Mediated Meaning:
A Contextualist Approach to
Hermeneutical Method

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Traditionally defined as "the science of interpretation," hermeneutics has of late evolved into a full-fledged philosophical concern of its own. Flowing out of the two opposing branches of the early twentieth century's "search for meaning" (analytic and existentialist philosophy), hermeneutics stands today as the central intersection of dialogue within and among such diverse disciplines as philosophy, linguistics, the arts, political theory, psychology and theology. The issues and points of view are many and diverse.[1] My purpose here is to sketch, in broad strokes, the main contours of the landscape and to provide a suggested perspective or "inscape" of my own.

I

The modern era of hermeneutical understanding was ushered in with the introduction of the *historical-critical* method of textual interpretation.[2] In a much needed and eventually successful attempt to counteract the tyrannical dominance of authoritarian and/or spiritualizing hermeneutical activity, modern scholarship turned to objective, scientific criteria and procedures for determining what a given text *meant*. I stress the past tense of the term "meant" advisedly, for the emphasis of the historical-critical approach has consistently been on ascertaining what the text meant for the *writer* and those *to whom* it was originally addressed. By means of historical and textual research, including and especially archeological investigation, modern interpreters have sought to bridge the gap between the time of the text and their own, thereby facilitating a contemporary understanding of the text's meaning. Norman Perrin offers a fair account of this historical-critical method in the following passage:

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In the case of texts from another time and another culture this can be an extremely complex and difficult task, involving many different considerations, but the theoretical principles involved are both firmly established and well understood. We need, further, to understand as far as we can the intent of the author in writing the text, and the meaning understood by those for whom the text was written. For all of this we need a number of different critical skills, and ultimately a measure of historical imagination, as we seek to understand the text as the author intended it to be understood, or as it was understood by those who first read it.[3]

Over against what they perceived as the dehumanizing effects of the "cult of objectivity" existentialist thinkers arose, advocating a more personal, subjective approach to hermeneutics.[4] Not only is there no *way* to know the original meaning of a given text, since, as Kierkegaard demonstrated, "significant" meaning always transcends mere probability and observation, there is no *need* to know it, since what really matters for *us* is what the text means for today, *here* and *now*. In spite of their antipathy for each other, those advocating the historical-critical method and those touting the existentialist posture are agreed that there is a meaning to be found in the text, a message or lesson which can be discerned, either after appropriate scientific investigation, in the former case, or after proper demythologization, in the latter case.

Bultmann is as clear as he is adamant that the meaning of biblical texts, for instance, must and can lie only in the fresh "self-understanding" which it brings to each of us. As he puts it:

The real purpose of myth is not to present an objective picture of himself in the world in which he lives. Myth should be interpreted not cosmologically, but anthropologically, or better still, existentially. Myth speaks of the power or the powers which man supposes he experiences as the ground and limit of his world and of his own activity and suffering. He describes these powers in terms derived from the visible world, with its tangible objects and forces, and from human life, with its feelings, motives, and potentialities...Hence the importance of the New Testament mythology lies not in his imagery, but in the understanding of existence which it enshrines.[5]

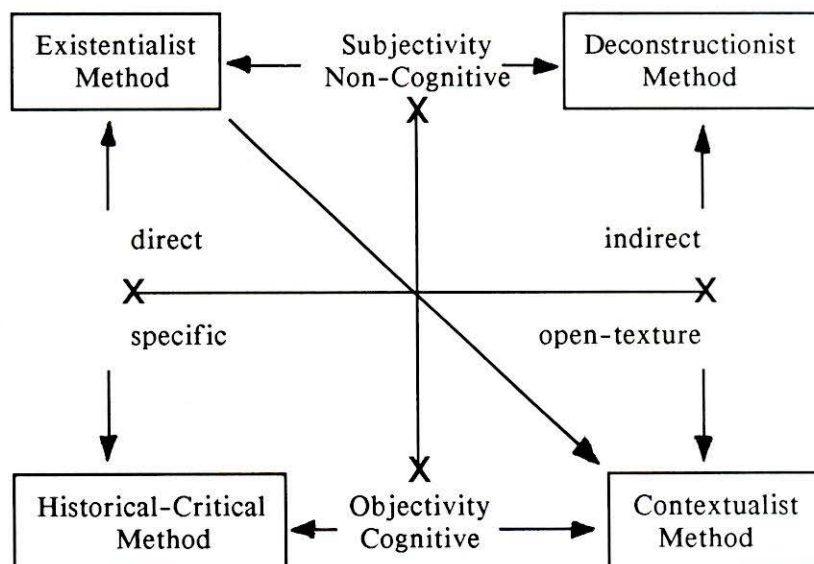Following along in the subjectivist mode, and drawing as well

on the advice of the "new critics" to avoid the fallacy of assuming anyone can determine the writer's original intentions, the robust deconstructionists burst on the scene.[6] This hermeneutical posture or non-posture maintains that the meaning of any text is what we *make* it, because not only are we unable to reconstruct its original meaning, either for the author or the readers, but language itself is incorrigibly vague, ambiguous and contradictory. *The* meaning of a text can *never* be ascertained and/or interpreted, either for *those then* or for *us now*, for the simple reason that language will not stand still long enough to allow a *single* meaning--and this fact ought to be celebrated, rather than lamented! Any given statement can be given a number of meanings, sometimes even the opposite of what it appears to mean, as ironic utterances clearly illustrate. One of the more enthusiastic proponents of the application of this methodology to the theological enterprise is Mark Taylor. In personal conversation he said to me that it is "the most important thing to happen to theology in the latter half of the twentieth century."

It is significant to note that the deconstructionist hermeneutical posture, while sharing the subjectivist emphasis of the existentialist approach, differs both from it and from the objectivism of the historical-critical perspective by insisting that meaning is never direct, but is, rather, entirely a function of the hearer's interpretive response. In other words, according to deconstructionist thinkers, the focus of meaning has shifted from the author, to the text itself, and finally to the reader alone. In short, the activity of interpretation, as well as *the* meaning of a given text, has now become so indirect, the focus has become so "soft," as to be essentially nonexistent. Meaning is in the mind of the reader or hearer, *period*.

It is, of course, impossible to deny both the strengths and weaknesses of each of these hermeneutical postures. The trick is to devise some way of integrating the former and avoiding the latter without ending up with a lumpy eclecticism. Is there a way to maintain the objectivity and authority of the text, together with contemporary and personal relevance, and yet acknowledge the indirect, open-texture of language? By itself the historical-critical method is limited, both in results and scope of application. Existentialist hermeneutics tends to be not only *a*-historical but *anti*-historical and social. Deconstructionism makes a valuable point, but becomes pointless--and indeed, meaningless--when applied to itself. So, one must ask, in Peggy Lee's words, "Is that all there is?"

My own suggestion at this juncture is to urge the development of a *contextualist* approach to hermeneutics, one which

incorporates the emphases and concerns at each of the above postures. More specifically, a contextualist hermeneutic seeks an understanding of a text in which meaning is *mediated* in and through the historical, existential and linguistic dimensions of human experience simultaneously. There simply is no need to choose any of these aspects of our common life as *the* primary mode, or to assume that they are mutually exclusive. For, clearly, our day-to-day existence does not come compartmentalized in such a manner. The following diagram indicates the relationship amongst these various emphases and methodologies:

Existentialist Method	Subjectivity Non-Cognitive	Deconstructionist Method
direct		indirect
specific		open-texture
Historical-Critical Method	Objectivity Cognitive	Contextualist Method

As I see it, contextualist hermeneutic is comprised of at least three main themes, each of which deserves a brief explication. The following remarks constitute my own "inscape" (with thanks to Gerard Manley Hopkins) into the hermeneutical thicket sketched above.

II

First, a contextualized perspective acknowledges the deeply *social* and *relational* character of language and speech. People speak, not only *in order* to be understood, but *because* they are understood. It is language which mediates social reality to us, both initially and continuously, and which brings us into the human community, both as members and as selves. Thus the hermeneutical task is surely grounded in a basic knowledge of

what a given text meant in its *original* human context, both historically and linguistically. This historical-critical concern is complemented, rather than set aside, by an equally sincere concern for the meaning of a text in the *contemporary* setting. Moreover, neither of these dimensions is obviated by a sensitivity to the flexible, open-textured quality of language, a quality which is necessitated by the ever-evolving social tasks in which language is employed.

One thinker who has contributed a great deal to this contextualist perspective is the social psychologist George Herbert Mead.[7] Mead stressed the social character of the human self, and the crucial role played by language in the composition of both culture and personhood. He termed the process by means of which both are constituted, "symbolic interaction," and he argued cogently for the "thick" understanding of the integral relationship between language and reality which comprises the fabric of human existence. Language is more than a mere system of *signs* for designating parts and aspects of the world. It is, rather, an organic form of human behavior that creates and shapes our world as well as describing it. Here is how he states it:

> The central factor in such adjustment is "meaning." Meaning arises and lies within the field of the relation between the gesture of a given human organism and the subsequent behavior of this organism as indicated to another human organism by that gesture. If that gesture does so indicate to another organism the subsequent (or resultant) behavior of the given organism, then it has meaning. In other words, the relationship between a given stimulus--as a gesture--and the later phases of the social act for which it is an early (if not the initial) phase constitutes the field within which meaning originates and exists. Meaning is thus a development of something objectively there as a relation between certain phases of the social act; it is not a psychical addition to that act and it is not an "idea" as traditionally conceived....The social process, as involving communication, is in a sense responsible for the appearance of new objects in the field of experience of the individual organisms implicated in that process. Organic processes or responses in a sense constitute the objects to which they are responses; that is to say, any given biological organism is in a way responsible for the existence (the meanings they have for it) of the objects to which it physiologically and chemically responds. There would, for example, be no food--no

edible objects--if there were no organisms which could digest it. And similarly, the social process in a sense constitutes the objects to which it responds or to which it is an adjustment. That is to say, objects are constituted in terms of meanings within the social process of experience and behavior through the mutual adjustment to one another of the responses or actions of the various individual organisms involved in that process, an adjustment made possible by means of a communication which takes the form of a conversation gestures in the earlier evolutionary stages of that process and of language in its later stages.[8]

Another contributor to the contextualist approach is the mature Ludwig Wittgenstein.[9] He emphasized the social and active dimension of speech by likening it to the various "games people play." He did not intend thereby to trivialize or demean linguistic interchange. Rather, he sought to highlight its pragmatic nature, that it is grounded in our shared tasks and purposes, and thus that it is a way we do things in and with our *common* world. Wittgenstein likened speech to a toolbox, to chess and to the exchange of money in order to suggest that meaning is, at the deepest level, a function of use in context. After all, apart from some concrete use in a particular setting by and to a specific person(s), a given string of sounds and/or markings cannot be said to have any *meaning* at all. The following is a representative Wittgenstienian insight:

> You say: the point isn't the word, but its meaning, and you think of the meaning as a thing of the same kind as the word, though also different from the word. Here the word, there the meaning. The money, and the cow that you can buy with it. (But contrast: money, and its use.)...A main source of our failure to understand is that we do not command a clear view of the use of our words. Our grammar is lacking in this sort of perspicuity. A perspicuous representation produces just that understanding which consists in "seeing connexions"....[10]

Hans-George Gadamer[11] has also contributed to a contextualist understanding of hermeneutics by means of his explorations in the phenomenology of language. Like Wittengenstein, Gadamer focuses on the *participatory* and *interactionary* aspects of linguistic communication, particularly through the notions of "play" and "conversation." These notions underline both the creative and

dialogical character of speech, indeed, even to the point of stressing the significance of silence in an overall understanding of meaning. For Gadamer, language is *organic*; it grows and dies. In addition, language is neither optional nor arbitrary; all humans participate in it to some degree and, at the primordial level, it arises in the warp and weft of concrete daily existence. As he says:

> Language is by no means simply an instrument, a tool. For it is in the nature of the tool that we master its use, which is to say we take it in hand and lay it aside when it has done its service. That is not the same as when we take the words of a language, lying ready in the mouth, and with their use let them sink back into the general store of words over which we dispose. Such an analogy is false because we never find ourselves as consciousness over against the world and, as it were grasp after a tool of understanding in a wordless condition. Rather, in all our knowledge of ourselves and in all knowledge of the world, we are always already encompassed by the language that is our own. We grow up, and we become acquainted with men and in the last analysis with ourselves when we learn to speak. Learning to speak does not mean learning to use a preexistent tool for designating a world already somehow familiar to us; it means acquiring a familiarity and acquaintance with the world itself and how it confronts us.[12]

III

A second motif of a contextualist hermeneutic is an insistence on the *active* and *pragmatic* character of linguistic communication. Here again, the later Wittgenstein's work has proven to be most helpful, for it gave rise to the insights of the Oxford philosopher, J. L. Austin.[13] Austin began by noting that frequently we do more than merely speak when we use language, we sometimes accomplish deeds as well. When, for example, we say "I apologize," or "I pronounce you husband and wife" in the appropriate circumstances, etc., we are *performing* the act of apologizing and pronouncing. Austin dubbed such utterances "performatives," and he suggested that as an important form of speech they break down the traditional dichotomies between language and reality, and between factual judgments and value judgments. In his later work, Austin suggested that every "speech-act" consists of at least three dimensions of meaning, each of which is essential to its overall significance.

Take, for example, the sign which used to hang in British railway lavatories: "Gentlemen Lift the Seat." One might well ask whether this is a stipulative definition, an empirical description, an imperative or an invitation to upperclass larceny. Everything depends on context and use, and in spite of the fact that it is both enlightening and entertaining to play around with possible meanings, it is roughly clear what this sign *means*. However, Austin would surely suggest that there is a "referential" dimension to the utterance (there must *be* gentlemen and a seat, for instance), as well as an "intentional" dimension (what the sign-makers intended) and a "responsive" dimension (some signs are so constructed as to give rise to unintended responses). All of these aspects of meaning must be taken into consideration when interpreting the sign.

It is this *pragmatic* thrust of language which counteracts the unbridled relativism of deconstructionism. For, although any given statement is subject to a wide variety of readings, in the vast majority of cases the context either provides sufficient guidance by which to ascertain the meaning, or sufficient feedback by which to determine what went wrong in the case of misunderstanding. To acknowledge the possibility of multiple meanings and misunderstandings is a far cry from affirming that concrete interpretation is impossible. As Wittgenstein put it: "If I say 'The ground was quite covered with plants,' do you want to say that you don't know what I mean until I give you a definition of a 'plant'?" Of course, many readings are possible, even here, but that does not mean that some are not better than others.[14]

Another thinker, once again a phenomenologist, who feeds into the pragmatist current of a contextualist approach to hermeneutics is Maurice Merleau-Ponty.[15] His work on the pivotal role of human *embodiment* in the composition of our particular form of life, especially as it involves the use of speech as a form of bodily behavior, is of front-rank significance. Merleau-Ponty suggests that through embodiment and language we interact with and shape our world, both physical and social. In short, he contends that our world is in large measure linguistically constituted by means of our interaction with each other in our common environment for specific shared tasks. We can neither separate our "inner" selves from our interactional relationships with the world, nor can we grasp reality and/or its meaning directly, apart from these relationships. However, reflection can "set back...to watch the forms of transcendence fly up like sparks from a fire; it slackens the intentional threads which attach us to the world and thus brings them to notice."[16]

IV

Third, a contextualist stance toward hermeneutical activity recognizes that, at the primordial level, language and meaning are fundamentally *metaphoric* in nature. The work of Owen Barfield is highly significant here.[17]   He calls attention to a deep contradiction which underlies our modern view of language. On the one hand, we are generally committed to the idea that people in ancient and classical (not to say "primitive") times imbibed myth and metaphor, while we in modern times have "put away such childish things" in favor of more precise, scientific speech. On the other hand, we are equally committed to a theory of language which entails that it begins with specific, literal meanings and only later are metaphoric and symbolic meanings derived.   But both cannot be true.   It cannot be the case that metaphors build on literal meanings *and* that the vast majority of literal terms are in fact "dead" metaphors!

Barfield argues that at its inception, whether with respect to the species or the individual, language must be endemically poetic in the sense that it does not stand over against or represent reality, but rather functions *symbiotically* with it in the mutual composition of our experienced and known world.   Primordial speech unites thought and reality, analytic speech divides them. Both, of course, are necessary to human life, but it is clear that the unity must exist, as a Gestalt, *before* analysis can take place. Thus both the historical-critical method and deconstructionism must acknowledge a more fundamental level of meaning that provides the context or the foothold for their own activity to have meaning.   We can only analyze, we can only deconstruct, what we have understood as meaningful in the first place.

One of the most controversial books in philosophical circles in recent years has been Thomas Kuhn's *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*.[18]   Kuhn's insights into the development of scientific thought lend support to the case for a contextualist hermeneutic. In brief, he contends that in order for any scientific activity to be carried out there must exist some *theoretic framework*, some unarticulated assumptions, forming what Kuhn calls the dominant paradigm, according to which this activity, including the theoretic level, gets its direction and meaning.   He also maintains that at certain crucial junctures in the history of science, these paradigms shift, causing a revolution in the way scientists think and work. The Copernican and Einsteinian revolutions are examples of such shifts in paradigms.

What is pivotal for our topic is the idea, espoused by an increasing number of scientific thinkers, that *all* meaningful activity and thought must take place within some social and

linguistic context. Contrary to the warnings of some, this does not mean that all truth and meaning are relative in the subjectivist, skeptical sense. Rather, it simply means that serious attention must be paid to the shape and direction, to the *concrete particulars*, of the context within which linguistic meaning arises when one engages in the task of interpretation. From the fact that no meaning is contextless it does not follow that meaningful communication is impossible.

There are many points of connection between the notion of paradigm and that of metaphor in the primordial sense. It is within what Stephen Pepper called our "root metaphors"[19] that we live and move and have our being, at both the practical and theoretic levels of our common human existence. One could argue that the history of any culture, especially in relation to intercultural encounter and dialogue, exhibits shifts in root metaphors, or mythologies, parallel to the paradigm shifts in scientific thought. It is essential that hermeneutical activity be sensitive to and make constructive use of the differences and developments within and among various historical and cultural contexts.[20]

One other important thinker whose work supports a metaphorical understanding of the contextualist approach to hermeneutics is the Harvard philosopher, Nelson Goodman. In his delightfully deep little book, *Ways of Worldmaking*,[21] Goodman invites us to think of the various worlds we inhabit, such as the worlds of science, economics, art, religion, morality, etc., as the result of our collaborative, creative interaction with our multidimensional environment. They grow out of each other, overlap with each other, and at times conflict with each other. These worlds are not fabricated arbitrarily, but arise as we engage in various shared activities and purposes. Nevertheless, they develop organically out of basic alternative ways of conceptualizing reality. This sort of open-mindedness entails, to be sure, a kind of relativism, but Goodman insists that this does not mean "anything goes." He advocates a "relativism with rigor" in order to distinguish truly helpful root metaphors from wild-eyed word salad. In his own words:

> What I have said so far plainly points to a radical relativism; but severe restraints are imposed. Willingness to accept countless alternative true or right world-versions does not mean that everything goes, that tall stories are as good as short ones, that truths are no longer distinguished from falsehoods, but only that truths must be otherwise conceived than as correspondence with a ready-made

world. Though we make worlds by making versions, we no more make a world by putting symbols together at random than a carpenter makes a chair by putting pieces of wood together at random. The multiple worlds I countenance are just the actual worlds made by and answering to true or right versions. Worlds possible or impossible supposedly answering to false versions have no place in my philosophy.[22]

V

What, then, are the potential dividends for religious life and understanding of this contextualist hermeneutical stance? Clearly such an approach entails a *mediational* view of *revelation*. By this I mean a view which sees God's activity in the world as mediated in and through historical, social and natural processes and events. For the Christian faith the notion of incarnation focuses this understanding of revelation in an axial fashion. "The Word became flesh and *dwelt among* us, and we beheld the glory,...full of *grace* and *truth*." The emphasis here is on *discerned* glory amidst the significant dimensions of life, not on supernatural *intrusions* from outer space. Even and especially in Christ we see through a glass, darkly. I say "especially" because it is only by means of a mediated mode of revelation that God can embody and communicate honest love and respect for human decision and responsibility, as John Hick has so profoundly made clear.[23]

A contextualist hermeneutic will come at the *Scriptures* in a similar manner. As a most important mediator of the nature and meaning of divine revelation, the texts of the Bible must be interpreted in terms of every relevant dimension: historically, literarily, culturally, existentially and imaginatively. What they meant *originally*, as best as can be determined, what they have meant through the centuries, what they mean to us *now*, and what they *may* mean to readers now and in the future--all these contexts mediate significant meaning, even for one another. The focus should be on the various root metaphors in each context and on how they function for the people therein, always with an eye to what they may yet reveal in our own and other settings. The Scripture is a record and interpretation of the community of believers' interaction with what they discern as God's activity in their midst. Two examples come readily to mind. Martin Luther King's interpretation of Israel's approach to the "Promised Land" in relation to the cause of Black people in America and the Civil Rights Movement was more than mere application, while being less specific than simple allegory. It constitutes an exemplary case of contextualist methodology. In a similar vein, the Reformist

dimension of the Christian Feminist Movement constitutes, in my view, a sound contextualist interpretation of Paul's powerful, if belatedly understood, remark that "In Christ there is...no male or female" (Galatians 3:28). The true meaning of this remark has only *begun* to dawn on the Christian Church.

The symbolism and ritual of *worship* will also be seen in a different light as a result of a contextualist hermeneutic. Participation in traditional and/or contemporary worship need not be viewed as merely that, but can be appreciated as a mediational means of participating in a multidimensional reality, wherein significance and value arise through active commitment to and involvement with the people and events of one's context. Baptism, the saying of the creeds, and the Eucharist, for example, are activities we engage in as a community, by means of which we accomplish or perform certain tasks or acts, and which function as the primordial metaphors for expressing the discernments and commitments that lie at the center of our common faith and life. This is not to say, of course, that symbols and rituals never become obsolete or that fresh ones can never be created. It is only to say that such alterations should be effected slowly and broadly, and that when they occur they will do so as a result of contours of communal needs, values and goals. Although it has come as a shock to many Roman Catholics, the reform instituted by the Second Vatican Council in the early 1960s with respect to the liturgy of the Mass strikes me as an excellent example of a contextualist interpretation of the worship ritual. It seeks a middle ground between past significance and contemporary life, without self-destructing into sheer subjectivism. Moreover, such reform establishes connections with other dimensions of the Christian community, thereby contributing to the unity of the Church. Catholic and Protestant dialogue, as well as common worship and social action, are no longer simply a dream.

Finally, *theology* itself must also be affected by a contextualist hermeneutic. The traditional model of theology as a metaphysical counterpart to Newtonian science is clearly no longer viable. This includes all pontifical theologies, of both the philosophical and dogmatic varieties, left *and* right. Moreover, the individualized theologies of the existentialist and deconstructionist brands are of little help over the long and broad pull. The theologies most attentive to the contextualist motif would appear to be those being forged in the socio-political arena on the one hand and those working the "New Hermeneutic" field on the other hand. The former must be careful to allow for the distinction between the mediating context and that which is being mediated, lest the truth of revelation be equated with the expedient. The latter must pay

increasing attention to developing the logic of language and story in a truly metaphoric mode, otherwise we shall once again be faced with a no-win choice between objectivism and subjectivism. To my mind, the theologian who is doing the most creative, yet substantive work in this mode is Sallie McFague.[24] Drawing on the insights of the likes of Robert Funk and Dan Via, as well as insights of many of the thinkers already mentioned above, McFague explores the ramifications of approaching theology as an activity more akin to *aesthetic criticism* than to science or philosophy. Focusing on the role of *parable* as central both to Jesus's life and work and to the ongoing life of the Church, she stresses the "story" character of truth in general, as well as the metaphoric and mediational nature of revelation in particular. In McFague's words:

> The parables of the New Testament are united by a number of characteristics, of which one of the most outstanding is their concern with relationships of various kinds. What is important in the parables is not who the characters are (a static notion) but what they do (a dynamic one). The plot is always the heart of a parable, what a character or several characters decide in matters having to do with their relationships with each other. Whether one thinks of the parable of the Prodigal Son, the Good Samaritan, the Unjust Steward, or the Great Supper, it is relationships and decisions about them that are critical. Just as the central Old Testament religious language is relational--focused on the covenant between God and persons and their way of being in the world in community--likewise, if we look at Jesus as a parable of God, we have no alternative but to recognize personal, relational language as the most appropriate language about God. Whatever more one may wish to say about him, he was a person relating to other persons in loving service and transforming power.[25]

The cardinal concern for a contextual, mediational understanding of hermeneutics, in addition to its emphasis on those factors adumbrated in the foregoing pages, is the acknowledgement that whatever *truth* we possess, we carry in "earthen vessels." No truth can be revealed apart from the particulars of a concrete context, but no particular context can be equated with revealed truth. Mediated meaning must be shared both confidently and with humility, a rare and difficult combination, but a necessary one.

VI

Permit me a brief "concluding unprofessional postscript." I have no idea how my initial mentor, Professor Traina, will react to the foregoing reflections.   On the one hand, my concern to allow the scripture to "speak for itself," liberated from the tyranny of traditional and/or parochial agendae, is certainly traceable to his tireless and insightful efforts in the courses I took with him thirty years ago.   On the other hand, he may complain that I have collapsed the distinction between interpretation, application and correlation.   To this I can only answer that this distinction must be called into question, not in order to do away with it altogether, but in order to do justice to the manner and degree to which we are embodied and embedded in the language and thought patterns of our own heritage, both traditional and contemporary.   Although there is no way we can extricate ourselves from these webs of meaning in order to be eyeball-to-eyeball with truth and/or reality, we can, by acknowledging both the limitations *and* the functional adequacy of our own knowledge claims, be confident without being arrogant in our hermeneutical endeavors.   It is this circumspect confidence at which a contextualist hermeneutic aims--and that toward which Robert Traina pointed his students by means of his own example.

Notes

1. A good overview is provided by Roy J. Howard in *Three Faces of Hermeneutics* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1982).

2. Here see any "standard" text on interpretation within selected fields, such as literature, philosophy and theology.

3. Norman Perrin, *Jesus and the Language of The Kingdom* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1980), p. 4.

4. W. Dilthey and Rudolph Bultmann represent this approach in a classic manner. See Dilthey's *Selected Writings* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1976) and Bultmann's *Kerygma and Myth*, ed. H. W. Bartsch (New York: Harper & Row, 1961).

5. Bultmann, *Kerygma and Myth*.

6. Jacques Derrida, *Of Grammatology* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1976) and *Writing and Difference* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978).

7. See Mead's *On Social Psychology* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1956).

8. Ibid., p. 4.

9. Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations* (New York: Macmillan, 1953).

10. Ibid., pp. 120-122.

11. See both Gadamer's *Truth and Method* (New York: Seabury Press, 1975) and *Philosophical Hermeneutics* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1976).

12. Gadamer, *Philosophical Hermeneutics,* p. 62.

13. Especially significant is Austin's *How to Do Things With Words* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1961), pp. 132-163.

14. Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, p. 70.

15. Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception* (New York: Humanities Press, 1962).

16. Ibid., Preface, p. xiii.

17. See Barfield's *Poetic Diction* (Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 1973).

18. Thomas Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1962).

19. See Pepper's *World Hypotheses* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1942).

20. Here see Mark Johnson and Thomas Lakoff, *Metaphors We Live By* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980).

21. Nelson Goodman, *Ways of Worldmaking* (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishers, 1978).

22. Ibid., p. 94.

23. See Hick's *Faith and Knowledge* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1958), pp. 95-148.

24. See McFague's *Speaking in Parables* (1975), *Metaphorical Theology* (1982), and *Models of God* (1987), all published by Fortress Press.

25. McFague, *Metaphorical Theology,* p. 20.