

1: Interpretation: Analyzing What a Text Means

is that interpretation is (countable) an act or process of applying general principles or formulae to the explanation of the results obtained in special cases while understanding is (countable) reason or intelligence, ability to grasp the full meaning of knowledge, ability to infer.

Taking the very work of Gadamer on hermeneutics as an interpretation of Continental Philosophy, metaphorcity of language and historicity of understanding are the key elements in interpreting meaning in a text as well as a social action. Hence, each tradition has its own philosophical foundation, ontological, epistemological and methodological considerations. This, however, is done with reference to Hans-Georg Gadamer to correspond with the essay question to critically assess his hermeneutic philosophy. Such an interpretation of the essay question is imperative, since it correlates hermeneutic philosophy and the explanation in social sciences. In this essay, I make two different but overlapping arguments. This essay is composed of two sections. And finally the paper draws a conclusion. Later within the settings of modern continental philosophy, the content of the term expanded to cover interpretation of any kind of written text and speech. In this section, with reference to Gadamer, I will shed some light on the philosophical dimension of hermeneutics. Meanwhile, I make an attempt to highlight two elements in his conceptualization on hermeneutics namely, language and understanding. Here, in order to back up my claim a definition of continental philosophy is necessitated, Patrick A. Not only does he refer to these figures in his writings on hermeneutics but he also, interprets their views vis-a-vis knowledge and understanding, and their method of work, in order to establish the structure of his hermeneutics. Thus, for Gadamer dialogue becomes one of the foundational premises on which he builds his Hermeneutic philosophy. Then, the true nature of language conceals understanding a subject matter per-se, this will be dealt with in detail in the later part of this section. Building on the idea of question and answer from dialogue, Gadamer looks for a style that can manifest such a dialogue, in relation to a text within the route of history i. Thus as Richard E. For instance, if a text was discussing social justice, we need to interpret the text in such a way that we subject our selves to the questions that social justice directs us as readers i. For Gadamer this is an attempt to understand justice within a given context, and our interpretation builds on understanding, together with the understanding that the text has on justice in a dialectical manner. Gadamer for the most part, is an add-on to Heidegger. This turn took place in two phases. This would suggest that text can be the mediator between us an the past in this way, interpretation is the method by which we understand i. Gadamer interpreted the texts of Plato and Hegel as example of the past, but Heidegger was his teacher, and hence, Gadamer interpreted his experience to understand the subject matter: Two questions may arise here; first, interpreting what? Second, interpreting for what? The following example would make understanding and hermeneutics clear within a given social context. In Islam, performing prayer has very specific rules and functions. It includes a series of acts by the performer: While performing prayer, aside from the function and recitation, no further speech, action or even glance is allowed. For an observer unfamiliar with that social context i. But once the observer relates the act of that social agent performing prayer to its given social context, with taking into consideration the meaning that the social agent attaches to the act, then understanding occurs. In the first instance there was a language, a social agent performing prayer but since there was not understanding, the action was not meaningful, however, after understanding meaning became present. The meaning attached to the action by the performer is, prayer as an act of purifying and inner self-emancipation draws one closer to goodness. This meaning however is not just injected to the act by the social actor, but there is a history, culture and tradition in constituting that meaning. Thus, with taking the social agent, the act and the social context, understanding will be the common shared meaning between the observer and the observed i. Historicity of language, and perceiving meaning in relation to social knowledge as well as universality of hermeneutics will be points of discussion in the next section. In the most basic terms this would suggest that a human is a historical being, therefore he subjects the human to the route of history. This recognizes the power of history in two major ways: My emphasis is on the latter, the historicity of understanding. History tells us something, and we tell something in addition as we interpret. That

is to say, on the one hand we are subordinate to what we know and historically pre-given, and we have a chance to know what we do not know with the help of our creativity and questioning, on the other. This also indicates the evolutionary character of human being. Correspondingly, Joel Weinsheimer writes: A circle and circulation indicate a closed end movement, that starts from one point and ends at the same point. As discussed in *Bildung*, interpretation and understanding do not circulate but rather build on each other in a dialectical manner. But also, humans add interpretation, and in that dialectical interaction between human consciousness and historical consciousness, understanding becomes itself; this is what I call hermeneutical dialectic. Language is a metaphor for something, and in both language and an object, meaning is what can be present. In these two quotations Gadamer the first presents an assertion and then directs a question. Here, language plus meaning is a metaphor that invites understanding. In the same fashion, I argue that social action would be meaningless if it was not a metaphor, and it is meaningful as metaphor, in this way metaphoricity of language is central to understanding; or in other words, metaphor is what language and understanding have in common, whether the language is textual, aesthetic or behavioural. That is to say, we are the language; we are the metaphor, and hence we are the meaning and in turn understanding. Drawing on both Gadamer and Derrida, I use the Aristotelian logic to argue that metaphor is the final form of language, and when language is the condition of understanding then metaphor is the final form of understanding; meaning. By this I mean, that in a social context if we regard an action as a metaphor then the only way by which we can understand that social action is to interpret the social action in its given social context. Thus, social structure is a language, for all that can be understood is language. This metaphoricity of social action can be understood with regard to the historicity of that particular social action. That is, to understand elections we need to take into consideration the historical dimensions of the phenomenon to see what do social agents mean by what they do. Therefore, if hermeneutics as such is teachable, then it is science and hence, universal. And thus, he concretizes his universalistic claim about his hermeneutic philosophy. As stated by Gadamer himself, his hermeneutic philosophy is an illustration of what occurs when we interpret a speech, text or social event. Central to that conceptualization was language and understanding. Also, illustrated that Gadamer made an ontological turn in hermeneutics, from interpreting text to interpreting social world. And thus, reinforcing two main arguments of this essay: *The Cambridge Companion to Gadamer*, Cambridge: Linge, Philosophical Hermeneutics: University of California Press.

2: MIUA – 23rd Conference on Medical Image Understanding and Analysis

Company Accounts: Analysis, Interpretation and Understanding provides a clear understanding of the nature and format of the annual report and accounts of companies, and a full introduction to the analysis and interpretation of financial statements.

Literature[edit] Literary criticism is the analysis of literature. The focus can be as diverse as the analysis of Homer or Freud. While not all literary-critical methods are primarily analytical in nature, the main approach to the teaching of literature in the west since the mid-twentieth century, literary formal analysis or close reading, is. This method, rooted in the academic movement labelled The New Criticism , approaches texts – chiefly short poems such as sonnets , which by virtue of their small size and significant complexity lend themselves well to this type of analysis – as units of discourse that can be understood in themselves, without reference to biographical or historical frameworks. This method of analysis breaks up the text linguistically in a study of prosody the formal analysis of meter and phonic effects such as alliteration and rhyme , and cognitively in examination of the interplay of syntactic structures, figurative language, and other elements of the poem that work to produce its larger effects. Mathematical analysis Modern mathematical analysis is the study of infinite processes. It is the branch of mathematics that includes calculus. It can be applied in the study of classical concepts of mathematics, such as real numbers , complex variables , trigonometric functions , and algorithms , or of non-classical concepts like constructivism , harmonics , infinity , and vectors. Florian Cajori explains in A History of Mathematics the difference between modern and ancient mathematical analysis, as distinct from logical analysis, as follows: The terms synthesis and analysis are used in mathematics in a more special sense than in logic. In ancient mathematics they had a different meaning from what they now have. The oldest definition of mathematical analysis as opposed to synthesis is that given in [appended to] Euclid , XIII. To remove all doubt, the Greeks, as a rule, added to the analytic process a synthetic one, consisting of a reversion of all operations occurring in the analysis. Thus the aim of analysis was to aid in the discovery of synthetic proofs or solutions. The synthetic proof proceeds by shewing that the proposed new truth involves certain admitted truths. An analytic proof begins by an assumption, upon which a synthetic reasoning is founded. The Greeks distinguished theoretic from problematic analysis. A theoretic analysis is of the following kind. To prove that A is B, assume first that A is B. If this be known a falsity, A is not B. But if this be a known truth and all the intermediate propositions be convertible , then the reverse process, A is E, E is D, D is C, C is B, therefore A is B, constitutes a synthetic proof of the original theorem. Problematic analysis is applied in all cases where it is proposed to construct a figure which is assumed to satisfy a given condition. The problem is then converted into some theorem which is involved in the condition and which is proved synthetically, and the steps of this synthetic proof taken backwards are a synthetic solution of the problem.

3: Understanding Understanding

*Interpretation and Understanding [Marcelo Dascal] on www.enganchecubano.com *FREE* shipping on qualifying offers. Our species has been hunting for meaning ever since we departed from our cousins in the evolutionary tree.*

Introduction There has been a highly developed practice of interpretation in Greek antiquity, aiming at diverse interpretanda like oracles, dreams, myths, philosophical and poetical works, but also laws and contracts. The beginning of ancient hermeneutics as a more systematic activity goes back to the exegesis of the Homeric epics. This was a method of nonliteral interpretation of the authoritative texts which contained claims and statements that seemed theologically and morally inappropriate or false. Allegorisis was practiced widely from the sixth century BCE to the Stoic and Neoplatonistic schools and even later Scholasticism. In the Middle Ages the most remarkable characteristic of the interpretative praxis was the so-called *accessus ad auctores*; this was a standardized introduction that preceded the editions and commentaries of classical authors. There were many versions of the *accessus*, but one of the more widely used was the following typology of seven questions. Detel Johann Conrad Dannhauer was the first to present a systematic textbook on general hermeneutics Jaeger, the *Idea boni interpretis et malitiosi calumniatoris* introducing the Latin neologism *hermeneutica* as the title of a general *modus sciendi*. The intention of this work was to supplement the Aristotelian *Organon* and its subject matter to distinguish between the true and false meaning of any text *verum sensum a falso discernere*. It is explicitly general in scope, relevant for all scientific domains *una generalis omnibus scientiis communis* and applicable to the oral discourse and texts of all authors in *omnibus auctorum scriptis et orationibus*. Most remarkable is the work of Johann Clauberg, who introduced sophisticated distinctions between the rules of interpretation with respect to their generality and clarified the capturing of the intention of the author as a valuable aim of interpretative praxis. The scope of the more recent discussions on interpretation has become broader, often starting with the question whether human actions are to be viewed as physical phenomena or not and how they should be treated. Issues of interpretation hardly emerge if one adopts such a view. Unstructured bodily movements, i. The disagreement concerns the issue as to whether it is constitutive for a human action to have meaning or not. Mantzavinos If one adopts the interpretivist view, then issues of interpretation necessarily arise in the space of the mental. Human actions are meaningful, and the outcomes of these actions constitute meaningful material which calls for interpretation. It is important to distinguish carefully between two levels of analysis, the ontological and the epistemological. The meaning of Being should be disclosed as a result of analyzing the unique features of *Dasein*, and *Auslegung* interpretation is proposed as a concrete way of being in the world. Although epistemological studies on hermeneutics can, they need not share these or any other commitments with respect to ontology. Epistemological approaches, either descriptive or normative, can start with problems of interpretation and propose solutions to the problems independently of the ontological constitution and structure that underlies each problem area. Even when the distinction between the ontological and epistemological level is largely acknowledged, it has been a matter of dispute whether it is indeed fruitful to completely neglect the constitution and structure of the material that one deals with, when one is engaged in the activity of interpretation. Methodological dualists like Dilthey famously pleaded for the autonomy of the social sciences and humanities which must follow the method of *Verstehen*. The neo-Kantian philosophers Wilhelm Windelband and Heinrich Rickert focused on the methods of concept formation and judgment in the different groups of sciences, the *Kulturwissenschaften* and the natural sciences. For Rickert the *Kulturwissenschaften* are characterized by an individualizing form of concept formation which solved the problem of how the general concepts essential to any scientific representation could capture an individual object, without simply subsuming it under a general law in the fashion of natural scientific concept formation. By contrast to this dualistic approach, methodological monists like Mill reject the dichotomy and plead for a single method applicable to all sciences, convinced as he is that discovering and establishing lawlike hypotheses is also possible in the social sciences and humanities. At the heart of this controversy Ricoeur; L. If the object of the scientific analysis demonstrates a certain ontological constitution and structure, then we must use a method that is suitable for dealing with that constitution and structure. In

any case, the ontological and epistemological levels are not consistently segregated in the discussion. This is notably the case with respect to the hermeneutic circle which serves as the dominant argument for all those who raise a claim to the autonomy of the humanities, and to which we turn now. The Hermeneutic Circle The hermeneutic circle is a prominent and recurring theme in the discussion ever since the philologist Friedrich Ast Friedrich Schleiermacher in a lecture of adopts as a principle the notion that the same way that the whole is, of course, understood in reference to the individual, so too, the individual can only be understood in reference to the whole. What we are trying to establish is a certain reading of text or expressions, and what we appeal to as our grounds for this reading can only be other readings. The circle can also be put in terms of part-whole relations: An entity for which, as Being-in-the-world, its Being is itself an issue, has, ontologically, a circular structure. This conceptualization has been severely criticized as a fruitless attempt to immunize his conception from criticism by deliberately sheltering it under a mantle of apriorism Albert Others view the hermeneutic circle as a logical or methodological problem. To begin with, it is clear that the hermeneutic circle is not a logical problem in a strict sense: He maintains that, in its most important variations, the circle is by no means a narrow epistemological problem of the humanities, but a problem to be confronted in all disciplines. This is the case, for example, in what is known as the dilemma regarding the appropriate distinction between background knowledge and facts. It can only be solved if, through critical discussion the members of the relevant community of inquirers agree on what should count as fact and what as background knowledge in respect to the specific hypothesis tested. They discuss a series of methodological issues that arise during the processes of understanding, and claim that they all appear in the context of the justification of an interpretation. They distinguish four variations: Instead of viewing the hermeneutic circle as a methodological problem that emerges when testing an interpretative hypothesis, one can take it that the problem of the relationship between the meaningful whole and its elements emerges in the process of formulating a hypothesis. In this case, the hermeneutic circle is an empirical phenomenon that arises when one does not manage to understand a linguistic expression or other signs immediately, i. It is then necessary to create interpretative hypotheses, and it is during this activity that one gets confronted with the problem of the meaningful whole and its elements. Language processing is a complex skill which has become routinized once one has gained experience in all levels which are important when understanding expressions: If a difficulty arises in the language comprehension process, and if one cannot understand one or more linguistic expressions immediately, then cognitive resources in the form of attention are activated, and an interpretative hypothesis is generated. In psycholinguistics this conscious process is often modeled as an interactive process of all relevant levels of information processing: There is enough evidence that supports the claim that the discourse on the hermeneutic circle can be appropriately viewed as the search process that is activated if the interpreter of a linguistic expression does not understand something immediately J. The process of parsing during which the words in a linguistic expression are transformed into a mental representation with the combined meaning of the words, as studied by cognitive scientists, is especially relevant: Text Interpretation It is prima facie plausible to postulate that there is nothing beyond understanding a text, than understanding the sentences which compose it; and that there is nothing beyond understanding a sentence than understanding the words which compose it. This widespread view is based on the belief in the validity of the principle of compositionality Szabo Gottlob Frege has famously declared in section 60 of his *Grundlagen der Arithmetik* that only within complete sentences do words have meaning. This different, but related principle to the principle of compositionality is usually referred to as the context principle. It is enough if the sentence as whole has meaning; thereby also its parts obtain their meanings. There is a consensus in many contemporary theories that the semantic value of a sentence is a function of the semantic value of its constituents, insofar the principle of compositionality is applicable. However, the temptation to assume an analogous principle for texts should be resisted: Whereas a sentence may express a thought which is a plausible mental correlate, a text expresses a sequence of thoughts which cannot be grasped directly: Acknowledging the complexity of text comprehension as a process is the first step towards looking for models that can successfully come to grips with that complexity. Such models have been proposed and discussed in cognitive psychology. A prominent example of such a model has been put forward by Kintsch and van Deijk and focuses on the information

processing taking place once syntactic and semantic analysis have been undertaken. In other words, the focus of the model is directly on the comprehension of the whole text, after the initial set of propositions have been identified and after parsing processes have been applied to them. A crucial factor is the capacity limit of the cognitive system, namely the number of propositions that can be kept active in working memory. The consequence of this is that sets of propositions are cognitively processed in cycles, i. Thus, it becomes necessary to use criteria of relevance according to which propositions are kept active, so that the meaning of the entire text can be conveyed. The suggested criteria are temporal proximity and the importance of the information conveyed. This is done under the presupposition that there is a hierarchical relationship between the propositions in the text. During this complex process, the interpreter actively construes the meaning of the whole text and grasps its meaning Kintsch Such models of text comprehension are empirically tested and amount to a significant step forward towards the formulation of an account of text interpretation based on solid empirical evidence. However, a standard philosophical critique questions the possibility of providing testable models of text comprehension without appropriately acknowledging the normative presuppositions underlying all interpretative praxis. There are two lines of argument that have been influential in this context. In an imaginary situation, an interpreter is confronted with the verbal behavior of a human being, in an entirely alien culture, without any kind of knowledge about his or her beliefs, desires or the meanings of what he or she expresses. The problem consists of getting to know the beliefs, desires and meanings of this person starting from scratch, i. In the context of this largely artificial problem, it is contended that one is inclined to or bound to adopt a general interpretative principle of a normative nature, which is supposed to be imperative for correct translation and interpretation. According to Quine Charity in interpreting the words and thoughts of others is unavoidable in another direction as well: In fact, none of the principles proposed in this discussion is new. Hermeneutic equity *aequitas hermeneutica* is the tendency of the interpreter to hold that meaning for hermeneutically true that best comports with the flawlessness of the originator of the sign, until the opposite is shown. It is important to stress that the principle of hermeneutic equity is explicitly formulated as a presumption: In the Anglo-Saxon discussion on radical interpretation referred to above, the general thrust of the argument is that these rules are constitutive for the practice of interpretation; they occupy a specific status that must accordingly be recognized as an important presupposition of all interpretation. However, their apparent indispensability can simply be traced to the fact that they have been particularly well corroborated, as they have often been employed with success. Accordingly, it is only their greater corroboration that leads to a presumption that they are indispensable to every interpretation Mantzavinos The second line of argument regarding the normative presuppositions of interpretative praxis, centers around the indispensability of a rationality assumption in all interpretation Livingston According to this argument, it is possible to apprehend linguistic expressions only if it is assumed that speakers or authors manifest complex features that are appropriately conceptualized as rational. Most importantly, deductive rationality plays an important role: So, according to this view, rationality is constitutive of the beliefs of the author which give rise to his or her linguistic expressions and, thus, rationality is a or the normative presupposition which must underlie all interpretative praxis. However, the rationality assumption is surely not an uncontested principle Mantzavinos Thus, the process of text interpretation which lies in the center of hermeneutics as the methodological discipline dealing with interpretation can and has been analyzed empirically with the help of testable models. The question whether there are certain normative presuppositions of the interpretative praxis—like specific principles of interpretation that are constitutive of this praxis and indispensable rationality principles—is a focal issue of obvious philosophical importance Detel Regardless of the position that is assumed with respect to this issue, it is hardly possible to deny that the interpretative praxis can take on multiple forms and can take place according to diverse aims, an issue to which we turn next. Aims of Text Interpretation We have seen that text interpretation goes beyond the interpretation of simple or complex sentences since it crucially includes a number of inferences that are necessary in order to glean the meaning of a text. Text interpretation as a goal-directed activity can assume different forms, but must be distinguished from highlighting the significance of a text. In fact, a series of serious misunderstandings and confusions can be easily avoided, if a clear distinction is made between interpretation as an activity directed at the appropriation of the meaning of a text

and textual criticism as an activity that is concerned with the significance of a text with respect to different values. Instead of seeming beautiful, profound, or brilliant, the work seemed misguided, trivial, and false, and its meaning was no longer one that the author wished to convey. However, these examples do not show that the meaning of the work had changed, but precisely the opposite. No doubt the significance of the work to the author had changed a great deal, but its meaning had not changed at all. Significance, on the other hand, names a relationship between that meaning and a person, or a conception, or a situation, or indeed anything imaginable. Failure to consider this simple and essential distinction has been the source of enormous confusion in hermeneutic theory. Even if one acknowledges the difference between meaning and significance, and decides to honor the distinction between text interpretation and textual criticism, it is undisputable that interpretation can be directed at many different goals.

4: Analyzing, Interpreting and Reporting Basic Research Results

Hermeneutics as the art of interpreting and understanding text, speech and human action is central to Gadamer's hermeneutic philosophy. Drawing extensively on Gadamer's writings on hermeneutics, this essay is an assessment of the centrality of.

Analyzing What a Text Means This final level of reading infers an overall meaning. We examine features running throughout the text to see how the discussion shapes our perception of reality. We examine what a text does to convey meaning: For many, the shift to description and interpretation is particularly hard. They will freely infer the purpose of an action, the essence of a behavior, or the intent of a political decision. But they will hesitate to go beyond what they take a text to "say" on its own. They are afraid to take responsibility for their own understanding. Others are so attuned to accepting the written word that they fail to see the text as a viable topic of conversation. But you are also aware of a painting. You see different color paint well, not in this illustration! You recognize how aspects of the painting are highlighted by their placement or by the lighting. When examining a painting, you are aware that you are examining a work created by someone. You are aware of an intention behind the work, an attempt to portray something a particular way. Since the painting does not come out and actively state a meaning, you are consciously aware of your own efforts to find meaning in the painting: You can talk not only about the meaning of the picture, but also about how it was crafted. What is the significance of the dream landscape in the background? Why, when we focus on the left side of the picture, does the woman look somehow taller or more erect than if we focus on the right side? The more features of the painting that you recognize, the more powerful your interpretation will be. And yet there is still that feeling that texts are somehow different. Texts do differ from art insofar as they actually seem to come out and say something. There are assertions "in black and white" to fall back on. We can restate a text; we cannot restate a painting or action. Yet a text is simply symbols on a page. Readers bring to their reading recognition of those symbols, an understanding of what the words mean within the given social and historical context, and an understanding of the remarks within their own framework of what might make sense, or what they might imagine an author to have intended. There is no escape; one way or another we are responsible for the meaning we find in our reading. When a text says that someone burned their textbooks, that is all that is there: We can agree on how to interpret sentence structure enough to agree on what is stated in a literal sense. But any sense that that person committed an irresponsible, impulsive, or inspired act is in our own heads. It is not stated as such on the page unless the author says so! Stories present actions; readers infer personalities, motives, and intents. When we go beyond the words, we are reading meaning.

5: What Is Critical Reading?

Bibliographic data. This edition of Company Accounts: Analysis, Interpretation, and Understanding was issued in Hardcover. The volume of the book is pages (approximate value, can be different depending on the edition).

However, there are certain basics which can help to make sense of reams of data. Always start with your research goals. When analyzing data whether from questionnaires, interviews, focus groups, or whatever, always start from review of your research goals, i. This will help you organize your data and focus your analysis. For example, if you wanted to improve a program by identifying its strengths and weaknesses, you can organize data into program strengths, weaknesses and suggestions to improve the program. If you wanted to fully understand how your program works, you could organize data in the chronological order in which customers or clients go through your program. If you are conducting a performance improvement study, you can categorize data according to each measure associated with each overall performance result, e. Basic analysis of "quantitative" information for information other than commentary, e. Make copies of your data and store the master copy away. Use the copy for making edits, cutting and pasting, etc. Tabulate the information, i. For ratings and rankings, consider computing a mean, or average, for each question. For example, "For question 1, the average ranking was 2. This is more meaningful than indicating, e. Consider conveying the range of answers, e. Read through all the data. Organize comments into similar categories, e. Label the categories or themes, e. Attempt to identify patterns, or associations and causal relationships in the themes, e. Keep all commentary for several years after completion in case needed for future reference. Interpreting information Attempt to put the information in perspective, e. Consider recommendations to help employees improve the program, product or service; conclusions about program operations or meeting goals, etc. Record conclusions and recommendations in a report, and associate interpretations to justify your conclusions or recommendations. Also see Analyzing Data and Communicating Results Reporting Results The level and scope of content depends on to whom the report is intended, e. Be sure employees have a chance to carefully review and discuss the report. Translate recommendations to action plans, including who is going to do what about the research results and by when. The funder may want the report to be delivered as a presentation, accompanied by an overview of the report. Or, the funder may want to review the report alone. Be sure to record the research plans and activities in a research plan which can be referenced when a similar research effort is needed in the future. Who Should Carry Out the Research? Then a research expert helps the organization to determine what the research methods should be, and how the resulting data will be analyzed and reported back to the organization. If an organization can afford any outside help at all, it should be for identifying the appropriate research methods and how the data can be collected. The organization might find a less expensive resource to apply the methods, e. If no outside help can be obtained, the organization can still learn a great deal by applying the methods and analyzing results themselves. However, there is a strong chance that data about the strengths and weaknesses of a product, service or program will not be interpreted fairly if the data are analyzed by the people responsible for ensuring the product, service or program is a good one. These people will be "policing" themselves. This caution is not to fault these people, but rather to recognize the strong biases inherent in trying to objectively look at and publicly at least within the organization report about their work. Therefore, if at all possible, have someone other than the those responsible for the product, service or program to look at and determine research results. Contents of a Research Report -- An Example Ensure your research plan is documented so that you can regularly and efficiently carry out your research activities. For example, consider the following format: There is no "perfect" research design. Work hard to include some interviews in your research methods. For the Category of Business Research: To round out your knowledge of this Library topic, you may want to review some related topics, available from the link below. Each of the related topics includes free, online resources. Also, scan the Recommended Books listed below. They have been selected for their relevance and highly practical nature.

6: Interpretation of the Bible

Erkenntnis, 52, , *Interpretation and Understanding* Catherine Z. Elgin Abstract: *To understand a term or other symbol, I argue, it is generally neither necessary nor sufficient to assign it a unique determinate reference.*

It occurs because the older the individual in years the smaller the chance of death. Take extra care when interpreting logistic regression results using continuous explanatory variables. Variables inclusion and selection A major problem when building a logistic model is to select which variables to include. This approach increases the emergence of two situations. Remember that you are working with samples and spurious results can occur. The second situation is that a model with more variables presents less statistical power. So, if there is an association between one explanatory variable and the occurrence of an event, researcher can miss this effect because saturated models those that contains all possible explanatory variables are not sensible enough to detect it. So the researcher must to be very cautious with the selection of variables to include into the model. We can start a regression using either a full saturated model, or a null empty model, which starts only with the intercept term. In the first case, variables need to be dropped one by one, preferably dropping the less significant one. This is the preferred strategy just because is easier to handle, while the second requires all candidate variables to be tested each step in a way to select the better choice to include. On the other hand, if too many variables are included at once in a full model, significant variables could be dropped due to low statistical power, as mentioned above. However, if we have a limited sample size in relation to the number of candidate variables, a pre-selection should be performed instead. There is no reason to worry about a rigorous p-value criterion at this stage, because this is just a pre-selection strategy and no inference will derive from this step. This relaxed P-value criterion will allow reducing the initial number of variables in the model reducing the risk of missing important variables 4 , 5. There is some debate about the appropriate strategy to variable selection 6 and the last is just another one. It is easy and intuitive. More elaborated methods are available, but whatever the method, it is very important that researchers get aware of the procedure applied and not just press some buttons on software. Reference group setup There are some explanatory variables for which the reference level is almost automatically determined. On the other hand, some variables have no clear reference level, but present ordered levels and the reference level will be, usually, one of the endpoints or, less frequently, the central level. However, some variables have no ordered levels and no clear reference level. This can occur with geographic region. And then appears the question: The answer is that there is no answer! However, reference level selection can change the model estimation in some cases. It is important to remember that all results and significant effects presented are relative to the reference level. The results, showing just the region variable, are below Table 6. Relationship between geographic region and ketoacidosis prevalence in Brazil data from 7.

7: Dream Bible - The Online Guide To Dream Interpretation

Cognitive Interpretation and Modelling is based on enabling the interpreter to work naturally by designing software that takes into account the way in which we visually process data to absorb information, use that information to generate knowledge and develop an understanding.

As a Protestant I cherish the NT teaching on the priesthood of believers—that each Christian has the right to his own interpretation, but also that each Christian has the responsibility to get it right. It is full of contradictions. Welcome to our postmodern world. How does divine inspiration and human authorship affect biblical interpretation? What does a text mean? What are some general principles of interpretation? How do we interpret the Old Testament? How do we interpret the New Testament? What Does a Text Mean? The last lesson looked at the topic of inspiration and found that the Bible is both a human book and a divine book. There are certain implications of this for biblical interpretation. The first is that the human authors had a specific historical audience, context and purpose. These authors used their own language, writing methods, style of writing and literary form of writing. The divine authorship of the Bible gives it its unity and the ultimate source of all interpretation is from God. The answer to this question is that a text means what the author intended it to mean. If there is only one thing you learn from this lesson this is it. For a simple example, if you wrote a letter with some statements in it that are a little ambiguous, then what does the letter mean? Does it mean what you intended it to mean or how the readers interpret it? Of course it means what you intended it to mean. The true meaning of a text resides in the authorial intent of the text. This leads us to the first primary and fundamental principle of interpreting the Bible. General Principles of Biblical Interpretation Principle 1: To be able to do this some good Bible study tools are needed since we are years or more removed from the biblical authors and their context is very different than ours. The first tool that any one should get is a good study Bible with notes that explain historical and cultural background information. Most major Bible translations come in editions with these types of notes but by far the NET Bible with its over 60, notes surpasses them all. Get the most extensive Study Bible that goes with the translation you use. After this, good evangelical commentaries are essential tools to study the Bible but make sure to look at a couple to get a variety of perspectives. When someone in a Bible study states what the verse means to him, we need to redirect and clarify that the meaning is what the author intended. After that the question then is how that historical meaning applies to us today. The second principle of biblical interpretation should also be considered foundational. Interpretations must be done in the context of the passage. What does the following mean? Consider the following sentences: Therefore, context determines meaning! The nearest context must given the most weight in interpretation. First, there is the near context of the sentence, then the paragraph, then the section and then the book and even author. The interpreter should look at all these circles of context to be able to correctly assess the meaning. Far too often people try to interpret a verse by itself in isolation without looking at the context itself. For example, consider the verse Revelation 3: Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and will dine with him, and he with Me Rev 3: But the context in the preceding verse v. Also, in looking at the larger paragraph the passage is to a church Rev 3: The verse is really addressed to believers who need to repent from their sin and return to fellowship with God. Interpret the Bible literally or normally allowing for normal use of figurative language. Take the plain meaning of the text at face value. When the literal does not make sense you probably have a figure of speech. For example, Isaiah Since trees do not have hands or clap this must be a figure of speech. Figures of speech and illustrations give the Bible a powerful and colorful means of expression. They are an important part of the normal expression of language. Use the Bible to help interpret itself. Interpret difficult passages with clear ones. This is sometimes called the law of non-contradiction. For example, there are clear passages that teach the doctrine of eternal security, that once a person is truly saved he or she cannot lose salvation John 5; Rom 8. Some passages in the Bible are very hard to interpret like Hebrews 6: Also, use the New Testament to help interpret the Old Testament. This recognizes the progressive nature of revelation, that is the Bible is giving more revelation on topics over time. But one must start by interpreting the Old Testament

text in its context before a New Testament consideration is made. Interpretation must be distinguished from application. While there is one interpretation that is historical, there are many applications that can be carried over to our modern context. Build an application bridge from the interpretation to the timeless principle and then to the application now. For example in John 12, Mary anoints Jesus with very expensive oil. The historical context records a historical event. The interpretation relates only to what Mary did to Jesus. What about us today? Promises made to Israel in the Old Testament cannot automatically be transferred to the church in which we are a part. For example, the land promises were given to Abraham and his descendants Gen Christians are not under the requirements of the Mosaic law Rom 6: For example, in Lev It is true that certain Old Testament commands repeated in the New Testament are still binding, but this is made clear by their repetition in the New Testament. The church was formed in Acts 2 with the descent of the Holy Spirit and most direct statements to and about the church occur after that. Also, there is a future for national Israel cf. Be sensitive to the type of literature you are in. The Bible contains many different types of literature: Each of these types of literature has specific features that must be considered when interpreting a text. Some of these will be examined in the next section. For now we need to understand that where we are in the Bible makes a big difference on how we interpret and apply it. Interpreting the Old Testament Narrative Literature: Much of the Old Testament contains narrative literature. First, the passage needs to be interpreted in its historical context and then applications can be drawn from the characters and events. In the book of Judges, only one verse is given to the judge Shamgar. Why did God include this passage? Yes, it records an historical event. Realize that Christians are not under the law as a legal system Rom 6: Sometimes the teaching is carried directly into the New Testament e. Other times, the New Testament takes a text and applies a principle from it. Paul takes this verse, which refers to feeding a work animal and applies the principle of the Christian worker being worthy of tangible support. In general, if the Old Testament command in the law is not repeated in the New Testament, look for the principle behind the statement in the law and then try to apply that. Realize that much of the proverbial type of wisdom in the Old Testament is general truth based on observations but not absolute truths or promises. Two good examples are seen in the following: Christians should not take these types of proverbial statements as promises of what will always happen but rather patterns that are generally true outcomes based on observation. A gentle answer will not always prevent an angry outburst but it is much more likely to than a harsh one. Christian parents who have a child who has gone astray from the faith may have done their best to train the child the right way but the child did not take it. Realize that poetry often has a greater use of figurate language than narrative or law. For he set its foundation upon the seas, and established it upon the ocean currents. Who is allowed to ascend the mountain of the Lord? Who may go up to his holy dwelling place? Here we have three sets of pairs in side by side fashion with the second reference restating the basic idea of the first. Interpreting the New Testament Gospels:

8: Dream Interpretation, Dream Analysis, Dream Dictionary

Any particular text can, and will, be read at various levels of understanding at once. We cannot understand what a text says without recognizing relationships between sentences. We cannot even understand sentences without drawing inferences that extend beyond the words on the page.

You then analyze those data. Though this example may seem simplistic, it reflects the way scientists pursue data collection, analysis, and interpretation. Data, the plural form of the word datum, are scientific observations and measurements that, once analyzed and interpreted, can be developed into evidence to address a question. Data lie at the heart of all scientific investigations, and all scientists collect data in one form or another. The weather forecast that helped you decide what to wear, for example, was an interpretation made by a meteorologist who analyzed data collected by satellites. Data may take the form of the number of bacteria colonies growing in soup broth (see our Experimentation in Science module), a series of drawings or photographs of the different layers of rock that form a mountain range (see our Description in Science module), a tally of lung cancer victims in populations of cigarette smokers and non-smokers (see our Comparison in Science module), or the changes in average annual temperature predicted by a model of global climate (see our Modeling in Science module). Scientific data collection involves more care than you might use in a casual glance at the thermometer to see what you should wear. Because scientists build on their own work and the work of others, it is important that they are systematic and consistent in their data collection methods and make detailed records so that others can see and use the data they collect. But collecting data is only one step in a scientific investigation, and scientific knowledge is much more than a simple compilation of data points. The world is full of observations that can be made, but not every observation constitutes a useful piece of data. For example, your meteorologist could record the outside air temperature every second of the day, but would that make the forecast any more accurate than recording it once an hour? All scientists make choices about which data are most relevant to their research and what to do with those data: The thoughtful and systematic collection, analysis, and interpretation of data allow them to be developed into evidence that supports scientific ideas, arguments, and hypotheses.

Data collection, analysis, and interpretation: Weather and climate

The weather has long been a subject of widespread data collection, analysis, and interpretation. Accurate measurements of air temperature became possible in the mid-1700s when Daniel Gabriel Fahrenheit invented the first standardized mercury thermometer (see our Temperature module). Air temperature, wind speed, and wind direction are all critical navigational information for sailors on the ocean, but in the late 18th and early 19th centuries, as sailing expeditions became common, this information was not easy to come by. As a result, Maury organized the first international Maritime Conference, held in Brussels, Belgium, in 1853. At this meeting, international standards for taking weather measurements on ships were established and a system for sharing this information between countries was founded. Defining uniform data collection standards was an important step in producing a truly global dataset of meteorological information, allowing data collected by many different people in different parts of the world to be gathered together into a single database. The early international cooperation and investment in weather-related data collection has produced a valuable long-term record of air temperature that goes back to the 1700s. Chapter 15 in Explanations and Sailing Directions. This vast store of information is considered "raw" data: Raw data can be useful in and of itself—for example, if you wanted to know the air temperature in London on June 5, 1700. But the data alone cannot tell you anything about how temperature has changed in London over the past two hundred years, or how that information is related to global-scale climate change. In order for patterns and trends to be seen, data must be analyzed and interpreted first. The analyzed and interpreted data may then be used as evidence in scientific arguments, to support a hypothesis or a theory. Good data are a potential treasure trove—they can be mined by scientists at any time—and thus an important part of any scientific investigation is accurate and consistent recording of data and the methods used to collect those data. The weather data collected since the 1850s have been just such a treasure trove, based in part upon the standards established by Matthew Maury. These standards provided guidelines for data collections and recording that assured consistency within the dataset. At the time, ship captains were

able to utilize the data to determine the most reliable routes to sail across the oceans. Many modern scientists studying climate change have taken advantage of this same dataset to understand how global air temperatures have changed over the recent past. In neither case can one simply look at the table of numbers and observations and answer the question “which route to take, or how global climate has changed. Instead, both questions require analysis and interpretation of the data. Comprehension Checkpoint Data are most valuable when they are collected a. A complex and challenging process Though it may sound straightforward to take years of air temperature data and describe how global climate has changed, the process of analyzing and interpreting those data is actually quite complex. Consider the range of temperatures around the world on any given day in January see Figure 2: Now consider that over huge expanses of the ocean, where no consistent measurements are available. One could simply take an average of all of the available measurements for a single day to get a global air temperature average for that day, but that number would not take into account the natural variability within and uneven distribution of those measurements. Satellite image composite of average air temperatures in degrees Celsius across the globe on January 2, <http://> The majority of their paper “three out of five pages” describes the processing techniques they used to correct for the problems and inconsistencies in the historical data that would not be related to climate. For example, the authors note: Early SSTs [sea surface temperatures] were measured using water collected in uninsulated, canvas buckets, while more recent data come either from insulated bucket or cooling water intake measurements, with the latter considered to be 0. Similar problems were encountered with marine air temperature data. Historical air temperature measurements over the ocean were taken aboard ships, but the type and size of ship could affect the measurement because size "determines the height at which observations were taken. The authors therefore applied a correction for ship size in their data. Developing this grid required many decisions based on their experience and judgment, such as how large each grid cell needed to be and how to distribute the cells over the Earth. They then calculated the mean temperature within each grid cell, and combined all of these means to calculate a global average air temperature for each year. Statistical techniques such as averaging are commonly used in the research process and can help identify trends and relationships within and between datasets see our Statistics in Science module. Once these spatially averaged global mean temperatures were calculated, the authors compared the means over time from to A common method for analyzing data that occur in a series, such as temperature measurements over time, is to look at anomalies, or differences from a pre-defined reference value. In this case, the authors compared their temperature values to the mean of the years see Figure 3. This reference mean is subtracted from each annual mean to produce the jagged lines in Figure 3, which display positive or negative anomalies values greater or less than zero. Though this may seem to be a circular or complex way to display these data, it is useful because the goal is to show change in mean temperatures rather than absolute values. The black line shows global temperature anomalies, or differences between averaged yearly temperature measurements and the reference value for the entire globe. The smooth, red line is a filtered year average. Based on Figure 5 in Jones et al. Putting data into a visual format can facilitate additional analysis see our Using Graphs and Visual Data module. Figure 3 shows a lot of variability in the data: There are a number of spikes and dips in global temperature throughout the period examined. It can be challenging to see trends in data that have so much variability; our eyes are drawn to the extreme values in the jagged lines like the large spike in temperature around or the significant dip around However, these extremes do not necessarily reflect long-term trends in the data. In order to more clearly see long-term patterns and trends, Jones and his co-authors used another processing technique and applied a filter to the data by calculating a year running average to smooth the data. The smooth lines in the graph represent the filtered data. The smooth line follows the data closely, but it does not reach the extreme values. Data processing and analysis are sometimes misinterpreted as manipulating data to achieve the desired results, but in reality, the goal of these methods is to make the data clearer, not to change it fundamentally. As described above, in addition to reporting data, scientists report the data processing and analysis methods they use when they publish their work see our Understanding Scientific Journals and Articles module , allowing their peers the opportunity to assess both the raw data and the techniques used to analyze them. Uncovering and explaining trends in the data The analyzed data can then be interpreted and explained. In general, when

scientists interpret data, they attempt to explain the patterns and trends uncovered through analysis, bringing all of their background knowledge, experience, and skills to bear on the question and relating their data to existing scientific ideas. Given the personal nature of the knowledge they draw upon, this step can be subjective, but that subjectivity is scrutinized through the peer review process see our Peer Review in Science module. Based on the smoothed curves, Jones, Wigley, and Wright interpreted their data to show a long-term warming trend. They note that the three warmest years in the entire dataset are 1998, 2002, and 2003. They do not go further in their interpretation to suggest possible causes for the temperature increase, however, but merely state that the results are "extremely interesting when viewed in the light of recent ideas of the causes of climate change.

False Different interpretations in the scientific community

The data presented in this study were widely accepted throughout the scientific community, in large part due to their careful description of the data and their process of analysis. Through the 1990s, however, a few scientists remained skeptical about their interpretation of a warming trend. In 1996, Richard Lindzen, a meteorologist at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, published a paper expressing his concerns with the warming interpretation. Lindzen highlighted several issues that he believed weakened the arguments for global temperature increases. First, he argued that the data collection was inadequate, suggesting that the current network of data collection stations was not sufficient to correct for the uncertainty inherent in data with so much natural variability consider how different the weather is in Antarctica and the Sahara Desert on any given day. Second, he argued that the data analysis was faulty, and that the substantial gaps in coverage, particularly over the ocean, raised questions regarding the ability of such a dataset to adequately represent the global system. Finally, Lindzen suggested that the interpretation of the global mean temperature data is inappropriate, and that there is no trend in the data. He noted a decrease in the mean temperature from 1950 to 1980 at a time when atmospheric CO₂ levels, a proposed cause for the temperature increases, were increasing rapidly. In other words, Lindzen brought a different background and set of experiences and ideas to bear on the same dataset, and came to very different conclusions. This type of disagreement is common in science, and generally leads to more data collection and research. In fact, the differences in interpretation over the presence or absence of a trend motivated climate scientists to extend the temperature record in both directions – going back further into the past and continuing forward with the establishment of dedicated weather stations around the world. Of course, they were not able to use air temperature readings from thermometers to extend the record back to CE; instead, the authors used data from other sources that could provide information about air temperature to reconstruct past climate, like tree ring width, ice core data, and coral growth records Figure 4, blue line. Differences between annual mean temperature and mean temperature during the reference period Blue line represents data from tree ring, ice core, and coral growth records; orange line represents data measured with modern instruments. Graph adapted from Mann et al. Reporting error and uncertainty for data does not imply that the measurements are wrong or faulty – in fact, just the opposite is true. The magnitude of the error describes how confident the scientists are in the accuracy of the data, so bigger reported errors indicate less confidence see our Uncertainty, Error, and Confidence module. They note that the magnitude of the uncertainty increases going further back in time but becomes more tightly constrained around 1950. In their interpretation, the authors describe several trends they see in the data: In fact, they note that "almost all years before the twentieth century [are] well below the twentieth-century. Interestingly, where Jones et al. Debate over data interpretation spurs further research The debate over the interpretation of data related to climate change as well as the interest in the consequences of these changes have led to an enormous increase in the number of scientific research studies addressing climate change, and multiple lines of scientific evidence now support the conclusions initially made by Jones, Wigley, and Wright in the 1990s. Based on the agreement between these multiple datasets, the team of contributing scientists wrote: Warming of the climate system is unequivocal, as is now evident from observations of increases in global average air and ocean temperatures, widespread melting of snow and ice, and rising global average sea level. The short phrase "now evident" reflects the accumulation of data over time, including the most recent data up to 2003. A higher level of data interpretation involves determining the reason for the temperature increases.

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Perhaps no principle of interpretation is more universally agreed upon than the idea that understanding the context of the word, phrase, or passage is absolutely essential. Context is defined as "the parts of a discourse that surround a word or passage and can throw light on its meaning." 3.

This study is never finished; each age must in its own way newly seek to understand the sacred books. In the history of interpretation the rise of the historical-critical method opened a new era. With it, new possibilities for understanding the biblical word in its originality opened up. Just as with all human endeavor, though, so also this method contained hidden dangers along with its positive possibilities. The search for the original can lead to putting the word back into the past completely so that it is no longer taken in its actuality. It can result that only the human dimension of the word appears as real, while the genuine author, God, is removed from the reach of a method which was established for understanding human reality. The application of a "profane" method to the Bible necessarily led to discussion. Everything that helps us better to understand the truth and to appropriate its representations is helpful and worthwhile for theology. It is in this sense that we must seek how to use this method in theological research. Everything that shrinks our horizon and hinders us from seeing and hearing beyond that which is merely human must be opened up. Thus the emergence of the historical-critical method set in motion at the same time a struggle over its scope and its proper configuration which is by no means finished as yet. In this struggle the teaching office of the Catholic Church has taken up positions several times. At a time when liberalism was extremely sure of itself and much too intrusively dogmatic, Leo XIII was forced to express himself in a rather critical way, even though he did not exclude that which was positive from the new possibilities. It provided us with a synthesis, which substantially remains, between the lasting insights of patristic theology and the new methodological understanding of the moderns. In the meantime, this methodological spectrum of exegetical work has broadened in a way which could not have been envisioned 30 years ago. New methods and new approaches have appeared, from structuralism to materialistic, psychoanalytic and liberation exegesis. On the other hand, there are also new attempts to recover patristic exegesis and to include renewed forms of a spiritual interpretation of Scripture. Thus the Pontifical Biblical Commission took as its task an attempt to take the bearings of Catholic exegesis in the present situation years after "Providentissimus Deus" and 50 years after "Divino Afflante Spiritu. Thus the present document was established. It contains a well-grounded overview of the panorama of present-day methods and in this way offers to the inquirer an orientation to the possibilities and limits of these approaches. The biblical word comes from a real past. I believe that this document is very helpful for the important questions about the right way of understanding Holy Scripture and that it also helps us to go further. It takes up the paths of the encyclicals of and and advances them in a fruitful way. I would like to thank the members of the biblical commission for the patient and frequently laborious struggle in which this text grew little by little. I hope that the document will have a wide circulation so that it becomes a genuine contribution to the search for a deeper assimilation of the word of God in holy Scripture. Rome, on the feast of St. Matthew the evangelist Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger

Introduction The interpretation of biblical texts continues in our own day to be a matter of lively interest and significant debate. In recent years the discussions involved have taken on some new dimensions. Granted the fundamental importance of the Bible for Christian faith, for the life of the church and for relations between Christians and the faithful of other religions, the Pontifical Biblical Commission has been asked to make a statement on this subject. The State of the Question Today The problem of the interpretation of the Bible is hardly a modern phenomenon, even if at times that is what some would have us believe. The Bible itself bears witness that its interpretation can be a difficult matter. Alongside texts that are perfectly clear, it contains passages of some obscurity. When reading certain prophecies of Jeremiah, Daniel pondered at length over their meaning Dn. According to the Acts of the Apostles, an Ethiopian of the first century found himself in the same situation with respect to a passage from the Book of Isaiah Is. The Second Letter of Peter insists that "no prophecy of Scripture is a matter of private interpretation" 2 Pt. The problem is therefore quite old. But it has been accentuated with the passage of time. Furthermore, because of the progress made in the human sciences,

questions of interpretation have become more complex in modern times. Scientific methods have been adopted for the study of the texts of the ancient world. To what extent can these methods be considered appropriate for the interpretation of holy Scripture? For a long period the church in her pastoral prudence showed herself very reticent in responding to this question, for often the methods, despite their positive elements, have shown themselves to be wedded to positions hostile to the Christian faith. But a more positive attitude has also evolved, signaled by a whole series of pontifical documents, ranging from the encyclical "Providentissimus Deus" of Leo XIII Nov. That this more constructive attitude has borne fruit cannot be denied. Biblical studies have made great progress in the Catholic Church, and the academic value of these studies has been acknowledged more and more in the scholarly world and among the faithful. This has greatly smoothed the path of ecumenical dialogue. Interest in the Bible has grown among Catholics, with resultant progress in the Christian life. All those who have acquired a solid formation in this area consider it quite impossible to return to a pre-critical level of interpretation, a level which they now rightly judge to be quite inadequate. To some extent, this has come about in the scholarly world itself through the rise of alternative methods and approaches. But it has also arisen through the criticisms of many members of the faithful, who judge the method deficient from the point of view of faith. Some value this plurality of methods and approaches as an indication of richness, but to others it gives the impression of much confusion. Whether real or apparent, this confusion has brought fresh fuel to the arguments of those opposed to scientific exegesis. The diversity of interpretations only serves to show, they say, that nothing is gained by submitting biblical texts to the demands of scientific method; on the contrary, they allege, much is lost thereby. They insist that the result of scientific exegesis is only to provoke perplexity and doubt upon numerous points which hitherto had been accepted without difficulty. They add that it impels some exegetes to adopt positions contrary to the faith of the church on matters of great importance such as the virginal conception of Jesus and his miracles, and even his resurrection and divinity. Even when it does not end up in such negative positions, scientific exegesis, they claim, is notable for its sterility in what concerns progress in the Christian life. Interpretation may always have been something of a problem, but now it requires such technical refinements as to render it a domain reserved for a few specialists alone. To the latter some apply the phrase of the Gospel: "You have taken away the key of knowledge; you have not entered in yourselves and you have hindered those who sought to enter" Lk. As a result, in place of the patient toil of scientific exegesis, they think it necessary to substitute simpler approaches such as one or other of the various forms of synchronic reading which may be considered appropriate. Some seek above all to find in the Bible the Christ of their own personal vision and, along with it, the satisfaction of their own spontaneous religious feelings. Others claim to find there immediate answers to all kinds of questions touching both their own lives and that of the community. There are, moreover, numerous sects which propose as the only way of interpretation one that has been revealed to them alone. Such is the purpose of this document. The Pontifical Biblical Commission desires to indicate the paths most appropriate for arriving at an interpretation of the Bible as faithful as possible to its character both human and divine. The commission does not aim to adopt a position on all the questions which arise with respect to the Bible such as, for example, the theology of inspiration. What it has in mind is to examine all the methods likely to contribute effectively to the task of making more available the riches contained in the biblical texts. To accomplish this goal, the present document: Will examine certain questions of a hermeneutical nature. Will reflect upon the aspects which may be considered characteristic of a Catholic interpretation of the Bible and upon its relationship with other theological disciplines. Will consider, finally, the place interpretation of the Bible has in the life of the church.

Historical-Critical Method

The historical-critical method is the indispensable method for the scientific study of the meaning of ancient texts. Holy Scripture, inasmuch as it is the "word of God in human language," has been composed by human authors in all its various parts and in all the sources that lie behind them. Because of this, its proper understanding not only admits the use of this method but actually requires it.

History of the Method

For a correct understanding of this method as currently employed, a glance over its history will be of assistance. Certain elements of this method of interpretation are very ancient. They were used in antiquity by Greek commentators of classical literature and, much later, in the course of the patristic period by authors such as Origen, Jerome and Augustine. The method at that time was much less

developed. In the 18th century, Jean Astruc was still satisfied that the matter could be explained on the basis that Moses had made use of various sources especially two principal ones to compose the Book of Genesis. But as time passed biblical critics contested the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch with ever growing confidence. Literary criticism for a long time came to be identified with the attempt to distinguish in texts different sources. Thus it was that there developed in the 19th century the "documentary hypothesis," which sought to give an explanation of the editing of the Pentateuch. According to this hypothesis, four documents, to some extent parallel with each other, had been woven together: In similar fashion, to explain both the agreements and disagreements between the three synoptic Gospels, scholars had recourse to the "two source" hypothesis. According to this, the Gospels of Matthew and Luke were composed out of two principal sources: In the desire to establish the chronology of the biblical texts, this kind of literary criticism restricted itself to the task of dissecting and dismantling the text in order to identify the various sources. It did not pay sufficient attention to the final form of the biblical text and to the message which it conveyed in the state in which it actually exists the contribution of editors was not held in high regard. This meant that historical-critical exegesis could often seem to be something which simply dissolved and destroyed the text. This was all the more the case when, under the influence of the comparative history of religions, such as it then was, or on the basis of certain philosophical ideas, some exegetes expressed highly negative judgments against the Bible. It was Hermann Gunkel who brought the method out of the ghetto of literary criticism understood in this way. Although he continued to regard the books of the Pentateuch as compilations, he attended to the particular texture of the different elements of the text. He sought to define the genre of each piece e. Bultmann combined form-critical studies with a biblical hermeneutic inspired by the existentialist philosophy of Martin Heidegger. But one of the results of this method has been to demonstrate more clearly that the tradition recorded in the New Testament had its origin and found its basic shape within Christian community or early church, passing from the preaching of Jesus himself to that which proclaimed that Jesus is the Christ. When this last method was brought into play, the whole series of different stages characteristic of the historical-critical method became complete: From textual criticism one progresses to literary criticism, with its work of dissection in the quest for sources; then one moves to a critical study of forms and, finally, to an analysis of the editorial process, which aims to be particularly attentive to the text as it has been put together. All this has made it possible to understand far more accurately the intention of the authors and editors of the Bible as well as the message which they addressed to their first readers. The achievement of these results has lent the historical-critical method an importance of the highest order. Principles The fundamental principles of the historical-critical method in its classic form are the following:

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