

Terminology

Androcentrism

The term androcentrism describes the situation that man or the masculine is extolled as the norm for being human, which includes the biological sex as well as the sociocultural gender role. The dominance of the masculine is reflected not least in the language, but also manifests itself structurally in all areas of society (☞ Patriarchy).

Apocrypha

Apocrypha are writings that show up in the evolutionary and religious context of Biblical writings (☞ Bible / Biblical canon) but were not institutionally canonised, i. e. were not legitimised as part of Holy Scripture.

Archaeology

Archaeology is an academic discipline whose object of study is found in the material culture, as opposed to history, which primarily deals with written sources. The areas of concentration within archaeology, which meanwhile have become quite diverse, focus on relics from the beginning of modern mankind up to the present day. Traditionally, there is a major emphasis on antiquity (e.g. Egyptian, Greek, and Roman), especially in German a.

Art History

Art history is an academic discipline that has existed in Germany since 1799. Its subject is the history of art and it traditionally focuses on the visual arts as well as architecture. Important aspects for interrogation are visual motifs (☞ Iconography), forms, styles, and the materials utilised. Modern-day art historical research is conversant with a broad spectrum of methods. For example, it takes into account contexts related to the history of origin, cultural history, or media just as much as it does feminist perspectives.

Bible / Biblical Canon

The term Biblical Canon today refers to a collection of assorted texts that in (☞) Judaism and (☞) Christianity is considered to be inspired by God and therefore the entirety of the texts is known as the Holy Scripture. The texts are differentiated with respect to their time of creation, authorship, literary form, and style. In Judaism the Holy Scripture comprises the texts of the Tanach, which in Christianity is known as the (☞) Old Testament. The Old and the (☞) New Testaments together form the Christian Biblical Canon, which is of importance to essentially all denominations. The formation of the canon occurred gradually throughout history, with its components and their order constantly disputed. They vary within the Christian traditions to this day, which means that Christian denominations recognise their own Bible editions.

Byzantine Empire

The Byzantine Empire has its political roots in the late antique division of the (☞) Roman Empire in 395 into Western Roman and Eastern Roman empires. The latter was governed from the capital Constantinople (today Istanbul), which was named after Emperor Constantine and which originally was called Byzantium. The resulting empire, which lasted until 1453 and therefore survived longer than the Western Roman Empire, is thus designated as the Byzantine Empire.

Christianity

Christianity evolved from (☞) Judaism. The life, ministry, and death of Jesus are at the centre of the Christian religion. A distinctive feature of Christian monotheism is the belief in one God who is conceived in three forms (the Trinity), one of which is Jesus Christ. The religion recognises different religious truths (☞ dogma). Christianity is split into many branches and denominations; as a consequence, they reflect differences that involve institutional organisation of the various churches as well as specific matters of rituals. The most powerful Christian church, the (☞) Roman Catholic Church, sees itself as being in the tradition of Early Christianity. The (☞) Bible is considered the Holy Scripture for all Christian churches.

Denomination [Roman Catholic / Orthodox / Protestant]

Distinct religious communities within (☞) Christianity are identified as denomination. The largest of these are the (☞) Roman Catholic Church, the (☞) Orthodox Churches, the Protestant Churches (☞ Protestantism), the Anglican Church, and the Pentecostal movement. After the political division of the (☞) Roman Empire in the 4th century into the Western Roman and Eastern Roman empires (☞ Byzantine Empire), the Christian church

split up, at the latest with the schism of 1054 (called the Great Schism), into two large denominations: the Latin-speaking (☞) Roman Catholic Church in the West and the Greek-speaking (☞) Orthodox Church in the East.

– Roman Catholic Church

The largest institutional church in Christianity is referred to as the Catholic Church. It is divided into different churches, of which the largest (in terms of numbers) and most powerful is the Roman Catholic. Institutionally, it sees itself as an uninterrupted continuation of the primordial church that was founded after the death of Jesus Christ. The head of the church is the pope with his seat in Rome; occupying the supreme episcopate, he is understood to be the successor of Apostle Peter, the first bishop of Rome.

– Orthodox Churches

The Orthodox Church is made up of numerous sub-churches that are sometimes autonomous. Unlike the (☞) Roman Catholic Church, which is centrally run by the Vatican, the Orthodox Churches are more highly subdivided, sometimes at the level of national churches. A commonality of the Orthodox Churches is their Byzantine tradition (☞) (Byzantine Empire).

– Protestantism

Today Protestantism is made up of different branches. The terms Protestant and Evangelical are not synonymous. The Evangelical Church stands in a direct connection with the Reformation, which Martin Luther brought about starting in 1517, and therefore its development is oriented to be explicitly critical of the (☞) Roman Catholic Church. Luther's criticism of the Church included a wide variety of points, which above all concerned the institutionalised Church itself. Thus an essential aspect of the Evangelical Church is that faith is focused on the foundation of the Gospel.

Dogma

Dogma refers to fundamental truths that in Christianity are considered absolute. While the (☞) Orthodox and (☞) Evangelical Churches refer exclusively to the Scriptures, the (☞) Catholic tradition also recognises the magisterium of the Church, whereby the Church can institutionally proclaim d. That involves the person of the pope as head of the Church, whose infallibility in turn is considered dogma. Dogma as such has only come into the picture in the Roman Catholic Church since the 19th century but is rooted in the tradition of considering decisions of councils to be binding.

Egalitarianism

Equality means the consistency of specific external parameters for all those involved. In a more grandly conceived theory, egalitarianism describes the political, social, and economic equalisation of all individuals in a society and as an ideology is directed against elites and unequal hierarchical power structures.

Equal Rights

In particular, equal rights means the legal equalisation of all groups of people.

Exegesis

Biblical exegesis means the Jewish or Christian interpretation of Holy Scripture (☞ Bible). Furthermore, the goal of exegesis is usually associated with the interpretation of specific passages and their communication in the context of religious instruction, i. e. making them more understandable where necessary.

Feminism

The term feminism encompasses differently accented social, political, and academic movements that challenge existing gender roles and strive towards (☞) equal rights and self-determination of individuals of all genders. Traditionally, feminism seeks the emancipation of women and was a product of the (☞) women's movement. Nowadays the spotlight is increasingly on different aspects that have facilitated systematic discrimination; besides (☞) sexism, they are also racism or classism. This structural overlapping is currently being confronted by intersectional feminism.

Gender Equality

Gender equality means (☞) equal rights for all genders. In the context of gender-specific discrimination of women, the term is associated with the demand for women's equal rights.

Gospel

The (☞) New Testament contains four canonised books in which the life of Jesus is described. Their authors Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John are referred to as Evangelists and their texts are subsumed under the term gospel. In (☞) Christianity, these writings are considered preaching, which is why the preached Christian message of salvation through Jesus Christ is also termed gospel.

Greek-Roman Mythology

The term mythology describes the entirety of a regional- and culture-specific folklore. Greek mythology, as a distinctly polytheistic religion of nature, encompassed above all beliefs about the creation of the world and the numerous gods. The Romans ultimately incorporated the complex world of Greek gods and heroes into their own religion, among them the most important Greek deities: the twelve gods of Olympus.

Iconography

Iconography is an art historical method whereby specific pictorial content can be interpreted on the basis of characteristic features. In traditional European art, Christian and authoritative secular motifs, whose iconographies can be appropriately understood within their specific sacred or political frame of reference, have dominated for a long time. As a result, iconography today often also means reconstruction in the sense of the analysis of historical contexts.

Judaism

Among the three world religions that are all related to Abraham, i. e. Judaism, (☞) Christianity, and Islam, the Jewish religion is the oldest. Judaism refers to the tribe of the Israelites as described in the (☞) Torah. An identity and belief in a monotheistic god resulted from the interpretation of writings, above all the Tanach (☞ Old Testament) and the Talmud. Unlike (☞) Christianity, the Jewish religion does not recognise any (☞) dogmas, but instead traditional Jewish principles of faith. The interpretation and teaching of religion is done by rabbis. There are different branches within Judaism, for example Orthodox Judaism and Reform Judaism.

Misogyny

In concrete terms, misogyny describes a pathological hatred of women by men. In a broader sense, the term denotes hostility towards women. Misogyny is included in theories of (☞) feminism as a characteristic of (☞) patriarchal social structures. Presently, the term sexism is more likely to drive the discourse.

New Testament

Unlike in (☞) Judaism, in (☞) Christianity, Jesus of Nazareth is considered the Messiah and the son of God, with his death and resurrection bringing salvation to the world. Jesus' life and death are related in books of the New Testament, especially the (☞) Gospel. Thus the New Testament forms the fundamental basis of Christian faith. The New Testament contains 27 canonised writings in all (☞ Bible/Biblical canon).

Old Testament

The Old Testament is a collection of writings that is regarded as Holy Scripture by Jews (Tanach) and that makes up the first part of the Christian (☞) Biblical canon. Depending on the Christian (☞) denomination, deviations with respect to the canonised texts occur. The Old Testament contains, among other things, the creation story and the prophetic proclamation of the redeeming Messiah. Christians – but not Jews – consider Jesus to be that Messiah, and he is chronicled in the New Testament.

Patriarchy

In a narrower sense, patriarchy describes the sovereignty of men within the family. In a broader sense, the term describes societal power structures in which influential positions are taken by men but remain denied to women on the basis of their gender.

Plastik

Plastik is a German synonym for the art form (☞) sculpture. From a philosophical-historical aspect, it is a pivotal, classical-romantic fundamental term for the German idealistic aesthetic and was especially applied as a normative category and a reference to classical Greek antiquity. In the 18th century the term plastik could also be used for painting and literature within this aesthetic area of reference, but since then it was and is applied only to sculpture. Occasionally plastik (addition of material) is differentiated from sculpture (removal of material) on the basis of their technical processes.

Relief

A relief refers to an artistic object that is executed in three dimensions to varying degrees but has not been worked from all sides. A relief features an obvious front side and is generally integrated into a system (e.g. an architectural element) or is mounted on a support.

Roman Empire

The name Roman Empire (lat. Imperium Romanum) is the designation for the political state of the Romans that lasted from about 200 BC to the late 5th century, since its end can be defined differently. At times, the dominion of the Romans stretched across the entire Mediterranean region, into the Middle East and Africa, and as far as today's Great Britain. In 395 the powerful empire was split into two parts: the Western Roman Empire, which was governed from Rome as before, and the Eastern Roman Empire (☞ Byzantine Empire).

Sculpture

Sculpture is one form of the visual arts. It denotes three-dimensional objects that can be made from various materials and by different techniques. Traditionally, sculpture describes those objects that are sculpted, i.e. material is removed (stone, wood), modelled (clay, plaster), or cast (bronze). Frequently the German term (☞) Plastik is used as a synonym for sculpture.

Sexism

Sexism describes forms of discrimination on the basis of one's gender. The term is applied in a general sense to socially institutionalised structures, especially (☞) patriarchal ones, as well as with reference to concrete (☞) misogynistic prejudices and abuse.

Torah

The first five books of the Hebrew Tanach are termed the Torah, the Holy Scripture of Judaism. They are also called the Pentateuch or Five Books of Moses. In Christianity, the Tanach matches, in a different order of the writings, the (☞) Old Testament. In an (☞) exegetic interpretation, the Torah is understood as God's instructions to the people of Israel.

Women's Movement

The term women's movement means certain social movements that since the 19th century increasingly arose in Western Europe and the USA and that targeted social processes with the goal of (☞) equality for women. The specific issues of different movements could therefore vary widely; in the phase known as the »First Wave«, starting in the middle of the 19th century, the goals were access to employment and education as well as the vote, while in the »Second Wave« the focus was especially on autonomous sexuality. In continuation of the historical women's movement is the »Third Wave« of emancipatory efforts that began in the 1990s or thereabouts (☞ Feminism).