

To conceive theology in terms of method is to conceive it as a pattern of related and recurrent operations proceeding cumulatively and progressively towards an ideal goal

However modern theology is highly specialised - no one knows all of it - and so it has to be conceived as a pattern of normative patterns of related and recurrent operations ...

Three types of specialization

Field spec divides the data to be investigated
Scripture Patristic Medieval Renaissance & Reform Enlightenment Modern
Bible - OT NT - Law Prophets Writings -

Subject divides results to be taught
Departments subjects courses bibl theol
Semitic languages Hebrew history Religions of Ancient Near East Xtian

Functional specialization distinguishes stages in process from data to results

At each stage there is a different pattern of related and recurrent operations applied to results of preceding stage

Textual criticism - what was written

Exegesis, monographs - what was meant

History - what happened, what was going forward

Need not be different specialists - but must do different things on different stages of process

Experimental physicist - cyclotron

Theoretical - what experiments worth trying - how interpret results

Functional specialties are intrinsically related to one another; each successive stage presupposes the results of the preceding and complements them bringing them that much closer to end goal

greatest methodological interest

divides and clarifies process from data to results - prevents confusion of methods

links field spec with subject spec

thereby overcomes endless diversity disconnectedness of field spec

An Eightfold Division

research
interpretation
history
dialectic
foundations
doctrines
systematics
communications

basis implications of division later

first general sketch of what is meant

Grounds of the Division

Where does this list of eight come from

What are the principles to be invoked in working things out more exactly, in delimiting further and clarifying functions and relations

A posteriori: textual criticism, exegesis, history, apologetics, fundamental theology, dogmatic theology, systematic theology, pastoral theology

But this set up has not been working too well - does not cover whole field - ragged edges, little determinateness, rough relatedness

Apriori: theology moves in two phases

listen to word - bear witness

Wort - Antwort

lectio divina, quaestio

assimilate tradition - hand it on

encounter past - take stand towards future

in oratione obliqua - in oratione recta

Four levels of intentional consciousness pursue four cumulative goals

done

what are data - how understand them - what ~~ix~~ are the facts - what to be everyday consciousness pursues all four without too sharp a distinction

specialization uses all four in pursuit first of first end, then in pursuit of second, then in pursuit of third, then in pursuit of fourth

textual critic uses experience understanding judgement method to determine just what the data really are

exegete uses exp und jud meth to determine how they are to be underst

Combine two phases with four levels - eightfold division

dialectic

deliberation

x foundations

history

judgement

doctrines

interpretation

understanding

systematics

research

experience

communications

research - data of Xtian message and Xtian tradition - what were they

interpretation - not just gi en - convey a meaning- as in human sc

history - meaning conveyed through various channels vicissitudes - just what happened

different selections of data - scripture and tradition - sola scriptura

different interpretations

diffrenet histories

different witness es Ct

dialectic - encounter with the religious situation now, in past..

Intercalate - at least here - religious event - conversion

foundations - objectify conversion in a horizon

doctrines - from data interpretation history dialectic foundations

systematics - clarify explain doctrines

communications - transpose to other minds - relate to other disciplines media

The Need for the Division

1. Already exists in some form - research exegesis history of religions dogmas theology church - apologetics fundamental dogmatic systematic pastoral
2. Differences that exist are understood and ordered in light of two phases and four levels

a. Need not just convenience -- field divisions because too much matter - articles books multiplying so rapidly, Paul too much for one specialist subject specialization - subject growing - too much for one prof

Need arises from specifically different tasks - text criticism is quite different set of operations from exegesis etc

Different ends pursued by different means, different means employed in accord with rules that lead to different ends

One cannot arrive at methodical rules without distinguishing the separate tasks and without keeping them separate

b. The different tasks exist - once theology reaches a certain stage of development, the two phases separate - positive and dogmatic, scholastic further the two phases split up into the four functions

c. Need to curb totalitarian ambitions

only the dogmas - only systematics - only scripture - etc - only

d. Need to curb excessive demands

a theologian is doing quite well if he can make a significant contribution to any section of either phase

without the distinctions, his systematics will be judged by criteria of dogmatics - his dogmatics by criteria of history - his history be faulted because not exclusively devoted to scripture etc etc

The Dynamic Unity

Unity of subject in process of development is not static but dynamic

Not static: fixed sharp meanings of all terms - clearly enunciated and definitively established principles - rigorous deductions

Dynamic: unity of a process -- a development is from undifferentiated or less differentiated - through differentiation and specialization -- to integration of specialties

initially: just Xtian religion - no distinction between relig & theol- of some importance to understand the origin and nature of that distinction

Principal part of human living is meaning -- not dreamless sleep, not coma, but awake, intending, speaking, doing

Principal part of any human movement is common meaning: hence the more the movement spreads, the longer it lasts, the more is it forced to reflect on its common meaning to distinguish it from other meanings to guard it against aberrations

As rivals come and go
 as circumstances and problems change
 as issues are driven back to their presuppositions
 and decisions to their ultimate consequences
 there emerges what Georg Simmel has called die Wendung zur Idee, shift toward system

political social artistic literary scientific philosophic movements

NT apostolic PP, apologists, teachers Alex Antioch, Nicaea Chalcedon
 Byzantine Scholasticism - Medieval Scholasticism

Is not academic theology just cultural superstructure alien to religion?

There can be good theology and bad theology -- bad is distinct and alien -
 good is quite distinct from religion but related to it, in symbiosis
 of mutual influence, rlg living grounding theology and theology illuminating religious living
 good of one time is not good of another
 good for one person not good for another
 differentiation of religion and theology can be apprehended adequately
 only by differentiated consciousness -- worlds of common sense, theory, interiority, prayer
 where consciousness not differentiated - theology incomprehensible
 where consciousness highly cultured, childlike apprehension of religion soon appears childish - either religion cast off or theology learnt

Differentiation of theology and religion occurs only for return -
~~with~~ eighth functional specialty is communications
 Toynbee: withdrawal and return

Differentiation within theology itself

2 phases: lectio, quaestio; sentences, commentary; scholastic, positive; dogmatic, biblical theology; split - Ar logic static; mod so dynamic
 continuity of Xtian thought needs their interaction - else biblical archaism - and dogmatic without scriptural foundation
 interaction supposes functional parts within larger whole
 hence, functional specialties are not eight theologies - there is just one that through its specialists researches, interprets, narrates what happened, sorts out dialectical oppositions, marks off foundations, &c.

unity of first phase

four specialties stand to one another not as premisses to conclusions, of particular to universal, or any similar logical connection but are four successive partial objects cumulatively built up in ever fuller response to total moving object: the Body of Xt

structure is essentially open - experience to further data - understanding to greater penetration - judgement to more detailed information, more nuanced pronouncements, more adequate perspectives dialectic to elim of mistaken issues, clarifications of real conflicts

reciprocal dependence - interpr on research and vice versa
 history on research and interpr & vice versa
 dialectic on research interpr and history & vice versa
 theoretical advance makes new ranges of data apprehensible

reciprocal dependence most easily achieved when one man does all four sp
but the more the speclt develop, the more refined their techniques,
the more numerous and delicate the operations they perform,
the less possible it becomes for one man to do all four well

then recourse to team-work

understand the fact of reciprocal dependence

be familiar with acquia, with already achieved, so able to grasp new developm

be in easy and rapid communication - university periodicals bks congresses

First phase: from almost endless multiplicity of data

through many interpretative unities

to more comprehensive narrative unities

to dialectical oppositions running through interpr and histories

Second phase: from unity of grounding horizon

through doctrines and systematic clarifications

to communications with almost endless varied sensibilities

taste mentalities interests of mankind

Process is not deductive, from premisses to conclusions, but movement

through successive and more fully determinate contexts

Foundations provides a basic orientation

applied to conflicts of dialectic, ambiguities of history and interpretation

it becomes a principle of selection that results in Doctrines

Doctrines tend to be regarded as mere verbal formulae

until their ultimate meaning is worked out

their coherence is assured by Systematics

Systematics reveals what there is to communicate

but there remains the problem of the creative use of the available media

the task of finding the appropriate approach and procedure

to convey the message of the gospel to peoples of cultures classes

Dependence not just in one direction

questions for systematics can arise from communications

doctrinal formulations can draw on systematics

conversion, formulated as horizon in foundations, has not only personal

but also social historical doctrinal dimensions

reciprocal interdependence then in both phases

second phase depends on first

first is mediating theology - the Body of Christ as it has existed and
still exists manifesting itself to us

second is mediated theology - theology as of God and of all things in
their relations to God

first is theology as field specialization rising up four levels of cons int

second is theology as subject specialization descending from horizon of
conversion through doctrines and systematics to communications

second manifestly depends on first: second is facing future in light of past

does first depend on second?

it does, but here the greatest care must be exercised to exclude undue infl
undue influence would tend to set up second phase as independent, as cut
off from developing attention understanding of data - resourcement -
going back to sources

undue influence - first phase questions have to be met, not by appeal to second phase as a priori, but out of the resources of the first phase itself

easy enough to spot bias from positivism existentialism &c in another's work, but the effective answer is not content with this -- it will go back over the sources, it will pin down just what is overlooked, it will do the long painstaking scholarly job that just ends the matter

Stephen Neill, Interpretation of NT over last hundred years, Lightfoot, pinned down which Ignatian epistles genuine, what were their dates, and so simply exploded once and for all Baur's views on late NT 500 pages of Lightfoot's Apostolic Fathers for every first year theol

There is an interdependence of doctrines and doctrinal history one cannot write the history of maths chemistry medicine unless one has a thorough grasp of these subjects one would ever tend to overlook things of real significance and play up minor matters

one's language would be inaccurate or out of date, one's emphases mistaken, one's perspectives distorted, one's omissions intolerable the history of

Just as understanding the doctrine results from understanding the doctrine so inversely understanding the history results from understanding the doctrine

Again there is an interdependence of dialectic and foundations foundations objectify conversion: while there may well be more than one account of authentic conversion, still they may tend to a certain similarity; and they should tend to reduce the multiplicity laid bare by dialectic and to weaken its merely polemical tendencies

From these two interdependences there follows a general if indirect interdependence of the first two phases

Dynamic unity is then the interaction of the two phases the eight functions

It is the interaction of theology and religion

It is the interaction of religion and the world

NB Functional specialization involves a distinctive notion of theology Field spec gives the ideas of biblical patristic medieval reformation contemporary theology

Subject specialization gives theology as science of God and of all things in their relation to God as known under the light of revelation and faith

Functional specialization brings these two together, allowing each its full significance and role, without thereby tending to neglect the other

Moreover it keeps theology distinct from religion, the study of theology from the pursuit of religious development, the teaching of theology from the teaching of religion

No doubt all these are interconnected, but they have to be clearly distinguished before their relations and connections can be grasped.