Class 3a Crafting OurTexts: Literary Issues



Outline

- Fact & Fiction: The Nature of Biblical Literature
 - Modernist vs. fundamentalist views
 - A postmodern view
- Inspiration & Revelation
 - A fundamentalist view
 - A postmodern view
- Canon & Community: How Biblical Meaning is Made

Fact & Fiction The Nature of Biblical Literature

Modernist vs. fundamentalist views

The Bible is history or fact It is the word of God and so lies outside history
Any contradictions are in <i>our</i> minds; the text is inerrant (without error)

Fact & Fiction The Nature of Biblical Literature

- Modernist vs. fundamentalist views
 - Bible as fiction, but our histories are fact vs Bible as fact
- A postmodern view
 - The idea of facts outside of fiction or rhetoric—that is, outside of language—is an illusion of language itself.

(Loughlin, Postmodern Scripture, 312)

- · Biblical books are fictions
 - 。 Faithfully rendering characters to render our own possible identities
 - Faithfully rendering the truth of events, though not necessarily all the facts of those events (truth here is perceived meaning)
- Modernist histories of the Bible are "fiction" as well; they embed the perspectives of their authors

Inspiration & Revelation

- A fundamentalist view
 - The Bible is the Word of God, understood as God's actual words
 - · Divine dictation model
 - for some Orthodox Jews, Moses as scribe of Torah
- A postmodern view
 - The Bible is a thoroughly human product
 - Revelation and inspiration happen in every semiotic encounter with the text (author, scribe tradent, reader/hearer) – they are ongoing actions, not static deposits of words

Canon & Community How Biblical Meaning Is Made

- The individual or community names its experience
- They reshape the experience in light of later experience; this keeps the tradition alive
- At some point, they may determine which experiences to regard as most important (canon)
- They continue to interpret that canon
 - Sometimes within the books themselves
 - In the arrangement of the canon
 - In later readings of that canon

	GENESIS בראשית
200 Tar. a. Ta. Ta 200 Tarrest for the	 בראשיחי בכא אלקים את סשקום ואת קארץ: ין קארץ קוקה ההו ובהו וחשף של פגן החום ורוח אלחים מרופה של פגי
5.7%	הַנֶּים: יַנִיְא אַלֹּהָים יְתִי אַר נֵיָה־אָוֹר: יַנַיְרָא אַלֹּהָים אָת־ :
	י האור פרפוב מקול אלוים בין האור ובין החשף: י מקרא
	אַלקים ולאור וום ולחָשָׁךְ קַרָא לֵילָת וַיְמִי־עַרָב וַיְמִי־בָּקַר וָזֹם'
	י אַקר: י י ווָאַסָר אַלחוֹם יְהִי רָקוֹעַ בְּהַוֹּךְ הַפֵּים ויהָי מְבְּדִּילֹ
102,100,19	י בון מום למום: י וושש אלהים את־הָרְקִישׁ וַבְּוֹיִל בַין המוֹם אַשֶּׁר'
2921.12	מקחת לרקיש וכון הפום אשר מעל לרקיש יניהי כן: י ניקבא
,	אַלֹהָים לֶרְקִיע שְׁצֵּיִם וַיָּהִ־עָרֶב וַיְהִי־בָּקָר יָוֹם שָׁנִי: ס
49,49,9,49	י ווַאַפֶּר אַלהֹים יַּקּוֹוּ הפֿום מקסת השָטוֹם אַל־מְקָוֹם־ אָהָר וְחַרְאָה י
	מנקשה היסילקוי: יי הַיְקרֹא אַלוֹקִים ולִיבְּשָׁה אָרץ וּלְמֹקְנָה הַמָּום
	יי קַרָא וַעִּים וַיִּרָא אֱלֹקִים כִּי־שָּוֹב: יי וַיָּאֹטֶר אֱלֹהִים חַן־עֵא הָאֶּרָץ'
*1.1.1	יַלְשָׁא עָשָׁבי טוַרָּיִע זָרע עָץי פָּרִי עָשָה פָּרי לְמִינוֹי אַשֶּׁר זַרְעוֹ־בְּוֹ
	יי על־קאַרץ וַוָהִי בּן: יי וַמּוֹצֵׁא הָאָרץ וַיְשָׁא עַשָּׁב מַוְרַיַע וַרע לְמוֹנַחוּ
071.7	יי וענץ עשה פָּרֶי אַשֶׁר זַוְרַעוֹ־כָּוֹ לְמִוֹנְהַוּ וַיַרָא אֱלֹהָים כִּי־טָוֹב: יי וְיָהִייֹּ
013.1719	"אַרָב ,ווָה־בָּקֶר ,וֹם שְׁלִישָׁ: פּ יּ וְיָאמֶר אֱלֹוֹיִם וְתֵּי מְאֹרֹת
01111301113	בּרָקִישִ הֹשְׁמִים לְהַבְּרִּיל בָּין הַוָּים ובָין הַלָּיֵלֶה וְהָנִי לְאַהֹּת וּלְפִוֹּעָׁרִים
119	יי וּלְיָמֶים וְשָׁנֶים: יי וְהָיָוּ לְמָאוֹרֹת בּרְקֵיִע הַשְּׁמֵים לְהָאָיר עַל־הָאַרְץ
7-51 S	" , וְיִנִי בּוֹיִעִשׁ אַלֹּהִים אַת־שָׁעֵ בּמְאַרָת בּנְרֹלִים אַת־בּמְאַר
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Forms of the Jewish Bible in Antiquity

- Physical form: scrolls
 - Long books required a scroll of their own (Isaiah, Psalms)
 - Shorter books often circulated in groups (Torah, the twelve minor prophets)
- Languages:
 - Hebrew
 - Some Aramaic (a language related to Hebrew) in later books: Daniel and Ezra
 - the Septuagint: a Greek translation

Canon

Three Sections of the Jewish Bible

- Torah
 - The first five books of the Bible
 - The heart of Jewish scripture
- Prophets
 - 3 major prophets, 12 minor ones
 - High-level royal advisors who challenge kings to serve God
- Writings

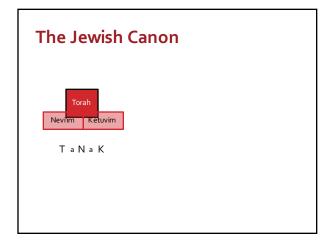
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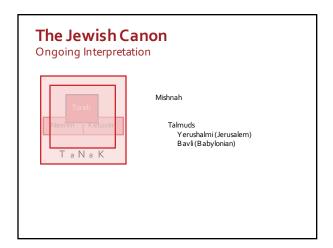
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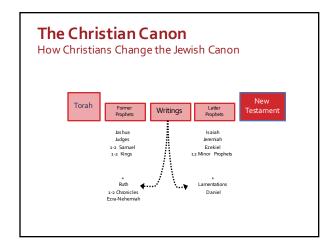
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Torah	Former Prophets Joshua Judges 1-2 Samuel 1-2 Kings Ruth 1-2 Chronicles Ezra-Nehemiah	Writings	Latter Prophets Isaiah Jeremiah Ezekiel 12 Minor Prophets Lamentations Daniel	New Testament
	and linear arrangeme		former prophets p	oints to
1	of Israel's history in		his story	

Affordances of Written Texts

Word-Play

Gen 2:18 Then the LORD God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper as his partner." 19 So out of the ground the LORD God formed every animal of the field and every bird of the air, and brought them to the man to see what he would call them; and whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name. 20 The man gave names to all cattle, and to the birds of the air, and to every animal of the field; but for the man there was not found a helper as his partner. 22 So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; then he took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. 22 And the rib that the LORD God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. 33 Then the man said,

This at last is bone of my bones	את הפֿעם עֶצֶם מֶעֲצָמֵי
and flesh of my flesh;	ِنْجُوْرِ جُنُوْرِ جَنْدِشِرِ
his one shall be called Woman	֓֓֓֓֓֓֓֓֓֓֓֓֓֓֓֓֓֓֓֓֓֓֓֓֓֓֓֓֓֓֓֓֓֓֓֓֓
for out of Mar this one was taken."	ני מאָיש לֵבֶּקתָה־וְאִת:

Affordances of Written Texts

- Repetition of scenes (type scenes/conventions)
- Withholding of motive (characterization)
- Subtle shifts in vocabulary
- Intertextuality (evocation of other literature)

These add richness and nuance to the text

How Scholars Study the Biblical Text

Historical Criticism

The Historical-critical approach to scripture seeks to determine

- the context in which particular biblical passages originated
- the way in which those passages developed, changed, and were transmitted, and
- their relationship to the intellectual and religious conditions of their times

How Scholars Study the Biblical Text

The Composition of Torah: The Documentary Hypothesis

- Evidence
 - The Torah tells the story from creation to the Exodus, bringing the Jews to the verge of the promised land by the end of Deuteronomy
 - But in the Torah, there are often multiple, contradicting versions of the same stories.
- Hypothesis
 - 4 documents with different versions of shared stories were written at different times and were gradually merged to create the books of Torah (= Genesis through Deuteronomy)



1000-700 BCE United, then southern kingdom



Deut eronomist 622-587+ BCE Reunited kingdom

Priestly 549+ BCE

How Scholars Study the Biblical Text

The Composition of Torah: The Documentary Hypothesis



ow Scholars Study the Biblical Text				
Historical Critical Method (HCM)				
Source Critiaism	Form Critiaism	Redaction Critiasm	Narrative Critiasm	
18 th -19 th centuries	1920-1960	1960–1970	1980–1990s	
Identify large writ- ten units predating the gospels, upon which evangelists depended	Identifysmaller oral units predating the gospels, upon which evangelists depended	Identify editor's interests through editing patterns	Identify meaning of text through internal narrative patterns	
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