1 Introduction to the problem

1.1 The problem: Why does Paul use reason language in Rom 12.1?

The goal of this book is to explain Paul's surprising use of reason language in Romans 12.1 (λογικός). Paul does not use the word λόγος or λογικός at an earlier point in the letter in a way that might prepare us for its appearance in Rom 12.1. This word never appears in the Greek traditions of the Old Testament and the Apocrypha (the "Septuagint"). And yet he uses it in this important transition in the letter's argument (Rom 12.1–2):

(1a) I invite you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God,

1 In a more restricted sense, we use the term "reason language in Rom 12.1" (sometimes just "reason language") specifically for Paul's use of λογικός. Of course, in a broader sense "reason language", in discussing Greco-Roman texts, should include other Greek terms (in some of their senses), such as ἄλογος, γνώμη, διαλογισμός, διαλογίζεσθαι, διανοεῖν, διάνοια, ἐνθύμησις, ἔννοια, ἔμφρων, ἐπιστήμη, ἡγεμονικός, καρδία, λογίζεσθαι, λογισμός, λογιστικός, λόγος, νοεῖν, νοερός, νόημα, νόησις, νοῦς, πνεῦμα, σοφία, σοφός, σύνεσις, συνετός, φρήν, φρονεῖν, φρόνημα, φρόνησις, φρόνιμος, or Latin terms, such as animus, cogitatio, consilium, intellectus, mens, prudentia, ratio, rationalis, spiritus. In particular, for Paul, the term νοῦς, given its use in Rom 12.2 (μεταμορφοῦσθε τῆ ἀνακαινώσει τοῦ νοὸς), and elsewhere (in Romans 1.28, 7.23, 7.25, 11.34, 14.5; cf. 1 Cor 1.10, 2.16, 14.14–15, 14.19, Phil 4.7), but also such terms as νοεῖν (Rom 1.20), λογισμός (Rom 2.15), and perhaps certain uses of λογίζεσθαι (Rom 6.11, 8.18, 14.14) seem relevant here.

While a fully integral approach with regards to the reason language used in Rom 12.1–2 might be desirable (cf., for instance, van Kooten 2008), our focus has been more restricted in terms of how we have evaluated the contextual material. That is to say, in our exploration of Paul's intellectual contexts, we have investigated texts using a broader range of reason language (see section 3.1) as well as focussing on the term λ 0y1kó ς (chapter 2), but we have not evaluated the full range of implications of the contextual parallels for all aspects of reason language in Paul. This is because the main intuition this study explores (and defends) is that the Epictetean parallels, especially 1.16 and 1.6, are the best key to understanding λ 0y1kó ς 0 in Rom 12.1, and thus, though this coheres better with certain interpretations of v0 ς 0, we have not approached Rom 12.1 from the angle of a combination of insights into Paul's "anthropological terms" (as in Jewett 1971, or, more recently, Schnelle 2014, 577–588). This has determined our focus.

While we have studied Rom 1.18-32 closely, due to its noted links with Romans 12.1-2, we have not, for instance, discussed Rom 7.23-25. We probe into some implications of our results for reading $vo\tilde{v}_{\varsigma}$ in Rom 12.2 in section 6.4, though of course this could be explored further. Our focus has thus been not on reconstructing Paul's psychology, but on how his use of reason language in Rom 12.1 points to the idea of a human vocation, in conversation with philosophical tradition, and how Paul applies this to Christ-followers in Rome.

2 He does use the lexeme $\lambda \acute{o}$ yoç in Rom 3.4; 9.6, 9, 28; 13.9; 14.12; 15.18. But the sense is not the relevant one.

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- (1b) to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God,
- (1c) which is your reason-related (λογικός) service-to-God (λατρεία).
- (2a) Do not be conformed to this world,
- (2b) but be transformed by the renewing of your mind,
- (2c) so that you may discern what it is God wants
- (2d) the good and acceptable and complete.³

Modern readers may find Paul's use of reason language surprising because it is taken for granted that Paul writes about "religion" and that "religion" and "reason" are somewhat antithetical. For an explanation of Paul's use, however, the relevant question is how the ancients used reason language and what they thought such language might imply. Hence, this book is going to explore central strands from the broad philosophical and wider cultural traditions that centre on the theme of reason within ancient discourse.

Interpreters of Paul have adduced many parallels that use the word λογικός in attempts to explain Paul's language here by a reconstruction of some *traditionsgeschichtlich* "background". But some of these reconstructions have too readily assumed that the relevant texts belong to certain already fixed categories ("religion", "ethics", etc.). We propose here a fresh reading of some of these texts in terms of different categories. These emerge from our reading of the wider tradition and are needed for an explanation of what Paul is doing in Rom 12.1–2.

Among these parallels, there is a famous passage by the philosopher Epictetus, *Discourse* 1.16.20 – 21, which has often been cited but without appreciating its full force because it has never before been fully explored in its own right with a view to explaining Paul's language in Rom 12.1. This study provides an in-depth reading of Epictetus 1.16 in its own context and suggests that this text may offer the best parallel for understanding what Paul is doing in Rom 12.1.

In order properly to appreciate Epictetus 1.16 as a parallel, such a reading needs to look at the role of the section cited by the interpreters (1.16.20) in the

³ This translation is the NRSV with significant and substantial changes. The translation of λ oyu- κ ó ς as "reason-related" is an attempt not to preempt the exegesis by a definite choice (though it does hold on to the fact that reason is in view, and not, for instance, a mere contrast to "outward physical ritual" or something of the sort). The verse division will be used in the following discussion throughout. A similar division is made by Reichert 2001, 230.

⁴ The category of religion can be problematic in the application to phenomena of the ancient world if the notion is saturated mainly by modern experience (cf. Nongbri 2013). We use it here with an awareness of the difficulty. Similarly, a notion like "reason" undergoes significant shifts in scope and contexts between the ancient and the modern world. It will be important for our argument to work out some of these differences and to take them into account for our interpretation of Paul's use of reason language.

light of the entire Discourse (1.16 as a whole). Furthermore, it needs to contextualise the parallel on the map of ancient philosophy and within its broader cultural setting. Our reading shows that the broader rubric to which it belongs is ancient discourse on what it means to be human and more specifically discourse about the role of human beings within the cosmos.

This identification rests on three characteristics of such discourse. First, the human endowment with reason and speech (the two go closely together for ancient views) is taken to be one of the most prominent characterisations of what makes humans human, of that which is peculiar to human beings (at least in the earthly sphere). Second, this view is given expression in the definition of human beings as "mortal rational animals" (θνητὰ λογικὰ ζῶα). And third, it is assumed that looking at a thing's peculiarity, and especially that of which something is uniquely capable, provides a reliable guide to determine its function, end, and purpose. In this way speaking about human beings as those endowed with reason can function, within the ancient cultural encyclopedia,⁵ as a way of claiming that this or that way of living is that to which humans are meant to aspire.

At this point there are profound intellectual and cultural differences between the ancient views on humans and their role in the wider world and those prevalent in the modern West. For the purpose of a historical exegesis of Paul's reason language it is important to be aware of them. The ancient conception of human reason is that which allows us to be in touch with the world. The world, then, is understood as a place of meaning with which human beings need to be in touch in order to realise their purpose. While not universally accepted, such a view is a fixed part of the ancient social imaginary. But this perspective is almost unintelligible to the modern Western outlook, in which reason has been described as more instrumental, concerned with finding means rather than determining ends, and in which the world is made up of stuff that is not concerned with the affairs and worries of humankind, and so meaning has to be constructed and projected, rather than "seen". The classical definition of human beings as "mortal rational animals" no longer commands widespread assent and, in any case, would be understood to mean something quite different now, given the shifts in how we understand the world, ourselves and human reason.⁷ This implies the need for a method that looks at broader contexts than the usual traditionsgeschichtlich approaches.

⁵ For the term see Eco 1976 and Eco 1984.

⁶ Cf. Ch. Taylor 1975, 6 − 7.

⁷ These shifts have been charted in great detail by Ch. Taylor 2007.

1.2 A new solution in outline

Looking at the relevant parallel texts and especially at the work of Epictetus suggests explaining Paul's use of reason language in Rom 12.1 as an allusion to the definition of human beings as animals endowed with reason. This understanding is prominent in ancient philosophical as well as broader cultural discussions. The definition of human beings in terms of rationality condenses central themes of ancient anthropology and needs to be understood within the horizon of the ancient cultural encyclopedia. Within this horizon, it is natural to assume what might seem strange to many today, namely that human beings have a purpose and function within the cosmos, understood as a larger and ordered whole, and that this function has to do with their unique position in the order of things. Humanity's position in the cosmos is based upon their endowment with reason. We argue that Paul is aware of these traditions and expects his readers to understand him as making a point about the endowment with reason as the human *proprium* in Rom 12.1.

Broadly, the argument is as follows: human beings are understood in many Greco-Roman contexts as having a role in the wider cosmos and that role is based on their place and their unique capacity. This capacity is founded upon the human endowment with reason which enables humans to fulfil their purpose if they use reason rightly. Among those texts which discuss what it means to be human and share the idea that human beings have a purpose in the cosmos⁸ one will find different conceptions of what that purpose is concretely, what the cosmos is like, how it is to be understood, and what the right exercise of reason entails. Nevertheless, there is agreement on these points in general terms: that humans have a role in the cosmos, that this role is based on what is constitutive for humans and makes them distinct, and that what constitutes their distinctness, on earth, is human reason. We argue in this book that Paul too endorses these general points and that in Rom 12.1 he draws on the philosophical traditions and language relevant to discourse about such themes. Human beings have a role in the larger cosmos and their reason gives them the potential, given certain conditions, to fulfil that role.

But explaining that Paul uses reason language in Rom 12.1 in order to make a point about the human role in the cosmos in a way that is intelligible within the ancient encyclopedia does not yet provide an answer to what he thinks the role of human beings is concretely and why he would choose to talk about this in his

⁸ This assumption would not be shared by Epicureans and Pyrrhonists for example.

letter to the Romans. To get at this, the textual unit Rom 12.1-2 needs to be understood in its place in the letter and in relation to the overall aims of the letter.

Rom 12.1-2 is an important transition between the argument of Rom 1-11 and of Rom 12-16. Most scholars accept that both parts belong together despite their noticeable differences, which have been variously characterised as a transition from a dogmatic section to one about ethics, or from a theoretical to an applied section. Just how these two parts belong together is a matter of ongoing debate and is tied up with larger questions in Pauline scholarship, such as how "theology" and "ethics" (or the "indicative" and the "imperative") relate in Paul, a question that owes much of its felt urgency to the fact that it can be used as a platform to debate the modern theological questions about "justification by faith" and what this doctrine is thought to imply about human "works". It can also sometimes be framed as the distinction between theory and praxis, where Paul first teaches his hearers what to think and then goes on to tell them what to do.9 More recent scholarship sees these ways of characterising the parts and their relationship as inadequate and has come up with attempts to integrate them more closely. 10 The exeges of Rom 12.1-2 as the transitional piece plays an important part in these ongoing debates. Our novel explanation of why Paul uses reason language in Rom 12.1-2 has implications for this debate and offers a contribution to these recent attempts at integrating "theology" and "ethics".

In order to state how our explanation of Paul's reason language in Rom 12.1 contributes to the integration of these broader categories in which Paul's thought is discussed, we need to answer the larger question of what the overall aims of Paul's writing the letter were. Paul is writing his letter to the communities of Christ-followers in Rome, which he has not himself founded, but in whose ways of living together he seems to have an interest and which he includes in his plans for the future. Our study joins those interpretations that see Paul concerned with the formation of particular kinds of communities and hold that Paul wrote Romans to promote a particular way of living in these communities. 11 Paul understands his own role as that of an "apostle of the Gentiles" (Rom 11.13) and

⁹ Wenschkewitz 1932, 125 speaks of a "darlegende[r]" and a "ermahnende[r] Teil."

¹⁰ On this question, see Zimmermann 2007 and Horn and Zimmermann 2009.

¹¹ Stowers 2011 problematises the concept of "community" in socio-historical analyses of groups of Christ-followers where its unreflective use as a descriptive term might suggest more social and ideological similarity than can be established. For our purposes, however, the term is useful, as our goal is not a socio-historical description of the groups Paul addresses, but an analysis of the kind of aims Paul might have had in addressing them and with the picture he presents in his writing.

he writes his letter to a partly unknown audience. Thus he is introducing himself through expounding at great length what his own ministry is about at the same time as he is trying to win them for or further encourage them in a certain way of living in these communities.

What is this way of living about? This we submit is the relevant question. Paul's basic belief is that Jesus of Nazareth is Israel's messiah, who died and was raised to new life, and that these recent events have marked the inauguration of a new age, in which a new way of life has become possible for human beings, one in which they can aspire to genuine humanness. Other philosophical and cultural traditions of antiquity similarly operate with the idea of genuine humanness to commend their version of the best life. In texts that operate with the idea of humans having a role in the wider cosmos, the idea of genuine humanness can take the form of fulfilling the human purpose. When the purpose for humans corresponds to a divine intention we will speak of a "human calling" or a "human vocation", that is, the idea that human beings have a task in life that originates in the divine sphere or involves essential reference to that sphere (however it is conceived) and that is incumbent upon human beings as such.¹² Such ideas have wider currency within ancient philosophical and wider cultural traditions. Again, some of the texts in which these ideas become most clear are from the philosopher Epictetus. It is highly significant for our thesis that Epictetus 1.16, which serves as the most important parallel for the reason language in Rom 12.1, is a text in which the idea of a human calling also comes to a particularly clear articulation. Language about the human endowment with reason is often employed in ancient texts to speak about a human role in the cosmos. Some texts go even further in such a way that one may speak of the idea of a human vocation.¹³ Epictetus clearly shares in the broader tradition that assumes some role and purpose of human beings, but at some points also goes further and expresses the idea of a human calling.

¹² We need to state at the outset that though Paul uses the lexeme family $\kappa\alpha\lambda\epsilon\tilde{\imath}\nu$ our use of the term "calling" or "vocation" is not dependent in the first place on what he is trying to say in passages in which these words occur (though that is not to say it is unrelated).

¹³ As an example: Aristotle's God, as described in the Metaphysics (1072b 18-24), is not concerned with the individual human thinker (the object of his thought is himself and thus at best he considers the world only indirectly, in its general features) and yet Aristotle describes the life of contemplation as one of the highest forms of life in which the thinker most nearly approaches the divine mode of existence, and in this way even transcends the merely human level (cf. EN 1177a 12-18, 1177b 26-31). Thus, there is a role in the order of the whole, based on human reason, which to fulfil is better than not to do so, even though it does not originate in a concern of God with the human.

If Epictetus is indeed the best parallel for understanding Paul's use of reason language in Rom 12.1, as we argue, then we may ask whether Paul too, in the argument of Romans, refers not only to a human role in the cosmos, but even, going further, to the idea of a human vocation. In this book we seek to show that the idea of a human vocation is (a) present in the argument of Rom 1-11, (b) makes excellent sense of the use of the reason language in Rom 12.1 in the light of ancient traditions, and especially the parallels in Epictetus, and (c) underlies the vision of community life which is expressed in Rom 12-16. Furthermore, it is a particular version of the idea of a human vocation that (d) contributes to the integration of Paul's theology and ethics. By considering Paul's writing to the Romans as part of the ancient discourse on what it means to be human and the discussion of what the human role is within the cosmos, our reading goes against the grain of many interpretations that operate with a classical understanding of sin, salvation and justification in terms of systematic theologies which were worked out later. (This does not of course set up an antithesis where one has to choose between a vocational reading and a soteriological one as though the two are mutually exclusive.) To make sense of this claim we need to consider more closely the shape such a human vocation might take in Paul's argument in Romans.

We submit that for Paul, too, the form of life in which genuine humanness is now available is a human calling, a human vocation of a particular sort: it is a messianic existence that takes its bearings from the events of the death and resurrection of Jesus and which aims at living in ways that conform best to the purpose of the new age which has been inaugurated in the resurrection of the messiah. Paul proclaims the good news about the death and resurrection of Jesus and he aims to foster communal life which best witnesses to these events and their implications. Paul is a Jew who believes the messiah has come and that this Christ event has important consequences for Gentiles who can now be rescued from dehumanising idolatry and become members of the messianic communities he intends to promote without them having to become Jews and get circumcised. The way in which Jews and Gentiles live together in these communities is precisely an important part of the new way of being human in which the old divisions are overcome – though overcome only ἐν Χριστῶ.

From this sketch it becomes clear why the idea of a human vocation should be suitable for Paul: Paul believes that humans everywhere are called to respond appropriately to the good news of the death and resurrection of Jesus, the messiah of Israel, to be baptised and to become part of the new communities that witness to these events and hence, to become part of the "new creation" which Paul believes is launched in these events. This is the genuinely human existence available in the light of the Christ event. It means understanding the world in the light of God's action in Christ and responding appropriately by doing things and saying things which give the best expression to the good news and which conform to the new age being launched. If we formulate the structure of this vocation more abstractly, we might say that humans are supposed to come to know what is true about God and the world and to give expression to this understanding by their actions and speech. We will refer to this as humans producing the appropriate signs. ¹⁴ The general structure of the vocation as outlined here (getting in touch with truth about God and the world and producing appropriate signs) is, we argue, an important part of Paul's argument in Romans 1 and Romans 6. It is also exactly the structure we find, once more, in Epictetus, not only in *Discourse* 1.16 but also elsewhere. ¹⁵

Of course, there are considerable differences between Paul and Epictetus (and the broader traditions which find expression in his writings): eschatology, the conception of God, the role of a messiah and so on. But in both we find the idea of a human vocation and of a certain structure to that vocation which at a general level is the same. And both aspects are combined with a particular use of reason language and ideas about the human endowment with reason. Studying Epictetus for these themes and bringing out the full force of the parallels enables us better to explain what is going on in Rom 12.1 and to detect already earlier in the argument the importance of the idea of a human vocation and even its structure. But while Paul shares this structure with Epictetus he goes even further in making the human response instrumental in the further purposes of God: humans are to understand what God has done in Jesus and to produce appropriate signs, which both signal their liberation as human beings and can become the occasion for others to come to learn the truth about what has happened. Those who belong to the messianic communities are to use their reason to find the appropriate signs in a particular situation which may allow others to get in touch with that reality and become part of it by joining the network of messianic communities. If being truly human means fulfilling the human calling, and if the human calling is to produce signs of the truth about God and the world, and if, as Paul believes, that truth is that the God of Israel has raised Jesus, the crucified messiah, then genuinely human action consists in living in such a way as best to produce signs of that truth.

Paul, then, is promoting a certain way of life which he understands to be the fulfilment of genuine humanness. By drawing on a philosophical and cultural tradition on humans as the beings endowed with reason and as such having a

¹⁴ For our use of the term "sign production", see section 1.4 below.

¹⁵ See section 4.5.

role in the cosmos, he presents the community life he advocates – the appropriate response to the Christ event – as being the fulfilment of the cultural aspirations for genuine humanness.

We can state our main claim then as follows: by using reason language in Rom 12.1, Paul alludes to widely known philosophical and cultural traditions about the role of human beings in the cosmos. Doing so enables him to present his ideal of living and working in the communities of Christ-followers as the fulfilment of the human vocation and of the aspirations to genuine humanness, which is an effective protreptic means in ancient discourse. This contributes to his overall goal of fostering communities which witness to the Christ event and coheres with his theological view that in Christ a new way of being human has been launched in which Jews and Gentiles together, as renewed human beings, are able to praise God (Rom 15.6).

How, then, is this form of the idea of a human vocation a contribution to the integration of theology and ethics? The key is to see that the community life Paul seeks to foster is itself an integrated kind of existence, in which coming to understand what has been revealed about God and the world in what happened to Christ (theology) and living in such a way as to make this understanding the basis of one's actions (ethics) inseparably belong together. The idea of a human vocation bridges the "is" and the "ought", to use the modern formulation, because the "is" itself is understood to be normatively charged, but the "ought" is responsive to the "is" because the signs to be produced are those which express the truth of the "is" that has been grasped by the knower. While ancient philosophy calibrated its "ethics" to be in tune with "physics", for Paul a new age has been inaugurated in the messiah, and therefore the new vocation is based on a new kind of thinking in relation to what might be called a "new physics".

We have now stated the problem which this book seeks to explain, indicated the wider significance of the issues involved, and given an outline of our explanation. It remains for us in this introductory chapter to do the following things. First, we will present a brief overview of previous attempts at explaining Paul's use of reason language (1.3). To a considerable extent these attempts come down to a choice of the texts deemed to be parallels. Second, we will discuss our notions of "vocation", "genuine humanness" and "sign production" (1.4). Third, we will give an overview of the chapters of our book (1.5).

1.3 Previous explanations

In this section our aim is to outline the main approaches to answering why Paul uses the language of λογικός in Rom 12.1. We are in the fortunate position that a recent contribution of Scott and the discussion of Reichert already give a good account of the main interpretations of λογικός in Rom 12.1. 16 Since both accounts agree in dividing the main solutions into three similar categories, it seems best first to discuss previous solutions in terms of the structure of their account and then to indicate other solutions in a second step. Finally, we will indicate why another approach is needed.

The three main interpretations, according to Reichert and Scott, assign to λογικός in Rom 12.1 either the meaning "reasonable" ("vernünftig"), "spiritual" ("geistlich") or "genuine, true, authentic" ("wahr, eigentlich").¹⁷

1.3.1 λογικός as "reasonable"

The first solution proceeds on the assumption that the sense of λογικός must be related to reason. An example is Betz, when he explains that Paul calls the $\lambda\alpha$ τρεία of Rom 12.1 λογικός "weil es 'vernünftig' ist, so zu handeln." This interpretation takes λογικός to express a sense related to reason, and treats it as expressing a judgment upon an action.¹⁹

Some interpretations which determine Paul's overall topic to be the true form of worship or cult (mainly based on the image of sacrifice in 12.1b and the cultic meaning of λατρεία) then develop this as an apologetic statement: Paul describes what the Jesus-followers do in their meetings, where they do not offer animal sacrifice, and Paul assures them that even though they are deprived of sacrifice, it is still reasonable what they do.

Or it could be construed as part of a polemical statement, for instance, directed against pagan forms of sacrifice (which by implication may be cast as irrational).20

¹⁶ Scott 2018, 517–525. Reichert 2001, 238–241.

¹⁷ Scott 2018, 517, 519, 524. Reichert 2001, 240 - 241.

¹⁸ Betz 1988, 212.

¹⁹ So also Evans 1979, 19 ("rational").

²⁰ A combination is Walter 1979, 437: Paul defends the "kultlos[e] Gottesdienst der Gemeinde" and calls it "[u]nser 'sinnvoller Gottesdienst'", but at the same time he attacks "[k]ultische Handlungen der euch geläufigen Art" as "sinnlos".

In a third variant, this sense is developed as the "logical" response to what God has done or to what has been explained in the previous argument.²¹ Sometimes the subject of evaluation is even God.²²

The problem with these interpretations is that the word λογικός is not used to express direct judgments upon actions as Scott's detailed semantic analysis of λογικός has shown.²³

1.3.2 λογικός as "spiritual"

The second type of solution assumes that λογικός means "spiritual" in the sense of "non-material" or "non-physical."²⁴ The λατρεία in Rom 12.1 is contrasted with forms of worship in which material offerings or animal sacrifice are employed. These solutions often assume that λογικός is used in Rom 12.1 to say something that could be expressed by πνευματικός. As parallels they point to 1 Peter 2.5 (πνευματικάς θυσίας).²⁵ Other parallels often adduced are from the Hermetic writings (for instance Corp. herm. 1.31. [λογικὰς θυσίας]; 13.18 [ὁ σὸς Λόγος δι' ἐμοῦ ὑμνεῖ σέ. δι' ἐμοῦ δέξαι τὸ πᾶν λόγω, λογικὴν θυσίαν]) in which it is assumed that they establish a sense of λογικός which means "spiritual."26 But the difficulty for this interpretation is that it is hard to see why Paul should have used a rare word (in the LXX and the NT) like λογικός, when he

²¹ Scott cites Bryant 2004, 287 for this option.

²² McCartney 1991, 128: "the sacrifices which are reasonable for God to expect."

²³ Scott 2018, 517–518. Though Scott does not point this out, the world εὔλογος would be used in such a sense.

²⁴ E.g. Käsemann 1980, 313. Dunn 1988b, 706. Even though he glosses as "rational", in effect the position of Ferguson 1980, 1165 amounts to this second type, as he explains the λογική λατρεία as "a service to God that proceeds from man's spiritual nature, the highest part of his being."

^{25 1} Peter 2.2 (τὸ λογικὸν ἄδολον γάλα) is the only other occurrence of λογικός in the New Testament. In contrast to Romans, in 1 Peter there is a use of the word λόγος that is relevant for the interpretation of λογικός, namely 1 Peter 1.23 (διὰ λόγου ζῶντος θεοῦ). The recipients of the letter are described as born anew (ἀναγεγεννημένοι) through the λόγος of God, which here means the word of God as becomes clear by the explanation in 1 Peter 1.25 (ῥῆμα), which applies the word of God in Isa 40.6 – 8 to the word that was announced in the gospel (τὸ ῥῆμα τὸ εὐαγγελισθὲν εἰς ὑμᾶς). The metaphor of being born anew for a conversion is then extended in 1 Peter 2.2, where the newborn infants (ἀρτιγέννητα βρέφη), that is those who were born anew by responding to the word of the gospel, are encouraged to long for the milk which is characterised as both λογικός and ἄδολος (without deceit, unadulterated). Thus many have seen there a reference to the "milk of the word" (see McCartney 1991, 128).

²⁶ Scott, however, argues that Corp. herm. 1.31 should be rendered "rational" (2018, 522).

might have chosen the much more frequent πνευματικός. There is little evidence that λογικός is used in such a sense²⁷ and so an implausible tradition has to be reconstructed, which assumes such a sense in mystical circles about which we remain in the dark.28

1.3.3 λογικός as "genuine"

The third type of solution assumes that λογικός is used not to describe a property of the λατρεία, but to mark it as the authentic form in contrast to others.²⁹ Wilckens, for instance, describes the function of the adjective as "den wahren Kult von der Vielfalt der vorhandenen, aber uneigentlichen Kulte zu unterscheiden."30 Again it is hard to find evidence where λογικός is used in this sense. Strack points to T. Levi 3.6 (προσφέρουσι δὲ Κυρίω ὀσμὴν εὐωδίας λογικήν, καὶ ἀναίμακτον προσφοράν),³¹ which describes a scene of heavenly worship, but it is far from clear that this text should be interpreted in this way.³² Furthermore, it is possible that T. Levi 3.6 is a Christian interpolation.³³

1.3.4 λογικός as "communicating" (Reichert)

Having argued against all of the first three readings, Reichert proposes a sense of λογικός which corresponds to λόγος as "speech" or "speaking". 34 Reichert claims 1 Peter 2.2 for her reading ("sprechende, truglose Milch"). 35 She discusses several examples where λογικός is used in such a sense (e.g. Plutarch, Cor. 38.3 [μέρεσι λογικοῖς] as "organs for speech") or Philo, Mos. 1.84³⁶ and a few others). However, having discussed examples in which λογικός is used to refer to speech in a regular sense, she then applies this sense to Rom 12.1 in a transferred sense, for which she has not offered examples. She renders the λογικὴ λατρεία as a

²⁷ Cf. Scott 2018, 520.

²⁸ Cf. Reichert 2001, 240 n. 75.

²⁹ So for instance Strack 1994, 297-8.

³⁰ Cf. Wilckens 1978 – 82, 3.6.

³¹ Strack 1994, 294.

³² The parallel with "bloodless" (ἀναίμακτος) leads Wilckens to take T. Levi 3.6 as evidence for the sense "spiritual", while Scott argues it could as well be "rational" (521).

³³ So Eckhardt 2014, 258 n. 10.

³⁴ Reichert 2001, 241.

³⁵ Reichert 2001, 242.

³⁶ Scott 2018, 513 reads the passage differently.

"sprechender Gottesdienst", and explains its meaning as a λατρεία which communicates towards outsiders.³⁷ But her solution cannot be convincing, because her evidence does not bear out this transferred sense.

1.3.5 λογικός as "guided by reasoning thought" (Scott)

The recent contribution of Scott (2018) is the most detailed attempt yet to explain Paul's language in terms of a semantic approach. Scott has analysed 420 occurrences of λογικός in the TLG, assigned these instances to seven "categories of use", and finds the category "activities performed by or guided by reasoning" to be the pertinent one in Rom 12.1, because this is the sense in which λογικός is used, in his sample, to modify "some human action". 38 Thus Paul emphasises in this reading, that the $\lambda \alpha \tau \rho \epsilon i \alpha$ is a "reasoning worship", a sacrifice "offered by engaging in rational ethical deliberation."39 The strength of this approach is that it offers linguistic parallels, but the weakness is that it may contextualise too narrowly and thus miss the encyclopedic relevance of larger ancient discourses. We will criticise Scott's contribution in more detail in chapter 2.

1.3.6 Conclusion: The need for evaluating qualitative parallels

We have thus indicated some of the main approaches to explaining Paul's reason language and indicated their shortcomings. All the strategies for explaining Paul's use of λογική λατρεία ultimately come down to a selection of pertinent parallels and a determination of the respect in which they are deemed to be parallel.

This process is largely guided by a hypothesis on the overall topic of Rom 12.1–2. The overall topic can be assigned to the broad rubrics of either "religion" (true sacrifice, true worship), or "ethics" (moral conduct), or "mission" (missional existence, community formation).⁴⁰

There are two main methods for explaining λογικός in Rom 12.1, the semantic approach and the traditionsgeschichtlich approach. The semantic approach looks at lexical parallels for λογικός and seeks a sense of the word which it

³⁷ Reichert 2001, 244 (she emphasises the "kommunikative Kraft", and the fact that this λατρεία "sich Aussenstehenden gegenüber bemerkbar macht").

³⁸ Scott 2018, 503, 511, 525.

³⁹ Scott 2018, 525.

⁴⁰ We use these labels heuristically. Cf. the remarks on "missional" and "religion" in section 1.4.

then tries to fit into a reading of Rom 12.1 (e.g. Scott). The traditionsgeschichtlich approach identifies a tradition on a topic (e.g. ideas about true worship), determines what Paul would say on the topic, and then explains how Paul's language of λογικός in Rom 12.1 is used to say that. Thus, in this latter approach, interpreters put forward what they deem to be thematic parallels, even if the linguistic links might be less strong.

The problem with the semantic approach is that the parallels may not be thematically relevant. The problem with the traditionsgeschichtlich approach is that the parallels may not be linguistically relevant. And, more precariously, they may not even be thematically pertinent.

For example, if, as we shall argue, Paul was not primarily concerned in Rom 12.1 with making a comment upon true sacrifice or "religion", then readings which reconstruct an ancient discourse on sacrifice in which the notions of true sacrifice get increasingly refined, 41 and then make Paul comment critically on it,42 run the risk of not even being thematically on target.

Thus, we argue here for an approach of evaluating qualitative parallels. Such an attempt is neither deductive (as the traditio-historical approach is: we know what Paul was talking about, and therefore he must have used the language in this way to say that) nor is it fully inductive (as the semantic approach is: here are all the sampled instances, and since in most cases with these features what is meant is this, that is what Paul was talking about), but perhaps should be called "abductive" (if we suppose that this parallel gives us an idea of some "rule" which could apply to Paul as well, what kind of suggestions for reading Paul differently emerge which would make Paul a case of the rule, and does the new reading allow a better resolution of a difficulty?).⁴³ We seek to offer here a fresh reading of parallels in Epictetus, which are set in the broader context of ancient discourse on what it means to be human. Our use of the term "discourse" points to the method of "discourse analysis". 44 As we shall argue, these Epicte-

⁴¹ For example Wenschkewitz 1932 or Ferguson 1980.

⁴² For an excellent refutation of these readings, see Reichert 2001, 238 – 241.

⁴³ On abduction, cf. Eco 1976, 131-133.

⁴⁴ On "discourse analysis" cf. Baker 2006, the handbook of Gee and Handford 2012, especially the contribution of Flowerdew 2012 (on "corpus-based discourse analysis" cf. 74), and the introductions into the methods by Jones 2019 (especially 207-2014 on "corpus-assisted discourse analysis") and S. Taylor 2012. Baker (2006, 3-5) helpfully distinguishes various concepts referred to by the term "discourse": (1) "language above the level of a clause or sentence"; (2) "language in use"; (3) "the discourse structure of particular texts" (e.g., a recipe); (4) topical discourses, e.g. political discourse or colonial discourse; (5) discourses in use by particular groups, for instance learners of English; (5) discourses (sometimes written with a capital) for "practices which systematically form the objects of which they speak" (Foucault 1972, 49)

tean parallels are both linguistically relevant and thematically pertinent. But this cannot be demonstrated in advance by appeal to a methodological criterion. Rather, we have to offer a reading of the Epictetus parallels in the light of broader ancient contexts and discourses, establish that they are concerned with the idea of a human vocation, and then show why the "hypothesis" that Rom 12.1 also speaks about a human vocation makes excellent sense of Rom 12.1 and the broader context of the letter. If this reading of Rom 12.1 is plausible in its ancient contexts, the "abduction" is successful, and we have found explanatory parallels which are both linguistically and thematically pertinent. For this fresh reading, we need interpretative categories, which we will now briefly discuss.

1.4 Remarks on our interpretative terms

As our outline in section 1.2 has indicated, our interpretation of Rom 12.1 in the light of ancient philosophical contexts makes use of such interpretative terms as "human vocation", "genuine humanness" and "sign production". Before we launch into our investigation, it is important to offer several remarks on our use of these terms.

First, these terms operate at the level of our interpretation, and thus they do not need to correspond directly to terms used in the sources we discuss. Thus, we do not, as we pointed out, use "vocation" only for passages in which the words

(this is how Baker uses it, noting it is related to the previous senses). (This is rather different from the use of "discourse analysis" in Runge 2010, where grammatical phenomena such as "connectives" in the New Testament are in focus.)

Our own approach could be characterised as trying to discern thematic parallels to Paul which are linked to specific terminology in other ancient sources, which are investigated by the methods of "corpus-assisted discourse analysis", employing the TLG or the PHI databases. However, we also use a mixed approach, or what Baker 2006, 15-17, following others, calls "triangulation": namely to use "multiple methods of analysis" (16). Thus, it could combine "smaller-scale analyses of single texts" with "corpus-based" research to confirm or check the findings in a more systematic manner.

In our case, we investigate the phrase ζῷον λογικόν in section 2.2 in a manner that is "corpus-assisted", but complement this by an even broader, and more thematic investigation of ancient discourses on what it means to be human, relying on previous literature, in section 3.1. Furthermore, for certain single texts of Epictetus (in chapter 4), and Paul (in chapters 5-7), we give more space to the analysis of longer passages, attempting to attend to the texts in their own right. In these analyses, however, the broader contextualisations inform our interaction with the texts. Finally, we are also in a position to compare Epictetus and Paul in the light of these various contextualisations.

καλεῖν, κλητός, or κλῆσις etc. can be found.⁴⁵ Nor does our use of the term vocation necessarily correspond to the layers of meaning accrued in later reception history or to its use in modern philosophical readings of Paul.⁴⁶

Second, we use these terms heuristically and develop them in discussion with ancient sources. Thus, for instance, the idea of a human vocation is developed in section 3.2 in dialogue with an investigation of Heinemann⁴⁷ and some of the ancient sources he discussed. But in particular our readings of Epictetus 1.16 and 1.6 will show clearly what kind of idea is involved (sections 4.4–4.5). The idea of genuine humanness refers to the normative conceptions of what it means to be human, which we develop from a discussion of source texts in section 3.1, in dialogue with previous scholarship.⁴⁸ The point of such terms is to alert to features of the texts, which we can only show in specific readings, and which we identify, so that we may then suggest them as interpretative lenses for reading Paul. Thus, when we discuss Romans in chapters 5–7, we can make use of the conceptions developed in chapters 3–4, because we can

⁴⁵ This also applies to a term like "signs" and σημεῖον. Conversely, the fact that Epictetus uses the term ἐπαγγελία to express the concept of a human vocation (see section 4.2), while Paul in Romans never uses it in this sense, but rather in the sense of "promise" (e.g. Rom 4.13-14), does not constitute a problem for our interpretation. What we propose is that Paul uses the concept of a "human vocation" (using the term λ ατρεία in Rom 12.1; see section 6.3.1), but his terminology does not *necessarily* have to overlap with other ancient texts where we detect a similar concept (cf. also Rom 9.4 as a kind of lexical irony, given our remarks here). In the case of λ ογικός in Rom 12.1, however, Paul does refer to a similar concept and use the same term as the Epictetean parallels.

⁴⁶ On the complex reception history of κλῆσις (especially as used in 1 Cor 7) as Beruf or Berufung in Luther, Max Weber and Giorgio Agamben, cf. Frey 2008. Agamben discusses κλῆσις in relation to a messianic vocation in his philosophical interpretation of Paul's letter to the Romans (2005, especially 19-43), but his conception of that vocation based on a reading of 1 Cor 7.20 is very different from ours. For Agamben, κλῆσις "indicates the particular transformation that every juridical status and worldly condition undergoes because of, and only because of, its relation to the messianic event" (22). Yet this relation to the messianic event does not determine the meaning of the messianic vocation, as in Agamben's reading of Paul the "messianic vocation does not ... have any specific content; it is nothing but the repetition of those same factical or juridical conditions in which or as which we are called" (22). In terms of our notion of sign production, Agamben's messianic vocation would be a sign of nothing beyond itself. By contrast, our reading of the messianic vocation, i.e. the vocation of Christ-followers, sees it as a production of signs of the new creation inaugurated in Christ's death and resurrection. For a perceptive critique of Agamben's reading of κλῆσις, see Frey 2008, 52-56. For a critique of the interpretations of Paul offered by Agamben 2005, Badiou 2003 and Taubes 2004 based on an evaluation of some of their readings within the context of ancient philosophy, see van Kooten 2019.

⁴⁷ Heinemann 1926.

⁴⁸ E.g. Landmann 1962.

point out similar features in the text, even while we can allow that Paul's conception of "genuine humanness" could be rather different, if concretely spelled out, from what Epictetus envisages. Yet discussing both sources in terms of these categories allows fresh readings of the texts, which are needed, we maintain, for explaining Paul's use of reason language in Rom 12.1.

Third, terms such as "genuine humanness" and "human vocation" point to much larger discussions on what it means to be human in the ancient world, and indeed, the modern world. Much of these discussions could be brought into fruitful conversation, not just with Romans, but also with Paul's other letters, which might emphasise other conceptions of what it means to be human (for instance, the human capacities for transformation in 1 Cor 15). Our goals in this book are more modest, however. For the focus of this book is not on all that Paul has to say in his letters on the topic of "humanness", on what "genuine humanness" looks like or on what the "human vocation" consists in. Our focus is not even all that he has to say on being human in Romans alone. If much of this book explores the concepts of "genuine humanness" and "human vocation", it is because, within the ancient encyclopedia, they often appear closely linked to human reason, which is key to our explanation of how Paul's reason language in Rom 12.1 works. The case that Paul draws on this link in Rom 12.1 is strengthened by demonstrating that Paul also makes use of these notions at other crucial stages in the argument of Romans. But they are not the topic of this book in their own right.

Even though we have indicated that the terms "genuine humanness" and "human vocation" are used heuristically, we may nevertheless briefly indicate how they relate to and differ from each other. While "genuine humanness" refers to normative conceptions of what it means to be human, which are employed in discourse to commend a certain way of living or acting with recourse to shared or argued for understandings of what human beings are or should be, an idea of a human vocation is also a normative conception of what it means to be human, but one which presupposes that there is a role in the cosmos or a task in life of human beings as such. Any conception of a human vocation also implies a notion of genuine humanness, since the failure to fulfil such a vocation would be to miss out on a crucial aspect of what humans, on this conception, should be and do in the cosmos. But there can be conceptions of genuine humanness without any direct link to an idea of a human vocation, such as when, for instance in ethical discourse, yielding to the vice of aggression is characterised as sinking to the level of a "ferocious beast".⁴⁹ Hence, these terms, as we employ them, are closely related, but not identical.

Fourth, our use of the term "sign production" may be unusual. While our use of the expression is inspired by Eco's theory of semiotics,⁵⁰ we do not employ "sign production" in the technical sense established there as part of a general theory of what is involved in any type of communication.⁵¹ Rather, we use "sign production" to refer to any human actions, ways of being, relations, attitudes, words, or even thoughts which are either interpretative of larger frameworks of understanding or expressive of them. Actions can have a symbolic significance and a communicative effect. They may express a group identity or embody an ethos.⁵² Our notion of sign production aims to point to more than phenomena of status, symbolic capital, or the need for groups to stabilise their identity, however. Rather, it seeks to forefront the active task of creating symbolic articulations that witness to one's understanding of the world. It thus shifts the emphasis from "ethics" as a response to "theology" and tries to integrate them both. We will develop this term and see its usefulness both in our reading of Epictetus (chapter 4) and in our reading of Paul in Romans (chapters 5-7). In both thinkers, it points to the connection with what humans are supposed to do and how it is based on their being endowed with reason. But in Paul, it is suitable in particular to bring out the "missional" focus of Paul's goals in forming and shaping communities.

Our reasons for using the term "sign production" are, then, as follows. The first is that its use may help to avoid the often negative theological connotations attaching to words used to discuss human action in Pauline scholarship, entrenched as they are by traditions seeking to avoid the spectre of "works right-eousness". Using a "defamiliarising" term may perhaps be helpful for the purpose of a more positive appraisal of human agency.⁵³

Second, its use may forestall some of the modern associations attaching to notions used to discuss ethics, which particularly in traditions looking back to Kant, differ significantly from ancient "eudaimonistic" approaches.⁵⁴ It seeks

⁴⁹ This example, taken from Epictetus, is discussed in section 4.2.

⁵⁰ Eco 1976, especially chapter 3.

⁵¹ Cf. Eco 1976, 1.

⁵² Cf. e.g. Wolter 2009.

⁵³ For an attempt to articulate a more positive account of human agency see Miller 2014, who seeks to do this by drawing on the work of Alasdair MacIntyre.

⁵⁴ Cf. the remarks of Annas 1993, 4–10 on the differences between ancient and modern ethics. The modern ethical views often offer a "simple choice between consequentialist and deontological ways of thinking", such that the focus is either on "calculating consequences" or "relying on

to avoid the sometimes implicit focus on right moral conduct as the exclusive referent of "ethical" action.55

Third, its use highlights an aspect of good human actions, which we claim is important both in Paul and in Epictetus (and in associated philosophical traditions), namely that they make reference to a larger whole, the cosmos, and the human role within it (in Paul, in particular, it is the connection of good human action to what God is doing in relation to the world in Christ).⁵⁶ From the perspective of the agent, this highlights the fact that thinking about an action in a concrete situation can take into consideration what such an action would signify (hence: "sign") with regards to the larger contexts in which the agent is embedded.⁵⁷ From the perspective of the larger whole, this highlights that actions performed by agents who identify with a larger whole always imply statements about that larger whole (so a philosopher who claims to hold that the cosmos is governed by divine providence, but then complains about his lot, produces a negative sign by his action).

This aspect, fourth, becomes even more important given that ancient thinkers consider human beings as creatures endowed with reason and speech, and hence, as we might put it, communicative beings.⁵⁸ Not only do speech acts communicate something else, but many more actions have symbolic layers of mean-

moral rules", where the latter is often coupled to the notion that "morality is essentially punitive or corrective" (4). Annas notes that more recently notions of "happiness" and "virtue" have become more important (cf. the rise of "virtue ethics"), which includes for ethics a focus on "the agent's life as a whole" (4); this point is especially important for our concerns and here we might go beyond Annas in emphasising the importance of the relation of human action to a larger whole, in particular, but not exclusively, in Epictetus and in Paul.

⁵⁵ Which also has consequences for the attempts at integrating Paul's theology and ethics. See chapter 7.

⁵⁶ Epictetus 2.10.4 is a particularly clear example: "Now what is the calling of a citizen? Never to approach anything with a view to personal advantage, never to deliberate about anything as though detached from the whole, but to act as one's hand or foot would act if it had the power of reason and could understand the order of nature, and so would never exercise any desire or motive other than by reference to the whole." (Transl. R. Hard, cf. section 4.2). Cf. also Epictetus 3.22 (on the life of the ideal Cynic philosopher).

⁵⁷ Pauline scholarship since the 1980s is used to discuss issues like circumcision in terms of "identity markers" and "boundary markers", for which cases the broader notion of sign production could also be applied (producing signs of a particular ethnic identity for instance). Similar remarks apply to the concepts of "ethos" and "identity" used by Wolter 2009.

⁵⁸ While sign production has in view other human beings who "see" what is being done, it can also communicate, as in Stoic tradition for example, to the divinity inside looking at what goes on in the individual's mind (cf. Seneca, Ep. 41.1-2), or, in Pauline tradition, to "rulers and powers" (cf. Eph 3.10).

ing (and hence human beings are constantly engaged in "interpreting" actions of others). While this holds in a general sense for most human behaviour, it holds in a more eminent and more precise sense when it applies to a particular human being's perceived task in life. The notion of sign production is thus especially useful in discussing those actions which are performed as the vocation of beings endowed with reason.

Thus, for Paul, fifth, it particularly serves to highlight the aspect that he considers the actions of human beings to be important for their "missional" function, their being called to witness to a larger truth about the Christ event. In Paul, the notion may also be useful for an emphasis on the eschatological aspect of action in the present, which amount, so we argue, to "signs" of new creation.⁵⁹

A few remarks on the term "missional" as we use it here are in order. When we use the term "missional", we mean this shorthand to convey Paul's conviction, first, that as many human beings as possible, both Jews and Gentiles, should come to believe the message about the death and resurrection of Jesus as the messiah of Israel, and, second, that Christ-followers are supposed to act, speak and live in such a way that this message is faithfully proclaimed, that is, to use our terms, their sign production is supposed to communicate this message as "good news".

Terms such as "mission" are problematic in their description of first-century phenomena, in that their definitions presuppose several concepts which are difficult or contested in their application for the purpose of historical description. For example, if "mission" would be understood as denoting efforts to "convert" the adherents of one religion to another, then this would apply poorly to early Christ-followers (whether Jewish or Gentile) in their communication both with Gentiles and Jews who were not Christ-followers. 60 First, "religion" is not helpful as a category either to describe the varieties of Judaism in the first century, or to describe what Christ-followers' practices and beliefs were about.61 Second, by becoming Christ-followers, Jews did not in any way become non-Jewish, 62 in the way such a distinction sometimes came to be established later.

Furthermore, we should be careful to take on board the insights of the so called New Perspective on Paul, however varied its results in detail, which

⁵⁹ Cf. 1 Cor 15.58 as a conclusion to the eschatological context of the chapter; 2 Cor 5.17.

⁶⁰ Subtler definitions of "mission" as applied to early Jesus-followers are discussed by Schmeller 2015, 1-11.

⁶¹ On the problematic construction of the category of "religion" and its extension to the study of ancient texts, see Nongbri 2013.

⁶² Any more than Paul himself ceased to regard himself as Jewish, as we see, for instance, in Rom 11.1.

seek to avoid the construction of negative foils of varieties of Judaism and their relations to Jewish law which are then contrasted with, for instance, Paul's views on the law and salvation. 63 At the same time, the question of how radical an innovation the belief in a crucified messiah would prove to be in the complicated process loosely called the "parting of the ways" should not be underestimated by such cautionary remarks.64

Sixth, our use of the term "sign production" seeks to be comprehensive in scope, that is, ranging over both words, thoughts, emotions, actions, ways of being, relations and so on, and thus to highlight a possible integration of "theory" and "action" in the concept of a human vocation such as we detect in Paul: the sign produced by a particular good action is expressive of the values and meaning of the larger worldview at the same time as it "embodies" it in concrete circumstances.

To summarise and repeat in terms of a definition: we use "sign production" for "human actions performed in such a way as to signify, embody and express those truths and meanings a particular worldview holds to be of paramount importance, and which to communicate in a given context it sees as the role of human beings in the cosmos".65

This definition is thus context-dependent. For Epictetus, it is particularly divine providence and actions in conformity66 or "yielding"67 to the rational plan governing the cosmos. For Paul, these truths focus on the significance of Christ's death and resurrection (the "Christ event") for what God is doing in relation to his creation, and which Paul's proclamation of the "good news" aims to communicate and promote. The relation of the sign production of Christ-followers to the Christ event is, however, more complex than simply the relation of a message about what happened to Jesus of Nazareth to specific acts of proclamation (though of course they might be included). Rather, it must account for the fact that the Christ event is, for Paul, at the same time something that inaugurates

⁶³ For a brief overview on the various debates, developments and reactions associated with the New Perspective on Paul, see Horrell 2015, 125-152. For a nuanced assessment of Sanders 1977 and the debate in its wake, focused on "grace", see Barclay 2015, 151-175.

⁶⁴ Cf. Schnelle 2016, 303. On the debate about the so called "parting of the ways" see Paget 2010, 3-23; Lieu 2015, 1-27, 31-49; and the contributions in Becker and Reed 2003 and Baron, Hicks-Keeton, and Thiessen 2018.

⁶⁵ Here "action" is conceived broadly, so as not to exclude states and relations which are main-

⁶⁶ This also where the *imitatio dei* motif in ancient philosophy comes into play. Cf. e.g. Cic. *Tusc*

⁶⁷ Cf. Epictetus 2.23.42 (quoting Cleanthes' Hymn to Zeus), 3.22.95, 4.1.131, Ench. 53.

a change of conditions such that a new kind of human behaviour is possible, ⁶⁸ something that reveals the central truth about God which is of paramount importance for humans in the present, something that paradigmatically displays the genuine humanness which Christ-followers are called and destined (in some way) to embody, and something that is both rooted in a larger history of God with humanity and looks toward the new creation. Thus, in the context of Paul, as we aim to show, the notion of sign production could be defined as "actions by human beings (in Christ), performed in such a way as to signify, embody and express the truths and meanings of the Christ event, which to communicate in a given context he sees as the role of human beings in the cosmos." ⁶⁹

1.5 Outline of the argument

We will now briefly indicate the structure of our argument such as it unfolds in the remaining chapters.

In chapter 2, we discuss the semantics of λ oyικός in dialogue with Scott's recent investigation, noting certain methodological reservations with his approach. In a second part, we perform a corpus-based discourse analysis of the phrase ζ ϕ ov λ oyικόν to show that it was widely used before Paul, initially mainly within Stoicism, but then also in other philosophical traditions. We classify key uses of the concept and find that it is prominently used to discuss the human place in the cosmos, their role and vocation, and what it means to be genuinely human. Furthermore, we address the question of how familiar Paul and his hearers would have been with the definition of human beings as mortal rational animals.

In chapter 3, we investigate the role of reason in Greco-Roman discussions of what it means to be human, finding it to be one of the key characteristics in articulations of genuine humanness. Further, we consider the language used in texts speaking about the human role in the cosmos.

In chapter 4, we focus on Epictetus and how he speaks about genuine humanness and the human vocation, based on the endowment with reason. Through a close analysis of several of his *Discourses*, we discuss how he uses the definition of human beings in order to speak about genuine humanness,

⁶⁸ On various dimensions to these changes, see section 5.3.1.

⁶⁹ In attempting to make this definition more conspicuous, we have already drawn on claims this study seeks to establish in the course of its argument; where these are deemed disputable, the reader might replace them with the more generic statements given above (i. e. "expressive of larger frameworks of understanding").

the importance of providence for his articulation of the human vocation, and the structure of the human vocation (as a sign production based upon understanding). In particular we consider Epictetus 1.16 in detail, because it is about the human vocation and it contains the most important parallel for Paul's reason language in Rom 12.1.

In chapter 5, we turn to Romans. In the light of the themes and context we have studied in chapters 3-4, we consider whether notions of genuine humanness and the idea of a human vocation are part of Paul's argument in Rom 1-8. Genuine humanness appears as an important feature of Rom 5. We also find evidence for Paul's use of the idea of a human vocation in Rom 1 and 6, where it appears that even the structure of the human vocation is similar to the traditions we have studied in chapters 3-4: it is a sign production based upon an understanding of God such as he has made himself known in the Christ event. Romans 8 confirms this picture in dynamical relation to the cosmos waiting to be renewed.

In chapter 6, we analyse Rom 12.1–2 in detail. We show how the consideration of the broader tradition on what it means to be human and in particular Epictetus 1,16,20 - 21 as a parallel to Rom 12,1 explains Paul's use of reason language as an allusion to the philosophical tradition about the vocation of human beings. This requires us to look in particular at a fresh grammatical solution to how the adjective λογικός modifies the noun λατρεία. What Paul identifies as the human vocation is the "presentation of the body as a living sacrifice" (Rom 12.1b), which retrieves the language crafted in Rom 6 to speak about a sign production for the new way of being human in Christ.

In chapter 7, we investigate how our explanation of Paul's reason language in Rom 12.1 contributes to an understanding of Rom 12-15 as "missional" existence (i.e. one producing signs of the new understanding). This is because Rom 12.1–2 frames the section on Paul's vision of life in the community of Christ-followers (Rom 12-15). Several of the themes Paul discusses in Rom 12.3-13.14 confirm the importance of the ideas of a human vocation based on the human endowment with reason and of a sign production for new creation. In chapter 8, we conclude by summarising our findings.