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## The Theological Use of Scripture

1 We begin with an excerpt from E Gutwenger, SJ, *Bewusstsein und Wissen Christi*, Innsbruck 1960.

Through an analysis of this argument and further through consideration of those matters that are presupposed in the argument, we will arrive at an exact notion of theological argumentation in scripture.

2 Part 1, chapter 3, pp. 47-55.

### Die Ichaussagen Christi in den Evangelien

(a) 50-55: The author collects all the places in the gospels where there is question of the 'I' of Jesus – there is a schematic overview on p. 50.

(b) He does not want to inquire about the exegesis of individual passages – only that Jesus did speak substantially in the sense that is narrated in the gospels; very little about chronology, or gathering materials on the basis of themes, or about 'Formgeschichte,' or about the various 'constantibus' of individual passages, p. 47f.

(c) He distinguishes some sayings that regard the person in a given nature ('I thirst') and others that respect the person as person – e.g., the relations between Father and Son, Son and human beings (gift of self, love), etc.

(d) He concludes that 'I' is used quite often to refer to the person itself.

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(1) Peinador – biblical theology presupposes dogmas.

Descamps – biblical theology is above all the techniques of literary-historical criticism; they determine the meaning for the Catholic and for the infidel. God's word --> God meant that. Inerrancy --> that is true. Don't rush into print. Rejects the 'only' of Marrou.

Ebeling – historical-critical method is not an indifferent tool, has developed, eliminated errors of idealism and *Voraussetzungslos*; no appeal to metaphysics is *Selbstverständlich*; autonomy (relative) of science, social living; no appeal to authority; is of basic importance to Protestantism.

Ebeling – Biblical – normative, in accord w SScr – all Christian theologies definitive, the theology of Sscr writers – Religionswissenschaft (those who ? hardly think of themselves as doing theology)

Bultmann – every investigation of human realities proceeds from a preunderstanding of human reality; this preunderstanding is placed in a clear light

through philosophical analysis. Thus the investigator understands both himself and also the author under investigation. E.g., 'Existenziale' in Paul. What one concludes from this about one's own life pertains to faith and to decision, but not to science.

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Descamps – Literary-historical method and technique especially, without theological preoccupation, is to be used and exercised by the biblical theologian. The faith of the investigator has no influence, even the faith of the one investigated.

Ebeling – Historical-critical method is not an indifferent technique. It is slowly being perfected. It is of fundamental importance in Protestant theology. It excludes metaphysics and authority.

Marrou – Historical-critical method as exposed by Langlois-Seignobos [anonymous method, objective technique] leads only to the editing of texts, what is added is almost a result of arbitrariness on the part of the historian.

Gadamer – *Die historische Schule* was opposed to Hegelian apriorism and committed to understanding historical data on their own account but nonetheless it employed the notions of Hegel and the Enlightenment. Dilthey in his *Lebensphilosophie*, his reduction of history to hermeneutics, could not attain the object of history conceived by the historical school. He [Gadamer?] teaches that hermeneutics is not reduced to abstract experience but to concrete preunderstanding, tradition, *Wirkungsgeschichte*.

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The nature and significance of historical-critical method

A The fundamental element is the transition from classical culture to historical consciousness.

Classical culture is an integration of life and theory through the suppression, the mitigation, of the antithesis.

Theory tends to 'la haute vulgarisation'; it is devalued to the level of the non-theoretical person, of scholars, students, and teachers.

Life is apprehended not in its radical diversity, particularity, spontaneity, originality, but in the light of the 'ideal man' ('man' as he should be in accord with eternal reasons), in the generality of the law, under a universal, typical, exemplary,

immobile aspect; it acknowledges that temporal contingents exist but it attends to eternal truths. Facts are hypotheses.

Historical consciousness disrupts the classical integration.

Theory is placed beyond the grasp of the non-theoretical person: math, natural science, modern ??

Life is acknowledged in its plurality and mobility, its diversity, and the greatest possible attention is paid to the pre-rational, pre-conceptual, pre-intellectual, to social, political, economic determinisms, and so on.

Historical consciousness has not yet arrived at its proper integration, which nonetheless will be found insofar as there is a movement from the perceivable world of life and the intelligible world of theory to the world of interiority that is the transcendental condition of each of these, as can be illustrated in many ways through the modern philosophies.

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B A non-essential element, but one definitely in the mix and not clearly distinct from method itself, is found in the various doctrines and goals of those who labored strenuously to bring about this transition.

The philologists proceeded from the integration of Greek and Latin studies with Christian life to the real pre-Christian and pagan Graeco-Latin mind.

Biblical scholars moved from an understanding the scriptures according to an analogy of faith to biblical religion as it was before its defined developments, before the discovery of patristic and medieval theology, before the juridical organization of the church.

Historians of dogma and theology exposed the dogmas in their becoming, and systems in accord with their origins and genesis.

Etc., etc, with anthropology, depth psychology, history of religions and ideas and cultures, and the empirical human sciences: not with a Catholic mentality but with one that is Protestant, rationalist, Romantic, idealist, historicist, vitalist (*Lebensphilosophie*), as if these manifested the truth itself, *wie es eigentlich gewesen*.

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The importance of historical-critical method

(a) It is the transition from classical culture to historical consciousness. This transition was opposed by Catholics on three counts.

(a') Classical culture and Catholic faith are identified, not by way of some explicit thesis but because the culture of Catholics is classical; thus their apprehension of the faith is so mixed with classicism that they cannot grasp how it is possible that the faith be preserved while classicism is rejected.

(b') The historical movement (*die Neuzeit*) from classical culture to historical consciousness was accomplished by those who wanted a new world; they rejected Catholicism, Scholasticism, and metaphysics.

(c') Historical consciousness has not yet arrived at the clarity, the full exposition, that would allow there to be communicated and grasped how historical consciousness is reconciled with the faith and communicated and grasped with it.

That is, Catholic authors more commonly composed particular works and ? of historical consciousness than they investigated and placed in a clear light its foundations, suppositions, and consequences.

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The importance of historical-critical method

A The fundamental element is the transition from classical culture to historical consciousness.

B Mixed elements are found in the rationalism, Romanticism, idealism of those who labored in particular to bring about this transition.

C Thus for two reasons this method, its suppositions, and its consequences are opposed by Catholics (a) who identify classical culture and Catholic faith, (b) who identify use and abuse, and (c) each of which they do more easily to the extent that the Catholics who want and use this method and indeed pronounce it to be manifest, evident, necessary, and opposition to be ridiculous, ignorant, a return to a time that has been gone beyond, still do not clearly and exactly define it in terms of its suppositions and consequences nor determine how it can be reconciled with traditional theology.

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Life and Theory

On the side of the object – Socrates and the Athenians

life – wants to understand what is to be said and done in every situation under contingent circumstances

theory – universal definition, acceptance of all logical presuppositions and consequences, driven to system, to the *priora quoad se*.

On the side of the subject – Thales and the milkmaid

life – intellect is a part in the whole; it does not attend to those things that are known within the operation of the whole

theory – intellect dominates, everything else is subordinated, included in parentheses; all truth, all intelligibility is intended; a total openness of horizon but: detached, disinterested, out of touch, impractical

In the mode of experiencing

theory – experience --> experiment, the crucial experiment  
the question is defined, *videtur quod non, Sed contra*  
the conclusions are deduced, and there is invoked experience as idealized, localized, defined, repeatable by anyone at any time

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Classical and modern as opposed tendencies

(A) The classical tendency mitigates, suppresses, the antitheses between life and theory. Theory is adapted as it is understood by the Athenians and the milkmaids. There is removed what is specific, beyond the vital horizon. It is not denied that life is spontaneous, changeable, multiple, original, particular, but it is so apprehended through ideals, the exemplary, precepts, laws, and other universals that other things are omitted. Facts are taken as hypotheses. These are true, eternal, unchangeable. Particulars as contingent and temporal are of lesser importance, a vast sea, undefined, inexhaustible, and therefore negligible.

(B) The modern tendency places the antitheses between life and theory in a clear light: math, natural science, logic, methodical, systematic, critical, transcendental philosophy; life in all its differences is sedulously examined: psychological, social, political, juridical, economic, technological; knowledge of languages, literatures, religions, doctrines, cultures.

It becomes apparent that the problem is the confusion, the implicit identification, of Catholic faith and classicism.

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GW [Geisteswissenschaften]

1 They are distinguished from the natural sciences in that their object is constituted by meaning, *esse intentionale*. Without meaning, *esse intentionale*, human affairs are sound and fury: sound in tribunals and parliament, fury in prisons and wars.

Meaning is found in intersubjectivity, works of art, symbols, languages, literatures, myths, religions, sciences, philosophies, histories. It is not restricted to conceptual meaning. It is not divided into proper and transferred meaning. It exhibits the full spectrum of modes of knowing, *Denkformen*.

Meaning informs and makes societies, families, educations, moralities, states, laws, economies, technologies.

2 This meaning pertains especially to the order not of theory but of life.

(a) Platonic philosophers are not kings. Even if they were, men would grasp their ideas imperfectly and will them, embrace them voluntarily, even more imperfectly. They would be related to life only through conflicts and compromises. In a battle there are two clear and definite plans, indeed opposed, and neither the conquered nor the conqueror follows them perfectly. In life there are not two plans but thousands.

(b) Still there exists a movement, a tendency, to ideas, *die Wendung zur Idee*: there exist questions within the order of life to which there is no response without theory, except one that is symbolic and that easily becomes mythical.

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1 Context and truth

The meaning of a true statement is ascertained from the context in which the question arises and the answer is given.

The truth of a true statement transcends its original context and demands appropriate expression in every other context.

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2 Two radically different types of context

on the side of the object: Socrates – erklären

Athenians – verstehen

do not confuse with distinction of natural sciences and *Geisteswissenschaften*

on the side of the subject: Thales  
milkmaid

on the side of experience: crucial experiment  
life as experience, experience a great teacher

the perceivable world – the living subject  
the intelligible world – the theoretic subject

*die Wendung zur Idee*  
*die Anwendung* – implication, application

Theologian is concerned with a system, he is detached from actual living, his appeal to scripture is like a scientific experiment.

minimal meaning – what is Logos = X = erat in principio  
convergence of minimal meanings  
delighted with evidence of a *Wendung zur Idee*

Scriptural writers not concerned with systematic thinking, full of the *Sorge* that proceeds from faith operating through charity, speaking of *mundus aspectabilis* as *understood*.

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Erklären und Verstehen

1 As difference between NW & GS

(a) object of NW has an intelligibility that is not constituted by human acts of meaning

object of GW has an intelligibility that is constituted by human acts of meaning

Nature of free fall,  $d^2s/dt^2 = g$

Meaning of name, free fall, ...

(b) the habit, degree, of understanding that is immanent in living, existing, is a basic component within knowledge of GW

the development, advance in knowledge, of GW is in accord with the same mode of understanding as spontaneous accumulation of insight, acquiring the common sense of another class, nation, language, culture, epoch

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2 as two distinct contexts in which questions arise and answers are given

forced toward system

(a) on the side of the object: aims at understanding what is to be said and done in any of customary sets of situations

intellect dominant, pure desire to know, detached, disinterested

(b) on the side of the subject: intellect part of whole man; its functioning limited by functioning of whole; excludes questions arising from pure desire as useless, not practical; Thales et milkmaid;

the crucial experiment, instance, an idealized, localized, defined, repeatable experience

(c) as for the mode of experience: experience in sense of learning from experience; experience is the great teacher; the shock, upset, stop when customary anticipation (Vorverständnis) found wrong

– the experience of 1930

(d) as for language: technical

familiar, common

act is added to act such that common situations are promptly understood for practical ends

(e) as for the mode of understanding: logical closed system

(f) difference: *priora quoad se*: each more easily to its own proper questions theoretical in the practical affairs

*priora quoad nos*: practical in theoretical affairs

beyond horizon, myth, picture, *Weltanschauung*

equivalence: genetic and applied

*priora quoad nos* = *posteriora quoad se*

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3 Classical and historical culture

(a) Classical: genesis: the victory of *logos* over *mythos*

nature: [the integration of the two contexts by softening, suppressing, differences] the victory of the school-master

(a') theoretic context submitted to schematization, simplification, devalorization, popularization

theology, philosophy, science becomes its 'haute vulgarisation'

(b') spontaneous context: submitted to demythologization, rationalization, idealization, ?, stylization



(b) Historical Culture

(a') genesis: the breakdown of the classicist integration

(a'') man's experience of making his own new world: the world of classical culture is man-made; [French quote]

voyages, new lands, alien customs, cultures

new vernacular languages and literatures

new science, philosophies, theologies, religions

new states, governments, systems of law, economics, ?, industry, technology

(b'') history as the weapon for discrediting the old world

classical culture as blended with Europ Christianity – as prior to Christianity

biblical religion as prior to councils, theologians, eccl. organization

what the philosophers (Fathers, theologians) said, meant, as opposed to simplified, rigid, schematic accounts of them

(c'') romanticism: feeling vs reason; art vs science; spontaneity vs uniformity, genuineness vs artificiality; particular vs universal; pre-rational, pre-conceptual, vital, passionate, affective

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B Historical Culture [cont'd]

B' Content

terms: not merely defined but history of their successive meanings

doctrines: not merely taught but history of their genesis

authorities: not simply quoted but their meaning made object of historical investigation

language: not sensus proprius et translatus

but a spectrum of Denkformen each with its proper meanings

not genera litteraria

but process from undifferentiated and inadequate

to differentiated and adequate

philosophy: not eternal verities vs temporal and contingent

but invariants in historical process itself

synthesis: not abstract reconciliation of concepts, theorems, ?

but concrete vision, detailed, of human process

history: not what was thought and done

but what went forward unnoticed, unperceived, unanticipated, yet out of [what was] thought, said, done

basis: not Cogito, transcendental Ego  
but the Besinnung of the Essentially Temporal Subject  
a nunc fluens  
that surveys past, anticipates future, and decides at his own risk

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Fundamental to understanding the problem is the distinction between life and theory, that is, between two horizons, two contexts, two modes of knowing, two modes of conceiving and speaking.

Distinction

on the side of the object: Socrates and Athenians  
life: wants to understand what is to be said and done  
in any of commonly contingent situations  
theory: is thought to be formed in system – definitions explicit,  
universal – all suppositions explicitly acknowledged – all consequences clearly and  
exactly deduced  
whence Eddington's two tables – everything equally duplicated  
priora quoad se = posteriora quoad nos – and vice versa

on the side of the subject: Thales and milkmaid  
life: intellect is just a part in the whole  
operation of intellect of part of human operation  
end of intellect is condition of human end  
theory: intellect becomes the end; other potencies are either  
subordinated or enclosed within parentheses; inquiry has to do with being, with  
quiddity; there is total openness but it is detached, disinterested, out of touch with  
real life

in the mode of experiencing  
life: one learns especially from the experience of life – the supreme  
and almost the sole teacher  
what this experience is, what is presupposed, what is added can  
hardly be said – from experience we all learn, know  
theory: experience --> experiment --> crucial experiment  
the whole question, and the consequences of each part are  
enumerated, there is an appeal to an experience that indeed is localized but is also  
defined and repeatable

in the mode of speaking: ordinary language and technical language

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## Applications

### 1 Mythos and logos, *die Wendung zur Idee*

It is clear there cannot be theory without life. There are many living subjects, of whom very few, and these sporadically and for a brief time attend to theory.

But this dependence is reciprocal. The questions of one, which theory wishes to posit exactly and answer clearly, already exist, are considered, some solutions are found. But the solution is within the horizon of life: symbolically apprehended, easily degenerating to myth.

The victory of *logos* over *mythos* is twofold: a natural victory discovered by the Greeks, and a supernatural victory found in the Hebraic law and word of God

### 2 Scripture and theology:

Scripture is already *logos*, but not a human word. The mode of apprehending, experiencing, objectifying, orientation of scripture is within the order of life. Theology is the transition from life to theory but in such a way that it is not from myth to *logos* but from *logos* to *logos*.

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### 3 Classical culture and historical consciousness

(A) Classical culture completes life through theory but in such a way as to mitigate or suppress the antithesis. It does not produce a man divided in himself but one completely integrated and therefore

- because theory tends to 'la haute vulgarisation,' philosophy is 'le bon sens,' disputed questions are acknowledged to exist but also they do not bother the mind but are rather omitted, or are occasions for exercising the mind, or are schematically conceived

- because life, even if it is acknowledged to be multiple, varied, spontaneous, original, ineffable, still is apprehended through ideals, exemplary ideas, precepts, types, classes, and even if realities other than universals are acknowledged as contingent and temporal, still attention is so fastened on eternal and immutable truths that facts are considered hypotheses

(B) Historical consciousness clearly and openly acknowledges the antithesis, continually seeks various modes of integration, because it seems to have reached

something definitive. Theory lies beyond the horizon of life: math, natural science, logic, methodical, systematic, critical, transcendental philosophy; attention is paid to life in all its variety: linguistic and literary studies, studies of the arts, symbols, religions, cultures, customs, social, political, legal, economic, and technological forms; so that man is defined not according to some ideal, as he should be according to the eternal reasons, a rational animal, but in accord with universal judgments, as a symbolic animal.

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Hermeneutik developed

theologically – reinterpretation of misinterpreted Bible – Reformers  
philologically – rediscovery of classical culture as distinct  
from its *Umbildung* in Western tradition

Luther 163

Aufklärung 165 – drop dogmatic assumption of Reformation

Bibl = set of sources, only unity (not canon ) but *Lebenszusammenhang*  
only one hermeneutics

166 → hermeneutics ? into history

meaning of the author → events that he meant

167 Schleiermacher: hermeneutic is wherever understanding and possibility of misunderstanding

wherever *Fremdheit* to be overcome

the individuality of ‘Thou’ – (Romantic)

[168 Gadamer notes oversight Sprache aims at sich miteinander verstehen  
concerned with object – Einverständnis

only when all means fail does there arise the question, How could he think that? Fremdheit is sign of failure of Einverständnis

169 Spinoza: Scripture: either ? is understood immediately (elementary narrative, moral precepts)

or ? is to be explained historically

171 – Chladenius: to remove pupil’s lack of understanding

there can be some lack in author – that makes him an occasion for us[?] to add