianism survived through competition with various ideas and schools.

The process of Confucian canonization was thus a political construct. It is an ideological instrument to wield power and control for the sake of Confucian win over other schools. The representative example is “Burning of Books and Burying of Scholars” (焚書坑儒).³⁸⁾ The first emperor of the Qin was encouraged by Legalists, who were the chief rivals of the Confucians, and decreed that the Confucian books must be burnt. After the fall of the Qin dynasty, however, the School of Law, which was dominant during the Warring States period, gradually lost its influence, and criticisms of Legalists from Confucianism, Mohism, and Daoism resulted in diminishing the meaning of the rule of law.

However, despite fierce opposition, Emperor Han Wu-Ti (漢武帝) of the Han dynasty made Confucianism the state religion. Finally, in 175 CE, according to his royal decree, the Five classics were engraved in stone “that symbolizes the final establishment of the orthodox version of the Han classics.”³⁹⁾ As Confucianism was established as the ruling ideology of the

38) The act of burning books containing ideas different from one’s own will and killing several Confucian scholars can be seen as suppressing freedom of thought and expression. This is a traditional interpretation that the “Burning of Books and Burying of Scholars” reveals the narrow-mindedness and exclusivity of the tyrant. However, counterarguments are also raised. The history described from the standpoint of the Han Dynasty, which succeeded the Qin Dynasty, tended to denigrate that the Qin Dynasty’s rule was full of wrongs and faults. Here, it is argued that the biased evaluation of the Han Dynasty was overlaid on the “Burning of Books and Burying of Scholars.” In reality, the books subject to the burning were limited, and most of the Confucian scholars who were the targets of burying were only profiteers who deceived the people.

39) Xinzhong Yao and Hsin-chung Yao, *An introduction to Confucianism*, 55.

Han Dynasty, “law” and “rule of law” were imprinted with negative meanings, and the doctrine of the School of Law gradually declined. One of the reasons is that the benefits of the rule of law were reduced to punishment and reward, which were tools for the monarch to dominate the subject or people in the mid-to-late Warring State period.⁴⁰⁾

But it was not the end of the victory story of Confucianism. From the Later Han dynasty to the end of the Tang dynasty, Buddhism or Daoism took the lead over Confucianism. Confucianism reversed the situation during the time of the Song dynasty and reemerged in the format of Neo-Confucianism (新儒學; 宋明理學).⁴¹⁾ Ancient Confucianism did not pay much attention to explaining the fundamental aspects of the world and the universe. As archaic Confucianism focused on politics and character cultivation based on a realistic foundation, ignoring metaphysical topics did not cause significant problems. There is also a need to strengthen these fundamental theoretical foundations. Neo-Confucians reinterpreted and re-edited the ancient classics with the syncretic help of Buddhism and Daoism.⁴²⁾ Neo-Confucian classics were the products of interacting with Buddhism and Daoism.

In conclusion, the ancient Chinese Confucian canonization process shows that the Confucian canon was established from the political and ideological conflicts from an extended period. More importantly, the Confucian scriptures were vigorously open to interpretation, reinterpretation, and reedition.

40) Joo, In-Suck, “A Comparison of Political Thoughts of Mencius and Han Feizi beyond Exclusive Boundaries of Confucianism and Legalism,” *Korean Association of National Thought* 15:1 (2021), 141-186. [주인석, “맹자와 한비자의 정치사상 비교: 유가와 법가의 배타적 경계를 넘어,” 「민족사상」, 15:1 (2021), 141-186].

41) The term “Neo-Confucianism” was devised by Western Confucian scholars, and was not used at all at the time of the Song and Ming dynasties.

42) Xinzhong Yao and Hsin-chung Yao, *An Introduction to Confucianism*, 56.

4. Conclusion

As shown above, the Confucian scriptures were reorganized and re-established so as to expand or reduce. The Confucian classics were expanded into five or nine, later into thirteen or fifteen. The Confucian scriptures were not self-evident in themselves. It is argued that the Confucian scriptures should not remain in the Six classics and Four books but extend to the “Four Classification System,” along with the *Weishu* (緯書). Tracing the history of the establishment of the Confucian classics and books reveals the characteristics of “flexibility” of Confucian canonization.⁴³⁾ Confucian scriptures were not crystallized at the same time as they were created but were developed as open texts, accepting other books in new times and situations even after certain books had already been recognized as canons.

The Qumran community shows a similar feature in that their scrolls were expanded and rewritten while they had political and religious conflicts with the Hasmonians and with non-followers of the Teacher of Righteousness. The Qumran scrolls reveal that they had flexibility in thinking of canonicity. The community had received authoritative books, but these books were open to reinterpretation, rewriting, and reediting. If the Qumran community’s notion of canonicity would have continued or at least would have lasted a bit longer, we must have had a different shape of canons of Judaism.

Thus, from surveying the Confucian canons and Qumran scrolls, canon and canonicity are related words, but they should be viewed as different concepts. While the canon refers to a fixed and closed list of books, canonicity denotes a community’s perspective or attitude toward a book. In other words, if a community accepts the book as an authoritative book, they should

43) 신정근, “유교 경전의 확립 과정 연구,” 『유교사상문화연구』 80 (2020), 97-126.

already have the concept of canonicity. Looking at these different numbers of canonical books of the Catholic Church, the Greek Orthodox Church, and the Ethiopian Church,⁴⁴⁾ it can be seen that the concept of the canon itself is a term used differently by each denomination. The canon is always vulnerable to ideological conflicts.

<주요어>

쿰란문서, 유교 경전, 다시 쓴 성서, 정경, 폐사림

<Keywords>

The Qumran scrolls, Confucian Canons, Rewritten Bible, Canon, Scriptures, Pesharim

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44) There are 73 books in the Catholic Bible, plus two more in an appendix to the Latin Vulgate. There are 79 books in the Greek Orthodox Bible. The Ethiopian Orthodox Bible includes 86 books.

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<초록>

유교경전에서 본 쿤란문서의 정경성 문제

이윤경

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성서 학자들은 정경(canon)과 경전(scriptures)을 엄밀히 구분하고자 한다. 이 구분에 따르면 쿤란 문서는 유대교의 경전화 과정을 보여주는 좋은 증거가 된다. 일반적으로 유대교는 쿤란 시대까지 고정된 경전이 없었다고 본다. 그러나 본 논문은 쿤란공동체가 정경 개념을 인지하고 있었음을 논증하고자 했다. 쿤란공동체가 이미 정경의 범위와 정경성에 대한 개념을 갖고 있었음을 보여주기 위해, 본 논문은 쿤란 문서의 세 가지 특징, 즉 의의 교사, 폐사림, 다시 쓴 성경을 검토하였다. 이러한 특징은 쿤란공동체가 정경의 배타성과 포괄성에 있어 엄격한 기준을 갖고 있었음을 드러낸다. 그러나 동시에 쿤란공동체는 폐사림과 다시 쓴 성서에서 볼 수 있듯이 전수받은 문서의 확장과 추가에도 열린 입장을 지니고 있었다. 쿤란 문서의 정경성 논쟁에서 볼 수 있는 독창성은 쿤란공동체와 하스몬 왕조, 그리고 외부인에 대한 정치적, 종교적 갈등에 기인하였다. 본 논문은 쿤란의 정경성 개념을 검토하기 위해서, 유교의 정경화 과정을 검토하고, 유교에서도 정치적인 요소가 필수적인 요소임을 알 수 있었다. 유교의 정경화 과정을 검토해봄으로써, 유대교의 정경화 과정 역시 정치적인 측면이 중요한 부분임을 제시하였다.

<Abstract>

Reading the Qumranic Canonicity from the Confucian Context

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Biblical scholars have made a sharp distinction between canon and scriptures. According to this distinction, the Qumran community is to be good evidence to show a process of canonization of Judaism. It is said that Judaism had no fixed set of scriptures up until the Qumran scrolls. In this paper, however, I raised a question about whether the Qumran community had a different concept of canon from our general scholarly sense. To show that the Qumran community already had the notion of canon and canonicity, I presented three characteristics of the Qumran scrolls: the Teacher of Righteousness, the Pesharim, and the Rewritten Bible. These features reveal that the Qumran community had a strict sense of canon in terms of scriptural exclusivity and inclusivity. Yet, at the same time, they were open to expansion and addition, as shown in the Pesharim and the Rewritten Bible. The uniqueness of the Qumran document can be attributed to political and religious conflicts with the Hasmonean dynasty and the outsiders. The Confucian process of canonization also shows that political elements are essential factors. By examining the Confucian case, it can be confirmed that the political aspect was an important one in the canonization process of Judaism.