

Easy to get lost in all this...

[2002 - omit 1+2]

Remember Core Ideas - the anchor for all this (keep in mind or our investigations will slip off the rails)

① Central = ENCOUNTERS (we → artwork [or repository])

→ Who are "we" — what is the artwork that we observe?
and what are the principles or guidelines of our encounter?
(Very difficult questions... at the heart of old + new musings,
old + new theory)

Ingarden/Weltek → concerned w/ what work was ^{what is this this?} (intentional acts of consciousness on many levels — system of norms) and does it have an identity that's stable (= YES)

— and with the encounter or interpretation → filling in spaces of indeterminacy in order to produce a whole Gestalt or completion (concretization)

— No q. that "Art" a concept exists.

— ∴ Encounter = a function of hermeneutics (not knowledge?)

② The complications that a musical work is situated and implicated in history (as are we)... and hence distanced from us.

— How ~~do~~ distance and strangeness (lack of immediate accessibility or assimilation into our world) affect our encounter?

— Call for a historically grounded hermeneutics, or a historically informed practice of perception.

(Dahlhaus — Gadamer)

— Theoria of "paper" history and historical practice
(Why and to what end do we "do" history?
To aid the encounter?)

③ The Reverey / Suspicion Dichotomy (Faith-Charity / Suspicion)
Verstehen Erklären — will guide hermeneutics or critical theory.

④

Today → The classic "reervey" argument → Gadamer

④ The Sociological Divide or Dichotomy (Marx)

- transformationalist thesis (activist)
- do we study individual works/artists or social forces
(who really produced the work + for what end?)

Marx waterheds

p. 10 of "Clasificación" 2 approaches -
Gadamer - left side (phenomenology)

- "relative autonomy" + its validity (freeing from history + utility)
- But if "autonomous" as text, that is this work that we examine?
Collingwood - an answer? (More on this today)
- Do historical periods demand that we view works differently?

Topic 8 &
and Topic 9

(of 8 a-b)

Topic 9 also below

Use BOOK

Gadamer, Truth + Method, 296-97, 366-ca.75, 383-89

- 1) temporal distance - central condition (297)
"horizon" (302) *Wirkungsgeschichte* 300-07
- 2) Q + A [369] Collingwood: ^{Dictum} 370, 373-75

3) Charity/Sympathy : 299 (~~299~~ ^{cf.} n. 299) --

367 = not at cross purposes

383 -

385 !! bottom 1/2 (esp !! n. 1 bottom of page)

Dahlhaus Foundations
(BOOK)

ch. 4 = directly from book (see notes therein)

ch. 5

ch. 6

ch. 7

} Books plus notes

below

Guilloy on "Canon" → Use *lecturichia* (most imp -
mediating role of educational institution)

JH: "canon" bad term (exclusionary, from church fathers) = "canons" (plural)

Gadamer Truth + Method - Key Ideas

- p. 184ff
- 1) Schleiermacher as founder of modern hermeneutics — 1838 (posth.)
Hermeneutics + Criticism (concern = biblical) — psychological basis
 - a) How to avoid misunderstandings (187)
 - b) Hermeneutics not a method but an art (190)(191)
 like DIVINATION (189, 187) → needed by the hermeneut (189) + corresponds to creator's "genius"
 - c) psychological → identifying with the personality of the author
IDENTIFICATION — 191 188 "Artistic thought" a "Lebensmomente" bursting pleasurably into utterance
 - d) Schl. FORMULA (p. 192) — understand an author better than he understood himself
 (Gad. will want to separate meaning from the author) ^{exclusive control of}
 (see p. 296 → middle!) [^]

p. 294 = Assume intelligibility → It does mean something! Gadamer distinguishes betw. good + bad prejudices — 298, bottom

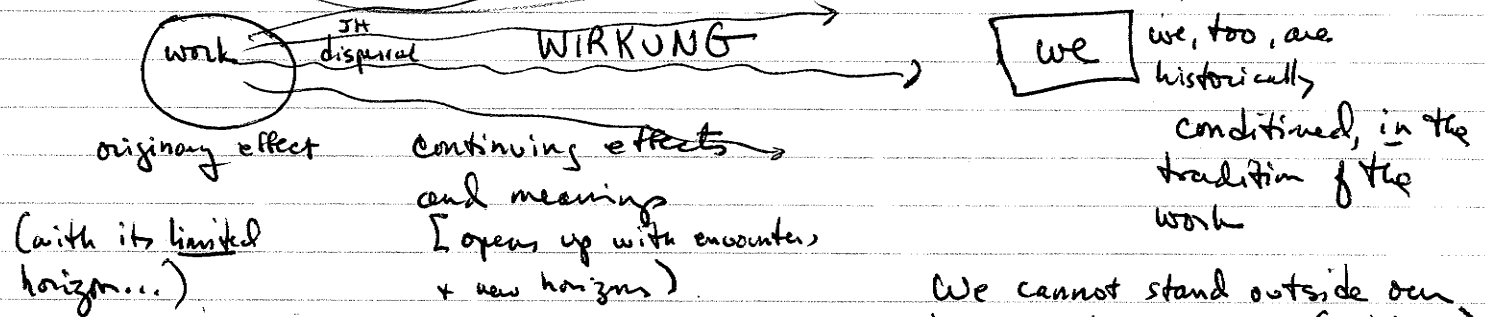
Initial act of charity → assumption of completeness + sense
an initial prejudice Enabling 295 (Donald Davidson - Princ. of Charity)

295 "fundamental, enabling prejudices"
 true + false prejudices — bottom of 298

(295) 296 DISTANCE (need ... not to overcome but to negotiate through it ... it is ²⁹⁶ TO BE FOREGROUND)
 = 297 a part of our central perception ... ²⁹⁷ thematically it

297 READ ON DISTANCE

300 - Section on Wirkungsgeschichte ("history of effect" / "effective history")



True Meaning of a work discloses itself in a tradition/history ... within historical time. "never finished" [298]

We cannot stand outside our tradition to critique it (301) (5 up)
 Hence: incomplete knowledge of ourselves (302)
 Goal → suspend our prejudices (299!)
 → foreground (abheben) 299 305
 open ourselves in charity —
 remain ^{deeply} aware of our own historicity (299)
 Do not assimilate the work hastily to our horizon (305)
 Transpose ourselves to horizon of the work (303) bottom

CF CRITICAL EDITION?

- 306 - famous Horizontverschmelzung ³⁰⁶ — Result of an act of transposition (303)
 from our horizon to that of the traditional text
- thematizing distance
 - tension of the horizons (306)
 - remaining aware of (thematizing) one's own historicity and place in the tradition (don't factor your prejudices out ... but neither should you indulge them)
 - thematizing work as Wirkung, not original intention or psychology (307)
 - We are implicated deeply in our own readings. Write as if aware of this. (indeed, problematize it)

NEXT

Q + A paradigm ^{What is Gadamer's sense of} p. 366 (already insisted upon, p. 299, 301, etc.)

- Received opinion exists to stifle questions (danger) (366)
- Hermeneutics (299) but exists in the openness of QUESTIONS in good faith. (QUESTION-ANSWER DIALOGUE) — the EPIPHANY of finding the right question to ask → 366

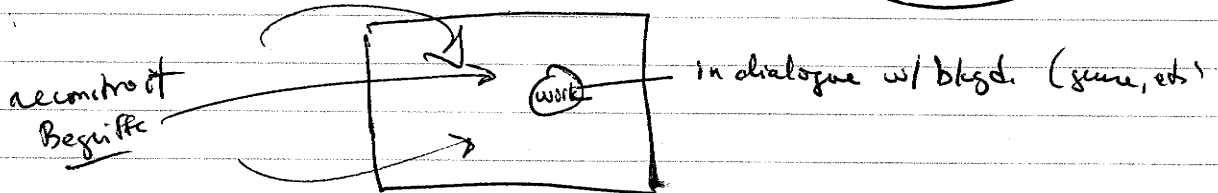
- NB → truly ENORMOUSLY IMPORTANT! One must "want to know" (366) ^{↑ up} as opposed to being assimilated into mere opinion.
- 367 → No interrogation ... connect by listening sympathetically — (Herm. of recovery) ... conversational (368-69)

→ 1st Question is asked of us by the text (370, top)

370 Collingwood Dictum (VERY IMPORTANT)

This → one does not merely view the work (or utterance) — one tries to reconstruct the situation/question to which it responds.

[NB — our original g — we → artwork (cf. Derrida!)]



375, 12 up !! → i.e. ... The art of hermeneutics is the art of FINDING THE RIGHT QUESTIONS TO ASK OF PIECES (JH) → Gadamer also says this, p. 301!

Gadamer

p. 383 ff

More on the conversational / openness aspect of our 9-a dialogue with the work

383 Do not presuppose a conclusion -

384 Translation metaphor (or fusion of horizons) cf. Iser.
- taken up again on 386-87 Analysis ?? (386!)

385 READ → The classic Verstehen - Erklären divide !!

387 Finally, how can "fixed" [mute] artwork conduct their side of the dialogue? (Through the interpreter)

than one has been able to understand," for Chladenius the real task of hermeneutics is not to understand this "more," but to understand the true meaning of the books themselves (i.e., their content). Because "all men's books and speech have something incomprehensible about them"—namely obscurities due to our insufficient knowledge about the subject matter—correct interpretation is necessary: "unfruitful passages can become fruitful for us," since they "give rise to many thoughts."

It should be noted that in making all these observations Chladenius is not considering edifying exegesis of Scripture; he explicitly disregards the "sacred writings," for which the "philosophical art of interpretation" is only a preliminary. Nor is he attempting to legitimize everything that can be thought (every "application") as part of the meaning of a book, but only what corresponds to the intentions of the writer. But for him this clearly does not imply a historical or psychological limitation; it refers to a correspondence with respect to the subject matter, which, as he states explicitly, exegetically takes account of recent theology.¹⁴

(ii) *Schleiermacher's Project of a Universal Hermeneutics*

As we see, the prehistory of nineteenth-century hermeneutics looks very different if we no longer view it with Dilthey's preconceptions. What a gulf lies between Spinoza and Chladenius on the one hand and Schleiermacher on the other! Unintelligibility, which for Spinoza motivates the detour via the historical and for Chladenius involves the art of interpretation in the sense of being directed entirely towards the subject matter, has for Schleiermacher a completely different, universal significance.

The first interesting difference, as I see it, is that Schleiermacher speaks not so much of lack of understanding as of misunderstanding. What he has in mind is no longer the pedagogical function of interpretation as an aid to the other's (the student's) understanding; for him interpretation and understanding are closely interwoven, like the outer and the inner word, and every problem of interpretation is, in fact, a problem of understanding.¹⁵ He is

¹⁴That would certainly apply to Semler, whose statement, quoted above in n. 7, shows the theological dimension of his demand for historical interpretation.

¹⁵[This fusing of understanding and interpretation, of which I am accused by writers like E. D. Hirsch, I derived from Schleiermacher. See his *Sämtliche Werke*, III, part 3, 384 (repr. in *Philosophische Hermeneutik*, ed. Gadamer and Boehm (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1976), p. 163): "Interpretation differs from understanding only as speaking aloud from speaking silently to oneself." This view has important consequences for the linguisticity of thinking.]

concerned solely with the *subtilitas intelligendi*, not with the *subtilitas explicandi*¹⁶ (let alone *applicatio*).¹⁷ But, most important, Schleiermacher explicitly distinguishes between a looser hermeneutical praxis, in which understanding follows automatically, and a stricter one that begins with the premise that what follows automatically is misunderstanding.¹⁸ His particular achievement—which was to develop a real art of understanding instead of an "aggregate of observations"—is based on this distinction. This is something fundamentally new. For from now on we no longer consider the difficulties and failures of understanding as occasional but as integral elements that have to be prevented in advance. Thus Schleiermacher even defines hermeneutics as "the art of avoiding misunderstandings." It rises above the pedagogical occasionality of interpretation and acquires the independence of a method, inasmuch as "misunderstanding follows automatically and understanding must be desired and sought at every point."¹⁹ The avoidance of misunderstanding: "all tasks are contained in this negative expression." Schleiermacher sees their positive solution as a canon of grammatical and psychological rules of interpretation, which even in the interpreter's consciousness are quite distinct from obligation to a dogmatic content.

Now Schleiermacher was undoubtedly not the first to limit the scope of hermeneutics to making intelligible what others have said in speech and text. The art of hermeneutics has never been the organon of the study of things. This distinguishes it at the outset from what Schleiermacher calls dialectic. But indirectly, wherever an attempt is made to understand something (e.g., Scripture or the classics), there is reference to the truth that lies hidden in the text and must be brought to light. What is to be understood is, in fact, not a thought considered as part of another's life, but as a truth. Precisely for this reason hermeneutics has an ancillary function and remains subordinate to the study of things. Schleiermacher takes account of this, insofar as he relates hermeneutics, within the system of sciences, to dialectics.

Nevertheless, the task he sets himself is precisely that of isolating the procedure of understanding. He endeavors to make it an independent method of its own. For Schleiermacher this also involves freeing himself from the limited tasks that constitute the nature of hermeneutics for his predecessors, Wolf and Ast. He

¹⁶Which Ernesti places beside it, *Institutio interpretis NT* (1761), p. 7.

¹⁷J. J. Rambach, *Institutiones hermeneuticae sacrae* (1723), p. 2.

¹⁸*Hermeneutik*, §§ 15 and 16, *Werke*, I, part 7, 29f.

¹⁹*Ibid.*, p. 30.

Hermeneutik
und Kritik
publ. 1838 (posth.)
not written after
1819

Schleiermacher
on the nature of
hermeneutics

hermeneutics
is an aid

does not accept its being restricted to foreign languages, or to the written word, "as if the same thing could not happen in conversation and in listening to a speech."²⁰

This is more than an extension of the hermeneutical problem from understanding what is written to understanding discourse in general; it suggests a fundamental shift. What is to be understood is now not only the exact words and their objective meaning, but also the individuality of the speaker or author. Schleiermacher holds that the author can really be understood only by going back to the origin of the thought. What is for Spinoza a limiting case of intelligibility, and hence requires a detour via the historical, is for Schleiermacher the norm and the presupposition from which he develops his theory of understanding. What he finds "most neglected, and even largely ignored" is "understanding a succession of thoughts as an emerging element of life, as an act that is connected with many others, even of another kind."²¹

Thus beside grammatical interpretation he places psychological (technical) interpretation. This is his most characteristic contribution.²² We will pass over Schleiermacher's brilliant comments on grammatical interpretation. They contain remarks on the role that the pre-given totality of language plays for the writer—and hence also for his interpreter—as well as remarks on the significance of the whole of a literature for an individual work. It may be, as seems probable from a recent investigation of Schleiermacher's unpublished texts,²³ that psychological interpretation only

²⁰Friedrich Schleiermacher, *Werke*, III, part 3, 390.

²¹[Ibid., p. 392 (*Philosophische Hermeneutik*, pp. 177f.)]

²²[See Manfred Frank's critique of my view and my reply in "Zwischen Phänomenologie und Dialektik: Versuch einer Selbstkritik," *GW*, II, 13ff.]

²³Hitherto our knowledge of Schleiermacher's hermeneutics rested on his "Academy Lectures" of 1829 and on the lecture on hermeneutics published by Lücke. The latter was reconstructed on the basis of a manuscript of 1819 and lecture notes from Schleiermacher's last ten years. Even this external fact shows that it is to the late phase of Schleiermacher's thought—and not the period of his fruitful beginnings with Friedrich Schlegel—that the hermeneutic theory we know belongs. This is what, primarily through Dilthey, has been influential. The above discussion also starts from these texts and seeks to draw out their essential tendencies. However, Lücke's version is not quite free of elements that point to a development of Schleiermacher's hermeneutical thought and are deserving of attention. At my suggestion, Heinz Kimmerle has worked through the unpublished material in the hands of the Deutsche Akademie in Berlin and has published a critical revised text in the *Abhandlungen der Heidelberger Akademie der Wissenschaften* (1959), 2nd *Abhandlung*. In his thesis, quoted there, Kimmerle attempts to determine the direction of Schleiermacher's development. Cf. his essay in *Kantstudien*, 51, no. 4, 410ff. [Kimmerle's new edition is more authentic, but less readable than Lücke's, which is now again accessible as F.

gradually came to dominate the development of his thought. At any rate, psychological interpretation became the main influence on the theorists of the nineteenth century—Savigny, Boeckh, Steinthal and, above all, Dilthey.

Even in the case of the Bible, where interpreting each writer in terms of his individual psychology is of less moment than the significance of what is dogmatically uniform and common to them,²⁴ Schleiermacher still regards the methodological distinction between philology and dogmatics as essential.²⁵ Hermeneutics includes grammatical and psychological interpretation. But Schleiermacher's particular contribution is psychological interpretation. It is ultimately a divinatory process, a placing of oneself within the whole framework of the author, an apprehension of the "inner origin" of the composition of a work,²⁶ a re-creation of the creative act. Thus understanding is a reproduction of an original production, a knowing of what has been known (Boeckh),²⁷ a reconstruction that starts from the vital moment of conception, the "germinal decision" as the composition's organizing center.²⁸

Isolating understanding in this way, however, means that the structure of thought we are trying to understand as an utterance or as a text is not to be understood in terms of its subject matter but as an aesthetic construct, as a work of art or "artistic thought." If we keep this in mind, we will understand why what is at issue is not a relation to the subject matter (Schleiermacher's "being"). Schleiermacher is following Kant's definitions of the aesthetic when he says that "artistic thought can be differentiated only by greater or lesser pleasure" and is "properly only the momentaneous act of the subject."²⁹ Now, the precondition of there being an un-

D. E. Schleiermacher, *Hermeneutik und Kritik*, ed. Manfred Frank (Frankfurt, 1977).]

²⁴I, part 7, 262: "Even though we shall never be able to achieve the complete understanding of every personal idiosyncrasy of the writers of the New Testament, the supreme achievement is still possible, namely of grasping ever more perfectly . . . the life that is common to them."

²⁵*Werke*, I, part 7, 83.

²⁶*Werke*, III, part 3, 355, 358, 364.

²⁷*Enzyklopädie und Methodologie der philologischen Wissenschaften*, ed. Bratuschek (2nd ed., 1886), p. 10.

²⁸In the context of his studies on poetic imagination, Dilthey coined the term "point of impression" and explicitly transferred its application from artist to historian (VI, 283). We shall discuss later the significance of this application from the point of view of intellectual history. Its basis is Schleiermacher's concept of life: "Where life exists, we have functions and parts held together." The expression "germinal decision" is found in his *Werke*, I, part 7, 168.

²⁹Schleiermacher, *Dialektik*, ed. Odebrecht, pp. 569f.

photo-
Verstehen

As if one
must comprehend
the essential
spark that
once ignited
the whole.
"divination"
a gift of
hermeneutic
genius + "art"
-- not
mere notes
see p. 181

Art as surplus — abundance

derstanding at all is that this "artistic thought" is not a mere momentaneous act but expresses itself. Schleiermacher sees "artistic thoughts" as life moments that contain so much pleasure that they burst into utterance, but—however much pleasure they evoke in the "originals of artistic works"—even then they remain individual thought, a free construct that is not tied to being. This is precisely what distinguishes poetic from scientific texts.³⁰ By this, Schleiermacher undoubtedly means that poetic utterance is not subject to the already described criterion of agreement concerning the thing meant, because what is said in poetry cannot be separated from the way it is said. The Trojan War, for example, *exists* in Homer's poem—a person who is concerned with historical fact is no longer reading Homer as poetic discourse. No one would maintain that Homer's poem gained in artistic reality as a result of archaeologists' excavations. What is to be understood here is not a shared thought about some subject matter, but individual thought that by its very nature is a free construct and the free expression of an individual being.

But it is characteristic of Schleiermacher that he seeks this element of free production everywhere. He even differentiates kinds of dialogue in the same way when—in addition to "dialogue proper," which is concerned with the common search for meaning and is the original form of dialectics—he speaks of "free dialogue," which he ascribes to artistic thought. In free dialogue the content of the thoughts "is virtually ignored." Dialogue is nothing but the mutual stimulation of thought ("and has no other natural end than the gradual exhaustion of the process described"),³¹ a kind of artistic creation in the reciprocation of communication.

Insofar as utterance is not merely an inner product of thought but also communication and has, as such, an external form, it is not simply the immediate manifestation of the thought but presupposes reflection. This is primarily true, of course, of what is fixed in writing and hence of all texts. They are always presentation through art.³² But where speaking is an art, so is understanding. Thus all speech and all texts are basically related to the art of understanding, hermeneutics, and this explains the connection between rhetoric (which is a part of aesthetics) and hermeneutics; every act of understanding is for Schleiermacher the in-

³⁰ *Dialektik*, p. 470.

³¹ *Dialektik*, p. 572.

³² *Ästhetik*, ed. Odebrecht, p. 269.

verse of an act of speech, the reconstruction of a construction. Thus hermeneutics is a kind of inversion of rhetoric and poetics.

We may be somewhat surprised to find poetry linked in this way with the art of speaking,³³ for it seems to us precisely the distinction and dignity of poetry that in its language is not rhetoric—i.e., that it possesses a unity of meaning and form that is independent of any connection with rhetoric in the sense of addressing or persuading. However, Schleiermacher's conception of "artistic thought" (in which he includes poetry and rhetoric) is concerned not with the product but with the orientation of the subject. Thus eloquence is here regarded purely as art—i.e., disregarding any reference to purpose or fact—as an expression of a creative productivity. Of course the borderline between the artistic and the non-artistic is fluid, like that between artless (immediate) understanding and the understanding reached through an artful procedure. Insofar as this production takes place mechanically according to laws and rules and not through unconscious genius, the process of composition will be consciously re-performed by the interpreter; but if it is an individual, truly creative product of genius, then there can be no such re-creation according to rules. Genius itself creates models and rules. It creates new ways of using language, new literary forms. Schleiermacher is fully cognizant of this difference. In hermeneutics, what corresponds to the production of genius is divination, the immediate solution, which ultimately presupposes a kind of congeniality. But the frontier between artless and artful, mechanical and genial production, is fluid insofar as an individuality is always being expressed and hence an element of rule-free genius is always at work—as with children, who grow into a language; it follows that the ultimate ground of all understanding must always be a divinatory act of congeniality, the possibility of which depends on a pre-existing bond between all individuals.

This is, in fact, Schleiermacher's presupposition, namely that all individuality is a manifestation of universal life and hence "everyone carries a tiny bit of everyone else within him, so that divination is stimulated by comparison with oneself." Thus he can say that the individuality of the author can be directly grasped "by, as it were, transforming oneself into the other." Since Schleiermacher focuses understanding on the problem of individuality, the task of hermeneutics presents itself to him as universal. For the extremes of alienness and familiarity are both given with

³³ *Ästhetik*, p. 384.

NB —
hermeneutics
"genius"

the relative difference of all individuality. The "method" of understanding will be concerned equally with what is common, by comparison, and with what is unique, by intuition; it will be both comparative and divinatory. But in both respects it remains "art," because it cannot be turned into a mechanical application of rules. The divinatory remains indispensable.³⁴

On the basis of this aesthetic metaphysics of individuality, the hermeneutical principles used by the philologist and the theologian undergo an important change. Schleiermacher follows Friedrich Ast and the whole hermeneutical and rhetorical tradition when he regards it as a fundamental principle of understanding that the meaning of the part can be discovered only from the context—i.e., ultimately from the whole. This is, of course, true of understanding any sentence grammatically as well as setting it within the context of the whole work, even of the whole of that literature or literary form concerned; but *Schleiermacher applies it to psychological understanding*, which necessarily understands every structure of thought as an element in the total context of a man's life.

It has always been known that this is a logically circular argument, insofar as the whole, in terms of which the part is to be understood, is not given before the part, unless in the manner of a dogmatic canon (as governs the Catholic and, as we saw, to some degree the Protestant understanding of Scripture) or of some analogous preconception of the spirit of an age (as, for example, when Ast presumes that retribution characterizes the spirit of the ancient world).

But Schleiermacher says that these dogmatic guidelines cannot claim any prior validity and hence are only relative limitations of the circularity. Fundamentally, understanding is always a movement in this kind of circle, which is why the repeated return from the whole to the parts, and vice versa, is essential. Moreover, this circle is constantly expanding, since the concept of the whole is relative, and being integrated in ever larger contexts always affects the understanding of the individual part. Schleiermacher applies his usual procedure of a polar dialectical description to hermeneutics, and thus he takes account of the fact that understanding is provisional and unending by elaborating it on the basis of the old hermeneutical principle of the whole and the parts. But he intends this characteristic speculative relativization more as a schema describing the process of understanding than as a funda-

³⁴Schleiermacher, *Werke*, I, part 7, 146f.

mental principle. This is shown by the fact that he assumes something like complete understanding when divinatory transposition takes place, "when all the individual elements at last suddenly seem to receive full illumination."

We might ask whether such phrases (which we also find in Boeckh with the same meaning) are to be taken strictly or as describing only a relative completeness of understanding. It is true that Schleiermacher saw individuality as a secret that can never be fully unlocked—as Wilhelm von Humboldt even more definitely did; but even this statement needs to be taken only in a relative way: the barrier to reason and understanding that remains here is not entirely insuperable. It is to be overcome by *feeling*, by an immediate, sympathetic, and con-genial understanding. Hermeneutics is an art and not a mechanical process. Thus it brings its work, understanding, to completion like a work of art.

Now, the limitation of this hermeneutics based on the concept of individuality can be seen in the fact that Schleiermacher does not find the task of literary or scriptural exegesis—i.e., of understanding a text written in a foreign language and coming from a past age—fundamentally more problematical than any other kind of understanding. It is true that, even according to Schleiermacher, there is a special task when a temporal distance has to be bridged. Schleiermacher calls it "identifying with the original reader." But this "process of identifying, the linguistic and historical production of sameness, is for him only an ideal precondition for the actual act of understanding, which for him does not consist in identifying with the original reader but in putting oneself on the same level as the author" whereby the text is revealed as a unique manifestation of the author's life. Schleiermacher's problem is not historical obscurity, but the obscurity of the Thou.

We may wonder, however, whether it is possible to distinguish in this way between identifying with the original reader and the process of understanding. Actually this ideal precondition of understanding—identifying with the original reader—cannot be fulfilled prior to the effort of understanding proper but rather is inextricable from it. Even in the case of a contemporary text with whose language or content we are unfamiliar, the meaning is revealed only in the manner described, in the oscillating movement between whole and part. Schleiermacher recognizes this. It is always in this movement that we learn to understand an unfamiliar meaning, a foreign language or a strange past. The circular move-

hermeneutic
circle

Sympathy

ment is necessary because "nothing that needs interpretation can be understood at once."³⁵ For even within one's own language it is still true that the reader must completely assimilate both the author's vocabulary and, even more, the uniqueness of what he says. From these statements, which are found in Schleiermacher himself, it follows that identifying with the original reader is not a preliminary operation that can be detached from the actual effort of understanding, which Schleiermacher sees as identifying with the writer.

Let us examine more closely what Schleiermacher means by identification for of course it cannot mean mere equation. Production and reproduction remain essentially distinct operations. Thus Schleiermacher asserts that the aim is to understand a writer better than he understood himself, a formula that has been repeated ever since; and in its changing interpretation the whole history of modern hermeneutics can be read. Indeed, this statement contains the whole problem of hermeneutics. It would be valuable, therefore, to go further into its meaning.

What it means for Schleiermacher is clear. He sees the act of understanding as the reconstruction of the production. This inevitably renders many things conscious of which the writer may be unconscious. It is obvious that here Schleiermacher is applying the aesthetics of genius to his universal hermeneutics. Creation by artistic genius is the model on which this theory of unconscious production and necessarily conscious reproduction is based.³⁶

In fact the formula, understood in this way, can be regarded as a principle of all philology, insofar as the latter is regarded as the understanding of artful discourse. The better understanding that distinguishes the interpreter from the writer does not refer to the understanding of the text's subject matter but simply to the understanding of the text—i.e., of what the author meant and expressed. This understanding can be called "better" insofar as the explicit, thematized understanding of an opinion as opposed to actualizing its contents implies an increased knowledge. Thus the sentence says something almost self-evident. A person who learns to understand a text in a foreign language will make explicitly conscious the grammatical rules and literary forms which the author followed without noticing, because he lived in the language and in its means of artistic expression. The same is true of

³⁵ *Werke*, I, part 7, 33.

³⁶ H. Patsch has now clarified more precisely the early history of romantic hermeneutics. See his "Friedrich Schlegels 'Philosophie der Philologie' und Schleiermachers frühe Entwürfe zur Hermeneutik," *Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche* (1966), pp. 434–472.

all production by artistic genius and its reception by others. We must remember this especially in regard to the interpretation of poetry. There too it is necessary to understand a poet better than he understood himself, for he did not "understand himself" at all when the structure of his text took shape within him.

From this also follows the point—which hermeneutics ought never to forget—that the artist who creates something is not the appointed interpreter of it. As an interpreter he has no automatic authority over the person who is simply receiving his work. Insofar as he reflects on his own work, he is his own reader. The meaning that he, as reader, gives his own work does not set the standard. The only standard of interpretation is the sense of his creation, what it "means."³⁷ Thus the idea of production by genius performs an important theoretical task, in that it collapses the distinction between interpreter and author. It legitimizes identification insofar as it is not the author's reflective self-interpretation but the unconscious meaning of the author that is to be understood. This is what Schleiermacher means by his paradoxical formula.

Since Schleiermacher others, including August Boeckh, Steinthal, and Dilthey, have repeated his formula in the same sense: "The philologist understands the speaker and poet better than he understands himself and better than his contemporaries understood him, for he brings clearly into consciousness what was actually, but only unconsciously, present in the other."³⁸ Through the "knowledge of psychological laws" the philologist, according to Steinthal, can deepen his understanding by grasping the causality, the genesis of the work of literature, and the mechanics of the writer's mind.

Steinthal's repetition of Schleiermacher's statement already betrays the effect of psychological research which takes research into nature as its model. Dilthey is freer here, because he more firmly preserves the connection with the aesthetics of genius. In particular, he applies the formula to the interpretation of poetry. To understand the "idea" of a poem from its "inner form" can of course be called "understanding it better." Dilthey regards this as the "highest triumph of hermeneutics,"³⁹ for the philosophical

³⁷ The modern habit of applying a writer's interpretation of himself as a canon of interpretation is a product of a false psychologism. On the other hand, however, the "theory," e.g., of music or poetics and rhetoric, can well be a legitimate canon of interpretation. [See my "Zwischen Phänomenologie und Dialektik: Versuch einer Selbstkritik," *GW*, II, 3ff.]

³⁸ Steinthal, *Einleitung in die Psychologie und Sprachwissenschaft* (Berlin, 1881).
³⁹ V, 335.

for
Leo Strauss's
alternative,
see p. 535

one makes
explicit what
was assumed
or once
self-evident
in the original
thinking

Author
(composer) is not
the privileged
interpreter of
his own work.

Initial Charity → as enabling "prejudice"

Initial axiom — assume completeness of the given text

of completeness." But this, too, is obviously a formal condition of all understanding. It states that only what really constitutes a unity of meaning is intelligible. So when we read a text we always assume its completeness, and only when this assumption proves mistaken—i.e., the text is not intelligible—do we begin to suspect the text and try to discover how it can be remedied. The rules of such textual criticism can be left aside, for the important thing to note is that applying them properly depends on understanding the content.

The fore-conception of completeness that guides all our understanding is, then, always determined by the specific content. Not only does the reader assume an immanent unity of meaning, but his understanding is likewise guided by the constant transcendent expectations of meaning that proceed from the relation to the truth of what is being said. Just as the recipient of a letter understands the news that it contains and first sees things with the eyes of the person who wrote the letter—i.e., considers what he writes as true, and is not trying to understand the writer's peculiar opinions as such—so also do we understand traditional texts on the basis of expectations of meaning drawn from our own prior relation to the subject matter. And just as we believe the news reported by a correspondent because he was present or is better informed, so too are we fundamentally open to the possibility that the writer of a transmitted text is better informed than we are, with our prior opinion. It is only when the attempt to accept what is said as true fails that we try to "understand" the text, psychologically or historically, as another's opinion.²²³ The prejudice of completeness, then, implies not only this formal element—that a text should completely express its meaning—but also that what it says should be the complete truth.

principle of initial charity

only when our credibility or understanding is changed do we alter this initial position

Here again we see that understanding means, primarily, to understand the content of what is said, and only secondarily to isolate and understand another's meaning as such. Hence the most basic of all hermeneutic preconditions remains one's own fore-understanding, which comes from being concerned with the same subject. This is what determines what can be realized as unified meaning and thus determines how the fore-conception of completeness is applied.²²⁴

²²³In a lecture on aesthetic judgment at a conference in Venice in 1958 I tried to show that it too, like historical judgment, is secondary in character and confirms the "anticipation of completeness." ("On the Problematic Character of Aesthetic Consciousness," tr. E. Kelly, *Graduate Faculty Philosophy Journal* (New School for Social Research), 9 (1982), 31-40.)

²²⁴There is one exception to this anticipation of completeness, namely the case of writing that is presenting something in disguise, e.g., a *roman à clef*.

Thus the meaning of "belonging"—i.e., the element of tradition in our historical-hermeneutical activity—is fulfilled in the commonality of fundamental, enabling prejudices. Hermeneutics must start from the position that a person seeking to understand something has a bond to the subject matter that comes into language through the traditional text and has, or acquires, a connection with the tradition from which the text speaks. On the other hand, hermeneutical consciousness is aware that its bond to this subject matter does not consist in some self-evident, unquestioned unanimity, as is the case with the unbroken stream of tradition. Hermeneutic work is based on a polarity of familiarity and strangeness; but this polarity is not to be regarded psychologically, with Schleiermacher, as the range that covers the mystery of individuality, but truly hermeneutically—i.e., in regard to what has been said: the language in which the text addresses us, the story that it tells us. Here too there is a tension. It is in the play between the traditional text's strangeness and familiarity to us, between being a historically intended, distanced object and belonging to a tradition. The true locus of hermeneutics is this in-between.

openness to meaning

Distance from the Object

Given the intermediate position in which hermeneutics operates, it follows that its work is not to develop a procedure of understanding, but to clarify the conditions in which understanding takes place. But these conditions do not amount to a "procedure" or method which the interpreter must of himself bring to bear on the text; rather, they must be given. The prejudices and fore-meanings that occupy the interpreter's consciousness are not at his free disposal. He cannot separate in advance the productive prejudices that enable understanding from the prejudices that hinder it and lead to misunderstandings.

i.e., one lives in one's own horizon

This presents one of the most difficult hermeneutical problems (cf. the interesting remarks by Leo Strauss in *Persecution and the Art of Writing*). This exceptional hermeneutical case is of special significance, in that it goes beyond interpretation of meaning in the same way as when historical source criticism goes back behind the tradition. Although the task here is not a historical, but a hermeneutical one, it can be performed only by using understanding of the subject matter as a key to discover what is behind the disguise—just as in conversation we understand irony to the extent to which we are in agreement with the other person on the subject matter. Thus the apparent exception confirms that understanding involves agreement. [I doubt that Strauss is right in the way he carries out his theory, for instance in his discussion of Spinoza. Dissembling meaning implies a high degree of consciousness. Accommodation, conforming, and so on do not have to occur consciously. In my view, Strauss did not sufficiently see this. See op. cit., pp. 223ff. and my "Hermeneutics and Historicism," Supplement I below. These problems have meanwhile been much disputed, in my view, on too narrowly semantic a basis. See Donald Davidson, *Inquiries into Truth and Interpretation* (Oxford, 1984).]

Rather, this separation must take place in the process of understanding itself, and hence hermeneutics must ask how that happens. But that means it must foreground what has remained entirely peripheral in previous hermeneutics: temporal distance and its significance for understanding.

This point can be clarified by comparing it with the hermeneutic theory of romanticism. We recall that the latter conceived of understanding as the reproduction of an original production. Hence it was possible to say that one should be able to understand an author better than he understood himself. We examined the origin of this statement and its connection with the aesthetics of genius, but must now come back to it, since our present inquiry lends it a new importance.

That subsequent understanding is superior to the original production and hence can be described as superior understanding does not depend so much on the conscious realization that places the interpreter on the same level as the author (as Schleiermacher said) but instead denotes an insuperable difference between the interpreter and the author that is created by historical distance.

Every age has to understand a transmitted text in its own way, for the text belongs to the whole tradition whose content interests the age and in which it seeks to understand itself. The real meaning of a text, as it speaks to the interpreter, does not depend on the contingencies of the author and his original audience. It certainly is not identical with them, for it is always co-determined also by the historical situation of the interpreter and hence by the totality of the objective course of history. A writer like Chladenius,²²⁵ who does not yet view understanding in terms of history, is saying the same thing in a naive, ingenuous way when he says that an author does not need to know the real meaning of what he has written; and hence the interpreter can, and must, often understand more than he. But this is of fundamental importance. Not just occasionally but always, the meaning of a text goes beyond its author. That is why understanding is not merely a reproductive but always a productive activity as well. Perhaps it is not correct to refer to this productive element in understanding as "better understanding." For this phrase is, as we have shown, a principle of criticism taken from the Enlightenment and revised on the basis of the aesthetics of genius. Understanding is not, in fact, understanding better, either in the sense of superior knowledge of the subject because of clearer ideas or in the sense of fundamental superiority of conscious over unconscious produc-

²²⁵Cf. p. 183 above.

tion. It is enough to say that we understand in a different way, if we understand at all.

Such a conception of understanding breaks right through the circle drawn by romantic hermeneutics. Since we are now concerned not with individuality and what it thinks but with the truth of what is said, a text is not understood as a mere expression of life but is taken seriously in its claim to truth. That this is what is meant by "understanding" was once self-evident (we need only recall Chladenius).²²⁶ But this dimension of the hermeneutical problem was discredited by historical consciousness and the psychological turn that Schleiermacher gave to hermeneutics, and could only be regained when the aporias of historicism came to light and led finally to the fundamentally new development to which Heidegger, in my view, gave the decisive impetus. For the hermeneutic productivity of temporal distance could be understood only when Heidegger gave understanding an ontological orientation by interpreting it as an "existential" and when he interpreted Dasein's mode of being in terms of time.

Time is no longer primarily a gulf to be bridged because it separates; it is actually the supportive ground of the course of events in which the present is rooted. Hence temporal distance is not something that must be overcome. This was, rather, the naive assumption of historicism, namely that we must transpose ourselves into the spirit of the age, think with its ideas and its thoughts, not with our own, and thus advance toward historical objectivity. In fact the important thing is to recognize temporal distance as a positive and productive condition enabling understanding. It is not a yawning abyss but is filled with the continuity of custom and tradition, in the light of which everything handed down presents itself to us. Here it is not too much to speak of the genuine productivity of the course of events. Everyone is familiar with the curious impotence of our judgment where temporal distance has not given us sure criteria. Thus the judgment of contemporary works of art is desperately uncertain for the scholarly consciousness. Obviously we approach such creations with unverifiable prejudices, presuppositions that have too great an influence over us for us to know about them; these can give contemporary creations an extra resonance that does not correspond to their true content and significance. Only when all their relations to the present time have faded away can their real nature appear, so that the understanding of what is said in them can claim to be authoritative and universal.

²²⁶Cf. p. 183 above.

Distance

(Wirkung)

NB

negotiate through the distance

What is "real" and "true" discloses itself only over time

NR

"Objectivity" seems to deny the present -- but this is an illusion (or at least an inadequate methodology)

In historical studies this experience has led to the idea that objective knowledge can be achieved only if there has been a certain historical distance. It is true that what a thing has to say, its intrinsic content, first appears only after it is divorced from the fleeting circumstances that gave rise to it. The positive conditions of historical understanding include the relative closure of a historical event, which allows us to view it as a whole, and its distance from contemporary opinions concerning its import. The implicit presupposition of historical method, then, is that the permanent significance of something can first be known objectively only when it belongs to a closed context—in other words, when it is dead enough to have only historical interest. Only then does it seem possible to exclude the subjective involvement of the observer. This is, in fact, a paradox, the epistemological counterpart to the old moral problem of whether anyone can be called happy before his death. Just as Aristotle showed how this kind of problem can serve to sharpen the powers of human judgment,²²⁷ so hermeneutical reflection cannot fail to find here a sharpening of the methodological self-consciousness of science. It is true that certain hermeneutic requirements are automatically fulfilled when a historical context has come to be of only historical interest. Certain sources of error are automatically excluded. But it is questionable whether this is the end of the hermeneutical problem. Temporal distance obviously means something other than the extinction of our interest in the object. It lets the true meaning of the object emerge fully. But the discovery of the true meaning of a text or a work of art is never finished; it is in fact an infinite process. Not only are fresh sources of error constantly excluded, so that all kinds of things are filtered out that obscure the true meaning; but new sources of understanding are continually emerging that reveal unsuspected elements of meaning. The temporal distance that performs the filtering process is not fixed, but is itself undergoing constant movement and extension. And along with the negative side of the filtering process brought about by temporal distance there is also the positive side, namely the value it has for understanding. It not only lets local and limited prejudices die away, but allows those that bring about genuine understanding to emerge clearly as such.

Often temporal distance²²⁸ can solve question of critique in hermeneutics, namely (how to distinguish the true prejudices, by

²²⁷ *Nicomachean Ethics*, I, 7.

²²⁸ [I have here softened the original text ("It is only temporal distance that can solve . . ."): it is distance, not only temporal distance, that makes this hermeneutic problem solvable. See also *GW*, II, 64.]

which we understand, from the false ones, by which we misunderstand. Hence the hermeneutically trained mind will also include historical consciousness. It will make conscious the prejudices governing our own understanding, so that the text, as another's meaning, can be isolated and valued on its own. Foregrounding (abheben) a prejudice clearly requires suspending its validity for us. For as long as our mind is influenced by a prejudice, we do not consider it a judgment. How then can we foreground it? It is impossible to make ourselves aware of a prejudice while it is constantly operating unnoticed, but only when it is, so to speak, provoked. The encounter with a traditional text can provide this provocation. For what leads to understanding must be something that has already asserted itself in its own separate validity. Understanding begins, as we have already said above,²²⁹ when something addresses us. This is the first condition of hermeneutics. We now know what this requires, namely the fundamental suspension of our own prejudices. But all suspension of judgments and hence, a fortiori, of prejudices, has the logical structure of a question.

The essence of the question is to open up possibilities and keep them open. If a prejudice becomes questionable in view of what another person or a text says to us, this does not mean that it is simply set aside and the text or the other person accepted as valid in its place. Rather, historical objectivism shows its naivete in accepting this disregarding of ourselves as what actually happens. In fact our own prejudice is properly brought into play by being put at risk. Only by being given full play is it able to experience the other's claim to truth and make it possible for him to have full play himself.

The naivete of so-called historicism consists in the fact that it does not undertake this reflection, and in trusting to the fact that its procedure is methodical, (it forgets its own historicity). We must here appeal from a badly understood historical thinking to one that can better perform the task of understanding. Real historical thinking must take account of its own historicity. Only then will it cease to chase the phantom of a historical object that is the object of progressive research, and learn to view the object as the counterpart of itself and hence understand both. The true historical object is not an object at all, but the unity of the one and the other, a relationship that constitutes both the reality of history and the reality of historical understanding.²³⁰ A hermeneutics ad-

²²⁹ Pp. 290 and 295 above.

²³⁰ [Here constantly arises the danger of "appropriating" the other person in one's own understanding and thereby failing to recognize his or her otherness.]

openness

Question

Suspension of prejudices (willing to listen)

Bravo!

equate to the subject matter would have to demonstrate the reality and efficacy of history within understanding itself. I shall refer to this as "history of effect." *Understanding is, essentially, a historically effected event.*

(iv) *The Principle of History of Effect (Wirkungsgeschichte)*

Historical interest is directed not only toward the historical phenomenon and the traditional work but also, secondarily, toward their effect in history (which also includes the history of research); the history of effect is generally regarded as a mere supplement to historical inquiry, from Hermann Grimm's *Raffael* to Gundolf and beyond—though it has occasioned many valuable insights. To this extent, history of effect is not new. But to require an inquiry into history of effect every time a work of art or an aspect of the tradition is led out of the twilight region between tradition and history so that it can be seen clearly and openly in terms of its own meaning—this is a new demand (addressed not to research, but to its methodological consciousness) that proceeds inevitably from thinking historical consciousness through.

It is not, of course, a hermeneutical requirement in the sense of the traditional conception of hermeneutics. I am not saying that historical inquiry should develop inquiry into the history of effect as a kind of inquiry separate from understanding the work itself. The requirement is of a more theoretical kind. Historical consciousness must become conscious that in the apparent immediacy with which it approaches a work of art or a traditional text, there is also another kind of inquiry in play, albeit unrecognized and unregulated. If we are trying to understand a historical phenomenon from the historical distance that is characteristic of our hermeneutical situation, we are always already affected by history. It determines in advance both what seems to us worth inquiring about and what will appear as an object of investigation, and we more or less forget half of what is really there—in fact, we miss the whole truth of the phenomenon—when we take its immediate appearance as the whole truth.

In our understanding, which we imagine is so innocent because its results seem so self-evident, the other presents itself so much in terms of our own selves that there is no longer a question of self and other. In relying on its critical method, historical objectivism conceals the fact that historical consciousness is itself situated in the web of historical effects. By means of methodical critique it does away with the arbitrariness of "relevant" appro-

contra claims
of "historical
objectivism"

priations of the past, but it preserves its good conscience by failing to recognize the presuppositions—certainly not arbitrary, but still fundamental—that govern its own understanding, and hence falls short of reaching that truth which, despite the finite nature of our understanding, could be reached. In this respect, historical objectivism resembles statistics, which are such excellent means of propaganda because they let the "facts" speak and hence simulate an objectivity that in reality depends on the legitimacy of the questions asked.

We are not saying, then, that history of effect must be developed as a new independent discipline ancillary to the human sciences, but that we should learn to understand ourselves better and recognize that in all understanding, whether we are expressly aware of it or not, the efficacy of history is at work. When a naive faith in scientific method denies the existence of effective history, there can be an actual deformation of knowledge. We are familiar with this from the history of science, where it appears as the irrefutable proof of something that is obviously false. But on the whole the power of (effective history) does not depend on its being recognized. This, precisely, is the power of history over finite human consciousness, namely that it prevails even where faith in method leads one to deny one's own historicity. Our need to become conscious of effective history is urgent because it is necessary for scientific consciousness. But this does not mean it can ever be absolutely fulfilled. That we should become completely aware of effective history is just as hybrid a statement as when Hegel speaks of absolute knowledge, in which history would become completely transparent to itself and hence be raised to the level of a concept. Rather, historically effected consciousness (wirkungsgeschichtliches Bewußtsein) is an element in the act of understanding itself and, as we shall see, is already effectual in finding the right questions to ask.

Consciousness of being affected by history (wirkungsgeschichtliches Bewußtsein) is primarily consciousness of the hermeneutical situation. To acquire an awareness of a situation is, however, always a task of peculiar difficulty. The very idea of a situation means that we are not standing outside it and hence are unable to have any objective knowledge of it.²³¹ We always find ourselves within a situation, and throwing light on it is a task that is never entirely finished. This is also true of the hermeneutic sit-

²³¹The structure of the concept of situation has been illuminated chiefly by Karl Jaspers, *Die geistige Situation der Zeit*, and Erich Rothacker. [See my "Was ist Wahrheit," *Kleine Schriften*, I, 46–58, esp. pp. 55ff. (GW, II, 44ff.)]

Wirkungsgeschichte
Our own
pre-shaping by
the course of
the past that
leads to our
contingent present.

NB - the
central question
of scholarship

NB!

uation—i.e., the situation in which we find ourselves with regard to the tradition that we are trying to understand. The illumination of this situation—reflection on effective history—can never be completely achieved; yet the fact that it cannot be completed is due not to a deficiency in reflection but to the essence of the historical being that we are. To be historically means that knowledge of oneself can never be complete. All self-knowledge arises from what is historically pregiven, what with Hegel we call “substance,” because it underlies all subjective intentions and actions, and hence both prescribes and limits every possibility for understanding any tradition whatsoever in its historical alterity. This almost defines the aim of philosophical hermeneutics: its task is to retrace the path of Hegel’s phenomenology of mind until we discover in all that is subjective the substantiality that determines it.

Every finite present has its limitations. We define the concept of “situation” by saying that it represents a standpoint that limits the possibility of vision. Hence essential to the concept of situation is the concept of “horizon.” The horizon is the range of vision that includes everything that can be seen from a particular vantage point. Applying this to the thinking mind, we speak of narrowness of horizon, of the possible expansion of horizon, of the opening up of new horizons, and so forth. Since Nietzsche and Husserl,²³² the word has been used in philosophy to characterize the way in which thought is tied to its finite determinacy, and the way one’s range of vision is gradually expanded. A person who has no horizon does not see far enough and hence overvalues what is nearest to him. On the other hand, “to have a horizon” means not being limited to what is nearby but being able to see beyond it. A person who has an horizon knows the relative significance of everything within this horizon, whether it is near or far, great or small. Similarly, working out the hermeneutical situation means acquiring the right horizon of inquiry for the questions evoked by the encounter with tradition.

In the sphere of historical understanding, too, we speak of horizons, especially when referring to the claim of historical consciousness to see the past in its own terms, not in terms of our contemporary criteria and prejudices but within its own histori-

²³²[H. Kuhn already referred to this in “The Phenomenological Concept of ‘Horizon,’” in *Philosophical Essays in Memory of Husserl*, ed. Martin Farber (Cambridge, 1940), pp. 106–23. See my observations on “horizon” above, pp. 245ff.]

Horizon:
definiteness

for Nietzsche
+ “horizon”
see
Unterschied
Med. & Natur.
1. 62.

cal horizon.” The task of historical understanding also involves acquiring an appropriate historical horizon, so that what we are trying to understand can be seen in its true dimensions. If we fail to transpose ourselves into the historical horizon from which the traditional text speaks, we will misunderstand the significance of what it has to say to us. To that extent this seems a legitimate hermeneutical requirement: we must place ourselves in the other situation in order to understand it. We may wonder, however, whether this phrase is adequate to describe the understanding that is required of us. The same is true of a conversation that we have with someone simply in order to get to know him—i.e., to discover where he is coming from and his horizon. This is not a true conversation—that is, we are not seeking agreement on some subject—because the specific contents of the conversation are only a means to get to know the horizon of the other person. Examples are oral examinations and certain kinds of conversation between doctor and patient. Historical consciousness is clearly doing something similar when it transposes itself into the situation of the past and thereby claims to have acquired the right historical horizon. In a conversation, when we have discovered the other person’s standpoint and horizon, his ideas become intelligible without our necessarily having to agree with him; so also when someone thinks historically, he comes to understand the meaning of what has been handed down without necessarily agreeing with it or seeing himself in it.

In both cases, the person understanding has, as it were, stopped trying to reach an agreement. He himself cannot be reached. By factoring the other person’s standpoint into what he is claiming to say, we are making our own standpoint safely unattainable.²³³ In considering the origin of historical thinking, we have seen that in fact it makes this ambiguous transition from means to ends—i.e., it makes an end of what is only a means. The text that is understood historically is forced to abandon its claim to be saying something true. We think we understand when we see the past from a historical standpoint—i.e., transpose ourselves into the historical situation and try to reconstruct the historical horizon. In fact, however, we have given up the claim to find in the past any truth that is valid and intelligible for ourselves. Ac-

²³³[I already discussed the moral aspect of this topic in my 1943 essay “Das Problem der Geschichte in der neueren deutschen Philosophie,” *Kleine Schriften*, I, 1–10 (GW, II, 27–36). It will also be more emphatically stressed in what follows.]

A traditional
aim of
Verstehen

negative shift
to Erklären?

Dahhaus
(grounding
idea)

(Collingwood)

knowledging the otherness of the other in this way, making him the object of objective knowledge, involves the fundamental suspension of his claim to truth.

However, the question is whether this description really fits the hermeneutical phenomenon. Are there really two different horizons here—the horizon in which the person seeking to understand lives and the historical horizon within which he places himself? Is it a correct description of the art of historical understanding to say that we learn to transpose ourselves into alien horizons? Are there such things as closed horizons, in this sense? We recall Nietzsche's complaint against historicism that it destroyed the horizon bounded by myth in which alone a culture is able to live.²³⁴ Is the horizon of one's own present time ever closed in this way, and can a historical situation be imagined that has this kind of closed horizon?

Or is this a romantic refraction, a kind of Robinson Crusoe dream of historical enlightenment, the fiction of an unattainable island, as artificial as Crusoe himself—i.e., as the alleged primacy of the solus ipse? Just as the individual is never simply an individual because he is always in understanding with others, so too the closed horizon that is supposed to enclose a culture is an abstraction. The historical movement of human life consists in the fact that it is never absolutely bound to any one standpoint, and hence can never have a truly closed horizon. The horizon is, rather, something into which we move and that moves with us. Horizons change for a person who is moving. Thus the horizon of the past, out of which all human life lives and which exists in the form of tradition, is always in motion. The surrounding horizon is not set in motion by historical consciousness. But in it this motion becomes aware of itself.

When our historical consciousness transposes itself into historical horizons, this does not entail passing into alien worlds unconnected in any way with our own; instead, they together constitute the one great horizon that moves from within and that, beyond the frontiers of the present, embraces the historical depths of our self-consciousness. Everything contained in historical consciousness is in fact embraced by a single historical horizon. Our own past and that other past toward which our historical consciousness is directed help to shape this moving horizon out of which human life always lives and which determines it as heritage and tradition.

Understanding tradition undoubtedly requires a historical ho-

²³⁴Nietzsche, *Untimely Meditations*, II, at the beginning.

e.g., pp. 60-61, on the burdens of memory and history.
(CU9 edition)

izon, then. But it is not the case that we acquire this horizon by transposing ourselves into a historical situation. Rather, we must always already have a horizon in order to be able to transpose ourselves into a situation. For what do we mean by "transposing ourselves"? Certainly not just disregarding ourselves. This is necessary, of course, insofar as we must imagine the other situation. But into this other situation we must bring, precisely, ourselves. Only this is the full meaning of "transposing ourselves." If we put ourselves in someone else's shoes, for example, then we will understand him—i.e., become aware of the otherness, the indissoluble individuality of the other person—by putting *ourselves* in his position.

Transposing ourselves consists neither in the empathy of one individual for another nor in subordinating another person to our own standards; rather, it always involves rising to a higher universality that overcomes not only our own particularity but also that of the other. The concept of "horizon" suggests itself because it expresses the superior breadth of vision that the person who is trying to understand must have. To acquire a horizon means that one learns to look beyond what is close at hand—not in order to look away from it but to see it better, within a larger whole and in truer proportion. To speak, with Nietzsche, of the many changing horizons into which historical consciousness teaches us to place ourselves is not a correct description. If we disregard ourselves in this way, we have no historical horizon. Nietzsche's view that historical study is deleterious to life is not, in fact, directed against historical consciousness as such, but against the self-alienation it undergoes when it regards the method of modern historical science as its own true nature. We have already pointed out that a truly historical consciousness always sees its own present in such a way that it sees itself, as well as the historically other, within the right relationships. It requires a special effort to acquire a historical horizon. We are always affected, in hope and fear, by what is nearest to us, and hence we approach the testimony of the past under its influence. Thus it is constantly necessary to guard against overhastily assimilating the past to our own expectations of meaning. Only then can we listen to tradition in a way that permits it to make its own meaning heard.

We have shown above that this is a process of foregrounding (abheben). Let us consider what this idea of foregrounding involves. It is always reciprocal. Whatever is being foregrounded must be foregrounded from something else, which, in turn, must be foregrounded from it. Thus all foregrounding also makes visible that from which something is foregrounded. We have de-

NB!

scribed this above as the way prejudices are brought into play. We started by saying that a hermeneutical situation is determined by the prejudices that we bring with us. They constitute, then, the horizon of a particular present, for they represent that beyond which it is impossible to see. But now it is important to avoid the error of thinking that the horizon of the present consists of a fixed set of opinions and valuations, and that the otherness of the past can be foregrounded from it as from a fixed ground.

In fact the horizon of the present is continually in the process of being formed because we are continually having to test all our prejudices. An important part of this testing occurs in encountering the past and in understanding the tradition from which we come. Hence the horizon of the present cannot be formed without the past. There is no more an isolated horizon of the present in itself than there are historical horizons which have to be acquired. Rather, understanding is always the fusion of these horizons supposedly existing by themselves. We are familiar with the power of this kind of fusion chiefly from earlier times and their naivete about themselves and their heritage. In a tradition this process of fusion is continually going on, for there old and new are always combining into something of living value, without either being explicitly foregrounded from the other.

If, however, there is no such thing as these distinct horizons, why do we speak of the fusion of horizons and not simply of the formation of the one horizon, whose bounds are set in the depths of tradition? To ask the question means that we are recognizing that understanding becomes a scholarly task only under special circumstances and that it is necessary to work out these circumstances as a hermeneutical situation. Every encounter with tradition that takes place within historical consciousness involves the experience of a tension between the text and the present. The hermeneutic task consists in not covering up this tension by attempting a naive assimilation of the two but in consciously bringing it out. This is why it is part of the hermeneutic approach to project a historical horizon that is different from the horizon of the present. Historical consciousness is aware of its own otherness and hence foregrounds the horizon of the past from its own. On the other hand, it is itself, as we are trying to show, only something superimposed upon continuing tradition, and hence it immediately recombines with what it has foregrounded itself from in order to become one with itself again in the unity of the historical horizon that it thus acquires.

Projecting a historical horizon, then, is only one phase in the

process of understanding; it does not become solidified into the self-alienation of a past consciousness, but is overtaken by our own present horizon of understanding. In the process of understanding, a real fusing of horizons occurs—which means that as the historical horizon is projected, it is simultaneously superseded. To bring about this fusion in a regulated way is the task of what we called historically effected consciousness. Although this task was obscured by aesthetic-historical positivism following on the heels of romantic hermeneutics, it is, in fact, the central problem of hermeneutics. It is the problem of application, which is to be found in all understanding.

2 THE RECOVERY OF THE FUNDAMENTAL HERMENEUTIC PROBLEM

(A) THE HERMENEUTIC PROBLEM OF APPLICATION

In the early tradition of hermeneutics, which was completely invisible to the historical self-consciousness of post-romantic scientific epistemology, this problem had its systematic place. Hermeneutics was subdivided as follows: there was a distinction between *subtilitas intelligendi* (understanding) and *subtilitas explicandi* (interpretation); and pietism added a third element, *subtilitas applicandi* (application), as in J. J. Rambach. The process of understanding was regarded as consisting of these three elements. It is notable that all three are called *subtilitas*—i.e., they are considered less as methods that we have at our disposal than as talents requiring particular finesse of mind.²³⁵ As we have seen, the hermeneutic problem acquired systematic importance because the romantics recognized the inner unity of *intelligere* and *explicare*. Interpretation is not an occasional, post facto supplement to understanding; rather, understanding is always interpretation, and hence interpretation is the explicit form of understanding. In accordance with this insight, interpretive language and concepts were recognized as belonging to the inner structure of understanding. This moves the whole problem of language from its peripheral and incidental position into the center of philosophy. We will return to this point.

²³⁵ Rambach's *Institutiones hermeneuticae sacrae* (1723) are known to me in the compilation by Morus. There we read: *Solemus autem intelligendi explicandique subtilitatem (soliditatem vulgo).*

no "s"

Horizontverschmelzung

Fusion brings forth the tension between the two horizons

presuppose a knowledge that one does not know; so much so, indeed, that a particular lack of knowledge leads to a particular question.

Suppression
of questions

Plato shows in an unforgettable way where the difficulty lies in knowing what one does not know. It is the power of opinion against which it is so hard to obtain an admission of ignorance. It is opinion that suppresses questions. Opinion has a curious tendency to propagate itself. It would always like to be the general opinion, just as the word that the Greeks have for opinion, doxa, also means the decision made by the majority in the council assembly. How, then, can ignorance be admitted and questions arise?

Let us say first of all that it can occur only in the way any idea occurs to us. It is true that we do speak of ideas occurring to us less in regard to questions than to answers—e.g., the solution of problems; and by this we mean to say that there is no methodical way to arrive at the solution. But we also know that such ideas do not occur to us entirely unexpectedly. They always presuppose an orientation toward an area of openness from which the idea can occur—i.e., they presuppose questions. The real nature of the sudden idea is perhaps less that a solution occurs to us like an answer to a riddle than that a question occurs to us that breaks through into the open and thereby makes an answer possible. Every sudden idea has the structure of a question. But the sudden occurrence of the question is already a breach in the smooth front of popular opinion. Hence we say that a question too “occurs” to us, that it “arises” or “presents itself” more than that we raise it or present it.

We have already seen that, logically considered, the negativity of experience implies a question. In fact we have experiences when we are shocked by things that do not accord with our expectations. Thus questioning too is more a passion than an action. A question presses itself on us; we can no longer avoid it and persist in our accustomed opinion.

It seems to conflict with these conclusions, however, that the Socratic-Platonic dialectic raises the art of questioning to a conscious art; but there is something peculiar about this art. We have seen that it is reserved to the person who wants to know—i.e., who already has questions. The art of questioning is not the art of resisting the pressure of opinion; it already presupposes this freedom. It is not an art in the sense that the Greeks speak of techne, not a craft that can be taught or by means of which we could master the discovery of truth. The so-called epistemological digression of the *Seventh Letter* is directed, rather, to distinguish-

ing the unique art of dialectic from everything that can be taught and learned. The art of dialectic is not the art of being able to win every argument. On the contrary, it is possible that someone practicing the art of dialectic—i.e., the art of questioning and of seeking truth—comes off worse in the argument in the eyes of those listening to it. As the art of asking questions, dialectic proves its value because only the person who knows how to ask questions is able to persist in his questioning, which involves being able to preserve his orientation toward openness. The art of questioning is the art of questioning ever further—i.e., the art of thinking. It is called dialectic because it is the art of conducting a real dialogue.

To conduct a dialogue requires first of all that the partners do not talk at cross purposes. Hence it necessarily has the structure of question and answer. The first condition of the art of conversation is ensuring that the other person is with us. We know this only too well from the reiterated yesses of the interlocutors in the Platonic dialogues. The positive side of this monotony is the inner logic with which the subject matter is developed in the conversation. To conduct a conversation means to allow oneself to be conducted by the subject matter to which the partners in the dialogue are oriented. It requires that one does not try to argue the other person down but that one really considers the weight of the other's opinion. Hence it is an art of testing.³¹³ But the art of testing is the art of questioning. For we have seen that to question means to lay open, to place in the open. As against the fixity of opinions, questioning makes the object and all its possibilities fluid. A person skilled in the “art” of questioning is a person who can prevent questions from being suppressed by the dominant opinion. A person who possesses this art will himself search for everything in favor of an opinion. Dialectic consists not in trying to discover the weakness of what is said, but in bringing out its real strength. It is not the art of arguing (which can make a strong case out of a weak one) but the art of thinking (which can strengthen objections by referring to the subject matter).

The unique and continuing relevance of the Platonic dialogues is due to this art of strengthening, for in this process what is said is continually transformed into the uttermost possibilities of its rightness and truth, and overcomes all opposition that tries to

³¹³ Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, 1004 b 25: *esti de he dialektike peirastike*. Here we can already discern the idiom of being led, which is the real sense of dialectic, in that the testing of an opinion gives it the chance to conquer and hence puts one's own previous opinion at risk.

charity
Verstehen

NB

Hermeneutics:
the art of finding
the best questions
to ask of a text

Main obstacle:
pre-fixed
“opinion” that
blocks questions

Here: the
EPIPHANY of the
ADEQUATE QUESTION

Essential:
a genuine desire
to want to know
apart from
public opinion

limit its validity. Here again it is not simply a matter of leaving the subject undecided. Someone who wants to know something cannot just leave it a matter of mere opinion, which is to say that he cannot hold himself aloof from the opinions that are in question.³¹⁴ The speaker (der Redende) is put to the question (zur Rede gestellt) until the truth of what is under discussion (wovon der Rede ist) finally emerges. The maieutic productivity of the Socratic dialogue, the art of using words as a midwife, is certainly directed toward the people who are the partners in the dialogue, but it is concerned merely with the opinions they express, the immanent logic of the subject matter that is unfolded in the dialogue. What emerges in its truth is the logos, which is neither mine nor yours and hence so far transcends the interlocutors' subjective opinions that even the person leading the conversation knows that he does not know. As the art of conducting a conversation, dialectic is also the art of seeing things in the unity of an aspect (sunoran eis hen eidos)—i.e., it is the art of forming concepts through working out the common meaning. What characterizes a dialogue, in contrast with the rigid form of statements that demand to be set down in writing, is precisely this: that in dialogue spoken language—in the process of question and answer, giving and taking, talking at cross-purposes and seeing each other's point—performs the communication of meaning that, with respect to the written tradition, is the task of hermeneutics. Hence it is more than a metaphor; it is a memory of what originally was the case, to describe the task of hermeneutics as entering into dialogue with the text. That this interpretation is performed by spoken language does not mean that it is transposed into a foreign medium; rather, being transformed into spoken language represents the restoration of the original communication of meaning. When it is interpreted, written tradition is brought back out of the alienation in which it finds itself and into the living present of conversation, which is always fundamentally realized in question and answer.

Thus we can appeal to Plato if we want to foreground the place of the question in hermeneutics. We can do this all the more readily since Plato himself manifests the hermeneutical phenomenon in a specific way. It would be worth investigating his critique of the written word as evidence that the poetic and philosophical tradition was becoming a literature in Athens. In Plato's dialogues we see how the kind of textual "interpretation" cultivated by the sophists, especially the interpretation of poetry for

³¹⁴See above pp. 292f., 336f.

Dialogue as
"spoken,"
(flexible,
spontaneous)

Q+A at the
heart of
hermeneutics

(value of
dialogue in
Plato)

didactic ends, elicited Plato's opposition. We can see, further, how Plato tries to overcome the weakness of the logoi, especially the written logoi, through his own dialogues. The literary form of the dialogue places language and concept back within the original movement of the conversation. This protects words from all dogmatic abuse.

The primacy of conversation can also be seen in derivative forms in which the relation between question and answer is obscured. Letters, for example, are an interesting intermediate phenomenon: a kind of written conversation that, as it were, stretches out the movement of talking at cross purposes and seeing each other's point. The art of writing letters consists in not letting what one says become a treatise on the subject but in making it acceptable to the correspondent. But on the other hand it also consists in preserving and fulfilling the standard of finality that everything stated in writing has. The time lapse between sending a letter and receiving an answer is not just an external factor, but gives this form of communication its special nature as a particular form of writing. So we note that speeding up the post has not improved this form of communication but, on the contrary, has led to a decline in the art of letter writing.

The primacy of dialogue, the relation of question and answer, can be seen in even so extreme a case as that of Hegel's dialectic as a philosophical method. To elaborate the totality of the determinations of thought, which was the aim of Hegel's logic, is as it were the attempt to comprehend within the great monologue of modern "method" the continuum of meaning that is realized in every particular instance of dialogue. When Hegel sets himself the task of making the abstract determinations of thought fluid and subtle, this means dissolving and remolding logic into concrete language, and transforming the concept into the meaningful power of the word that questions and answers—a magnificent reminder, even if unsuccessful, of what dialectic really was and is. Hegel's dialectic is a monologue of thinking that tries to carry out in advance what matures little by little in every genuine dialogue.

(ii) The Logic of Question and Answer

Thus we return to the conclusion that the hermeneutic phenomenon too implies the primacy of dialogue and the structure of question and answer. That a historical text is made the object of interpretation means that it puts a question to the interpreter.

Goal: to
dissolve all
back to origin
+ sincere
conversation

A text asks us questions

Thus interpretation always involves a relation to the question that is asked of the interpreter. To understand a text means to understand this question. But this takes place, as we showed, by our attaining the hermeneutical horizon. We now recognize this as the horizon of the question within which the sense of the text is determined.

Thus a person who wants to understand must question what lies behind what is said. He must understand it as an answer to a question. If we go back *behind* what is said, then we inevitably ask questions *beyond* what is said. We understand the sense of the text only by acquiring the horizon of the question—a horizon that, as such, necessarily includes other possible answers. Thus the meaning of a sentence is relative to the question to which it is a reply, but that implies that its meaning necessarily exceeds what is said in it. As these considerations show, then, the logic of the human sciences is a logic of the question.

Despite Plato we are not very ready for such a logic. Almost the only person I find a link with here is R. G. Collingwood. In a brilliant and telling critique of the Oxford "realist" school, he developed the idea of a logic of question and answer, but unfortunately never elaborated it systematically.³¹⁵ He clearly saw what was missing in naive hermeneutics founded on the prevailing philosophical critique. In particular the practice that Collingwood found in English universities of discussing "statements," though perhaps good practice for sharpening one's intelligence, obviously failed to take account of the historicity that is part of all understanding. Collingwood argues thus: We can understand a text only when we have understood the question to which it is an answer. But since this question can be derived solely from the text and accordingly the appropriateness of the reply is the methodological presupposition for the reconstruction of the question, any criticism of this reply from some other quarter is pure shadow boxing. It is like understanding works of art. A work of art can be understood only if we assume its adequacy as an expression of the artistic idea. Here too we have to discover the question which it answers, if we are to understand it as an answer. This is, in fact, an axiom of all hermeneutics: we described it above as the "fore-conception of completeness."³¹⁶ Cf. p. 375, 12 up.

³¹⁵ Cf. Collingwood's Autobiography which at my suggestion was published in German translation as Denken, pp. 30ff., as well as Joachim Finkeldei, Grund und Wesen des Fragens (unpub. diss., Heidelberg, 1954). A similar position is adopted by Croce (who influenced Collingwood) in his Logic as Science of the Pure Concept, tr. Ainsley (London, 1917), German tr., pp. 135ff., where he understands every definition as an answer to a question and hence historical.

³¹⁶ Cf. pp. 293-94f. above, and my critique of Guardini, Kleine Schriften, II,

For Collingwood, this is the nerve of all historical knowledge. The historical method requires that the logic of question and answer be applied to historical tradition. We will understand historical events only if we reconstruct the question to which the historical actions of the persons involved were the answer. As an example Collingwood cites the Battle of Trafalgar and Nelson's plan on which it was based. The example is intended to show that the course of the battle helps us to understand Nelson's real plan, because it was successfully carried out. Because his opponent's plan failed, however, it cannot be reconstructed from the events. Thus, understanding the course of the battle and understanding the plan that Nelson carried out in it are one and the same process.³¹⁷

But yet one cannot conceal the fact that the logic of question and answer has to reconstruct two different questions that have two different answers: the question of the meaning of a great event and the question of whether this event went according to plan. Clearly, the two questions coincide only when the plan coincides with the course of events. But we cannot suppose such coincidence as a methodological principle when we are concerned with a historical tradition which deals with men, like ourselves, in history. Tolstoy's celebrated description of the council of war before the battle—in which all the strategic possibilities are calculated and all the plans considered, thoroughly and perceptively, while the general sits there and sleeps, but in the night before the battle goes round all the sentry posts—is obviously a more accurate account of what we call history. Kutusov gets nearer to the reality and the forces that determine it than the strategists of the war council. The conclusion to be drawn from this example is that the interpreter of history always runs the risk of hypostasizing the connectedness of events when he regards their significance as that intended by the actual actors and planners.³¹⁸

This is a legitimate undertaking only if Hegel's conditions hold good—i.e., the philosophy of history is made party to the plans of the world spirit and on the basis of this esoteric knowledge is able to mark out certain individuals as having world-historical importance, since there is a real correlation between their particular ideas and the world-historical meaning of events. But it is

178-87 (GW, IX), where I said: "All criticism of literature is always the self-criticism of interpretation."

³¹⁷ Collingwood, An Autobiography (Oxford: Galaxy ed., 1970), p. 70.

³¹⁸ There are some good observations on this subject in Erich Seeberg's "Zum Problem der pneumatischen Exegese," in Festschrift for Sellin, pp. 127ff. [repr. in Die Hermeneutik und die Wissenschaften, ed. H.-G. Gadamer and G. Boehm (Frankfurt, 1978), pp. 272-82].

Moving into Collingwood and the recovery of background presuppositions

Collingwood's Diction

(also: assume that the original "answer" was adequate - don't criticize it from a different horizon.)

pp. 31, 33

War + Peace
history cannot (does not) go according to the plans of the individual

impossible to derive a hermeneutical principle for the knowledge of history from such conjunctions of the subjective and objective in history. In regard to historical tradition Hegel's theory clearly has only a limited truth. The infinite web of motivations that constitutes history only occasionally and briefly acquires the clarity of what a single individual has planned. Thus what Hegel describes as an exception proves the rule that there is a disproportion between an individual's subjective thoughts and the meaning of the whole course of history. As a rule we experience the course of events as something that continually changes our plans and expectations. Someone who tries to stick to his plans discovers precisely how powerless his reason is. There are rare occasions when everything happens, as it were, of its own accord—i.e., events seem to be automatically in accord with our plans and wishes. On these occasions we can say that everything is going according to plan. But to apply this experience to the whole of history is to make a great extrapolation that completely contradicts our experience.

Collingwood's use of the logic of question and answer in hermeneutical theory is made ambiguous by this extrapolation. Our understanding of written tradition per se is not such that we can simply presuppose that the meaning we discover in it agrees with what its author intended. Just as the events of history do not in general manifest any agreement with the subjective ideas of the person who stands and acts within history, so the sense of a text in general reaches far beyond what its author originally intended.³¹⁹ The task of understanding is concerned above all with the meaning of the text itself.

This is clearly what Collingwood had in mind when he denied that there is any difference between the historical question and the philosophical question to which the text is supposed to be an answer. Nevertheless, we must remember that the question we are concerned to reconstruct has to do not with the mental experiences of the author but simply with the meaning of the text itself. Thus if we have understood the meaning of a sentence—i.e., have reconstructed the question to which it really is the answer—it must be possible to inquire also about the questioner and his intended question, to which the text is perhaps only an imagined answer. Collingwood is wrong when he finds it methodologically unsound to differentiate between the question which the text is intended to answer and the question to which it really is an answer. He is right only insofar as understanding a text

³¹⁹ See pp. 183, 296 above and passim.

does not generally involve such a distinction, if we are concerned with the subject matter of which the text speaks. Reconstructing the author's ideas is quite a different task.

We will have to ask what conditions apply to this different task. For it is undoubtedly true that, compared with the genuine hermeneutical experience that understands the meaning of the text, reconstructing what the author really had in mind is a limited undertaking. Historicism tempts us to regard such reduction as a scientific virtue and to regard understanding as a kind of reconstruction which in effect repeats the process whereby the text came into being. Hence it follows the cognitive ideal familiar to us from the knowledge of nature, where we understand a process only when we are able to reproduce it artificially.

I have shown above³²⁰ how questionable is Vico's statement that this ideal finds its purest culmination in history because there man encounters his own human-historical reality. I have asserted, on the contrary, that every historian and philologist must reckon with the fundamental non-definitiveness of the horizon in which his understanding moves. Historical tradition can be understood only as something always in the process of being defined by the course of events. Similarly, the philologist dealing with poetic or philosophical texts knows that they are inexhaustible. In both cases it is the course of events that brings out new aspects of meaning in historical material. By being re-actualized in understanding, texts are drawn into a genuine course of events in exactly the same way as are events themselves. This is what we described as the history of effect as an element in hermeneutical experience. Every actualization in understanding can be regarded as a historical potential of what is understood. It is part of the historical finitude of our being that we are aware that others after us will understand in a different way. And yet it is equally indubitable that it remains the same work whose fullness of meaning is realized in the changing process of understanding, just as it is the same history whose meaning is constantly in the process of being defined. The hermeneutical reduction to the author's meaning is just as inappropriate as the reduction of historical events to the intentions of their protagonists.

However, we cannot take the reconstruction of the question to which a given text is an answer simply as an achievement of historical method. The most important thing is the question that the text puts to us, our being perplexed by the traditionary word, so that understanding it must already include the task of the histor-

³²⁰ Pp. 222f. and 276f. above.

limitations on any understanding (including that of the author)
Wirkungsgeschichte

main point
diff. from Inquiry, etc.
NB: The real q. to which a text is an answer may be unknown to the intentions of the author

ical self-mediation between the present and tradition. Thus the relation of question and answer is, in fact, reversed. The voice that speaks to us from the past—whether text, work, trace—itself poses a question and places our meaning in openness. In order to answer the question put to us, we the interrogated must ourselves begin to ask questions. We must attempt to reconstruct the question to which the traditional text is the answer. But we will be unable to do so without going beyond the historical horizon it presents us. Reconstructing the question to which the text is presumed to be the answer itself takes place within a process of questioning through which we try to answer the question that the text asks us. A reconstructed question can never stand within its original horizon: for the historical horizon that circumscribed the reconstruction is not a truly comprehensive one. It is, rather, included within the horizon that embraces us as the questioners who have been encountered by the traditional word.

Hence it is a hermeneutical necessity always to go beyond mere reconstruction. We cannot avoid thinking about what the author accepted unquestioningly and hence did not consider, and bringing it into the openness of the question. This is not to open the door to arbitrariness in interpretation but to reveal what always takes place. Understanding the word of tradition always requires that the reconstructed question be set within the openness of its questionableness—i.e., that it merge with the question that tradition is for us. If the “historical” question emerges by itself, this means that it no longer arises as a question. It results from the cessation of understanding—a detour in which we get stuck.³²¹ Part of real understanding, however, is that we regain the concepts of a historical past in such a way that they also include our own comprehension of them. Above I called this “the fusion of horizons.”³²² With Collingwood, we can say that we understand only when we understand the question to which something is the answer, but the intention of what is understood in this way does not remain foregrounded against our own intention. Rather, reconstructing the question to which the meaning of a text is understood as an answer merges with our own questioning. For the text must be understood as an answer to a real question.

The close relation between questioning and understanding is what gives the hermeneutic experience its true dimension. However much a person trying to understand may leave open the truth

³²¹ See the account of this wrong turning of the historical in my analysis above, pp. 181ff., of Spinoza's *Theologico-Political Treatise*.

³²² Cf. pp. 306ff. above.

of what is said, however much he may dismiss the immediate meaning of the object and consider its deeper significance instead, and take the latter not as true but merely as meaningful, so that the possibility of its truth remains unsettled, this is the real and fundamental nature of a question: namely to make things indeterminate. Questions always bring out the undetermined possibilities of a thing. That is why we cannot understand the questionableness of something without asking real questions, though we can understand a meaning without meaning it. *To understand the questionableness of something is already to be questioning.* There can be no tentative or potential attitude to questioning, for questioning is not the positing but the testing of possibilities. Here the nature of questioning indicates what is demonstrated by the actual operation of the Platonic dialogue.³²³ A person who thinks must ask himself questions. Even when a person says that such and such a question might arise, this is already a real questioning that simply masks itself, out of either caution or politeness.

This is the reason why understanding is always more than merely re-creating someone else's meaning. Questioning opens up possibilities of meaning, and thus what is meaningful passes into one's own thinking on the subject. Only in an inauthentic sense can we talk about understanding questions that one does not pose oneself—e.g., questions that are outdated or empty. We understand how certain questions came to be asked in particular historical circumstances. Understanding such questions means, then, understanding the particular presuppositions whose demise makes such questions “dead.” An example is perpetual motion. The horizon of meaning of such questions is only apparently still open. They are no longer understood as questions. For what we understand, in such cases, is precisely that there is no question.

To understand a question means to ask it. To understand meaning is to understand it as the answer to a question.

The logic of question and answer that Collingwood elaborated puts an end to talk about permanent *problems*, as in the way the “Oxford realists” approach to the classics of philosophy, and hence also an end to the concept of history of problems developed by neo-Kantianism. History of problems would truly be history only if it acknowledged that the identity of the problem is an empty abstraction and permitted itself to be transformed into questioning. There is no such thing, in fact, as a point outside history from which the identity of a problem can be conceived within the vicissitudes of the history of attempts to solve it. The fact is that

³²³ Pp. 362ff. above.

We are included
in our own
interpretations

understanding philosophical texts always requires re-cognizing what is cognized in them. Without this we would understand nothing at all. But this in no way means that we step outside the historical conditions in which we are situated and in which we understand. The problem that we re-cognize is not in fact simply the same if it is to be understood in a genuine act of questioning. We can regard it as the same only because of our historical short-sightedness. The standpoint that is beyond any standpoint, a standpoint from which we could conceive its true identity, is a pure illusion.

We can understand the reason for this now. The concept of the problem is clearly an abstraction, namely the detachment of the content of the question from the question that in fact first reveals it. It refers to the abstract schema to which real and really motivated questions can be reduced and under which they can be subsumed. Such a "problem" has fallen out of the motivated context of questioning, from which it receives the clarity of its sense. Hence it is insoluble, like every question that has no clear, unambiguous sense, because it is not really motivated and asked.

This also confirms the origin of the concept of the problem. It does not belong in the sphere of those "honestly motivated refutations"³²⁴ in which the truth of the subject matter is advanced, but in the sphere of dialectic as a weapon to amaze or make a fool of one's opponent. In Aristotle, the word "problema" refers to those questions that present themselves as open alternatives because there is evidence for both views and we think that they cannot be decided by reasons, since the questions involved are too great.³²⁵ Problems are not real questions that arise of themselves and hence acquire the pattern of their answer from the genesis of their meaning, but are alternatives that can only be accepted as themselves and thus can be treated only in a dialectical way. This dialectical sense of the "problem" has its proper place in rhetoric, not in philosophy. Part of the concept of the problem is that there can be no clear decision on the basis of reasons. That is why Kant sees the rise of the concept of the problem as limited to the dialectic of pure reason. Problems are "tasks that emerge entirely from its own womb"—i.e., products of reason itself, the complete solution of which it cannot hope to achieve.³²⁶ It is interesting that in the nineteenth century, with the collapse of the unbroken tradition of philosophical question-

³²⁴ Plato, *Seventh Letter*, 344b.

³²⁵ Aristotle, *Topics*, I, 11.

³²⁶ *Critique of Pure Reason*, A 321ff.

ing and the rise of historicism, the concept of the problem acquires a universal validity—a sign of the fact that an immediate relation to the questions of philosophy no longer exists. It is typical of the embarrassment of philosophical consciousness when faced with historicism that it took flight into an abstraction, the concept of the "problem," and saw no problem about the manner in which problems actually "exist." Neo-Kantian history of problems is a bastard of historicism. Critiquing the concept of the problem by appealing to a logic of question and answer must destroy the illusion that problems exist like stars in the sky.³²⁷ Reflection on the hermeneutical experience transforms problems back to questions that arise and that derive their sense from their motivation.

The dialectic of question and answer disclosed in the structure of hermeneutical experience now permits us to state more exactly what kind of consciousness historically effected consciousness is. For the dialectic of question and answer that we demonstrated makes understanding appear to be a reciprocal relationship of the same kind as conversation. It is true that a text does not speak to us in the same way as does a Thou. We who are attempting to understand must ourselves make it speak. But we found that this kind of understanding, "making the text speak," is not an arbitrary procedure that we undertake on our own initiative but that, as a question, it is related to the answer that is expected in the text. Anticipating an answer itself presupposes that the questioner is part of the tradition and regards himself as addressed by it. This is the truth of historically effected consciousness. It is the historically experienced consciousness that, by renouncing the

taking into account Wirkungs-geschichte

³²⁷ Nicolai Hartmann, in his essay "Der philosophische Gedanke und seine Geschichte," *Abhandlungen der preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften* (1936), no. 5 (repr. in Hartmann, *Kleine Schriften*, II, 1–47), rightly pointed out that the important thing is to realize once more in our own minds what the great thinkers realized. But when, in order to hold something fixed against the inroads of historicism, he distinguished between the constancy of what the "real problems are concerned with" and the changing nature of the way in which they have to be both asked and answered, he failed to see that neither "change," nor "constancy," the antithesis of "problem" and "system," nor the criterion of "achievements" is consonant with the character of philosophy as knowledge. When he wrote that "only when the individual avails himself of the enormous intellectual experience of the centuries, and his own experience is based on what he has recognized and what has been well tried . . . can that knowledge be sure of its own further progress" (p. 18), he interpreted the "systematic acquaintance with the problems" according to the model of an experimental science and a progress of knowledge that falls far short of the complicated interpenetration of tradition and history that we have seen in hermeneutical consciousness.

chimera of perfect enlightenment, is open to the experience of history. We described its realization as the fusion of the horizons of understanding, which is what mediates between the text and its interpreter.

The guiding idea of the following discussion is that the fusion of horizons that takes place in understanding is actually the achievement of language. Admittedly, what language is belongs among the most mysterious questions that man ponders. Language is so uncannily near our thinking, and when it functions it is so little an object, that it seems to conceal its own being from us. In our analysis of the thinking of the human sciences, however, we came so close to this universal mystery of language that is prior to everything else, that we can entrust ourselves to what we are investigating to guide us safely in the quest. In other words we are endeavoring to approach the mystery of language from the conversation that we ourselves are.

When we try to examine the hermeneutical phenomenon through the model of conversation between two persons, the chief thing that these apparently so different situations—understanding a text and reaching an understanding in a conversation—have in common is that both are concerned with a subject matter that is placed before them. Just as each interlocutor is trying to reach agreement on some subject with his partner, so also the interpreter is trying to understand what the text is saying. This understanding of the subject matter must take the form of language. It is not that the understanding is subsequently put into words; rather, the way understanding occurs—whether in the case of a text or a dialogue with another person who raises an issue with us—is the coming-into-language of the thing itself. Thus we will first consider the structure of dialogue proper, in order to specify the character of that other form of dialogue that is the understanding of texts. Whereas up to now we have framed the constitutive significance of the *question* for the hermeneutical phenomenon in terms of conversation, we must now demonstrate the linguisticity of dialogue, which is the basis of the question, as an element of hermeneutics.

Our first point is that the language in which something comes to speak is not a possession at the disposal of one or the other of the interlocutors. Every conversation presupposes a common language, or better, creates a common language. Something is placed in the center, as the Greeks say, which the partners in dialogue both share, and concerning which they can exchange ideas with one another. Hence reaching an understanding on the subject matter of a conversation necessarily means that a common lan-

guage must first be worked out in the conversation. This is not an external matter of simply adjusting our tools; nor is it even right to say that the partners adapt themselves to one another but, rather, in a successful conversation they both come under the influence of the truth of the object and are thus bound to one another in a new community. To reach an understanding in a dialogue is not merely a matter of putting oneself forward and successfully asserting one's own point of view, but being transformed into a communion in which we do not remain what we were.³²⁸

³²⁸ Cf. my "Was ist Wahrheit?," *Kleine Schriften*, I, 46–58 (GW, II, 44–56).

openness to the
progress of the conversation,
w/o force of will or a
predetermined outcome.

not really
"re-enactment" →
∴ slightly different from,
say, Schleiermacher or

1 LANGUAGE AS THE MEDIUM OF HERMENEUTIC EXPERIENCE

We say that we "conduct" a conversation, but the more genuine a conversation is, the less its conduct lies within the will of either partner. Thus a genuine conversation is never the one that we wanted to conduct. Rather, it is generally more correct to say that we fall into conversation, or even that we become involved in it. The way one word follows another, with the conversation taking its own twists and reaching its own conclusion, may well be conducted in some way, but the partners conversing are far less the leaders of it than the led. No one knows in advance what will "come out" of a conversation. Understanding or its failure is like an event that happens to us. Thus we can say that something was a good conversation or that it was ill fated. All this shows that a conversation has a spirit of its own, and that the language in which it is conducted bears its own truth within it—i.e., that it allows something to "emerge" which henceforth exists.

In our analysis of romantic hermeneutics we have already seen that understanding is not based on transposing oneself into another person, on one person's immediate participation with another. To understand what a person says is, as we saw, to come to an understanding about the subject matter, not to get inside another person and relive his experiences (Erlebnisse). We em-

phasized that the experience (Erfahrung) of meaning that takes place in understanding always includes application. Now we are to note that this whole process is verbal. It is not for nothing that the special problematic of understanding and the attempt to master it as an art—the concern of hermeneutics—belongs traditionally to the sphere of grammar and rhetoric. Language is the medium in which substantive understanding and agreement take place between two people.

In situations where coming to an understanding is disrupted or impeded, we first become conscious of the conditions of all understanding. Thus the verbal process whereby a conversation in two different languages is made possible through translation is especially informative. Here the translator must translate the meaning to be understood into the context in which the other speaker lives. This does not, of course, mean that he is at liberty to falsify the meaning of what the other person says. Rather, the meaning must be preserved, but since it must be understood within a new language world, it must establish its validity within it in a new way. Thus every translation is at the same time an interpretation. We can even say that the translation is the culmination of the interpretation that the translator has made of the words given him.

The example of translation, then, makes us aware that language as the medium of understanding must be consciously created by an explicit mediation. This kind of explicit process is undoubtedly not the norm in a conversation. Nor is translation the norm in the way we approach a foreign language. Rather, having to rely on translation is tantamount to two people giving up their independent authority. Where a translation is necessary, the gap between the spirit of the original words and that of their reproduction must be taken into account. It is a gap that can never be completely closed. But in these cases understanding does not really take place between the partners of the conversation, but between the interpreters, who can really have an encounter in a common world of understanding. (It is well known that nothing is more difficult than a dialogue in two different languages in which one person speaks one and the other person the other, each understanding the other's language but not speaking it. As if impelled by a higher force, one of the languages always tries to establish itself over the other as the medium of understanding.)

Where there is understanding, there is not translation but speech. To understand a foreign language means that we do not need to translate it into our own. When we really master a language, then

it
music and
[translated?]
connecting in
fact music?

no translation is necessary—in fact, any translation seems impossible. Understanding how to speak is not yet of itself real understanding and does not involve an interpretive process; it is an accomplishment of life. For you understand a language by living in it—a statement that is true, as we know, not only of living but dead languages as well. Thus the hermeneutical problem concerns not the correct mastery of language but coming to a proper understanding about the subject matter, which takes place in the medium of language. Every language can be learned so perfectly that using it no longer means translating from or into one's native tongue, but thinking in the foreign language. Mastering the language is a necessary precondition for coming to an understanding in a conversation. Every conversation obviously presupposes that the two speakers speak the same language. Only when two people can make themselves understood through language by talking together can the problem of understanding and agreement even be raised. Having to depend on an interpreter's translation is an extreme case that doubles the hermeneutical process, namely the conversation: there is one conversation between the interpreter and the other, and a second between the interpreter and oneself.

charity —
hermeneutics
of recovery

CRUCIAL!
NB ←

Conversation is a process of coming to an understanding. Thus it belongs to every true conversation that each person opens himself to the other, truly accepts his point of view as valid and transposes himself into the other to such an extent that he understands not the particular individual but what he says. What is to be grasped is the substantive rightness of his opinion, so that we can be at one with each other on the subject. Thus we do not relate the other's opinion to him but to our own opinions and views. Where a person is concerned with the other as individuality—e.g., in a therapeutic conversation or the interrogation of a man accused of a crime—this is not really a situation in which two people are trying to come to an understanding.¹

Seeks to understand the text, not the person uttering it

Everything we have said characterizing the situation of two people coming to an understanding in conversation has a genuine application to hermeneutics, which is concerned with understanding texts. Let us again start by considering the extreme case of translation from a foreign language. Here no one can doubt that the translation of a text, however much the translator may have dwelt with and empathized with his author, cannot be sim-

(music ??)

¹If one transposes oneself into the position of another with the intent of understanding not the truth of what he is saying, but him, the questions asked in such a conversation are marked by the inauthenticity described above (pp. 362f.).

anti-eklektisch — inauthenticity
cf. Schubert — Lieder? unfinished Symph?
psychoanalytical analysis?
cf. Popper story!

ply a re-awakening of the original process in the writer's mind; rather, it is necessarily a re-creation of the text guided by the way the translator understands what it says. No one can doubt that what we are dealing with here is interpretation, and not simply reproduction. A new light falls on the text from the other language and for the reader of it. The requirement that a translation be faithful cannot remove the fundamental gulf between the two languages. However faithful we try to be, we have to make difficult decisions. In our translation if we want to emphasize a feature of the original that is important to us, then we can do so only by playing down or entirely suppressing other features. But this is precisely the activity that we call interpretation. Translation, like all interpretation, is a highlighting. A translator must understand that highlighting is part of his task. Obviously he must not leave open whatever is not clear to him. He must show his colors. Yet there are borderline cases in the original (and for the "original reader") where something is in fact unclear. But precisely these hermeneutical borderline cases show the straits in which the translator constantly finds himself. Here he must resign himself. He must state clearly how he understands. But since he is always in the position of not really being able to express all the dimensions of his text, he must make a constant renunciation. Every translation that takes its task seriously is at once clearer and flatter than the original. Even if it is a masterly re-creation, it must lack some of the overtones that vibrate in the original. (In rare cases of masterly re-creation the loss can be made good or even mean a gain—think, for example, of how Baudelaire's *Les fleurs du mal* seems to acquire an odd new vigor in Stefan George's version.)

The translator is often painfully aware of his inevitable distance from the original. His dealing with the text is like the effort to come to an understanding in conversation. But translating is like an especially laborious process of understanding, in which one views the distance between one's own opinion and its contrary as ultimately unbridgeable. And, as in conversation, when there are such unbridgeable differences, a compromise can sometimes be achieved in the to and fro of dialogue, so in the to and fro of weighing and balancing possibilities, the translator will seek the best solution—a solution that can never be more than a compromise. As one tries in conversation to transpose oneself into the other person in order to understand his point of view, so also does the translator try to transpose himself completely into his author. But doing so does not automatically mean that understanding is achieved in a conversation, nor for the translator does

such transposition mean success in re-creating the meaning. The structures are clearly analogous. Reaching an understanding in conversation presupposes that both partners are ready for it and are trying to recognize the full value of what is alien and opposed to them. If this happens mutually, and each of the partners, while simultaneously holding on to his own arguments, weighs the counterarguments, it is finally possible to achieve—in an imperceptible but not arbitrary reciprocal translation of the other's position (we call this an exchange of views)—a common diction and a common dictum. Similarly, the translator must preserve the character of his own language, the language into which he is translating, while still recognizing the value of the alien, even antagonistic character of the text and its expression. Perhaps, however, this description of the translator's activity is too truncated. Even in these extreme situations where it is necessary to translate from one language into another, the subject matter can scarcely be separated from the language. Only that translator can truly re-create who brings into language the subject matter that the text points to; but this means finding a language that is not only his but is also proportionate to the original.² The situation of the translator and that of the interpreter are fundamentally the same.

In bridging the gulf between languages, the translator clearly exemplifies the reciprocal relationship that exists between interpreter and text, and that corresponds to the reciprocity involved in reaching an understanding in conversation. For every translator is an interpreter. The fact that a foreign language is being translated means that this is simply an extreme case of hermeneutical difficulty—i.e., of alienness and its conquest. In fact all the "objects" with which traditional hermeneutics is concerned are alien in the same unequivocally defined sense. The translator's task of re-creation differs only in degree, not in kind, from the general hermeneutical task that any text presents.

This is not to say, of course, that the hermeneutic situation in regard to texts is exactly the same as that between two people in conversation. Texts are "enduringly fixed expressions of life"³ that are to be understood; and that means that one partner in the hermeneutical conversation, the text, speaks only through the other partner, the interpreter. Only through him are the written marks changed back into meaning. Nevertheless, in being changed

²We have here the problem of "alienation," on which Schadewaldt has important things to say in the appendix to his translation of the *Odyssey* (RoRo-Klassiker, 1958), p. 324.

³Droysen, *Historik*, ed. Hübner (1937), p. 63.

Now --
issues of
translation



(analysis?)

JH: is
translation
like analysis?
(cf. the later
Jacc!)

How do fixed
texts participate
in the dialogue?
They speak
through the
interpreter

back by understanding, the subject matter of which the text speaks itself finds expression. It is like a real conversation in that the common subject matter is what binds the two partners, the text and the interpreter, to each other. When a translator interprets a conversation, he can make mutual understanding possible only if he participates in the subject under discussion; so also in relation to a text it is indispensable that the interpreter participate in its meaning.

Thus it is perfectly legitimate to speak of a *hermeneutical conversation*. But from this it follows that hermeneutical conversation, like real conversation, finds a common language, and that finding a common language is not, any more than in real conversation, preparing a tool for the purpose of reaching understanding but, rather, coincides with the very act of understanding and reaching agreement. Even between the partners of this "conversation" a communication like that between two people takes place that is more than mere accommodation. The text brings a subject matter into language, but that it does so is ultimately the achievement of the interpreter. Both have a share in it.

Hence the meaning of a text is not to be compared with an immovably and obstinately fixed point of view that suggests only one question to the person trying to understand it, namely how the other person could have arrived at such an absurd opinion. In this sense understanding is certainly not concerned with "understanding historically"—i.e., reconstructing the way the text came into being. Rather, one intends to *understand the text itself*. But this means that the interpreter's own thoughts too have gone into re-awakening the text's meaning. In this the interpreter's own horizon is decisive, yet not as a personal standpoint that he maintains or enforces, but more as an opinion and a possibility that one brings into play and puts at risk, and that helps one truly to make one's own what the text says. I have described this above as a "fusion of horizons." We can now see that this is what takes place in conversation, in which something is expressed that is not only mine or my author's, but common.

We are indebted to German romanticism for disclosing the systematic significance of the verbal nature of conversation for all understanding. It has taught us that understanding and interpretation are ultimately the same thing. As we have seen, this insight elevates the idea of interpretation from the merely occasional and pedagogical significance it had in the eighteenth century to a systematic position, as indicated by the key importance that the problem of language has acquired in philosophical inquiry.

Since the romantic period we can no longer hold the view that

in the absence of immediate understanding, interpretive ideas are drawn, as needed, out of a linguistic storeroom where they are lying ready. Rather, language is the universal medium in which understanding occurs. Understanding occurs in interpreting. This statement does not mean that there is no special problem of expression. The difference between the language of a text and the language of the interpreter, or the gulf that separates the translator from the original, is not merely a secondary question. On the contrary, the fact is that the problems of verbal expression are themselves problems of understanding. All understanding is interpretation, and all interpretation takes place in the medium of a language that allows the object to come into words and yet is at the same time the interpreter's own language.

Thus the hermeneutical phenomenon proves to be a special case of the general relationship between thinking and speaking, whose enigmatic intimacy conceals the role of language in thought. Like conversation, interpretation is a circle closed by the dialectic of question and answer. It is a genuine historical life comportment achieved through the medium of language, and we can call it a conversation with respect to the interpretation of texts as well. The linguisticity of understanding is *the concretion of historically effected consciousness*.

The essential relation between language and understanding is seen primarily in the fact that the essence of tradition is to exist in the medium of language, so that the preferred *object* of interpretation is a verbal one.

(A) LANGUAGE AS DETERMINATION OF THE HERMENEUTIC OBJECT

The fact that tradition is essentially verbal in character has consequences for hermeneutics. The understanding of verbal tradition retains special priority over all other tradition. Linguistic tradition may have less perceptual immediacy than monuments of plastic art. Its lack of immediacy, however, is not a defect; rather, this apparent lack, the abstract alienness of all "texts," uniquely expresses the fact that everything in language belongs to the process of understanding. Linguistic tradition is tradition in the proper sense of the word—i.e., something handed down. It is not just something left over, to be investigated and interpreted as a remnant of the past. What has come down to us by way of verbal

the monument merely loathsome, was that perhaps my fault? Was I looking in it for qualities it did not possess, and either ignoring or despising those it did?

I will not try to describe everything I went through in what, for many months, continued to be my daily communings with the Albert Memorial. Of the various thoughts that came to me in those communings I will only state one: a further development of a thought already familiar to me.

My work in archaeology, as I have said, impressed upon me the importance of the 'questioning activity' in knowledge: and this made it impossible for me to rest contented with the intuitionist theory of knowledge favoured by the 'realists'. The effect of this on my logic was to bring about in my mind a revolt against the current logical theories of the time, a good deal like that revolt against the scholastic logic which was produced in the minds of Bacon and Descartes by reflection on the experience of scientific research, as that was taking new shape in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. The *Novum Organum* and the *Discours de la Méthode* began to have a new significance for me. They were the classical expressions of a principle in logic which I found it necessary to restate: the principle that a body of knowledge consists not of 'propositions', 'statements', 'judgements', or whatever name logicians use in order to designate assertive acts of thought (or what in those acts is asserted: for 'knowledge' means both the activity of knowing and what is known), but of these together with the questions they are meant to answer; and that

a logic in which the answers are attended to and the questions neglected is a false logic.

I will try to indicate, briefly as the nature of this book requires (for it is an autobiography, not a work on logic), the way in which this notion developed in my mind as I reflected day by day upon the Albert Memorial. I know that what I am going to say is very controversial, and that almost any reader who is already something of a logician will violently disagree with it. But I shall make no attempt to forestall his criticisms. So far as he belongs to any logical school now existing, I think I know already what they will be, and it is because I am not convinced by them that I am writing this chapter. I shall not use the word 'judgement', like the so-called 'idealistic' logicians, or Cook Wilson's word 'statement': the thing denoted by these words I shall call a 'proposition': so that this word will always in this chapter denote a logical, not a linguistic, entity.

I began by observing that you cannot find out what a man means by simply studying his spoken or written statements, even though he has spoken or written with perfect command of language and perfectly truthful intention. In order to find out his meaning you must also know what the question was (a question in his own mind, and presumed by him to be in yours) to which the thing he has said or written was meant as an answer.

It must be understood that question and answer, as I conceived them, were strictly correlative. A proposition was not an answer, or at any rate could

not be the right answer, to any question which might have been answered otherwise. A highly detailed and particularized proposition must be the answer, not to a vague and generalized question, but to a question as detailed and particularized as itself. For example, if my car will not go, I may spend an hour searching for the cause of its failure. If, during this hour, I take out number one plug, lay it on the engine, turn the starting-handle, and watch for a spark, my observation 'number one plug is all right' is an answer not to the question, 'Why won't my car go?' but to the question, 'Is it because number one plug is not sparking that my car won't go?' Any one of the various experiments I make during the hour will be the finding of an answer to some such detailed and particularized question. The question, 'Why won't my car go?' is only a kind of summary of all these taken together. It is not a separate question asked at a separate time, nor is it a sustained question which I continue to ask for the whole hour together. Consequently, when I say 'Number one plug is all right', this observation does not record one more failure to answer the hour-long question, 'What is wrong with my car?' It records a success in answering the three-minutes-long question, 'Is the stoppage due to failure in number one plug?'

In passing, I will note (what I shall return to later on) that this principle of correlativity between question and answer disposes of a good deal of clap-trap. People will speak of a savage as 'confronted by the eternal problem of obtaining food'. But what really

confronts him is the problem, quite transitory like all things human, of spearing this fish, or digging up this root, or finding blackberries in this wood.

My next step was to apply this principle to the idea of contradiction. The current logic maintained that two propositions might, simply as propositions, contradict one another, and that by examining them simply as propositions you could find out whether they did so or not. This I denied. If you cannot tell what a proposition means unless you know what question it is meant to answer, you will mistake its meaning if you make a mistake about that question. One symptom of mistaking the meaning of a proposition is thinking that it contradicts another proposition which in fact it does not contradict. No two propositions, I saw, can contradict one another unless they are answers to the same question. It is therefore impossible to say of a man, 'I do not know what the question is which he is trying to answer, but I can see that he is contradicting himself'.

The same principle applied to the idea of truth. If the meaning of a proposition is relative to the question it answers, its truth must be relative to the same thing. Meaning, agreement and contradiction, truth and falsehood, none of these belonged to propositions in their own right, propositions by themselves; they belonged only to propositions as the answers to questions: each proposition answering a question strictly correlative to itself.

Here I parted company with what I called propositional logic, and its offspring the generally recognized

age-old hope of using it as a school of political wisdom was as vain as Hegel knew it to be when he made his famous remark that the only thing to be learnt from history is that nobody ever learns anything from history.

But what if history is not a scissors-and-paste affair? What if the historian resembles the natural scientist in asking his own questions, and insisting on an answer? Clearly, that altered the situation. But might he not ask questions whose answers, however interesting, were of no practical use?

The historian is a person whose questions are about the past. He is generally supposed to be a person whose questions are exclusively about the past; about a past, namely, that is dead and gone, and in no sense at all living on into the present. I had not gone very far in my study of historical thought before I realized that this was a delusion. The historian cannot answer questions about the past unless he has evidence about it. His evidence, if he 'has' it, must be something existing here and now in his present world. If there were a past event which had left no trace of any kind in the present world, it would be a past event for which now there was no evidence, and nobody—no historian; I say nothing of other, perhaps more highly gifted, persons—could know anything about it.

In order that a past event should have left in the present world a 'trace' of itself which to the historian is evidence for it, this trace must be something more than any material body, or any state of a material body. Suppose a medieval king granted certain land

to a certain monastery, and suppose the charter recording the grant is preserved to this day, a brown piece of parchment covered with certain black marks. The only reason why this parchment can serve to a modern historian as evidence of the grant is because other things, besides the parchment, survive from the medieval world into the world of to-day. To take only one of these things, the knowledge of Latin survives. Other indispensable survivals, of the same general type, will occur to every reader. I will confine myself to the one I have mentioned. If the habit of reading and understanding Latin had not survived among 'clerkly' persons from the Middle Ages to the present day, the parchment could never have told the historian what in fact it does tell him. In general terms, the modern historian can study the Middle Ages, in the way in which he actually does study them, only because they are not dead. By that I mean not that their writings and so forth are still in existence as material objects, but that their ways of thinking are still in existence as ways in which people still think. The survival need not be continuous. Such things may have died and been raised from the dead, like the ancient languages of Mesopotamia and Egypt.

By about 1920 this was my first principle of a philosophy of history: that the past which an historian studies is not a dead past, but a past which in some sense is still living in the present. At the time, I expressed this by saying that history is concerned not with 'events' but with 'processes'; that 'processes' are things which do not begin and end but turn into one

of Gadamer + the concept of
Wirkung + tradition

Dahlhaus
pp. 3-4
(also from
Gadamer)

another; and that if a process P_1 turns into a process P_2 , there is no dividing line at which P_1 stops and P_2 begins; P_1 never stops, it goes on in the changed form P_2 , and P_2 never begins, it has previously been going on in the earlier form P_1 . There are in history no beginnings and no endings. History books begin and end, but the events they describe do not.

If P_1 has left traces of itself in P_2 , so that an historian living in P_2 can discover by the interpretation of evidence that what is now P_2 was once P_1 , it follows that the 'traces' of P_1 in the present are not, so to speak, the corpse of a dead P_1 but rather the real P_1 itself, living and active though incapsulated within the other form of itself P_2 . And P_2 is not opaque, it is transparent, so that P_1 shines through it and their colours combine into one. Therefore, if the symbol P_1 stands for a characteristic of a certain historical period and the symbol P_2 for the corresponding but different (and therefore contradictory or incompatible) characteristic of its successor, that successor is never characterized by P_2 pure and simple, but always by a P_2 tinged with a survival of P_1 . This is why people who try to depict the characteristic features of this or that historical period go wrong if they do their work too thoroughly, forgetting that the silk of their period is in reality always a shot silk, combining in itself contradictory colours.

The idea of a living past, together with a good many others connected with it, I had completely worked out by 1920; and in that year I wrote them down in an essay of short book-length, very sparing of words and

making point after point without any attempt at elaboration or explanation. It was primarily a study of the nature and implications of process or becoming. Secondly, it was an attack on 'realism', showing how the *non possumus* of 'realists' towards a theory of history arose from their refusal to admit the reality of becoming, and from their analysis of the true proposition ' P_1 becomes P_2 ' into the complex of propositions ' P_1 is P_1 ', ' P_1 is not P_2 ', ' P_1 ends where P_2 begins', ' P_2 is P_2 ', and ' P_2 is not P_1 ', all of them either tautologous or false. This book, written in three days, was intended only to help the process of crystallization in my own thoughts; it would have been quite unintelligible to the general public, and I never contemplated printing it. Nobody has seen it except my friend Guido de Ruggiero, for whom I typed a copy, thinking that it might amuse him as an historian of philosophy. By way of a private joke, I called it *Libellus de Generatione*, and prefixed to it a motto: 'For as the old hermit of Prague, that never saw pen and ink, very wittily said to a niece of king Gorboduc, That, that is, is: for what is that, but that? and is, but is?'

How, I asked, did these conceptions affect the question whether history could be a school of moral and political wisdom? The old pragmatic idea of history was futile because its idea of history was the scissors-and-paste idea in which the past is a dead past, and knowing about it means only knowing what the authorities say about it. And that knowledge is useless as a

²⁴ The original manuscript, like the only manuscript of *Truth and Contradiction*, was destroyed after I wrote this book.

Context for us:

- Jean-Francois Lyotard, The Postmodern Condition (1979)
- Hayden White - Tropics of Discourse [1978] - Metahistory [1973]
- the faction of historians (postmodern) who deeply question narrativity and the "truth" of history - F.R. Ankersmit, Robert Berkhofer, etc.

Dalhous Ch. 4 - EASIEST CH. IN BOOK

Metanarrative Issue (Lyotard)

strains of the decline of Postmodern the coming of age of historic

Is there a "subject" or central tale that unites all history into a story? Lyotard The Postmodern Condition -> collapse of faith in metanarrative

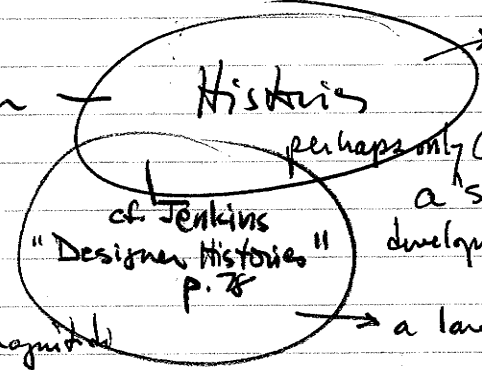
If so, only a heuristic device that makes the telling possible (Danto: "explanation sketch")

(Maxim - liberalism -> yes) JENKINS, p. 71-72
Hayden White -> Tropics of Discourse
narrative history = fiction, fictitious construction w/ no "real" grounding

Q of narrativity + linearity in history

p. 47 Proust - Joyce - + Credo, bottom of p. 47

48 bottom - CD's solution



or "subhistories" Geschichten 48-49
perhaps only Geschichten can have a 'subject' (a coherent development) - Geschichte cannot

p 49 top.

p. 52 medium rd. of magnitude

-> a laudable goal?

Dehlhaus Ch. 5 (A DIFFICULT CHAPTER)

Begriffsgeschichte of 4 or 5 key concepts in approaching the writing of history and adopting a perspective.

Historicism

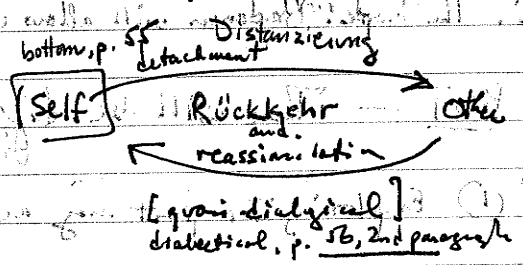
53-58

Initial dialectic - History as ASSIMILATION or CRITIQUE

§ FIRST: TURN TO CONCEPT 1: TRADITION CRITIQUE → AN ELABORATE HISTORY OF THIS CONCEPT
 (2) CRITIQUE: SHORT HISTORY? (awareness of the contingency of the past) - that the past need not shape us. Religion critique (Protestant) - moral critique
 European Enlightenment viewed other cultures (or their own) with detachment, an existing view of "human nature" called into question.
 Method = Kontrollierte Verfremdung (Habermas) [which CD seems to embrace as "good"]
 p. 55 Top Thm: Produces not Entfremdung (alienation) but Bildung (Bildungsprozess) p. 55, 18 up, + its aim was Universalhistorie (Schiller ¹⁷⁸⁴ Universal culture of gen.) →

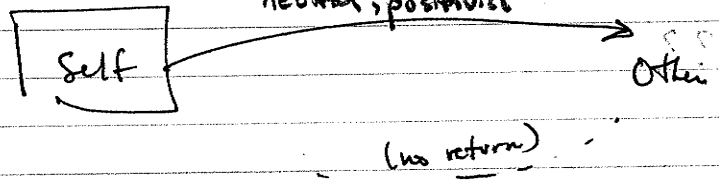
bottom of 55

Point = Detachment need not lead to alienation
Bildungsprozess led from Self back to a reassimilation (Wiederaneignung)



∴ Quasi Golden Age for CD... then is THE FALL - THE GRAND IDEA WAS LOST.
 Collapse from Universal Hist. to History of Europe (56), then national history.
 New neutrality of inquiry (positivism) did not lead back to reassimilation - (56)

With Nietzsche, tradition critique led not to Kontrollierte Verfremdung but to genuine Entfremdung. (57) → Detachment, objectivity = loss of Self (56-59) neutral, positivist



Then we find ourselves shattered... The process of alienation grows apace.
 + inquiry became interrogation, "remorseless suspicion" and "non-examination" (57) [cf. Maximal term of suspicion]

We can't revive 18th.c. wholeness (57, 8p) →
 We are left with a situation where the act of history itself destroys and undermines tradition (58)... "history + tradition drifting asunder" (58)

Marxist solution are empty 58 (10-12 up) - - Here we hit rock bottom.
 Is there a way out? Where to turn?



58-60 Gadamer (im nicht hinter den Stand der Diskussion zurückzufallen)

Who has elaborated a mediated, reflected way of confronting TRADITION and receiving it

(tradition of [Schleiermacher] and Dilthey = HERMENEUTICS)

We are not distanced [alienated] from tradition: we are caught in it; way (58) getragen und umschlossen 10 down

Basic Gadamer concepts (58-59)

Verstehen

"coming to an understanding"

participatory (58)

prejudice & assumptions

∴ The hope: Gadamer will allow us to rebuild — repair the rift.

BUT — There will be difficulties. Not simple. Five Objections

1) Exploring the past may actually be more mystifying than enlightening

? 2) Real alienation of that "other" past is still a danger

3) Can we dialogue with the past? or only with our own selves, projection into the past? Dialogical model adequate?

4) Gadamer minimizes "aesthetic" quality of the works

5) ??

Note - characteristic of Dilthey to bring forth a major figure (whom he is going to embrace, by + large) by beginning with criticisms!

(CR, CA) 8? Russian friends

Dahlhaus, Ch. 5, continued. Begriff

CONCEPT 2: HISTORICISM → TWO BASIC GENERAL TYPES

Problem with concept: historicism, esp. for music historian.

There are two connotations in the domain of music, and they seem to be mutually exclusive.

sophisticated

naive

i.e. Dahlhaus very critical of this side [performers, culture industry] on intellectual grounds

61 line 9 (mode of behavior)

For the Music Historian [Gadamer and Western-Marxist inflected]

For the Performer/Concert System

("historical" canon + repertoire)

Accepts that musical meaning is constituted by its historical placement

Predominance of the "old" [classics] over the "new"

"historical through and through" 61 (bottom)

"museum" approach to art 61 bottom

part of "innate essence" 61 [contingent, historical]

thus: preservationist by nature + by nature suspicious of avant-garde 61 6 up

Suspicion of timeless norms + "naturalness" 61, 12 down (hence: collapse of belief in "aesthetics of immediacy")

popularized Aesthetic Platonism (timelessness of art... not to be subjected to tradition critique)

jump to 63

As we study the past, the more distant from us it seems (63) !! (middle, 63)

Music is "natural" and "classical" (both a hypothesis)

But this type of hermeneutic historicism more open to avant-garde + to new (63) [still a concern to CD in 1970s!]

Music = stands apart from history! (62, bottom)

But historicity of a piece can still be aesthetic, if art-character is part of that genre (WORK) 64 top

BUT! feeling "close" to past works is deeply to miscomprehend them (63, middle)

Don't collapse WORK to mere DOCUMENT in this history (at least not in the 19th c!) [nuance!]

Each age (again) has its own norms (64) [In other words...]

[! 1st of 2nd of 3rd of 4th of 5th of 6th of 7th of 8th of 9th of 10th of 11th of 12th of 13th of 14th of 15th of 16th of 17th of 18th of 19th of 20th of 21st of 22nd of 23rd of 24th of 25th of 26th of 27th of 28th of 29th of 30th of 31st of 32nd of 33rd of 34th of 35th of 36th of 37th of 38th of 39th of 40th of 41st of 42nd of 43rd of 44th of 45th of 46th of 47th of 48th of 49th of 50th of 51st of 52nd of 53rd of 54th of 55th of 56th of 57th of 58th of 59th of 60th of 61st of 62nd of 63rd of 64th of 65th of 66th of 67th of 68th of 69th of 70th of 71st of 72nd of 73rd of 74th of 75th of 76th of 77th of 78th of 79th of 80th of 81st of 82nd of 83rd of 84th of 85th of 86th of 87th of 88th of 89th of 90th of 91st of 92nd of 93rd of 94th of 95th of 96th of 97th of 98th of 99th of 100th]

Begriff

69-67 | CONCEPT 3: TRADITION / TRADITIONALISM

Different types (bad + good)

naive traditionalism (before the fall) (Term: 67)

- broken traditions; "seamless continuity"
- immediate, "immediate relation to the past"
- wholeness of one's world, not yet split asunder (65, bottom)
- Schiller's "naive" (67) 6 up
- "unite submission before all that used to be" [67]
- "the past extends unnoticed into the present" [69]
- devotion to "established truths" (67)

TRADITIONALISM

"tradition" conceived after the Fall

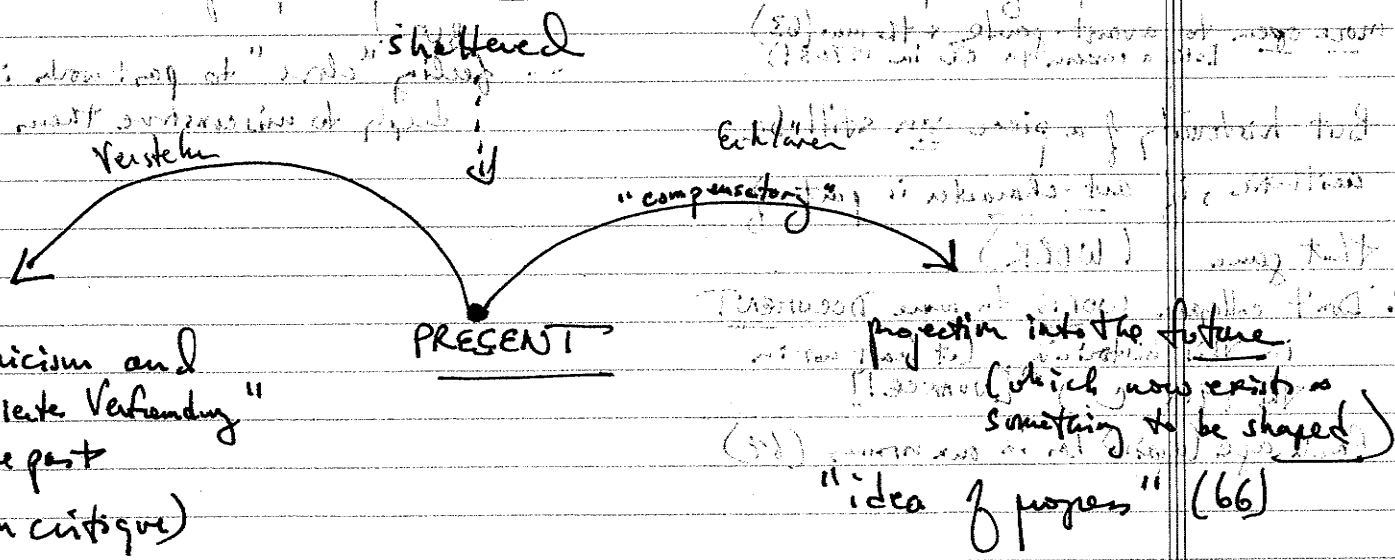
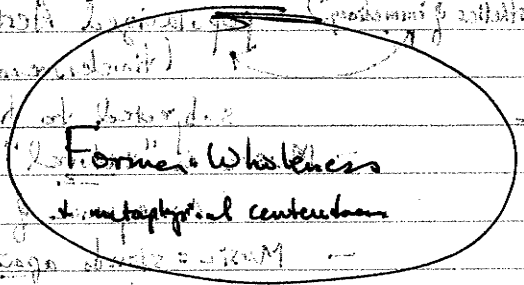
- traditions can no longer just "happen" (65)
- becomes an object of reflection (65) [embodied estrangement]
- shattered via Enlightenment + subsequent tradit- (65, bottom)
- Schiller's "sentimental" (67), 6 up
- tradition critique + political position

Conservatism
politically restoring a past form which we have been separated (67) to "renew contact" with what has been lost

more sophisticated tradition critique
other types of responses that are more reflective (67) 14 up
(CD will want to explore this further)

THEN - A VERY STARK AND ARRESTING IMAGE. P. 66 bottom - P. 67

Once again, evocation of the civil suicide's / chattering point of Enlightenment thought



[Read bottom of 66, top of 67!]

BEGRIFF

67-71

CONCEPT "3a" or 4: RESTORATION

Restoration [related to "conservatism" or "impulse to restore" 67]

- ① Renew contact with an interrupted tradition (essence → separation from tradition)
 - ② Restorations must thus be reconstituted, put back together (Schiller: "sentimental")
 - Hence they are reflective by nature (67), mediated by thought.
 - (naive tradition need no thought - they are taken for granted)
 - ③ The restorations can never recapture their old substance and expressiveness "then restored in "new surroundings" [68] - Stravinsky - modern] ... etc.
- (cf. "second immediacy" - Meitusinger, et.)

The question → Is there a "good" or intellectually defensible type of RESTORATION?

[Now note: CD is arguing for some sort of restoration or reconnection with tradition, in part via Gadamer, et al. What he wants to do at the end of the chapter is to distance himself from certain kinds of conservatism]

Conservatism (as reflective thought) ⁶⁹

Authentic Conservatism

(Brahms): preserving or continuing traditional thought in an anti-traditional present

(not "intolerant" but does tend to deny the saturated historicity (70) of art ... "through + thought")
... holds on to "invisible tenets..."

"Good" historicism 70, bottom 1/2

Historicism paper

CD's preference
[i.e., the "good" type of historicism]

Much more historical + reflective; past scrutinized (70)... much more aware of the historical contingency of things (no immutable "art")

- Aesthetics may be regained in studying works where it was foregrounded (18th, 19th century) = "aesthetic presence" but not for all works...

- Past + present a "indissoluble alloy" - pastness of the present, and vice versa

- Aesthetic contemplation of the Past, as frozen Panorama [the goal] (not the Marxist transformationist goal)

HISTORY ITSELF BECOMES a "work" or text to be explicated for the purpose of aesthetic contemplation

Melancholy - meditation among the ruins -- "truth" gone; light of greatness only remembered.

merely examining the present (CD seem to have little use for this...)

CD's grand solution: a particular type of HISTORICISM (Gadamer)

Read also foreshadowing, p. 57, 3up-58

Dahlhaus, Chapter 6 is laboring (Very difficult to translate - German should be kept at hand)

Devoted to the extraordinarily difficult question of hermeneutics - -

The subject-object gap and how we can come to establish any kind of relationship to the past.

Main Topics: contradictions in approach between:

① Verstehen (hermeneutics of recovery; esp. identified here with a personalized identification with the composer or author) (concerns individuals)

= intrinsic approach ("von innen heraus") "intentional interpretations"

Fay, ch. 6 = interpretivism, understanding people/texts in their own terms

Problem: enormous history of different views of and problems with the task of hermeneutical Verstehen. [Much of chapter explicates the Germanic tradition of this] Also, Fay → people's "own terms" may easily be misguided or deceived, ("self-misunderstanding") can easily turn into

② Erklären (often: hermeneutics of [extreme] suspicion, in our own time) - -

Seeks external causes and explanations - - social conditions, forces!

= extrinsic approach ("von außen") "causal and functional interpretations"
Fay = "critique" ("ideology critique") lead to "critical theories"

You remember: exactly what Gadamer wants to avoid - see 299, bottom + esp p. 385, n. 1!

③ The principle that we should adapt our method to suit the historical age in question (74, 84)

... or try to understand past ages in their own terms"; 74-77 expands the argument and illustrates it.

These two "opposing" "realms" are separated by "contradictions"

Habermas emancipates knowledge

Read last paragraph p. 73

cf. Fay + Thompson arguing for a combination of these two -- but CD views their contradiction as more troubled. bottom of 83

Essentially, CD argues that we must not throw out ①, even in this age of suspicion! → Make a place for it (71-73): REPEATED PLEASE NOT TO SURRENDER TO PURE SKEPTICISM (71, 72)

Clearly CD wants to appropriate ① and use it for his own reflective history... but he does not want to totally invalidate ② WITHIN, AND IN ONE OR TWO OTHER POINTS, HE DIFFERS FROM GADAMER.

Hence at Chapter's end (pp. 83-84) he seeks to claim that both ① and ② are valuable, though their value in any given repository or age must be subjected to pragmatic scrutiny - - What & how much do they tell us?

P. 84 = Any adequate history must place before itself "the problem of the contradiction between the [two] realms." ["erst eine Musikgeschichtsschreibung, die sich dem Problem des Widerspruchs, zwischen den Bereichen stellt, eine Chance hat, adäquat zu sein" Grundlagen 136] [bad transl. on p. 84]

p. 84 = end of 1st paragraph But = Inclusion of ③ into the mix will set ① and ② against each other [M. P. Stowen] and "blur" their potentially "complementary" relationship. CONCLUSION: LAST SENTENCE

Pp. 71-74 = Making room for (1) in an age that is marked by (2)
 + intro (74) of idea of (3)

74-78: Expansion of (3) reflection on why Verstehen (normally grounded in recovering a composer's intent) is not fully adequate for each epoch of music history.

Kunsttheorie (cf. pp. 20-23!)	Funktional	Gegenständlich ("Affektlehre")	Personal (Ausdrucksästhetik)	Struktural
Appropriate Mode of Historical Approach	Erklärung (history of institutions and techniques) (genres)	Auslegung (explication) material content; rhetoric and	Verstehen (spiritual identification)	Analyse

NB! → IMPLIES THAT GADAMER'S VERSTEHEN EMPHASIS IS LIMITED TO ONLY CERTAIN PERIODS

78-83: Dahlhaus's mini-primer of Germanic (hermeneutic) treatments of the problem of Verstehen in history -- how we can grasp meanings in that other that is history -- and four historical figures.

- 1) Humboldt
- 2) Hegel -- history only exists via records... and what we make of it historic reconstruction
- 3) Droysen -- "general ego" -- sharing of a common humanity

* 4) Schleiermacher⁸⁰ -- Lebensphilosophie; Lebensmoment within a Lebenszusammenhang that must be reconstructed

5) Dilthey⁸¹ -- from individual Erlebnis → one reconstructs background principles of Leben.

6) Windelband

7) Rickert⁸² -- Notz -- getting closer... human actions are underpinned and premised with a Wertstruktur -- toward this is what the historian should seek

8) Weber⁸³ -- Exactly true for Dahlhaus: Actions presuppose a background of subjective meaning (Grundlagen, 135: Handeln... nicht nach Max Weber cf. Fay p. 113 = Sache des Historikers, die Sinnbezüge vergangener Handelns zu rekonstruieren) (cf. Dahlhaus in translation, p. 37 -- poetic indulging

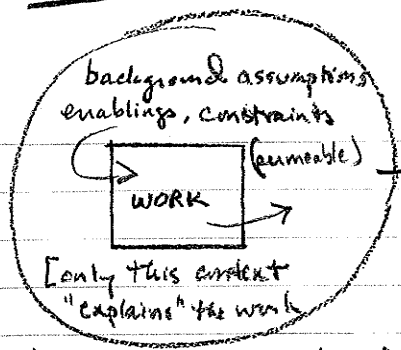
Collingswood's enactment in Fay 36-39! Thompson's element of music history (p. 267) Here is Dahlhaus's vision/goal = Conceptual Pursues, indulging the element of music history (Begriffsgeschichte)

83-85 = Dahlhaus's final views on the interaction of (1), (2), and (3) in this process -- (they are described on the opposite side of this page) →

... recurring

Ch. 6

2002 5/e



See diagram on last page of this set of notes, 5/11 ->

Precursors of the idea (or close to it) -> Humboldt, Hegel, Droysen (proto-Verstehen)

	<u>text</u>	<u>context</u>
Schleiermacher ^{p.80} ("Lebensphilosophie")	Lebensmoment	Lebenszusammenhang
Dilthey ^{p.81} (Verstehen)	Erlebnis	Leben
Heinrich Rickert ^{p.82}	[actions, events]	Wertstruktur [makes possible a narrative]
Weber ^{p.83}	Verhalten, "modes of behavior" Vergangenen Handeln, "past actions"	Sinnbezüge, "patterns of meaning" as "ideal types"
Collingwood	Answer ↓ utterance / text	Question ↓ horizon
Gadamer		
Dahlsrud	Work - Datum -	Motivating "motives", ideas, and trends, "poetics" 37 "substructures" "subsystems" "subhistories" of a "medium order of magnitude" (52) that can actually be studied + researched empirically.

Foundations Ch. 7

Das Werturteil als Gegenstand und als Prämissen
The Value-Judgment: (Object) or Premise of History
good: value-relations bad: valuation; [epistemism]; [leave-in to subjectivity]

86-89 I) Basic problem: our research guided by our subjectivity (Habermas's Erkenntnis und Interesse). ∴ Are all histories merely subjective?

cf. Jenkins on BIAS pp. 44-47 (only valid change in a world that claims objectivity!)

- A) Ad hominem observations do not address arguments actually made. (86) (87, l. 4)
- B) Marxist/non-Marxist variants of the problem (87-88); Marxists embrace subjectivity too uncritically. (88)
- C) Solution: the "realistic" objectivity of intersubjectivity [89; Popper?]

(89-92) II) Value-Relations [Good] and Valuations [Bad] (terms = Max Weber)

- A) V.R. = to be increased / in the age that we are studying; √ = our own subjectivities.
- B) Solution: high value on TRADITION, given to us; we do not create it; we dialogue with it (91-2)

(92-98) III Est. "tradition" gives rise to questions about the CANON ("imaginary museum")

- A) Like tradition, the canon is a given; a set from which we select. (92, 11 up)
- B) Problems in legitimizing what's in the canon: historical import ["impact" or "symptomatic importance"] or aesthetic significance; [94-6]; Although canon is a given, we are in dialogue with it.

IV. Three Problems with regard to canon (in this "encounter" w/canon, a historian might ask:)

(99-101) A) How and why was the canon formed? What issues are at stake? Note: 1) success + prestige are two different things; 2) the canon may be created by institutions or it may create institutions; 3) "carrier strata" of society must be considered

(101-5) B) What axioms were posited to ground the surviving aesthetic canons (and the "facts" of history given to us by tradition)? Goal: to arrive at a

"DOGMATICS OF ART" → The age's dogmatics, not our own values.

See Notes - last page of this set in effect, CD's program of modest subsystems, captured as ideal types + empirically verifiable

- 1) Search for "deep-structure" postulates of an age; complex, but can be solved by empirical means [partially] correctible via scholarly intersubjectivity [007]
- 2) Appeal to pragmatism: the problems we can solve. (104)

(105-7) C) Can the canon be altered? Do we have that power?

1) It does happen, for example, that we discover that a work became part of tradition on the basis of legend, not fact [Missa Pope Marcelli], that "origins" of genres needed to be discovered [Florentine Camera, itself insignificant, 106], or by retrojecting 19th-c values into past ages ["novelty" criterion in Middle Ages, 107]; Problems abound.

Pre-existing —
 A field of facts / valuations,
 past actions + judgments — —
 Not static objects, but force-fields of value
 ("facts" are always processed w/ value)

I.e., a preloaded world, intumescing all with ⁽⁹⁶⁾ predetermined
 [vorgezeichnet or vorgegeben] valuations [Wertungen] and
value-relations [Wertbeziehungen] — — + all of this was loaded
 before the process was subjected to historical distance + awareness ⁽⁹⁶⁾
 — — Includes a "canon" [vorgezeichnet = ⁽⁹⁶⁾ predetermined] as either a
 kind of ^(93, 13 up) museum or basic framework of understanding.
 It is there, a canon "aus dem man wählt", not "den man wählt" ⁽⁹²⁾
 One may not (however one might wish to) replace this "primary,
 pre-existent canon" with a "subjective, secondary one" that suits
 one's own personal taste + interests...
 I.e... one cannot undo what is already there (as a crucial feature
 of its history), but one may select from it or interact with it
 in any number of ways... and carry out research with
 modest objectivity [solve practical problems,
 empiricism, etc.]

Jenkins
 p. 51 —
 reading
 Elton on
 Gemwell

enters the
 field and finds
 things already there
 ("vorfindet")
 Robinson "encounter" p. 97

Historian
 (with his/her own
 set of Wertungen,
 Wertbeziehungen
 (Horizon))

Indiv. biases, one-sidedness,
 etc., are inevitable.

Still: ① empirical research
 that results may be
 correct, even objectively
 carried out. (93)

② Can be mitigated
 by intersubjectivity
 (89)

What we encounter as "already there" is not a
 neutral field of objects ripe for our rearranging, nor
 are we neutral in entering it. What we encounter is
past writing about history (92, 3 down) and "earlier judgments" that
 provide the enabling conditions of our own thought (92, 3 down)
 Our job = the "secondary elaboration of the proposition thus received" ⁽¹⁰¹⁾

This elaboration can take in elements of critique

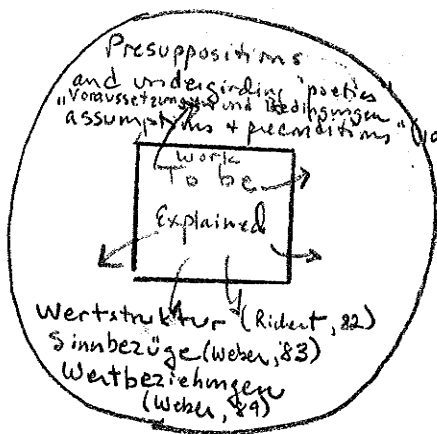
- ① We can inquire how, historically, the canon was formed
 (historicize the genesis of the canon). [98, 99-101]
 a) not by success in performance (his of Ferns) b) historicize the role of
 institutions; c) historicize the role of Trägerschichten, canica scripta (101)
- ② We can (codify or ¹⁰³ systematize) the grounding axioms that led to the
sustaining of the canon (intrinsic / extrinsic)
 Goal → to create a systematic "aesthetic dogmatics" (102, 103) of
 value-structures + Sinnbezüge.
- ③ However mildly, we do insert ourselves in the process and can affect
 the validity of the canon.

Dahlhaus: "Der Idee einer musikästhetischen Dogmatik" [Grundlagen 163]

"Der Gedanke einer "ästhetischen Dogmatik" (Grund, 167), "eine Kodifizierung und Systematisierung musikästhetisch-kompositionstechnischer Zeiteile ... " (tranc., p. 103, Found)

Even more external factors -- can only be posited "in advance" by decisionism and arbitrary assumption (Maxim, Freudianism, etc.)

More external contextual factors that are less subject to empirical verification



CD urges → Stay within practical limits of what is modestly possible + practical by empirical means (Found, p. 52: in einer 'mittleren' Größenordnung)

But → Do seek to systematize and codify the axioms most immediately grounding the work or style (via Collingwood principle ... + Gadamerian hermeneutics)

Thus the project is "einer ästhetischen Dogmatik" (102) set within reasonable, empirical limits. Pp. 102-103 = Another CD manifesto of his aims. He has been setting this up for seven chapters (cf. 83 on Weber's Sinnbezüge, accent, emphasis)

Dahlhausian credo, p. 104.

= CD's "precarious balance between two false extremes -- naive objectivism and destructive extreme skepticism" -- Chs 1-7 (while foreshadowing aspects of 8, 9, 10) have been devoted to the destruction of naive objectivism (i.e., defense of hermeneutics) - OVER

Dahhaus Foundation

Dahhaus has peered into
the abyss. Have we?

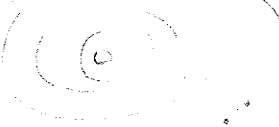
Ch. 1-7 (with foreshadowings of 8, 9, 10)

Committed to deeply problematizing all aspects of the process of history writing ("history of act" possible? What is a work? Where does it exist? Is artwork permanent? What is a "fact"? What about the problem involved with narrative? Hermeneutics of Suspicion & recovery? General hermeneutic questions)

By end of 7 = "naive objectivism" + "neutrality" etc. demolished as intellectually stunted and inadequate to the real problems at hand,

Also clear that CD seeks "the determining ideas + preconditions & ideas behind the work", (to be reconstructed in an "aesthetic dogmatism") -- He's willing to go only so far (diagram: only to the solid line) and no further... as a reasonable middle ground.

Chs. 8, 9, 10 will stop the process of expansion by setting firm limits in "deep-structure" Marxist or structuralist categories.

Like dropping a pebble into the water: Chs. 1-7  expand outward, with lots of troubled centers.

Chs. 8-10 = set limits beyond which responsible scholarship should not go.