

THE RESEARCH QUEST: Types of Sources and How to Find Them



Detail of a miniature of a hermit at work on a manuscript, from the *Estoire del Saint Graal*, France
(Saint-Omer or Tournai?), c. 1315 – 1325, Royal MS 14 E III, f. 6v

RESEARCH REQUIRES SOURCES

(DIRECT DIVINE ILLUMINATION IS UNFORTUNATELY NOT A COMMON OCCURRENCE)



St. Bridget's Eucharistic Vision, from St. Bridget of Sweden, Revelations and other texts, in Latin, Italy, Naples, Late 14th century

RESEARCH REQUIRES SOURCES

(DIRECT DIVINE ILLUMINATION IS UNFORTUNATELY
NOT A COMMON OCCURRENCE)



St. Bridget's Eucharistic Vision,
from St. Bridget of Sweden,
Revelations and other texts, in Latin,
Italy, Naples, Late 14th century

As you are doubtless aware,
direct divine illumination
is unfortunately not a
common occurrence.

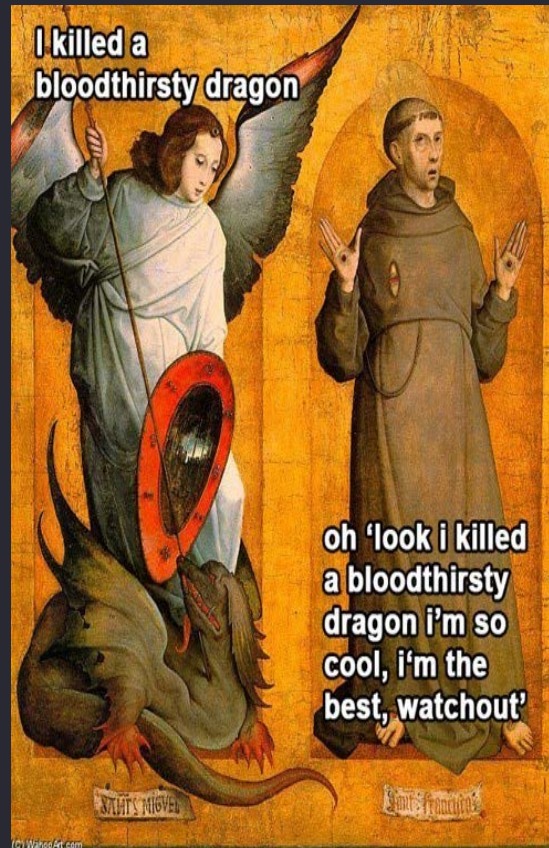
The Almighty seems to be
content working through
more mundane means,
which means that
choosing appropriate,
authoritative sources is
essential.

RESEARCH IS LIKE A SPIRAL



Like a good conversation, research is a give-and-take process of asking questions, going to sources for information, which leads to further questions and additional research FOREVER (not really – that is why God has graciously given us deadlines)

USING SOURCES IS WHAT MAKES RESEARCH A CONVERSATION INSTEAD OF A MONOLOGUE



A research paper is not a record of your experiences but a rigorous and engaging conversation with your sources and other scholars, guided by your thesis

THREE TYPES OF SOURCES



THREE TYPES OF SOURCES



- You can find information on your topic in three types of sources: tertiary, primary, and secondary. These are sort of like third, second, and first person conversations:
- I can speak about myself (first person - primary),
 - I can say something about “them” (third person – tertiary),
 - or you and I can have a conversation (second person – secondary).

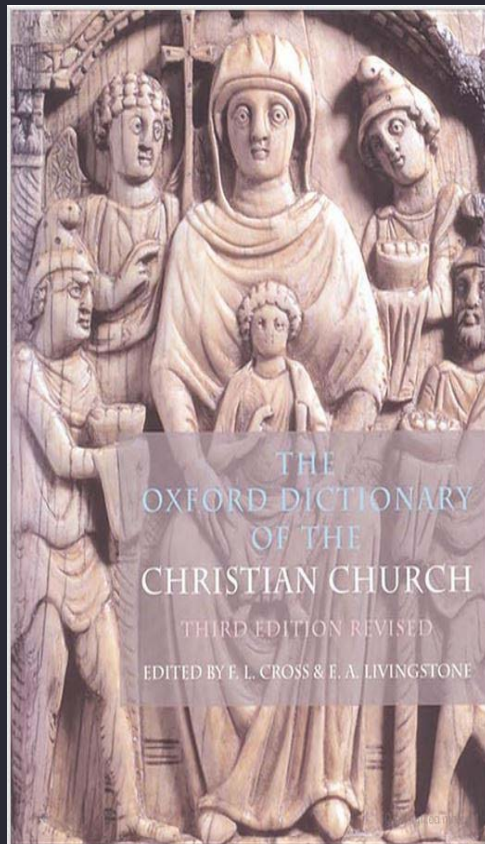
TERTIARY SOURCES (DICTIONARIES, ENCYCLOPEDIAS, ETC.)

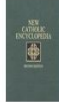
Has anyone here started a research project by going to the library and checking out a stack of books? If so, how many of the books that you checked out did you wind up actually using?




The Long Room, Trinity College, Dublin, Ireland

AND NOW I WILL SHOW YOU A MUCH BETTER WAY: TERTIARY SOURCES





TOPIC OVERVIEW
Francis of Assisi, St.
New Catholic Encyclopedia
Vol. 5, 2nd ed. Detroit: Gale, 2003. p870-871. COPYRIGHT 2003 Gale, COPYRIGHT 2006 Gale, COPYRIGHT 2007 Gale, Cengage Learning
R. ARMSTRONG



Page 870

FRANCIS OF ASSISI, ST.
Founder of the Order of Friars Minor, the Order of Saint Clare, and the Order of Brothers and Sisters of Penance. b. Assisi, c. 1182; d. there, Oct. 3, 1226.
His father, Pietro di Bernardone, was a textile merchant; his mother was named Pica. He was baptized John, but was called Francesco, that is, Francis. Having received the usual liberal arts education of the period, he knew Latin and possessed some knowledge of French. His wealth and love of life made him a flamboyant leader of Assisi's youth. In the feuding between Assisi and Perugia he was imprisoned (1202-03). Afterwards, a debilitating illness brought him to a realistic awareness of his strengths and weaknesses. In 1205 he dreamt about joining a campaign against Apulia, but after a dream promising him glory, he changed his plans and at Spoleto returned to Assisi. Soon after, he met a leper and began a life of continuous conversion. A short while later, he entered the abandoned church of San Damiano on the outskirts of Assisi where he heard a voice from the cross calling him to rebuild the house of God. Taking his inheritance he used the money to fulfill the mandate, severed relations with his father, and dramatically and publicly renounced dependence on his father, Pietro. After hearing the missionary discourse in the Gospel of Matthew 10: 5-14 on Feb. 24, 1209, he embraced poverty and gave his life to preaching penance and peace.
Early Days of the Order. He began attracting followers and when there were a dozen, Francis drew up a form of life consisting of Gospel passages and some practical norms of living. Francis and his brothers presented the document to Pope Innocent III who approved it orally in 1209 or 1210. They then returned to the chapel of Our Lady of the Portiuncula (Santa Maria degli Angeli) in the valley below Assisi. Clare was invested there March 18-19, 1212 into a new way of life and thus the Second Order was founded. The preaching of Francis and his brothers initiated in Italy a strong penitential movement, which spread elsewhere among the laity, and later developed into the Third Order.

TERTIARY SOURCES GIVE YOU

A QUICK introduction so you can determine whether you are interested in researching the topic

Gregory IX (c.1148–1241), Pope from 1227. 📖

Count Ugolino of Segni, a near relation of [Innocent III](#), studied at [Paris](#) and [Bologna](#). He was created Cardinal Deacon on the accession of Innocent in 1198, Cardinal Bp. of Ostia in 1206, and was employed as Papal legate on a series of diplomatic missions to Germany. In 1217 he was commissioned to preach a [Crusade](#) in northern, and later in central, Italy; from him the Emp. [Frederick II](#) took the Cross at his coronation (1220). Insisting on the immediate fulfilment of the vow as soon as he became Pope, he forced the Emperor to embark in 1227, excommunicated him (29 Sept.) when he returned a few days later, and refused his overtures for peace. When Frederick II sailed unreconciled (1228) he proclaimed an interdict over his lands and wherever he should go. After conducting an unsuccessful campaign against Sicily, he agreed in 1230 to the Treaty of San Germano with the Emperor, loosing him from the ban. In 1239, however, he again excommunicated Frederick for invading Lombardy and usurping the rights of the Church in Sicily, tried to secure the election of an antiking and in 1241 summoned a General Council to Rome which Frederick II, however, prevented from meeting. He died while the Emperor was besieging Rome (22 Aug. 1241).

A personal friend of [St Francis of Assisi](#), he was appointed Protector of the [Franciscan Order](#) as early as 1220 and assisted in the development of the [Third Order](#). It was largely from the [Dominicans](#) and Franciscans that he drew the full-time [Inquisitors](#) appointed from c. 1233. He canonized St Francis in 1228, St Antony of Padua in 1232 and St Dominic in 1234. In 1230 he commissioned [Raymond of Peñafort](#) to collect the Papal decretals of the past hundred years in the so-called 'Liber Extra' (published in 1234) and in 1231 instructed William of Beauvais to examine the works of [Aristotle](#) and prepare an orthodox edition to supersede the old Latin translation, the use of which had been forbidden in 1210 ('Physics') and 1215 ('Metaphysics'). Throughout his pontificate he laboured unsuccessfully to effect a union with the E. Church.

Bibliography

L. Auvray (ed.), *Les Registres de Grégoire IX* (Bibliothèque des Écoles Françaises d'Athènes et de Rome, 2nd ser. 9; 4 vols., 1896–1955).

► Find this resource:

G. Levi (ed.), *Registri dei Cardinali Ugolino d'Ostia e Ottaviano degli Ubaldini* (Fonti per la storia d'Italia, 8; 1890), 3–154.

► Find this resource:

A contemporary Life, prob. by John of Ferentino, ed. P. Fabre and L. Duchesne, *Liber Censuum*, 2 (Bibliothèque des Écoles Françaises d'Athènes et de Rome, 2nd ser. 6; 1910), 18–36.

► Find this resource:

P. Balan, *Storia di Gregorio IX e dei suoi tempi* (3 vols., Modena, 1872–3);


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J. Felten, *Papst Gregor IX* (1886);

TERTIARY SOURCES GIVE YOU

A QUICK introduction so you can determine whether you are interested in researching the topic

A general sense of the topic, its context, and the major themes it represents

Gregory IX (c.1148–1241), Pope from 1227. 

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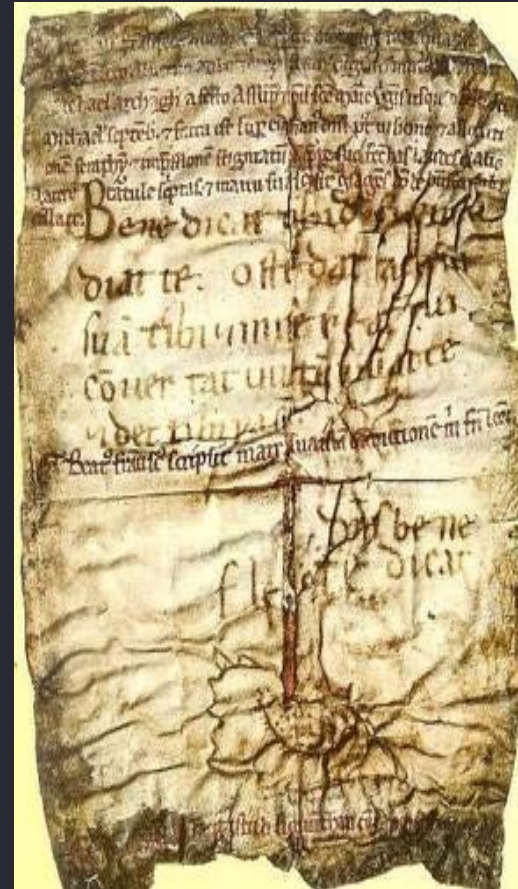
► Find this resource:

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A reliable bibliography that will lead you to the standard sources in that field

PRIMARY SOURCES

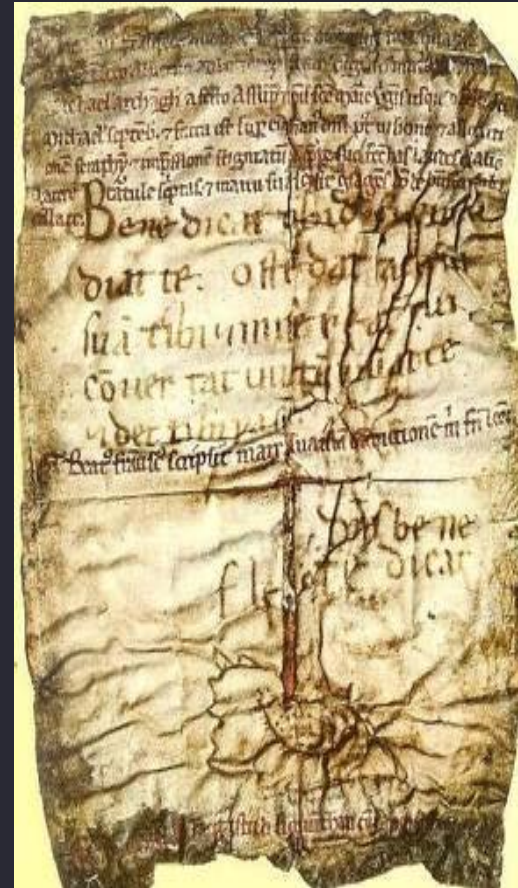
Primary sources are documents created by someone who was actually present at the event or who knew the participants in the event. A primary source is someone who experienced something first hand.



Francis' autographed benediction for Brother Leo

PRIMARY SOURCES

Primary sources are the heart and soul of research.

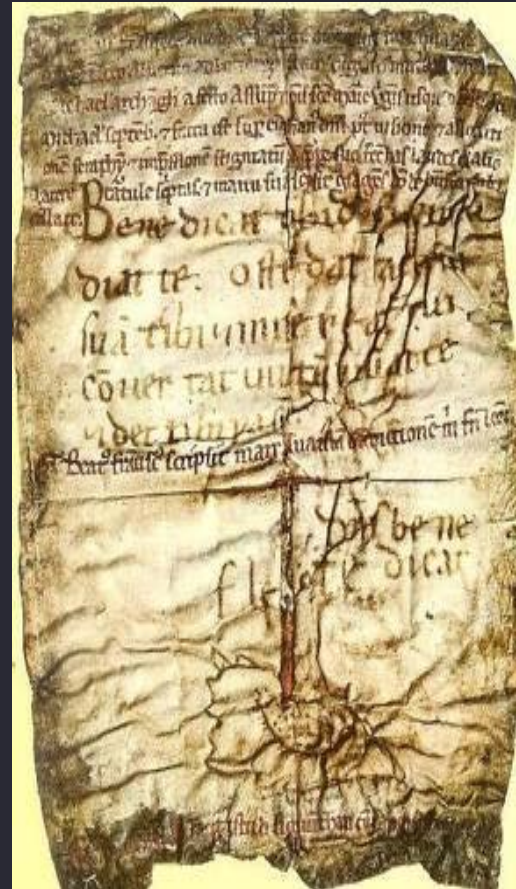


Francis' autographed benediction for Brother Leo

PRIMARY SOURCES

Primary sources are the heart and soul of research.

Tertiary sources are important because they help introduce, contextualize, and lead to relevant primary sources.



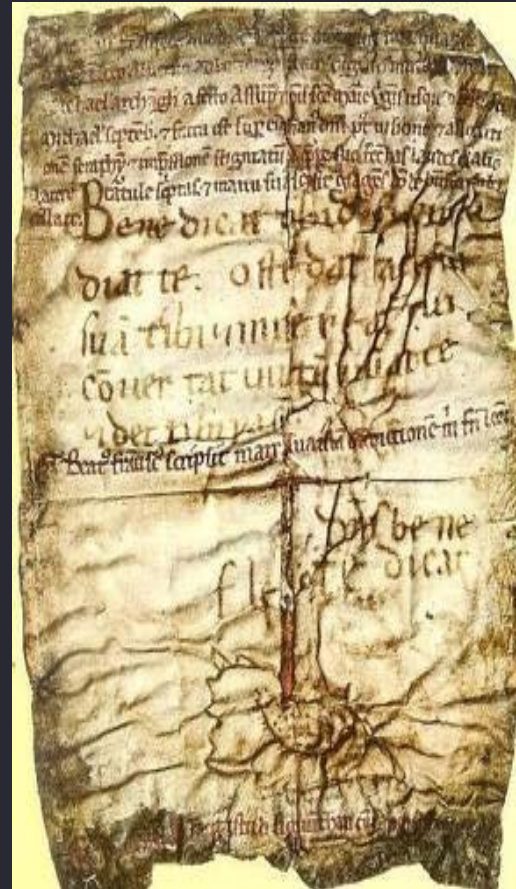
Francis' autographed benediction for Brother Leo

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Tertiary sources are important because they help introduce, contextualize, and lead to relevant primary sources.

Secondary sources are important because they interpret primary sources.



Francis' autographed benediction for Brother Leo

“PRIMARY” DOES NOT MEAN “OLD” OR “IN ITS ORIGINAL FORMAT”



PRAISES OF GOD.

Thou art holy, Lord God, who alone workest wonders. Thou art strong. Thou art great. Thou art most high. Thou art the Almighty King, Thou, holy Father, King of heaven and earth. Thou art the Lord God Triune and One; all good. Thou art good, all good, highest good, Lord God living and true. Thou art charity, love 1 Thou art wisdom. Thou art humility. Thou art patience. Thou art security. Thou art quietude. Thou art joy and gladness. Thou art justice and temperance. Thou art all riches to sufficiency. 1 Thou art beauty. Thou art meekness. Thou art protector. Thou art guardian and defender. Thou art strength. Thou art refreshment. Thou art our hope. Thou art our faith. Thou art our great sweetness. Thou art our eternal life, great and admirable Lord, God Almighty, merciful Saviour.

After this expression of the mystical ardors which consumed the *Poverello* comes:—

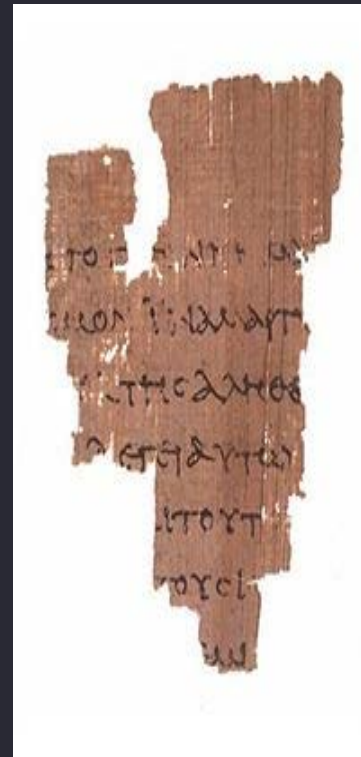
THE BLESSING OF BROTHER LEO.

May the Lord bless thee and keep thee. May He shew His face to thee and have mercy on thee. May He turn His countenance to thee and give thee peace. 2 Brother LeTo 3 may the Lord bless thee.

This is a digital rendering of the text of the parchment manuscript. An electronic version of a translation of a primary source *can* be a primary source (depending on your topic and facility with the original languages)

**“PRIMARY” IS OFTEN “AS PRIMARY AS WE CAN
REASONABLY HOPE TO GET”**

We may not have anything written in Jesus’ handwriting, like Francis’ autographed benediction, but we do have enough evidence, such as early manuscripts and records of oral tradition, to regard the New Testament as a credible primary source for the life of Jesus and the early Church.



Papyrus P52 – a fragment of John’s
Gospel dated c. 150 CE

DOES IT FIT?

The goal is not necessarily finding the oldest sources available; an item can be a really good primary source, but it might not be the best source for your specific quest.

Nor is it wise to accumulate vast numbers of resources of varying degrees of quality and relevance.

The aim is not merely to find sources, but to find the right sources for your project.



“it doesn’t have to fit!
It’s the most expensive ring I could find!”

“PRIMARY” IS RELATIVE TO THE SCOPE AND FOCUS OF YOUR PAPER



The Longest Day; Israel's Enemies Humiliated, Old Testament miniatures with Latin, Persian, and Judeo-Persian inscriptions from the Crusader Bible or the Morgan Picture Bible, France, Paris, 1240s

“PRIMARY” IS RELATIVE TO THE SCOPE AND FOCUS OF YOUR PAPER

Clearly this would be a secondary source, a later interpretation, if you were studying either the book of Joshua or bronze age Canaan; yet this would be a primary source if you were writing a paper on medieval biblical illumination.

Note also that “sources” are not necessarily written: paintings, coins, sculpture, and other artifacts – even buildings – can provide information you can use to support your thesis.



The Longest Day; Israel's Enemies Humiliated,
Old Testament miniatures with Latin, Persian, and Judeo-Persian inscriptions
from the Crusader Bible or the Morgan Picture Bible, France, Paris, 1240s

SECONDARY SOURCES

SECONDARY SOURCES ARE SYNTHESSES BY SCHOLARS IN THE FIELD.
THEY ARE BASED ON PRIMARY SOURCES, BUT ARE NOT PRIMARY SOURCES THEMSELVES.



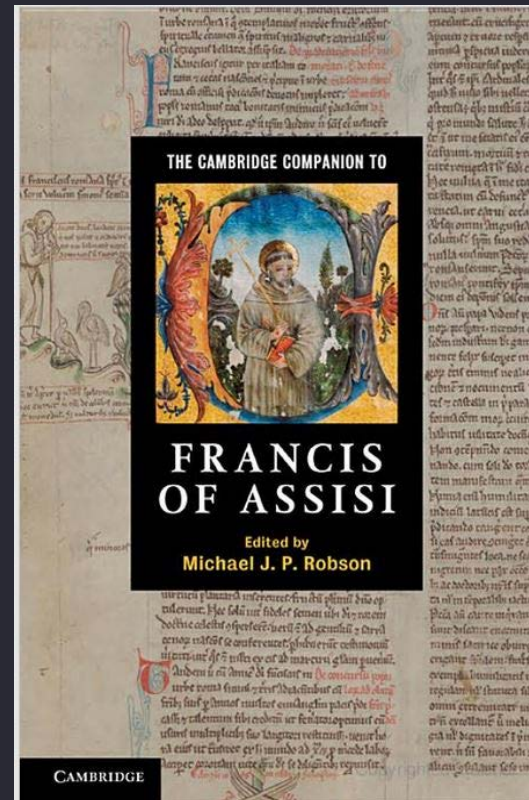
“On second thought, let’s not go to Camelot. ‘tis a silly place.”

EXAMPLE OF A SECONDARY SOURCE

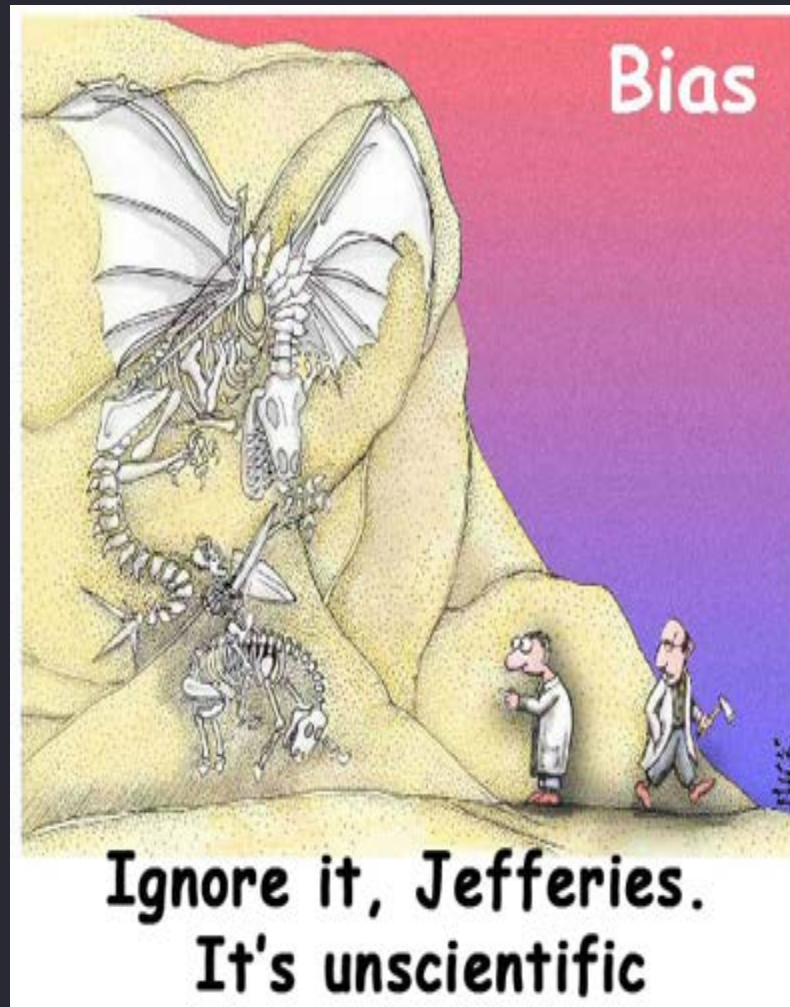
Secondary sources can present multiple perspectives on a topic.

They give you a sense of the overall story from beginning to end.

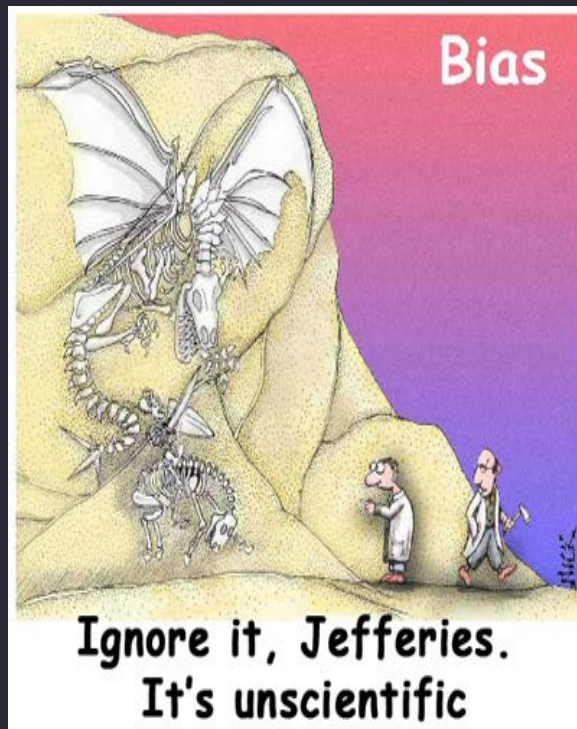
And they include analysis of the event—its causes, consequences, ramifications, etc.



TANGENT: PRESUPPOSITIONS



TANGENT: PRESUPPOSITIONS

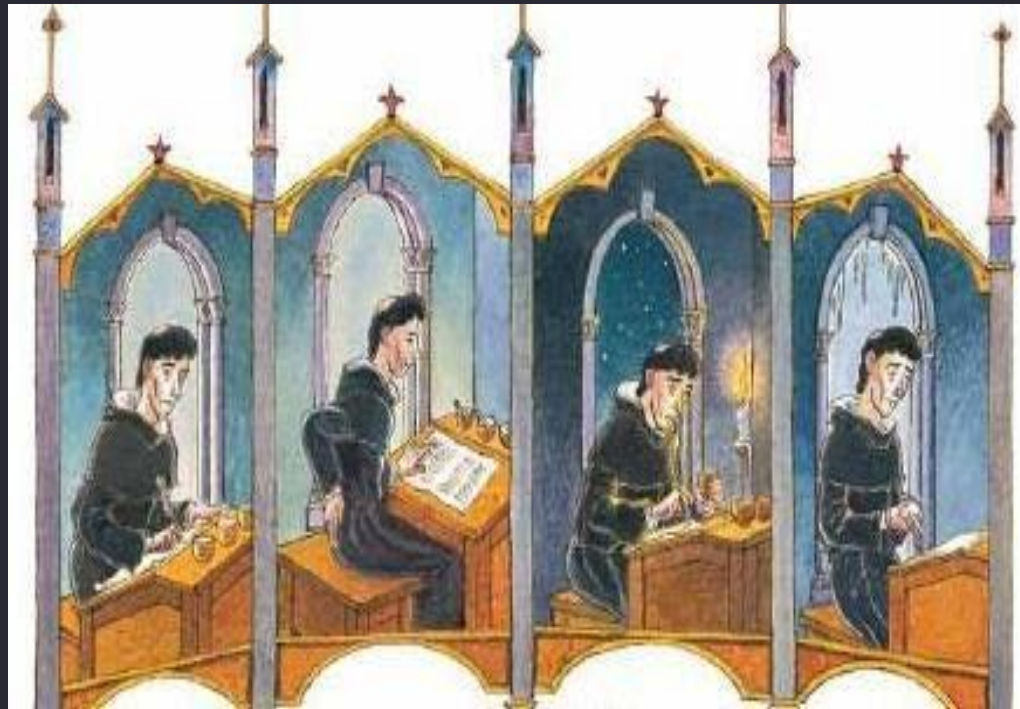


Secondary sources – like all sources – reflect the author’s point of view, and we must take this into account when evaluating the author’s argument or analysis.

It is best to take a stance of “critical humility” toward our sources – to trust them insofar as our knowledge of the available evidence allows, while subjecting them to rigorous cross-examination by comparing them with other interpretations.

Sources are innocent until proven guilty. (NB – it equally important to allow sources to critically evaluate our presuppositions in the course of the give-and-take spiral of scholarly conversation, i.e., research)

**YOU ARE CREATING A
SECONDARY SOURCE**



FINDING SOURCES



FINDING SOURCES USING BIBLIOGRAPHIES

Bibliography

The authentic writings of Francis are all quite short and their canon is still not fixed. They include two Rules (the 'Regula Prima' and the 'Regula Bullata'), the Rule for those living in hermitages ('Regula pro Eremiticis'), the Testament, 28 Admonitions, 8 letters, the 'Salutation of the BVM' and other liturgical works, and the 'Canticle of the Sun'. The earliest collected edn. is that of L. Wadding, OFM (Antwerp, 1623, often repr.).

Crit. edn. by K. Esser, OFM (Spicilegium Bonaventurianum, 13; Grottaferrata, 1976; also, with less full apparatus, Bibliotheca Franciscana Ascetica Medii Aevi, 12; *ibid.*, 1978).

► **Find this resource:**

Earlier edn. of works in Lat. by the Franciscans at Quaracchi (*ibid.* 1; 1904; 3rd edn., 1949) and H. Boehmer and others (Tübingen and Leipzig, 1904; 3rd edn., 1961).

► **Find this resource:**

Esser's text is repr., with Fr. tr., introd. and notes by T. Desbonnets, OFM, and others (SC 285; 1981).

► **Find this resource:**

Eng. trs. by P. Robinson, OFM (London, 1906),

► **Find this resource:**

J. Meyer, OFM (Chicago, 1952),

► **Find this resource:**

L. Sherley-Price (London, 1959),

► **Find this resource:**

B. Fahy, OFM (*ibid.* [1964]), and

► **Find this resource:**

One of the best ways to find primary sources is to look up your topic in a good, subject-specific dictionary or encyclopedia (tertiary sources) and check the bibliography, which should direct you to authoritative critical editions and translations

Of course, a bibliography will only help you if you are able to find the sources listed there, and you will have much more success finding these sources if you can decipher the citations (i.e., know whether you are looking for a book or a journal article or an essay in a book)

Cardini, Franco. “The Adventures of a Knight of Christ: Notes for a Study of Chivalry in the Spirituality of Saint Francis.” *Greyfriars Review* 20, no. 1 (2006): 47-108.

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If you see a city and publisher, you are looking for an ESSAY in a BOOK

FINDING SOURCES USING CALL #S

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(Click each subclass for details)

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Subclass BC	Logic
Subclass BD	Speculative philosophy
Subclass BF	Psychology
Subclass BH	Aesthetics
Subclass BJ	Ethics
Subclass BL	Religions. Mythology. Rationalism
Subclass BM	Judaism
Subclass BP	Islam. Bahaism. Theosophy, etc.
Subclass BQ	Buddhism
Subclass BR	Christianity
Subclass BS	The Bible
Subclass BT	Doctrinal Theology
Subclass BV	Practical Theology
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francis Select a Field (optional) Search Clear ?

AND chivalry Select a Field (optional)

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Search Results: 1 - 20 of 30 Relevance Page Options Share

1. [The adventures of a knight of Christ: notes for a study of chivalry in the spirituality of Saint Francis](#)

By: Cardini, Franco; Hagman, Edward (Translator). Source: Greyfriars Review, 20 no 1 2006, p 47-108. Publication Type: Article, Database: ATLA Catholic Periodical and Literature Index

Subjects: Francis, of Assisi, Saint, 1182-1226 -- Biography; Thomas, of Celano, active 1257; **Chivalry**, Knights and Knighthood; **Chivalry** -- Religious aspects -- Catholic Church; **Chivalry** in Literature; Knights and Knighthood in Literature; Knights and Knighthood -- Religious aspects -- Catholic Church

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The premier database for finding scholarly journal articles and essays is the Atla Religion Database [NB – gaining access to this interface also will enable you to select other databases from this vendor/publisher – EBSCO]

SOMETIMES YOU WILL BE ABLE TO GAIN ACCESS TO FULL-TEXT
CONTENT;
SOMETIMES THE DATABASE WILL ONLY TELL YOU THAT AN ARTICLE
OR ESSAY OR BOOK EXISTS AND GIVE YOU THE CLUES YOU NEED TO
HUNT IT DOWN



La chasse au cerf, an illustration from *Livre de la Chasse*, written, or rather dictated to a scribe from 1387 to 1389 by Gaston Phoebus, Count of Foix

**“NO FULL TEXT” IS NOT A SIGN OF THE
APOCALYPSE OR A GOOD REASON NOT TO
USE A SOURCE**



The second trumpet depicted in the 14th century *Cloister Apocalypse*,
Metropolitan Museum of Art

USING SOURCES



While it can be useful to know the difference between types of sources, just like it can be useful to know the difference between different building materials, they mainly useful because of what you can do with them.

TERTIARY SOURCES: BACKGROUND AND OVERVIEW



Tertiary sources are like a map: use them to get a broad overview of your topic and for contextual and background information.

This will help spark questions such as “in what ways did the English Civil War affect the CofE’s response to Wesley?” or “Why was the 13th cent RCC able to successfully integrate reform movements like the Dominicans and Franciscans, whereas the 16th cent RCC was unable to do so?”

**PRIMARY SOURCES:
DATA OBTAINED THROUGH INFORMED, CLOSE READING AND DETAILED ANALYSIS**



Woman armed with crossbow draws a bead on knights in an elephant castle. One of the knights seems to be shrugging.
Smithfield decretals. 1300-1340

Primary sources are foundational; they provide basis upon which you build your thesis.

This requires close reading, informed by the background and contextual information gleaned from tertiary sources, and detailed analysis.

This will prompt questions such as “what is that elephant doing there?” “why does she want to shoot it with a crossbow?” “what is the illustrator trying to depict, or say?”

SECONDARY SOURCES: CONVERSATION PARTNERS



USING SOURCES IS WHAT MAKES RESEARCH A CONVERSATION INSTEAD OF A MONOLOGUE



It is OK – even necessary – to critically analyze the writings of authorities in your field; research is not a matter of humbly groveling before lofty immortals, nor should it be a thoughtless exercise of revolutionary iconoclasm

RESEARCH IS A CONVERSATION



Marc Chagall, Abraham et les trois anges, 1966, Saint-paul-de-vence, France

Like a good conversation, research is a give-and-take process of

- looking at the information provided by primary sources,
- expressing your own ideas, and
- allowing others (other secondary sources) to offer their own interpretations in ways that either challenge or confirm your ideas, compelling you to re-evaluate them

AD FONTES – TO THE SOURCE



This is why it is essential to base your research on direct interaction with primary sources, and to keep going back to your primary sources, so when you enter into the conversation with other researchers and interpreters, you will have something to say, and a basis for saying it.

**YOUR GOAL IS OFFERING A FAITHFUL INTERPRETATION OF YOUR TOPIC, BASED ON
YOUR SOURCES, GUIDED BY YOUR THESIS**



Fra Filippo Lippi,
Madonna col Bambino, 1466-69



Botticelli,
Madonna of the Magnificat, 1475-1480



Cimabue,
Santa Trinita Madonna, 1290



Raphael
Small Cowper Madonna, 1505

Writing a research paper is sort of
like a work of representational art:

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Writing a research paper is sort of like a work of representational art: Primary sources are the “subject” — they are “what” you are representing - and your paper itself is your representation — both description and interpretation — of this “subject.”

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Each of these Madonnas is an interpretation, and each draws upon and reflects the historical-cultural presuppositions — dress, ethnicity, etc. — of the artist, yet each also represents the subject: the Christ Child and his Mother, the Virgin Mary.

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Your paper, your interpretation of the primary sources, both reflects your own historical-cultural context and presuppositions, and strives to faithfully represent your subject as you are able to gain access to it by means of primary sources.

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER: AN EXAMPLE

Until the 20th century, the scholarly consensus seems to have been that the Crusades were primarily motivated by religious zeal, manifest in violence toward members of other religions. Under the influence of Marxism, Jones and other 20th century scholars began to appreciate the economic factors that may have motivated some to go on crusade. For example, Rameous compares the economic activity evidenced in Venice before and after the period of the crusades (11th-13th centuries). However, based on close readings of contemporary chronicles and first-hand accounts, more recent scholars have found that neither economics, nor religious hatred were primary motivations. Rather, the primary impetus seems to have been piety, and the crusaders largely thought of themselves as pilgrims and crusades as a form of penance. As Flemish knight Guy de'Orlean relates to his personal chronicler . . .

ASK (FOR HELP), AND YE SHALL RECEIVE



Your librarians are here to help!

David Schmersal
dschmersal@austinseminary.edu

Contact us any time at libraryiq@austinseminary.edu with any questions.