

Critical Analysis of Language Bias on the Historicism vs Mythicism of Jesus

by Sven Nilsen, 2023

In this paper, I suggest that language bias of Seshatism vs Platonism plays an important role in how people argue in the debate of Historicism vs Mythicism of Jesus. I also point out other perspectives that seem to be entirely missing from the debate, which are ignored despite scientific evidence. My conclusion is that the debate is scientifically worthless or irrelevant to the origin of Christianity.

There is an ongoing debate about Historicism vs Mythicism of Jesus, which represents two different hypotheses about the origin of Christianity. Neither side argues in favor of Christian dogma, but portrays different interpretations of historical evidence. It is a debate in which the focus is not about Theism vs Atheism, but obviously, most theists are in favor of Historicism, since it aligns more with traditional Christian doctrines.

The evidence of a historical Jesus itself is very bad, on the edge of non-existence, which should suggest making room for doubt. However, the debate is more or less like a shit-show where people are throwing arguments back and forth without putting too much effort into making the debate moderated and respectful to both sides.

As a person observing this debate from the sideline, I try to come up with ways to describe the various positions in terms of language bias. My hypothesis is that what most people are doing in this debate, is to commit themselves to some language bias and proceed by attacking the other side in order to defend their own biases. The situation resembles a kind of metaphorical trench war where people put their entire careers on stake in order to gain a few inches of territory. While this is going on, there are large “Elephants in the room” around this debate which are avoided or ignored.

On one side, there are the people who argue in favor of Historicism, which clearly is Seshatic biased (from a perspective of Seshatism). Their way of arguing is based on the idea of crediting knowledge by causality, where Early Christianity evolves from one natural event, causing new natural events, taking place in the context of history. The emphasis is on the authenticity (in sense of Heidegger) and originality of Jesus, which is viewed as some sort of brilliant ancient game designer, laying out some basic rules of spirituality, out of which the sandboxed playground of Christianity evolves, kind of like a massive multi-player role playing game.

On the other side, there are people who argue in favor of Mythicism, which clearly is Platonic biased (from a perspective of Platonism). Their way of arguing is based on the idea of crediting knowledge by abstraction, where Early Christianity evolves from spiritual experiences, seen as taking place in a Jewish cosmological perspective of the universe. The emphasis is on the inauthenticity (in sense of Heidegger) and mythological aspect of Jesus, which is viewed as some sort of savior deity, used as a literary vehicle to transition from Bronze Age religious practices into new religious movements, who primarily sought spiritual enlightenment over needless animal sacrifices and superstitious beliefs in blood magic.

The missing side of this debate is, like it always has been in the past 2 millennia when people try to interpret history, ignoring how people through the ages used religion to advance their own political and social goals, or personal agendas. With other words, all evidence points in favor of people using religion (as a tool) as much as relating to it in a spiritual way (as a dogma).

For example, among ways people used religion that are mostly ignored by people in the debate:

- The demographics in Early Christianity consisted of mostly women, which indicates that the religious movement was attempting to advance pro-social goals, such as undermining the power of the state to perform religious persecution, saving abandoned babies, who often were female, feeding the poor and increasing the social mobility and rights of women etc.
- The Jewish origin might be explained as an attempt to form a new religion in order to unite the Jewish people, in constructing a long term empire, advancing the construction done by Herod the Great, centered on the prophecy of a Messianic figure signifying a new era.
- The demand for a new religion was to unite the elitist monotheism with popular polytheism. This is a point that is often overlooked due to the popular belief that Jewish religion was mostly monotheistic at the time, contrary to archeological evidence. Thus the role of polytheism might be more influential when shaping new religions, viewed as attempts to build bridges between multi-cultural belief systems.

Something that is important for people to learn, looking at the history from this era through a modern mindset, is that there were external social pressures that became a huge influence in how people shaped their beliefs over time. Individual spiritual experiences and personal communication, might not be used as the primary evidence of how beliefs are shaped, since both interpretation of spiritual experiences and decisions of personal communication are highly influenced by external social pressures.

For example, the idea of borrowing from other cultures and religions is a common practice when people use religion to advance their own social status. The reason for this is that external pressure from authority does not leave room for much experimentation on personal level. When people presented their stories to other people, they would naturally build on common knowledge instead of introducing too many new ideas.

This means that e.g. Greek and Egyptian influences on Early Christianity should not be ruled out, despite that the historical claims point to Israel as the geographical origin. Not even the people living at the time would object to taking ideas and inspiration from other places, as long it helped to advance their shared political, social and economic agenda as a group of believers. Using ideas from elsewhere was also a common tactic to reduce suspicion from authority, since people generally thought of these ideas as popular folklore, hence not worth being taken seriously.

There is a demand for new religious movements that undermine existing authority to present themselves as harmless. The “Elephant in the room” here is that people from multiple nations were willing to take on ideas coming from, Jerusalem, a geographically outpost of the Roman empire at the time, located in-between two geographical centers of the empire, Syria and Egypt. Such a dynamical social process, taking place in multiple distant locations at the same time, would probably not happen on a larger scale unless people taking on such beliefs shared a common underlying demographical cause, knowing that other people from similar demographics also shared these beliefs and took part in similar social change.

There is little benefit on taking ideas and inspiration from elsewhere unless it advances a hidden social and political agenda, which was evidently the situation during the spread of Christianity. The same rule applies to internal shaping of beliefs in the origin of Christianity itself, which might have taken ideas and inspiration from other religions and cultures. So, there is a possibility that Christianity in its origin took ideas from other places in the Roman empire and in turn the rest of the Roman empire took ideas from Christianity and adding their own ideas.

One can not rule out the possibility that Jesus was a savior deity inspired by other cultures and religions. This character could have been developed, as a tool, to unite groups of people who were struggling socially. Most people who lived in the complex political environment at the time would be able to predict the benefits of developing a common Messianic figure. This figure represented the Apocalypse, which meant the end of Roman authority in the region. It also represented the start of a new era, The Kingdom of Heaven, promising social stability. The latter is sometimes forgotten, since it emphasizes the hopes of socially vulnerable people, who were not motivated by demonstrating their scholarly knowledge in front of an audience, but to actually increase their quality of life through religious and political means. This particular demographic is consistently rewritten out of history, placed on the sideline, seen as insignificant of influence, because the people who write history almost universally come from a privileged social background.

The reason for masquerading this activity with social goals as a new religious movement, is to avoid suspicion from authority. It benefits the in-group when the authority views them as stupid and superstitious people. This enables greater social control of the in-group while shaping desired social boundaries to the outside world that enables religious conversion and zealotry. However, it also opens up the possibility of conspiracies and behind-the-scenes social manipulation. There are many examples in history where poor people are revolting against authority while the power ends in the hands of a few individuals who manipulate the movement politically.

For example, the single most debated point in Historicism vs Mythicism consists of determining whether Paul believed James was the biological brother of Jesus, or a “brother” meaning fellow believer in Jesus as savior, as distinct from an “apostle”, a higher title reserved for the leadership of the sect. Notice, Paul was the person who contributed most to the inter-national spread of Early Christianity, in which role he took up as an apostle. One could also read the letters of Paul as a social tension between James and Paul where he deliberately avoids calling James an apostle, instead calling him by a lesser title, in order to increase his own social status to the readers. Such petty behavior is not unknown to mankind and Paul might not have in mind at the time that people would read his letters 2 millennia later. There are other places where Paul engages in similar behavior, emphasizing his own status as an apostle, for example, when he claims that even an angel appearing to people is not evidence he is wrong.

On the other hand, if James himself invented the Jesus character based on a personal agenda, or belonged to a group which held a dogma of Jesus as a savior deity, not a biological being, then there is none or little reason to believe that Paul refers to an actual historical figure.

Other explanations of Paul’s beliefs, that Jesus was the biological brother of James, are that Jesus was either was made to play the Messianic figure in public as part of a conspiracy of ancient feminism, political propaganda, or actually believed himself incorrectly to be a Messianic figure, e.g. by suffering from something like untreated bipolar disorder. Neither of these explanations have gained mainstream support among scholars.

The consensus among scholars on the New Testament is that Jesus was an apocalyptic preacher which was crucified by order of the Roman prefect Pontus Pilates. With other words, the most boring explanation possible, reassuringly scholarly sounding, that is still somewhat consistent with mainstream dogma of Christianity, while sweeping the role and influence of the demographics in this sect under the historical carpet. All attempts to portray this sect as consisting of mentally unstable people, possible radical feminists or ambitious conspiring political agents, are dismissed, despite evidence of this happening in new religious movements all over the world. There is a massively invested motivation to keep Christianity historically grounded in an authentic language bias (in sense of Heidegger).

Contrary to today's popular beliefs, archeological evidence suggest that polytheism was still widely spread within Judea and Galilee at Jesus' time. Asherah worship was mentioned multiple times in the old testament, sometimes dismissively as some form of religious prostitution, instead of a more historical likely religious movement to empower women. This propaganda effect might not be as large on the population (as popularly believed among people of today's cultural mindset), since most people were illiterate (98%) and most likely never visited Jerusalem. It is very likely that Asherah worship continued for centuries despite attempts to persecute it.

Here are more "Elephants in the room":

- While we lack significant evidence of Jesus' existence, which has gained a lot of attention due to the popularity of this character, the case is much worse for establishing consensus around demographics and trends in gender depending beliefs.
- Hathor symbols were found in Jewish female tombs in Jerusalem from Jesus' time, which indicates that Egyptian mythology might have an influence in the popular religion.
- It is possible that the distinction between monotheism and polytheism was more blurry at the time, than what is commonly assumed when debating the historicity of Jesus.
- There was also a lot of political instability, due to the previous assassination of Julius Caesar, which ended the Roman republic, and following suicide of Cleopatra, which ended the Ptolemaic dynasty.
- There are also very few sources on the role of ancient spy networks (such as the one established by Herod the Great), their effort to spread religious or political propaganda and possible influence in shaping new religions to obtain political goals.

So, there are multiple external factors which could have influenced what people believed.

None of these points are even debated in Historicism vs Mythicism.

The impression I have is that the debate focuses on talking points which are not grounded in scientific evidence, but subject to interpretation and confirmation bias. The situation also serves as a gardened economic niche of book publishing on the topic, trying to present itself as a serious scholarly discipline, while ignoring the absurd nature of social struggle throughout history using religion as a tool for advancing social, political and economic goals, not merely as a doctrine.

I therefore conclude that the debate is scientifically worthless or irrelevant to the origin of Christianity. There is no new evidence to present and what evidence is at hand is not living up to the standards of scientific inquiry. Most of the books being published on the topic are targeting an audience who finds the origin of Christianity interesting from a perspective of Theism or Atheism, a place where people are socially vulnerable about their beliefs, unprepared to receive actual scientific evidence. So, the entire debate has boiled down to a few talking points in which nobody can make further progress beyond name-calling. In the process, the origin of Christianity itself is not debated scientifically, but merely to have a debate format that makes people engaged while staying comfortable.

The world has never historically been acting, on a scientific basis, as clean tapestry of patterns confirming to dogmas or simplified philosophical positions. There is no reason to believe that myth did not play a role in the life of some, potentially possible, historical Jesus, or that there were no claims about biological relationships to savior deities, considering that gifted individuals at the time were often referred to as offspring of deities by the general public. The historical and cosmological views that people had in this era, blended into each other and was used both as personal spiritual beliefs and for advancing social, economic and political goals. To assign the little evidence present to either interpretation just confirms to existing language biases and subjective assumptions.

Appendix A – Debate of Historicism vs Mythicism

One of the most quoted scholars on Historicism, mentioned on almost every wikipedia page on the topic, is Bart Denton Ehrman (PhD). He is an American New Testament scholar focusing on textual criticism of the New Testament, the historical Jesus, and the origins and development of Early Christianity. He has written and edited 30 books, including three college textbooks. He has also authored six New York Times bestsellers. He is the James A. Gray Distinguished Professor of Religious Studies at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. His PhD is from a private school in theology, Princeton Theological Seminary, in Princeton, New Jersey (USA).

One of the most quoted scholars on Mythicism, frowned up and described as a fringe theorist on almost every wikipedia page on the topic, is Richard Cevantis Carrier (PhD). He is long-time contributor to skeptical websites, including The Secular Web and Freethought Blogs, Carrier has published a number of books and articles on philosophy and religion in classical antiquity, discussing the development of early Christianity from a skeptical viewpoint, and concerning religion and morality in the modern world. His PhD is from Colombia University, a private Ivy League research university in New York City (USA).

The basic problem of the debate is that the side of Historicism basically uses textual criticism as the primary evidence that Jesus existed. Similarly, the side of Mythicism also uses textual criticism to argue about what people living in the ancient world believed. However, textual criticism does not compare to other methods of scientific inquiry, such as archeological evidence and geographical and demographical studies, specially not when one is basing claims on copies of copies of the original texts, out of which an unknown number of texts, only a few survived. It would be like, if I was reading texts of Ehrman or Carrier hundreds of years from now where I only get a glimpse into a few of them, then I probably would come up with a false model of what they believed.

Now, you might think that if I had a copy of the text, I could assign a high probability that the text was written by a person who believed what they wrote at the time. However, the history of Christianity is a pile of forgery on top of forgery and fictional history. In addition, texts written from so-called “heretical” movements of Early Christianity were destroyed. It does not get worse as a basis for forming arguments, in my opinion.

On top of this unreliable material, the talking points boil down to:

- Paul’s mentioning James as the biological brother of Jesus
- A handful mentions of Jesus/James by external Roman sources

This is not science. It is about selling books, courses and provide comfort to people who are either theists, reluctant atheists or anti-theists. It has very little to do with the origin of Christianity.

For example, a person who grows up in an Evangelical church and decides to de-convert as a grown up, has probably never been exposed to textual criticism of the New Testament before. In this situation, it is much more comforting to read Ehrman’s books than to e.g. learn about psychology and mental illnesses such as bipolar disorder. It is also less comforting to read about new religions formed around extremism, feminism and politics. The latter topics are scientifically relevant to form grounded beliefs in reality about the origin of Christianity. If a person is only looking for comfort, then it is easier to believe that there was an actual historical person and that they did not entirely wasted their time. People in this situation want an experience of being “enlightened” by scholarship and identify themselves with a more down-to-earth Jesus. People who are vulnerable in their personal beliefs are more likely to seek comfort than the absurd and violent history of Christianity.

Now, you might think that this is an argument against Historicism. However, Mythicism has similar problems, since when you argue on basis of textual criticism, it is easy to overlook the historical context in this era. There was a lot more political instability than in previous centuries. Religious traditions that kept people united were falling apart, so people sought to build new traditions to preserve their social network. More people moved into cities and got exposed to new religions everywhere. When a person is trying to convert people to a new religion, they do usually not criticize old beliefs, but explain how their pre-existing religious traditions fit into the new paradigm and why the new paradigm is better.

The argument that some Mythicists use, is that savior deities are often non-historical, but after a while, people make up stories as if their personal savior was a real person. This is not uncommon. However, the historical situation at the time of Jesus makes the situation more complex. There is reason to believe that people were exposed to external social pressures which did not apply as often in previous centuries. The political world, seen from a normal person living at the time, would seem very unstable, as two of the most powerful political institutions, the Roman republic and the Ptolemaic dynasty, were falling apart. So, the likelihood of some person claiming to be Messiah or prophesying the Apocalypse, is very plausible.

There is no possible way to settle this debate from a perspective of textual criticism. This is like building an airplane out of paper. You can make something that flies, but it will not carry people.

The problem of advancing this debate in a scientifically grounded direction, is not about whether Jesus was a biological person or not, because the little evidence available does not give a clear picture. The problem is to figure out what kind of situation people, identifying as the first Christians or followers of Jesus, were living under. People at the time did not think that their writings were going to be of interest to people living in 2 millennia later. You have to think about them as living in a situation, pressured by external factors and making decisions relative to personal goals, political alignment, gender depending beliefs etc. Making Jesus a historical person does not solve anything except providing comfort to people who previously believed in Jesus. The scientific interest is in the community, not in the individual roles, because we have no way to establish scientific consensus about an individual person's beliefs at the time. Jesus is a character that later Christians relate to spiritually, but the historical Jesus might not play the role of the single founder of Christianity.

For example, most people have heard of Steve Jobs and believe he was the single founder of Apple, a tech company. However, there was another Steve: Steve Wozniak, who actually built the first prototypes of the Apple computer. Steve Wozniak has largely being left outside of the popular mindset about Apple, because he does not appeal to the personal beliefs and emotions that most people have when they get obsessed with Apple products.

So, when people leave Evangelical churches, they want to hear about the single founder of Christianity, Jesus, as a historical person which they can relate to personally. What if James, Jesus' brother, was equally a participant in the foundation process? Are people interested in a such story? No, of course. It does not buy into the existing language bias that people have. People want to hear things that confirm to their existing set of beliefs, instead of being presented with new scientific evidence.

What about the women that was in Jesus' social orbit? Could some of them have written speeches that Jesus held? This point is often overlooked, despite having a second person to write a speech beforehand, while having the charismatic popular figure holding the speech, is more common than not in social movements. So, the words, that Christians today take as God's word directly being beamed down into Jesus' body, could be the words of a simple working woman, or perhaps somebody working a spy, contributing to political propaganda or participating in radical feminism.

Since such positions (which are actually backed by scientific evidence from all over the world and happens in the formation of new religions) are more uncomfortable to the average person who just had their world turned upside down after starting to ask questions about their world view, they are more likely to seek comfort in writings produced by scholarly sounding, reasserting positions by people with theological backgrounds, using talking points without any scientific evidence, such that the reader can make their own subjective interpretation.

The situation in Judea and Galilee at Jesus' time must be seen from the perspective of people actually living through these times, not through the distorted lens of modern religions and politics. The reason is that the modern mind is influenced by large movements such as Scientism and Pietism, which was much later developments and created sharper boundaries of what people today consider science or religion.

For example, people at the time organized complex social structures without relying on instant communication across large distances. In addition, they had take into account the uncertainty of correct information, possible future threats to wellbeing and the cost of not being pro-active when an opportunity presented itself. Female leaders were suspected due to the long tradition of matriarchy in Egypt, so a common technique was to establish a popular figure that was male, while keeping the actual organization under control by a shadowy female person. This confirms with scientific evidence of new religious movements today. Operating without a spy network might be a political gamble. Contrary the belief that only male participated in politics, there is some evidence that women participated in their way, by spreading rumors, assassination through poisoning etc.

During the history of Christianity, the role of women in active social and political movements has always been downplayed as insignificant. This is contrary to the scientific evidence about new religions in general, where women play an important role. Similarly, the sources on Early Christianity points to women in high positions of status, sponsoring the movement and possibly contributing to establishing multi-national information networks. There are two explanations for a such development, either that new networks were being formed, or that people used established networks. Among one of the possibilities, is that descendants from families who were killed in revenge of the assassination of Caesar, sought to undermine Caesar's legacy by building grass-root movements. What better place to start than in some Roman outpost, where the opponents of Roman authority were abundant and were easily convinced that they were on the way to establish a new empire, due to the vast construction work done by Herod the Great? This culture consisted of tribes with diverse beliefs and religious practices, which the political elite failed to unite using force, by attempting to convert illiterate people to monotheism. Guess what? Jesus starts his role as a preacher in the center of this target demographic, in Galilee. His message is oriented toward women, aligned with a version of the monotheistic message, but sympathetic toward the popular polytheism. The women at his side follows him everywhere, possibly providing assistance of various sorts and conveniently became the first witnesses of his resurrection. Coincidence?

The Jesus character functions like the distraction that a magician uses when performing his tricks. These people know what they are doing. They know that the target demographic will look to a male charismatic figure as the leader, ignoring what happens right in front of them. Later, Jesus was portrayed as a hand-worker, reflecting the likely professional occasion of most preachers under Early Christianity, while women in the back rows at the meetings were whispering about how handsome the preacher was. While there is rich, political untouchable, and virtuous woman paying for the food and drinks and encourages slaves to participate in meetings, so they can be trusted to perform certain activities during the day (women commanded slaves at the time), without revealing what was going on to the authorities. The Mary character is the very portrait of this innocent woman who just gives birth to Jesus, and not contributing any influence on the actual historical events, except being present in all important situations, providing support and organizing everything.

Yeah, sure. I probably think we should go back to discussing whether Jesus was the biological brother of James or not, based on basically none scientific evidence, because there is nothing interesting about the origin of Christianity otherwise. Look away! Look at this shiny Messiah figure and not bother your mind about things like promoting rights of women in a political environment stigmatized against female leaders.

The debate of Historicism vs Mythicism is focusing on preserving people's biases. They are aiming at white, male and privileged social backgrounds. This is a demographic where people are so sensitive and vulnerable about their beliefs that they are completely blindsided by how the world actually works around them. Do you think most women at Jesus' time cared about a cosmological Jesus? Or do you think women would follow an apocalyptic preacher around? Or do you think women would follow a person who served as a figure head for a social movement while they would get away doing all sorts of activities that fell under the nose of the authorities, given that they believed in deities who shared multi-national spread and feeling inspired of Cleopatra, a super-star celebrity, almost becoming the Queen of the entire Empire, and the very symbol of female social autonomy? While men basically fought endless wars and only contributed to social instability?

Ask yourself: What kind of product does the Jesus character sell to people? What were the demands? What was the social and political situation at the time? What factors contributed to people converting to this new religion simultaneously, across distant regions? Why did Paul see the potential in spreading his message? Could Paul be on guard against competition?

Do you actually believe that people would try to spread a message of a self-promoted Messiah figure, just because he told them to do so? Or, that there was a "cosmic secret" accessed through spiritual awakening that appealed to people because sacrificing animals is so out of fashion? Do you actually think that an apocalyptic preacher would have something to say of such profoundness that it moved the hearts of people to a such degree that they devoted their entire lives to spreading his words? Or, do you think people who spread this new religion had a skin in the game themselves?

Scholars today are struggling with the concept that people from lower social status in society can commit the incredible act of simply lying or making stuff up based on things they hear, in order to gain some higher probability of better social connections, better economic outlooks and better political influence. Ask yourself: What kind of fantasy world are these scholars living in?

Early Christianity focuses on practical and pragmatic means, such as getting food on the table, marrying into wealthy families, creating stable social relationships with other people and promoting rights of women so they can keep bringing food on the table, marrying into wealthy families and creating stable social relationships with other people. Most people in this movement probably did not think about whether it was important that Jesus existed or not. They probably thought things like "My family is converting to Christianity, so I will consider converting myself". This is not a deep philosophical position about the authenticity of religious beliefs. They observed what other people were doing around them and made estimates in their head of which side they should go to. When the political situation seemed to collapse, it was easier to bet on something new. At least they had the promise of a future socially stable society, something that the elite could not promise since all they thought about was to get more power for themselves. The Roman elite did not give two shits about common people and made no attempts to understand the perspective of Christians. So, when the elite started persecuting Christians, they did not even bother asking themselves whether it was justified. Every Christian was very well aware of this fact, so their new religion sought to undermine the authority, turning persecution into a huge advertisement opportunity. For every male preacher that got executed, a new one took the place, while the actual organizers who were wealthy women, were untouchable and if you ever attempted taking them down, you would soon find poison

in your food. Assuming these Christians were naive and insignificant historically, feels to me like making a false assumption based on underestimating people.

When people are assuming that not viewing Jesus as historical figure, is discrediting the significance of Early Christianity, they view the whole situation from a perspective distorted by modern religious institutions who seek to preserve their member numbers to benefit from taxation laws. This has nothing to do with what people actually believed and how they thought about things historically. There is no scientific basis to argue for Jesus' historical existence based on textual criticism while overlooking all the scientific evidence surrounding this religious movement.

When people living in the Roman empire at the time, accepted Jesus as the Son of God, they thought about it as a social criticism of the Roman elite, who claimed divinity due to Caesar's legacy. People did not care whether Jesus was actually the Son of God, or not. Why should they? They were not actually so superstitious that they could not differentiate between a figure-of-speech and watching the obvious philosophical consequences of seeing a rotten, half-eaten by rats, female baby, thrown at the side of the road, while marching soldiers passing by, toward a yet needless war.

It does not take a very high IQ to connect the dots, once you can imagine the situation that these people were going through during their lives. They were not ignorant, superstitious people of no political or historical influence. In fact, these people viewed themselves as more intellectual and enlightened compared to previous generations, moving on from Bronze Age religions (which used belief in blood magic at its core, the idea that people be washed free of their sins using the remaining power of creation from recently dead animals), instead, looking at the world, seeing that the way things are, are obviously not working nor desirable for the long term. Change coming from within, they started changing the world themselves step by step, focusing on one practical task after another. It seems very implausible that they would focus on the idea of an actual historical Jesus being the case or a cosmological Jesus which descended and ascended the seven heavens, marked by the orbits of planets. These things were of interest to the people obsessed with historical events or astronomy. Most people just went with what other people believed around them, winging it to create a better tomorrow, to get married, to have a stable income etc.

Later, when Christianity established itself as the dominating world view, they had to account for the horrible crimes they did to keep power. The elite had to justify to the public why they should have the right to live in prosperity while people were dying the streets. The elite became afraid of being exposed as forgers of history, faking the origin of their beliefs. Only then the question about the historical Jesus became of concern. This is again a perspective where the interests of the elite is seen as silencing the interest of the public. Once again, the bias toward interpreting history through the lens of elitism becomes the debate. It is like spitting in the face of the people who were among the first Christians, who are not allowed to simply be themselves as people, who they were according to scientific evidence. Instead, scholars are constructing this artificial, wannabe-authentic, perspective of ancient history that uses name-calling as the primary mechanism to keep competing views from surfacing. It so blatant false, so paper-thin mask, that it can not hold against any significant scientific inquiry. It promotes a fantasy world, with no ground in actual historical reality.

A scholar holds up a document written by Flavious Josephus, claiming that this proves beyond doubt that a real, historical person named Jesus walked around to spread his message about the coming end of the world before he was finally executed by Roman authorities. Now, everyone, safely ensured that their time and social investment was not wasted, can go back to sleep. It seems to be a scene taken out of an absurd drama movie, where people have forgotten what scientific evidence looks like. Just ignore the ever increasing stable of documents about the abuses committed that were accumulated during the long and complex history of Christianity. As long there is sliver of hope, a thread to hold onto, that there was an actual person, or an actual myth that makes

cosmological sense, in order to explain why the other group of believers/non-believers are superstitious idiots. Historical reality, how people thought and believed in general, does not enter this debate, because people being people is not something permitted to happen, ever (:P).

Appendix B – Seshatism vs Platonism

When the human brain learns to think of the world through abstract representations, it transforms information coming from the senses while checking it against expectations. The deep layers of the brain that are closer to mental representations are called “latent space”. This space can be thought of as a linear vector space of embedded vectors representing semantic meaning. The algebra of this space is how the brain can come up with new ideas by combining examples it has previously learned. We know how this works because we have replicated these layers in machine learning and compared them to samples from brains. Not only from humans, but from other animals too.

So, by default, the psychological representation of the world, seen from within a human brain, is many-dimensional. This is because the human brain is adapted to live and perform complex tasks in an environment of high fidelity. People do not behave as if there are only one or two dimensions of their representations that are more significant than others. Any such behavior is often diagnosed as mental disorder.

From a logical perspective, an analogue of what humans mean as propositions would be to have some sort of infinite-valued logic. The problem is that there are few developments of such theories today. For each added dimension, the binary operator space, which is how language produces simple composable primitives, grows super-exponentially. This means, we do not actually have a reasonable logical model of how people think in general. All logical languages we are studying today are boiled down, simplified versions, which treats only some aspects of human thought.

Now, if you are going to extend a logic from single valued to higher dimensions, then there are certain criteria that arises naturally due to optimal compression of information. One such criteria is to reduce the semantic overlap of newly introduced dimensions with existing dimensions. In mathematics, this criteria is called “orthogonality” and explains why such high-dimensional spaces of semantics become linear vector spaces.

A counter-intuitive consequence of this criteria is that when the first dimension deals with truth, such as `false` and `true` denoting a truth value, the next dimension should not be about truth. So, most of the higher dimensions are not about truth, essentially. This puts into question: What are these higher dimensions about? One efficient second dimension is about plurality of solutions. This means that one can encode a statement about a unique solution, a possible solution among other solutions, or an “imaginary” solution which functions theoretically, but has no underlying model.

In Path Semantics, we use $\sim a$ to denote the second dimension after the first dimension a . The notation $! \sim a$ refers to a unique solution and $\sim a$ to a possible among multiple solutions. When this information is not mentioned, but left out, one is talking about “imaginary” solutions.

This turns out that it is sufficient to have only two dimensions to start address psychological phenomena of language bias in human thought. On one hand, people who tend to emphasize concrete truth, or originality, can be thought of as tending to use $! \sim a$ more often than $\sim a$. On the other hand, people who tend to emphasize abstract truth, can be thought of as tending to use $\sim a$ more often than $! \sim a$. We call the first group “Seshatism” and the second group “Platonism”. Platonism here is a subset of the historical platonism, which is written with a small case “p”. This does not devalue Platonism, because as a subset, statements that hold for this subset also hold for

general platonism. Seshatism on the other hand, is the dual of Platonism, which produces a kind of dialectic relationship where higher dualities of Seshatism vs Platonism can be categorized by properties such as perspectives, authenticity, sympathy or tolerance. The calculus of these higher dualities is Joker Calculus.

Joker Calculus is the first attempt to study language bias of higher dualities in a formal setting. There are many phenomena of language biases that systematically can be associated to various expressions in Joker Calculus.

For example, when watching a movie, a viewer today has often the ability to move back and forth in the time line, but this is the only degree of freedom. This language bias is called “Seshatic Platonism”, because the degree of freedom that originates with the viewer is a perspective of Seshatism, while the content of the movie is static and abstract, hence Platonism.

Any content of information can be transformed into a movie. Likewise, there exist other language biases which equally can represent information. However, the representation of information does not affect the underlying mathematical properties of the content. Humans do not have access to most possible representations of data and are therefore constrained in their way of thinking. The only way one can study language bias in general today, is through mathematical notation. In the future, we might be able to construct more models of various language biases to give us a better picture of the space of potential. In art, new language biases are often signified as eras of different stylistic choices by artists, exploring perspectives of similar underlying models as a creative medium. In a more general setting, there are fashions of social thought corresponding to biases.

This makes Seshatism vs Platonism the most important language bias, since it is the most commonly used form of bias besides the initial dimension of truth. However, it is important to recognize Seshatism vs Platonism as orthogonal to truth, not just as a perspective about truth itself. When people fail to recognize this bias, they often engage in endless discourse over which language bias feels more “correct” than the corresponding dual language bias.

I seems to me that the debate of Historicism vs Mythicism is “trapped” in a such discourse where the language bias of Seshatism vs Platonism is used as a method of argumentation that outperforms the significance of presenting new scientific evidence. There has been no new scientific evidence presented for a long time in this debate, while mostly ignoring new scientific evidence orthogonal to either side. This means, scientific evidence is cherry picked by both sides in attempt to attack the other side. Thus, a false scholar consensus defending the traditional perspective on historicity of Jesus was formed, without forming similar consensus about insights from new scientific evidence.

I think this approach is problematic, because the whole enterprise of scholarship is to present evidence to people who might find this information valuable. When only a selected piece of evidence is presented, this does not form a solid basis to people so they can start to critically evaluate historical evidence for themselves.

For example, when people are presented with the case for Historicism, they are taught to believe that figuring out why Jesus was a historical figure explains why people believed in his teachings. This is a subjective position that builds on underlying assumptions that modern people are concerned about. When studying new religions around the world, people are often not concerned about historicity of the dogma, but more about whether these beliefs fit their social situation.

Similarly, when people are presented with the case for Mythicism, they are taught to believe that figuring out why Jesus was a cosmological figure explains why people believed in his teachings. This is a subjective position that builds on underlying assumptions that modern people are

concerned about. When studying new religions around the world, people are often not concerned about the cosmological perspective of the dogma, but about whether these beliefs fit their social situation.

Both sides ignore the most important factor of why people believe stuff: External social pressures.

Just like, when people have latent representations which puts too much emphasis on a few dimensions of semantics, is an indicator of mental disorder or illness, one can analyze the debate of Historicism vs Mythicism as a kind of shared mental disorder among scholars, where opposing views play a greater role than actually establishing scientific accuracy.

In the origin of Christianity, people had no idea that their religious views would become parts of one of the mainstream religions of the world. The scale, the incredible influence and consequences coming from this small sect, is nearly incomprehensible. However, treating these people as kind of out-of-distribution individuals, has no basis in science. They are neither saints or devils. They are just people. These people must be historically allowed to be subjective, selfish, corruptible, liars etc. because people are like this in the real world. When presenting these individuals, it is important to take into account the bias of the modern mind, who looks at this period in history through a metaphorical reverse telescope. The importance of Jesus as character must be downplayed and the role of ordinary people must be magnified in order to replicate a somewhat realistic situation around the early formation of a new religion.

If the evidence is selected by cherry picking and presented as a way to establish consensus around existing language bias, then this undermines the whole point of scientific inquiry. Scientific evidence is meant to challenge people's beliefs. Sometimes we let the imagination run wild, but it also happens that history can be stranger than fiction. A boring explanation, such that Jesus was an apocalyptic preacher, is not the only scientifically plausible explanation. Likewise, that Jesus was a super-hero from outer space, is also not the only scientifically plausible explanation. The unique period of this era, with political instability, complex social hierarchies and information networks across nation boundaries, allows a much more diverse set of perspectives.

There is a difference between claiming that Jesus is a character which is believed to have originated in the region of Judea and Galilee, and claiming that Jesus was an actual person or an actual cosmological myth. On what basis do people claim these positions? Textual criticism is not a solid scientific foundation for making such claims. You can take any religious development through history and examine its pragmatic usage and look what actually contributes to its spreading. Things like emphasis on rituals, adaptation to pre-existing beliefs and future outlook plays a vastly more important role than whether people actually believed such events happened either historically or in a spiritual, cosmic sense.

When people make these kind of claims, they assert that their perspective is the correct way of viewing things. However, in order to make such claims, scientific evidence is needed in order to establish a valid scientific consensus. This is not the case about either Historicism or Mythicism. There are too many topics that shows up due to new scientific evidence, that should be allowed room in the debate before settling on a final consensus. Most of these things, are not the kind of topics that people feel comfortable talking about in front of audience, e.g. gender dependent beliefs through history, because they are afraid to enforce social stereotypes or be met with criticism.

One can prove using logic that it is impossible theoretically to decide whether Seshatism or Platonism is any more "correct" than the dual position. Now, what is it about Historicism vs Mythicism that is not just a reflection of this kind of language biases? What kind of evidence is presented to establish a ground of truth beyond pre-existing beliefs? When both sides have clear

language bias, this is an indicator that people on both sides are not willing to take on different perspectives to move the debate forward. The same talking points are repeated over and over in the debate and when this does not work, people start to call each other names. This does not look to me like a good example of serious scientific discipline. New perspectives must be allowed room in the debate, precisely because we have good evidence of people settling in specific patterns of language bias over time. I suggest tone down the talking points and present new scientific evidence instead.