

REL 201 THE BIBLE

Historical Criticism (continued) & other “criticisms”

Form Criticism

- Oral Traditions
- Evidence for ancient oral traditions:
 - Stereotyped phrasing
 - Typical structures of oral genres



Example: Genesis 3



Copper snake, 13th-12th cents. BCE


- “Etiology”: why things are the way they are
- Gen 3 has three etiologies:
 - Why farming is hard work
 - Why society is patriarchal
 - Why snakes don’t have legs

Goal:
Traditions *older* than the text
Traditions older than J?
Jesus' original teachings?

Evaluation

- Ancient oral traditions no longer exist
- Literary evidence is subjective
- Reliability of oral tradition exaggerated

Redaction Criticism



- “Redactor” = editors
- Edited texts: *Gilgamesh*, *Jeremiah*
- Redaction Criticism asks:
 - Why did they edit texts into this form?
 - What is the meaning of the combined text?

Examples from Genesis 1-5

- Why combine Gen 1 with Gen 2-3?
- Why two similar genealogies in Gen 4-5?
- What is the intended effect?



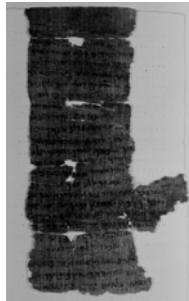
Michaelangelo, Creation of Adam

Evaluation

- Only *bad* editing obvious?
- Have editing standards changed?
- Have literary standards changed?
- How to tell the difference?

Review: Historical Criticism

- History **IN** the text
- History **OF** the text:
 - Source Criticism
 - Form Criticism
 - Redaction Criticism



Ten Commandments & Shema, 2nd cent. BCE

Other questions about

- Ideology
- Theology
- Cultural influences



Feminist Criticism



Egyptian grave painting, 15th-14th cents. BCE

- Does Gen 2-3 support patriarchy?
- Or have male interpreters only read it that way?

Canonical Criticism

- Does the biblical context change the meaning of Gen 6:1-8?



Neo-Assyrian reliefs (9th-7th cents. BCE)

Comparative ancient literature

- Flood in Genesis & Gilgamesh
 - Similarities?
 - Differences?
- Why does Gen 6-9 use and change a Babylonian flood story?



Michelangelo, Noah's Flood

Review: Kinds of Academic Analysis of Biblical Texts

- Translation
- Text criticism: manuscripts
- Literary criticism
- Historical criticism (in/of)
- Feminist criticism
- Canonical criticism
- Comparative literature
- & more

REMEMBER: Discussion sections Friday!

<i>Section</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>Place</i>	<i>T.A.</i>
02	F 12:50	Hinds 108	Saldino
03	F 11:45	HL 105	Saldino
04	F 11:45	HL 214	Beard
05	F 9:35	Bowne 125	Saldino
06	F 12:50	Hinds 107	Beard
07	F 1:55	Eggers 111	Beard
