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See handouts at
<http://personal.rhul.ac.uk/umys/038/2006/index.htm>

- An Ass having heard some Grasshoppers chirping, was highly enchanted; and, desiring to possess the same charms of melody, demanded what sort of food they lived on to give them such beautiful voices. They replied, "The dew." The Ass resolved that he would live only upon dew, and in a short time died of hunger.

Aesop's fable

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- Mr. Bob Trimm, Personnel Manager
- Importers Inc.
- 587 Lilly Road
- Dear Mr. Trimm:
- I am writing to you in response to your advertisement for a Legal Assistant specializing in Port Regulatory Law, which appeared in the Seattle Times on Sunday, June 15. As you can see from my enclosed resume, my experience and qualifications match this position's requirements.

Business Letter

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we must remember that nearly all the other and more important differences between man and the *Quadrumana* are manifestly adaptive in their nature, and relate chiefly to the erect position of man; such as the structure of his hand, foot, and pelvis, the curvature of his spine, and the position of his head. If man had not been his own classifier, he would never have thought of founding a separate order for his own reception.

Darwin, The Decent of Man

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I believe that the pre-eminence of Sparta was due not to the goodness of each of its laws in particular, for many of these were very strange, and even opposed to good morals, but to the circumstance that, originated by a single individual, they all tended to a single end. In the same way I thought that the sciences contained in books, composed as they are of the opinions of many different individuals massed together, are farther removed from truth than the simple inferences which a man of good sense using his natural and unprejudiced judgment draws respecting the matters of his experience.

Descartes Discourse on the Method

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If any one open his ditches to water his crop, but is careless, and the water flood the field of his neighbour, then he shall pay his neighbour corn for his loss.

If a woman quarrel with her husband, and say: "You are not congenial to me," the reasons for her prejudice must be presented. If she is guiltless, and there is no fault on her part, but he leaves and neglects her, then no guilt attaches to this woman, she shall take her dowry and go back to her father's house.

If a man knock out the teeth of his equal, his teeth shall be knocked out.

If a slave say to his master: "You are not my master," if they convict him his master shall cut off his ear.

Hammurabi Code

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We have been on a raid into Ms. but I have not time to give you the particulars of our trip. I will write in a few days if I can get a chance to send it and write you a long one.

I just came off of picket and found the boys all writing to send by a man that has been discharged who is going to start home this morning. I was quite sick three or four days while in Mo. but have entirely recovered. We captured a good many prisoners while in Mo. and killed a good many. I am in hopes that I will get a whole package of letters from you in a few days.

I never wanted to see you half as bad in all my life as I do now. I would give anything in the world to see you and the children. I have no idea when I will have that pleasure. We can't get any news here - do not know what is going on in the outside world.

A Love Letter

We have been on a raid into Ms. but I have not time to give you the particulars of our trip. I will write in a few days if I can get a chance to send it and write you a long one. I just came off of picket and found the boys all writing to send by a man that has been discharged who is going to start home this morning. I was quite sick three or four days while in Mo. but have entirely recovered. We captured a good many prisoners while in Mo. and killed a good many. I am in hopes that I will get a whole package of letters from you in a few days. I never wanted to see you half as bad in all my life as I do now. I would give anything in the world to see you and the children. I have no idea when I will have that pleasure. We can't get any news here - do not know what is going on in the outside world.

This is to treat them if they are bitten by a snake.

1. Dūnu'wa, dūnu'wa, dūnu'wa, dūnu'wa, dūnu'wa.

Listen! Ha! It is only a common frog which has passed by and put it (the intruder) into you.

2. Dayuha', dayuha, dayuha, dayuha, dayuha.

Listen! Ha! It is only an Us" gi which has passed by and put it into you.

(Prescription.)--Now this at the beginning is a song. One should say it twice and also say the second line twice. Rub tobacco (juice) on the bite for some time, or if there be no tobacco just rub on saliva once. In rubbing it on, one must go around four times. Go around toward the left and blow four times in a circle. This is because in lying down the snake always coils to the right and this is just the same (lit. "means like") as uncoiling it.

The Sacred Formulas of the Cherokees

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1. When in the height heaven was not named,
2. And the earth beneath did not yet bear a name,
3. And the primeval Apsū, who begat them,
4. And chaos, Tiamat, the mother of them both,--
5. Their waters were mingled together,
6. And no field was formed, no marsh was to be seen;
7. When of the gods none had been called into being,
8. And none bore a name, and no destinies [were ordained];
9. Then were created the gods in the midst of [heaven]

The Seven Tablets of the (Babylonian) *History of Creation*

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9. Then were created the gods in the midst of [heaven],

Verily at the first Chaos came to be, but next wide-bosomed Earth, the ever-sure foundations of all the deathless ones who hold the peaks of snowy Olympus, and dim Tartarus in the depth of the wide-pathed Earth, and Eros (Love), fairest among the deathless gods, who unnerves the limbs and overcomes the mind and wise counsels of all gods and all men within them. From Chaos came forth Erebus and black Night; but of Night were born Aether and Day, whom she conceived and bare from union in love with Erebus. And Earth first bare starry Heaven, equal to herself, to cover her on every side, and to be an ever-sure abiding-place for the blessed gods.

The *Theogony* of Hesiod

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Father Sergius lived as a recluse for another seven years.

His first cure occurred in the eighth year of his life as a hermit. It was the healing of a fourteen-year-old boy, whose mother brought him to Father Sergius insisting that he should lay his hand on the child's head. It had never occurred to Father Sergius that he could cure the sick. He would have regarded such a thought as a great sin of pride; but the mother who brought the boy implored him insistently, falling at his feet and saying: 'Why do you, who heal others, refuse to help my son?' She besought him in Christ's name. When Father Sergius assured her that only God could heal the sick, she replied that she only wanted him to lay his hands on the boy and pray for him. Father Sergius refused and returned to his cell. But next day (it was in autumn and the nights were already cold) on going out for water he saw the same mother with her son, a pale boy of fourteen, and was met by the same petition.

Father Sergius by Leo Tolstoy

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Resources

The New Jerusalem Bible
The New Jerome Biblical Commentary
<http://www.silk.net/RelEd/ot.htm>

Richard Simon (1638 – 1712)

1678 *Historie critique du Vieux Testament*

A study of the bible based on literary and historical analysis.

Simon suggested (among many other issues) that

Moses was not the only author of the Pentateuch

Unwritten traditions lie at the base of literary theory

In 1682 Simon's book was put on the *Index of Forbidden Books*.

De Wette (1780 – 1849)



De Wette (1780 – 1849)

Manual of Historico-Critical Introduction to the Bible (1817)

The events of the bible are comparable to other historical phenomena and subject to the same laws of historical research.

Wette was the first to combine literary and historical criticism.

De Wette (1780 – 1849)

Literary criticism studies content under the threefold aspect of

- Language
- Composition
- Origin.

De Wette (1780 – 1849)

Historical criticism studies the sacred writings as historical documents and attempts to reconstruct the writer's life, ideas and milieu using
philology,
archaeology and
geography.

Julius Wellhausen (1844 -1918)



- German biblical scholar best known for his analysis of the structure and dating of the *Pentateuch*.

Analysis of the Pentateuch

- The word *Pentateuch* [pɛntətju:k] is derived from the Greek words
 - *pente* (five, fivefold)
 - *teukhos* (implement, vessel, book)
- The five books are:
 - *Genesis*
 - *Exodus*
 - *Leviticus*
 - *Numbers*
 - *Deuteronomy*

Julius Wellhausen (1844 -1918): major achievements

Pentateuch was the result of **oral traditions** that **evolved** over time

- from a nomadic religion
- through the prophets
- to the law,

rather than from the law through the prophets, as it is presented in the Old Testament.

Julius Wellhausen (1844 -1918): major achievements

He dissected **two** distinct narrative structures from Genesis

- representing the *oldest portion* of the Pentateuch,
- while the laws and rituals were the *latest elements*.

Pentateuch: The Problem of Authorship

- For almost two millennia both Jewish and Christian traditions attributed the Pentateuch to Moses as author.
- Today it is a commonplace that he did not write the Pentateuch, but the formation of these books is still shrouded in mystery.

Pentateuch: The Problem of Authorship: Anachronisms

- Certain texts contradict Mosaic authorship. Thus, according to Deut 34, Moses died in Moab, NE of the Dead Sea, before the Israelites invaded Palestine. However, various formulas suggest a time after the Mosaic period:
 - "until this day," Deut 34:6;
 - "when the Canaanites dwelt in the land," Gen 13:7;
 - the designation of the land East of the Jordan as "the other side," indicating the point of view of a resident of Palestine, which Moses never entered, Gen 50:10.

Pentateuch: The Problem of Authorship: Textual Differences

- The sacred name *Yahweh* alternates with the generic name for divinity, *Elohim*.
- Those divine names came to be associated also with differences in
 - characteristic vocabulary,
 - narrative styles and
 - content

Pentateuch: The Problem of Authorship: The Duplets

- In the Pentateuch the same event sometimes is related twice, such as
 - the call of Moses
 - Exod 3, 6, or
 - the endangerment of the ancestress in Gen
 - 12:9 - 13:1
 - 20:1-18
 - 26:1-17

Pentateuch: The Problem of Authorship: The Questions

- The differences in names and vocabulary, in style and content, within the Pentateuch were noted, and they called for an explanation.
 - Were they due to various *documents*? Or
 - Was it a question of "*fragments*" that were eventually assembled? Or,
 - Was there a *basic narrative* which came to be supplemented (supplementary hypothesis)?
- A brilliant synthesis of previous efforts was presented by Julius Wellhausen (1844-1918), and it has dominated the field ever since, despite modifications.

Documentary Hypothesis

- Wellhausen's "documentary hypothesis" recognizes four documents in the following sequence:
 - J ("Jahwist", 9th c. BC.),
 - E ("Elohist", 8th c.),
 - D ("Deuteronomist", 7th c.) and
 - P (Priestly, postexilic).
- These four major written sources were eventually combined in the postexilic period under the guiding hand of the P tradition, and probably a *redactor* (R).

Documentary Hypothesis

- Behind each of these JEDP symbols stands
 - either an individual (esp. urged in the case of Yahwist) or, more likely,
 - a whole school / tradition.

Documentary Hypothesis

- J is marked by lively anthropomorphisms, vivid storytelling, and creative theological vision (promise / fulfillment). J articulated the old traditions, perhaps in response to the Solomonic enlightenment.
- The Elohist remains a problem. E has been considered to be merely interpolated independent traditions, or a redaction of J that never existed on its own. It has been associated with the traditions of the Northern Kingdom. It emphasizes morality and reflects the proper response of Israel: faith, and fear of the Lord.

Documentary Hypothesis

- D is a very clear tradition, but its existence in the Pentateuch outside of the book of Deuteronomy is not very clear itself. It insists on fear / love of God in terms of obedience to the divine commands and under threat of punishment. Its exhortatory style and its language give it a characteristic stamp, so that it is recognizable even when it appears outside the Pentateuch, as in the typical passages Josh 1:1-9; 23:3-16).

Documentary Hypothesis

- P is concerned with questions of cult and ritual (Lev),
 - is interested in genealogies (Gen), and
 - speaks of the presence of God in terms of glory and tabernacling* (Exod 16:10; 40:34-38). Particularly characteristic are
 - archaizing language (e.g. the divine name El Shaddai)
 - the systematization of Gen by use of the generations formula
 - the periodization of history by means of the covenants which perpetuated the blessing of fertility
 - with Noah (Gen 9:7)
 - Abraham (17:6), and
 - Moses (Lev 26:9).
- * from the Latin *tabernaculum* = tent, booth, shed; diminutive of *taberna* = tavern

Documentary Hypothesis

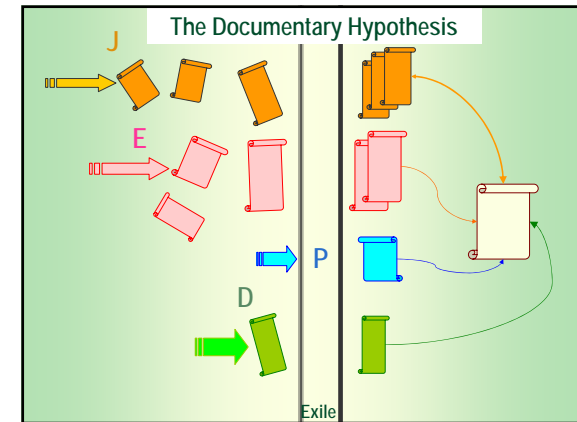
- It is generally agreed that Gen-Deut never functioned as a complete Torah until the exilic period.
- Before that time, several traditions, oral and written, would have provided guidance (not to mention the collections of prophetic oracles).

Documentary Hypothesis

- The home of the J tradition is usually considered to be Judah (the South)
- E is assigned to Israel (the North) because of its affinity with Hosea.
- The culmination of the deuteronomic movement in the reform of Josiah (641-609 BC) represents a tradition (D) that originated first in the North and then became important in Judah.
- The various law codes (of the Covenant, Exod 20:22 23:19; Holiness, Lev 17-26; Deuteronomy, Deut 12 26) have many practices in common, but they also show the development, characteristic of law, that took place over several centuries.

Documentary Hypothesis

- Later nuances were brought to the theory.
 - a tendency to date J and E earlier (10th and 9th cc.)
 - a recognition that these "documents" should be conceived more flexibly as "traditions," which incorporate any number of earlier oral and written traditions.



Pentateuch: Literary Forms Laws

- These take up a large portion of the Pentateuch, from Exod to Deut.

Pentateuch: Literary Forms Etiology

- A narrative that provides an explanation for a certain name or situation. The etiology can be
 - wordplay (Exod 15:23, *Marah*), or
 - a narrative that explains an event, such as the explanation given in Gen 47:13-26 for the land tax established by Joseph.

Pentateuch: Literary Forms Ritual

- A description of the way in which a community is to carry out (significant) ceremonies, such as
 - the offering of the firstfruits in Deut 26:1-11, or
 - the prescriptions for sacrifices (Lev 1 - 7).

Pentateuch: Literary Forms
Genealogy

- A list that traces ancestral descent and/or relationship. This can be
 - linear, giving only one line of descent (10 generations from Adam through Seth to Noah, Gen 5), or
 - segmented (branching) as in the list of the sons of Jacob in Gen 46:8-27.
- Ancient genealogies were not intended to be historical records. They include also the ties formed by commerce, geography, and other concerns

Pentateuch: Literary Forms
Hieros logos

- "Sacred words," or sacral tradition, which refer to the origin of a holy place (Gen 28:10-22; 33:18-20).

Pentateuch: Literary Forms
Blessing

- A form of speech that imparts an effective power upon someone. When the blessing is given on the deathbed (see Deut 33), it has also been called a "testament."

Pentateuch: Literary Forms
Myth

- The understanding of this term varies widely. It has been defined as
 - a narrative about gods
 - the story that accompanies ritual
 - a way of thinking, the mythopoetic quality of human thought.

Pentateuch: Literary Forms
Saga

- A long, prose, traditional narrative having an episodic structure and developed around stereotyped themes or objects. This can be further refined as
 - primeval (Gen 1 - 11)
 - family (the Abraham story of J in Gen 12 - 26)
 - heroic (Moses in the J version, Exod 3 ff.)

Pentateuch: Literary Forms
Legend

- A narrative concerned primarily with the wondrous, miraculous and exemplary.
- It aims to edify (Gen 22:1-19; Num 25:6-12).

Pentateuch: Literary Forms Story

- A narrative with a plot that arouses interest by
 - creating a tension and
 - resolving it.
- It may supply historical knowledge, but with a certain amount of freedom; or it may be oriented simply to entertainment, employing certain folklore motifs.
- It may also be called a tale or novella; examples might be the Joseph story or the book of Ruth.

Pentateuch: Literary Forms History

- Modern standards cannot be applied to the biblical record. Yet the Bible does supply history in various forms. It does record events of the past, but not precisely as they occurred or as a modern would record them. Chronological sequence, cause and effect relationship, and selectivity are characteristic of historiography.
- As a genre, history is to be found in the books of Kings, rather than in the Pentateuch, although some kind of historical memory is preserved in the patriarchal and exodus narratives.

Pentateuch: The Historicity of Content The Main Problems

- (1) the dating and historical nature of the patriarchal narratives;
- (2) the dating and the details of the exodus experience and the Sinai encounter (e.g., who participated);
- (3) the nature of "Israel's" occupation of Canaan and the origins and unity of the "tribes."

Fundamentalist readings of the Bible

- People with fundamentalist religious beliefs, hold that the Bible is historically accurate, even down to smallest details.
- According to this view, historians should accept all the details given in the Bible regardless of any other evidence to the contrary. Similarly, in the field of science, the first two chapters of the Book of Genesis are held to disprove the theory of evolution regardless of any other evidence that may be produced, see creation science.

Biblical minimalism

- Biblical minimalists generally hold that the Bible is *an imaginative fiction*, and all stories within it are of a mythic character at best. None of the early stories are held to have any historical basis and therefore:
 - the Biblical patriarchs never existed
 - the twelve tribes of Israel never existed
 - King David and King Saul never existed
 - the unified Biblical kingdoms of Israel never existed.

Biblical minimalism

- Some Biblical minimalists have suggested that Jesus Christ never existed, that the character is
 - a gestalt of numerous individuals who lived
 - and myths that were common currency during the late Hellenistic age.
- According to this school of thought early secular references (Tacitus on Jesus, Josephus on Jesus) provide no reliable historical evidence.

Biblical minimalism

- The approaches to the Bible fall on a spectrum, rather than in two tightly defined camps.
- Many scholars have some views that might be considered minimalist, while having a few beliefs that might be considered maximalist (and vice-versa.)

Biblical maximalism

- Biblical maximalists accept the findings of modern historical studies and archaeology; they agree that the Bible was never intended to be used as a history textbook, and that one needs to be cautious in teasing out fact from myth.
- However, maximalists hold that the core stories of the Bible indeed tell us about actual historical events, and that the later books of the Bible are more historically based than the earlier books.

Biblical maximalism

- Archaeology tells us about historical eras and kingdoms, ways of life and commerce, beliefs and societal structures; however only in extremely rare cases does archaeological research provide information on individual families.
- Thus, archaeology was not expected to, and indeed has not, provided any evidence to confirm or deny the existence of the Biblical patriarchs.

Biblical maximalism

- Some hold that many or all of these patriarchs were real historical figures, but that we should not take the Bible's stories about them as historically accurate, even in broad strokes.
- Others hold that it is likely that some or all of these patriarchs are better classified as purely mythical creations, with only the slightest relation to any real historical persons in the distant past, much like the British legends of King Arthur.

Biblical maximalism

- Biblical maximalists usually agree that
 - the twelve tribes of Israel did indeed exist
 - important biblical figures, such as King David and King Saul did exist
 - the Biblical kingdoms of Israel also existed
 - Jesus Christ was a historical figure.
- However, there is a wide array of positions that one can hold within this school, and some in this school overlap with biblical minimalists.

Literary Approaches:

Once upon a time biblical studies was focused almost exclusively on historical questions. Scholars' primary concern was with the history of the texts and with the history of the cultures which produced the texts. Since the 1970s the field of biblical studies has witnessed a proliferation of different approaches to the Bible. These can be roughly grouped under three categories:

- literary,
- social -- scientific and
- cultural hermeneutical.

<http://www.religion-online.org/showarticle.asp?title=2179>

Literary Approaches:

One impetus to the interest in biblical narrative was the creation in the 1960s and '70s of departments of religious studies in nondenominational colleges and public universities. In such contexts the study of the Bible "as literature" was deemed especially appropriate to a secular curriculum.

historical study: the prehistory of the text (oral traditions and written source materials) and with its development

literary study: focused on the final form of the text.

historical study: interested in the world referred to by the text

literary study: interested the world constructed in the text.

<http://www.religion-online.org/showarticle.asp?title=2179>

Literary Approaches: Influence of the New Criticism (1930s-1950s).

the literary text was considered an autonomous work of art, to be studied independently of its authors intentions and of the sociopolitical currents of the time in which it was produced.

<http://www.religion-online.org/showarticle.asp?title=2179>

Literary Approaches: Structuralism (1960s):

The anthropologist Claude Lévi Strauss argued that symbolic structures within human societies, including their kinship systems and their mythologies, could be analyzed in the same way, as systems of differences structured according to binary oppositions (e.g., life/death; male/female; hunting/farming; outside/inside).

The mythic narratives and genealogical accounts of Genesis, the symbolic geography of the Gospel narratives, and even the theological vocabulary of Paul offered opportunities for analyzing the patterns of binary opposition that structuralists argued were the key to the meaning of the texts.

<http://www.religion-online.org/showarticle.asp?title=2179>

Literary Approaches: reader-response criticism

the essential role of the reader in the process of making meaning. In reading, one only gradually gathers information that is progressively organized and reorganized by the reader to produce meaning. Moreover, the text often contains "gaps" which the reader, consciously or unconsciously, fills in. Subjectivity is limited, however, by what the reader's "interpretive community" considers to be a plausible or implausible inference.

<http://www.religion-online.org/showarticle.asp?title=2179>

Literary Approaches: poststructuralism, or deconstruction

Derrida noted the attempt of philosophy to posit a central term (God, reason, the human being) in relation to which all of reality can be organized. This organization characteristically takes place by means of binary oppositions (e.g., rational/irrational, oral/written, presence/absence), in which the first term is accepted as superior to the second. Deconstruction attempts to dismantle such structures in order to show their artificiality and the inevitable ways in which any such structure of thought implicitly "decenters" its central term and undermines itself through internal inconsistency and contradiction.

<http://www.religion-online.org/showarticle.asp?title=2179>

Social-Scientific Criticism:

applies insights and methods from the fields of sociology, anthropology and ethnography to describe aspects of ancient social life manifested in the biblical texts and to reconstruct the social worlds behind the texts.

To a certain extent historical criticism has always had a social dimension, since it has been interested in nations, states, social groupings and religious movements. Yet self-conscious social-scientific investigation has come into its own since the 1960s.

<http://www.religion-online.org/showarticle.asp?title=2179>

Social-Scientific Criticism:

the socioeconomic and political nature of the formation of the Israelite tribal confederacy.

the conquest model of Israel's entry into Canaan as it is described in the biblical narrative is challenged: Israel's origins were to be sought instead in a peasant revolt against urban Canaanite overlords.

<http://www.religion-online.org/showarticle.asp?title=2179>

Social-Scientific Criticism: Archaeology:

provides information concerning population patterns, forms of domestic architecture, agricultural practices and trade patterns for the period preceding the monarchy.

<http://www.religion-online.org/showarticle.asp?title=2179>

Social-Scientific Criticism: Social anthropology:

the significance of purity laws and kinship patterns and the social context of prophecy.

the movement from a loose tribal confederation to the eventual formation of royal states

the development of chieftainships as an intermediate stage between these two forms of social organization. A chiefdom is a hierarchically organized society that lacks the strong central governmental apparatus characteristic of a true state. Though some aspects of the process are still debated, it is now generally thought that Saul's "kingship" and at least the early stages of David's rule should be thought of as chieftainships.

<http://www.religion-online.org/showarticle.asp?title=2179>

Social-Scientific Criticism: important topics in the New Testament studies:

the nature of the early Christian movement

the social context and organization of the early Pauline communities.

the roles honor and shame played in Mediterranean societies, and of patron-client forms of social relations.

Slavery, as social phenomenon and as metaphors

the role of prophets and prophecy

the practice of magic

the class status of early converts to Christianity.

<http://www.religion-online.org/showarticle.asp?title=2179>

Social-Scientific Criticism:

the issue of sociological or anthropological methods

The school of social functionalism examines the ways in which society, considered as an organism, attempts to contain and manage conflict, integrating disparate members and subgroups into the whole.

Conflict models in sociological theory emphasize the ways in which different groups in a society pursue their own interests and the ways in which different ideologies struggle with one another.

Both of these approaches pay attention to the way in which societies create "symbolic universes by which to negotiate issues of identity, legitimacy and the creation or resolution of conflict.

<http://www.religion-online.org/showarticle.asp?title=2179>

Cultural Hermeneutics:

historical criticism is unconsciously shaped and informed by cultural assumptions specific to the time and place in which that method was developed. Pure objectivity is an illusion. In the interpretation of texts and cultures, there is no "view from nowhere."

"cultural hermeneutics" serves as an umbrella term for a variety of approaches to biblical criticism in which the social location of the interpreter is not only made explicit but serves as a principle in interpretation. The primary categories which have figured in such interpretation are those of class, ethnicity and gender.

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Cultural Hermeneutics:

Latin American liberation theology (1960s-1970s)

This approach emerged out of the concrete experience of the poor and of the pastors who lived and worked with them. They insisted that the starting point for reading and interpreting the Bible be the experience of the crushing poverty and oppression of the lowest social classes. Interpreted from the perspective of material poverty, the Bible discloses itself as a text of liberation and serves to further a revolutionary process of emancipation.

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Cultural Hermeneutics:

Latin American liberation theology (1960s-1970s)

Liberation theology has tended to place special emphasis on certain portions of the Bible, notably the story of the Exodus, the social criticism of the prophets, the figure of Mary, Jesus' preaching of the kingdom of God, the depiction of the liberating Christian community in Acts, and the struggle against evil in its imperialist and cosmic guise in the Book of Revelation.

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Cultural Hermeneutics: postcolonial hermeneutics

Not only have the colonizers' interpretations been examined and critiqued (e.g., the use of the Exodus/Conquest story in North America and South Africa to justify the displacement of the indigenous peoples), but increasingly attempts have been made to recover the forms of interpretation developed by the newly Christianized indigenous peoples themselves. Elements of "hybrid interpretation," that is, the mixing of indigenous traditions with Christian biblical narratives, are not only identified but often encouraged as a continuing creative practice.

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Cultural Hermeneutics: African-American biblical hermeneutics.

Afro-centric interpretation has drawn attention to the historical role played by African countries (especially Egypt and Ethiopia) and by Africans in the biblical text.

texts and issues that have been important to the lives of the African-American community: the Exodus narratives, the place of slavery in Israelite and early Christian reflection, and the preaching of Jesus.

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Cultural Hermeneutics: feminist biblical hermeneutics.

criticism of the role of the Bible in the oppression of women posed

One early position: the Bible, when correctly interpreted, affirms women's full humanity.

Other feminists: analyze the patriarchal elements in the biblical text in order to show how the patriarchal values can be separated from the essentially liberating values that form its primary message.

More radical feminists: the biblical traditions are thoroughly and irredeemably antifeminist.

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Cultural Hermeneutics: canonical criticism

how scripture's final form was created within a believing community and how the meanings created by that final form continue to guide the reading practices of the community.

Jewish Bible which concludes with the call of 2 Chronicles for the exiles to go up to Jerusalem to rebuild the Temple -- tells a different story from the Christian Old Testament, which concludes with Malachi's reference to the return of the prophet Elijah to announce the coming day of the Lord.

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Cultural Hermeneutics: canonical criticism

historical criticism, in the Book of Isaiah tries to distinguish which materials come from the eighth-century prophet, the sixth-century prophet and the fifth-century prophet
canonical critics focus on how the final form of the book has created the context within which all of its materials are now to be read, as a movement from judgment to salvation.

<http://www.religion-online.org/showarticle.asp?title=2179>

Inspiration and Truth of Sacred Scripture

(From the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1993)

Inspiration and Truth of Sacred Scripture (From the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1993)

- 105 God is the **author** of Sacred Scripture. "The divinely revealed realities, which are contained and presented in the text of Sacred Scripture, have been written down under the **inspiration** of the Holy Spirit." ^{DV 11}
- "For Holy Mother Church, **relying on the faith of the apostolic age**, accepts as sacred and canonical the books of the Old and the New Testaments, whole and entire, with all their parts, on the grounds that, written under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, they have God as their author, and have been handed on as such to the Church herself." ^{DV 11}

Inspiration and Truth of Sacred Scripture (From the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1993)

- 106 God inspired the human authors of the sacred books. "To compose the sacred books, God chose certain men who, all the while he employed them in this task, made **full use of their own faculties and powers** so that, though he acted in them and by them, it was **as true authors** that they consigned to writing whatever he wanted written, and no more." ^{DV 11}

Inspiration and Truth of Sacred Scripture (From the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1993)

- 107 The inspired books teach the truth. "Since therefore all that the inspired authors or sacred writers affirm should be regarded as affirmed by the Holy Spirit, we must acknowledge that the books of Scripture firmly, faithfully, and without error teach that truth which God, for the sake of our salvation, wished to see confided to the Sacred Scriptures." ^{DV 11}

Inspiration and Truth of Sacred Scripture (From the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1993)

- 108 Still, the Christian faith is **not** a "religion of the book". Christianity is the religion of the "Word" of God, "not a written and **mute word**, but incarnate and living". If the Scriptures are not to remain a dead letter, Christ, the eternal Word of the living God, must, through the Holy Spirit, "open (our) minds to understand the Scriptures." ^{cf. Lk 24:45}

The Holy Spirit, Interpreter of Scripture
(From the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1993)

109 In Sacred Scripture, God speaks to man in a human way. To interpret Scripture correctly, the reader must be attentive to **what the human authors truly wanted to affirm, and to what God wanted to reveal to us by their words.** DV 12

The Holy Spirit, Interpreter of Scripture
(From the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1993)

110 In order to discover the sacred authors' intention, the reader must take into account

- the conditions of their time and culture,
- the literary genres in use at that time, and
- the modes of feeling, speaking and narrating then current.

"For the fact is that truth is differently presented and expressed in the various types of historical writing, in prophetic and poetical texts, and in other forms of literary expression." DV 12

The Holy Spirit, Interpreter of Scripture
(From the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1993)

111 But since Sacred Scripture is inspired, there is another and no less important principle of correct interpretation, without which Scripture would remain a dead letter. "Sacred Scripture must be read and interpreted in the light of the same Spirit by whom it was written." DV 12

Scripture and Tradition

(From the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1993)

The Relationship Between Tradition and Sacred Scripture:
One common source. . .

80 "Sacred Tradition and Sacred Scripture, then, **are bound closely together**, and communicate one with the other. For both of them, **flowing out from the same divine well-spring**, come together in some fashion to form one thing, and move towards the same goal." DV 9

Each of them makes present and fruitful in the Church the mystery of Christ, who promised to remain with his own "always, to the close of the age". CF Mt 28:20

The Relationship Between Tradition and Sacred Scripture:
. . . two distinct modes of transmission

81 "Sacred Scripture is the **speech of God** as it is put down in writing under the breath of the Holy Spirit." DV 9

"and [Holy] Tradition transmits in its entirety the Word of God which has been entrusted to the apostles by Christ the Lord and the Holy Spirit. It transmits it to the successors of the apostles so that, enlightened by the Spirit of truth, they may faithfully preserve, expound and spread it abroad by their preaching." DV 9

The Relationship Between Tradition and Sacred Scripture:
... two distinct modes of transmission

82 As a result the Church, to whom **the transmission and interpretation of Revelation is entrusted**, "does not derive her certainty about all revealed truths from the holy Scriptures alone. **Both Scripture and Tradition** must be accepted and honoured with equal sentiments of devotion and reverence."^{OV 9}

The Magisterium of the Church

85 "The task of giving **an authentic interpretation of the Word of God**, whether in its written form or in the form of Tradition, has been entrusted to the **living teaching office of the Church alone**. Its authority in this matter is exercised in the name of Jesus Christ."^{OV 10}

This means that the task of interpretation has been entrusted to the bishops in communion with the successor of Peter, the Bishop of Rome.

Aesop



the supposed author of a collection of Greek fables, almost certainly a legendary figure.

Various attempts were made in ancient times to establish him as an actual personage. Herodotus in the 5th century BC said that he had lived in the 6th century and that he was a slave, and Plutarch in the 1st century AD made him adviser to Croesus, the 6th-century-BC king of Lydia... The probability is that Aesop was no more than a name invented to provide an author for fables centring on beasts, so that "a story of Aesop" became synonymous with "fable." The importance of fables lay not so much in the story told as in the moral derived from it.

A collection of fables that relied heavily on the Aesop corpus was that of Phaedrus (1st century AD). Phaedrus' treatment of them greatly influenced the way in which they were used by later writers, notably by the 17th-century French poet and fabulist Jean de La Fontaine.

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