

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 165 136

CS 204 302

AUTHOR Grossberg, Lawrence; Christians, Clifford G.
 TITLE Hermeneutics and the Study of Communication.
 PUB DATE Aug 78
 NOTE 41p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Association for Education in Journalism (61st, Seattle, Washington, August 13-16, 1978)

EDRS PRICE MF-\$0.83 HC-\$2.06 Plus Postage.
 DESCRIPTORS *Communication (Thought Transfer); Greek Civilization; *Historical Reviews; Intellectual Disciplines; *Intellectual History; Language; Linguistics; *Literature Reviews; Philosophy; Reading Comprehension; Research; Semantics

IDENTIFIERS *Communication Research; *Hermeneutics

ABSTRACT

The manner in which hermeneutics (the study of the interpretive process) has treated the phenomenon of interpretation is examined in this paper. Following a historical review of hermeneutics from its Hellenic roots through the phase of traditional hermeneutics to the major reformulation of the field by Friedrich Schleiermacher and Wilhelm Dilthey in the nineteenth century, the paper describes contemporary phenomenological hermeneutics. It points out that in phenomenological hermeneutics meaning is fundamental, subjectivity is redefined as being-interpreted, objectivity is redefined as historicity (the ongoingness of interpretation beyond the existential possibilities of individuals), language is an active presence in the constitutive structure of meaning or existence, understanding is an event of language, and communication is the ongoing process of interpretation within language. It then discusses Paul Ricoeur's theory of comprehension and his model that permits the isolation of major issues in any theory of interpretation; and it outlines the work of contemporary French "poststructuralists." The conclusion discusses stumbling blocks to the isolation and identification of the methodological implications of hermeneutical theorizing and discusses the implications of hermeneutics for current social theorizing and communication research. (GW)

 * Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
 * from the original document. *

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH,
EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF
EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRO-
DUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM
THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGIN-
ATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS
STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT
OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF
EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

Qualitative Studies Division

HERMENEUTICS AND THE STUDY OF COMMUNICATION

by

Lawrence Grossberg
Department of Speech Communication
University of Illinois - Urbana

and

Clifford G. Christians
Institute of Communications Research
University of Illinois - Urbana

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS
MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Lawrence Grossberg /
Clifford G. Christians

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES
INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC) AND
USERS OF THE ERIC SYSTEM."

Presented to the Qualitative Studies Division, Association for Education In
Journalism - Annual Convention, Seattle, Washington, August 1978.

"Hermeneutics and the Study of Communication"

by

Lawrence Grossberg and Clifford Christians
University of Illinois - Urbana

Hermeneutics studies the interpretive process. Assuming that interpretation is a constant and pervasive condition of human existence, hermeneutics attempts to explicate this fundamental notion, establish its parameters, and assess its significance. Assuming, further, that interpretativeness is the central aspect of human communication, this essay introduces communication students to the manner in which the hermeneutical enterprise has treated this phenomenon.

Out of the several alternatives for organizing the material, we have chosen an historical overview, tracing hermeneutics from its establishment in ancient Greece to the French post-structuralists of modern times. While this broad sweep precludes our attention to detail, it does serve to document the important role that hermeneutics has played in western thinking since the classical Greeks first identified the hermeneutical impulse. We seek in this essay to expand the philosophical awareness of those in communication committed to interpretive research, and thereby prevent the pursuit of naive and foreshortened alternatives.

We do not endorse a simplistic progressivism in our historical reconstruction. As a matter of fact, we credit the Greeks and 19th century Germans with making irrevocable achievements in hermeneutical study. However,

we recognize that based on these permanent contributions, the 20th century has been able to provide our most significant explication of the interpretive act. Therefore, we develop this contemporary material somewhat more carefully vis-a-vis communications, noting, for example, how modern hermeneutics decisively shatters the subject/object dichotomy underlying mainline research, how today's hermeneutics establishes meaning as the very structure of man's belonging in the world, provides a more spacious definition of communication, and reconceptualizes the term "language" as an active event embodying meaningfulness. Ricoeur's five-moment model of interpretation is then introduced as the most serious contemporary effort to explore methodological implications. In conclusion, we expand the methodology matter somewhat further, suggesting enigmatically that the ongoing process of radical hermeneutical reflection permits us no neatly construed applications and conclusions.

Hellenic Roots

The ancient Greeks discovered--within western society, at least--the hermeneutical consciousness. They brought ars interpretandi into sharpness, that is, established the process of interpretation as an intellectual problem. The Greek genius identified this fundamental aspect of human experience, attesting that it ultimately transcends the linguistic realm and extends more broadly in scope than rationality alone.

Interpretation as foundational to human life emerged, on the one hand, from Greece's philological curiosity. Aristotle, for example, found hermeneia (interpretation) worthy of a major treatise.¹ In that attempt to delineate the conditions through which understanding occurs, he observed no perfect congruence between word sequences and their meanings. Thus he sifts out a human

ability to interpret language, to fill linguistic expressions with meaning. Plato had already established in the Phaedrus that messages must be inscribed on the soul to be meaningful, therefore hinting at a distinction between expressions and interpretations. Aristotle--in a preoccupation with language far exceeding grammatical taxonomy--set limits and gave both expression and interpretation a legitimate place. In so doing he distinguished the hermeneutical aspect of linguisticity from the rhetorical dimension. He viewed language as the avenue through which understanding occurs, but refused to reduce one to the other.

The fundamental character of ars interpretandi became likewise obvious through Hellenic interest in foreign languages. Translating from one language to another required a fusion of horizons; it highlighted the obvious need to recreate meanings from a distant culture into recognizable terms. Translation became a reservoir in classical Greece for explaining the hermeneutical task. Translation was viewed as a special form of interpretativeness whereby strangeness dissolves into familiarity.

Socratic-Platonic fascination with dialogue (questioning especially) further enhanced the Greek ability to discriminate speaking per se from the process of making meaningful. When Plato refers to hermēneia in his Seventh Letter, for example, he captures the unique character of conversation by arguing, in effect, that the art of questioning is actually the art of thinking. Dialogue in Platonic terms is fundamentally a mysterious appropriation of meaning,² a double-edged process demonstrating the hermeneutical problem: We must presuppose a commonness among interlocutors, yet reaching an understanding involves a transformation in which two frames of reference become

something more than before. What is at one person's disposal must bind the other without destroying his own ideas.

Even as the Greeks were able to separate the interpretive process from linguistic expression, they likewise identified hermēneia as a clearly isolatable element within the larger epistemological domain. Intellection and interpretation become distinguished, for example, as Aristotle articulates the role that reason plays in moral action. In effect, Aristotle limits the heavy rationalism of Socrates and Plato in his description of virtuous activity.³ Hermēnia (in this case, self-knowledge governing moral action) belongs to the higher and purer operations of the mind but is not just theoretical knowledge (epistēmē); nor is it practical skill (technē) since it concerns more than utility. Making a moral decision entails doing the right thing in a particular situation, and to accomplish that successfully, moral knowledge requires that we deliberate within ourselves. Since knowledge of the right can never be knowable in advance, we interpret the concrete situation. Aristotle located this moment of interpretation earlier than logical analysis and insisted that it not be confused with logic. In this manner, Aristotle confirmed an orienting process beyond instinct yet differing from epistēmē.

The Greek achievement described so far can be illustrated and summarized etymologically. In addition to isolating the concept "interpretation", Greeks in the classical period provided the appropriate terminology. The word hermeneutics has its roots in the Greek verb hermēneuein (to interpret) and the noun hermēneia (interpretation).⁴

It is true that hermēneia meant "interpretation" very broadly in Greek literature, applied as it was to the activity of bringing the unclear to

clarity. Sometimes the context indicates that it refers to "express," then to "explain," and at other times to "translate." There are several such nuances of meaning, but the "process of bringing to understanding" always remains the essential focus. Interpretation is implicit in all the basic directions which hermēneia takes. Though each nuance has different connotations, all the meanings may be expressed by the English verb "to interpret." In fact, one already detects the faint outline of a theoretical enterprise. Plato mentions hē hermēneutikē technē (the hermeneutical art, Politicus 260D), a neologism which does not strictly mean "the science of hermeneutics," but a first outlining, an allusion to it nonetheless.

The history of the Hermes mythology over the centuries illustrates the refinement of Greek thinking on hermēneia. Hermes undoubtedly came down from the North as a pastoral god and travelling companion when the Hellenes occupied Hellas in the 2nd millenium B.C. During the Homeric Age, Hermes in the Illiad (24.334-469, 24.679-694) is a divine guide to the living, and in the Odyssey (5.28-148, 10.275-308, 24.1-10) conducts souls on their last journey. Mid-sixth century art and sculpture depict Hermes as a divine messenger carrying the herald's caduceus. By the classical age, Hermes was called the god of orators (a natural development from the herald with a fine voice and persuasive tongue).

However, for all that multiplicity of titles and varying functions during ~~the early mythologies,~~ Hermes becomes more specified in the classical period and thereby indicates this era's greater precision in identifying the hermeneutical consciousness. Hermes is no longer understood merely as announcer for the deities, but mediator between gods and man, the interpreter and defender of divinity to humanity. In Plato's Ion, hermēneia assumes this more

distinct meaning. Ion of Ephesus, the young poet, claims merely to recite Homer. Socrates pricks his self-satisfaction by insisting that a poet becomes a holy and winged being (a Hermes, an interpreter) only under inspiration when reason leaves him. When Plato uses hermēneia in the Ion he concerns himself with this Hermes process (as it might be called), that is, with our coming to understand and the role interpretation plays in such understanding. Hermes is thus perceived, not just as a messenger, but as the god of inspiration who lays open messages and appropriates them to various situations. Hermes is not just a speaker, but overseer of the process of making intelligible. He translates infinite into finite, turns divine spirit into sensible appearance, makes divine will comprehensible. Developing this insight, Plato calls poets "spokesmen (hermēnes) of the gods" and the rhapsodists who recite Homeric poems are labeled "spokesmen for spokesmen" (hermēneon hermēnes).⁵ Both uses of language--the poet's creation and rhapsodist's recital--are interpretive in nature. To encapsulate this sharpened description, Hermes is typically emphasized now as the inventor of language (the medium of interpretation). He now is assigned the more complicated task of transmuting what is beyond human understanding into a form human intelligence can grasp. Hermēneia at this stage begins to suggest the process of bringing a thing or situation to understanding.

As the Greeks laid the foundations for ethics, mathematics, astronomy, and the rest, so they did for hermeneutics. The Greeks saw hermēneia as a central human activity, as a theoretical problem, and though they did not provide adequate explanatory tools, they did begin to examine interpretation theoretically. They located the foundational Hermes process--something

foreign, strange, separated in time, space or experience becomes familiar and present; something requiring representation, explanation or translation is somehow "brought to understanding" (interpreted). They grasped the proportions and nature of the hermeneutical task sufficiently so that today all hermeneutics counts Greek thinking as conditio sine qua non.

Years of Narrowness

After the classical Greeks discovered the hermeneutical phenomenon, the next major phase occurred around the B.C. - A.D. watershed. Often called traditional hermeneutics, patterns laid down early in the Christian era prevailed generally through the 18th century. Two major developments--one philological and the other theological--conditioned the way theorizing about interpretation occurred in Western Civilization during these several centuries.

On the one hand, the Stoics wondered to what degree Homeric literature remained religiously, aesthetically, and morally binding. As the Ionian philosophy of nature established itself, intelligent man found it increasingly difficult to take mythology seriously--especially the caprice and immoralities of the gods. From the 4th century B.C. Greek writers confronted such difficulties in various ways--by openly criticizing religious structures, by contorted explanations that cast divine exploits into a more acceptable light, or by insisting that Homer and Hesiod were actually speaking anthropomorphically. Among Stoic writers committed both to a heavy rationalism and the status quo, the allegorical mode of interpretation became especially popular for dealing with their reservations about mythology.⁶

On the other hand, the canonical authority of the Old Testament needed vindication for both Jew and Christian. Had the church replaced the synagogue,

or did the two together eliminate theocracy and temple? The debate occurred on numerous levels, of course, but finally revolved around problems of translation. Rabbinic casuistry, Qumranian and early Christian eschatological exegesis, Alexandrian vs. Antiochian schools--all assumed different approaches to the Old Testament's authority in a New Testament age. St. Augustine's continued engrossment during the 5th century with this very matter in De Doctrina Christiana indicates that the problems were not easily or quickly resolved.

These two debates gave traditional hermeneutics a very definite character and series of preoccupations.

For one thing, they emphasized authoritative literature primarily. Sometimes distinguished as special rather than general hermeneutics--and more commonly as hermeneutica sacra instead of hermeneutica profana--scholars did not imaginatively formulate principles of interpretation for all human expression. The necessity of translating sacred writings became the primary motivation. Inevitably the work took on a dogmatic character so that careful linguistics often became secondary to apologetics. Small pockets of scholarship maintained a tension between scientific and religious interpretation, but essentially the distinction disappeared and the latter prevailed. The more purely philological side--nourished primarily by the Stoics--was swallowed by biblico-theological concerns, so that problems of interpretation by the 3rd century A.D. became almost solely the province of ecclesiastics.

Secondly, interpretation and exegesis were sharply distinguished--with emphasis on the latter. Biblical scholars were concerned that canonical literature speak to the contemporary situation, that its meaning be heard in the churches. Whereas the Greeks made hermeneia richly suggestive by touching

virtually all dimensions of language and several in epistemology, the term now became almost synonymous with technical and specialized exegetical matters, with homilies, with rules whereby safe interpretations were ensured.

Thirdly, interest narrowed exclusively to written texts. Hellenic concern with interpretation stemmed in great part from enthrallment with conversation and the clash between oral and written systems. The Middle Ages reduced hermeneutical reflection to manuscripts. Often hermeneutic inquiry began and ended with the language of the text. Hermeneutics became caught in philological lore and typically failed to go beyond such specialized resources. Traditional hermeneutics increasingly spoke in literary categories derived from assiduous attention to written texts. Involvement with interpretation per se declined in direct proportion to the growing sophistication of lexicography in biblical scholarship.

Hermeneutical questions received fresh investigation when the Renaissance and Reformation revived the classics.⁷ From 14th century scholars such as Nicholas of Lyra⁸ to the 16th century Reformers, there appeared a new concern for the theory--rather than simply the process--of exposition. However, this renewed interest did not substantially change the nature of the hermeneutical pursuit. Hermeneutics emerged in the post-reformation era committed to sacred literature, to exegesis more than principles of interpretation, and to written texts. In fact, with the growing complexity of theological scholarship in the post-reformation period, hermeneutics became an increasingly narrow subdivision within biblical linguistics and was often omitted as a discipline altogether.

19th Century Reformulation

Friedrich Schleiermacher sought to establish general hermeneutics as the art of understanding. In the process, he provided a major redirection of the field, and along with Wilhelm Dilthey, completely reformulated the hermeneutical enterprise. One can summarize Schleiermacher's work by suggesting that in his attempt to develop hermeneutics as the art of understanding, he freed the field from its traditional, triple-sided straight-jacket described above, and recovered in a vigorous form the ancient Greek concern for the hermeneutical consciousness.

First, Schleiermacher continually complained that a general hermeneutics did not exist. He saw his predecessors involved only with theological and philological matters. While differences obviously exist among messages on the surface, Schleiermacher argued, underneath them lies a fundamental unity no matter what their external shape. Thus Schleiermacher called hermeneutics away from local and narrowly conceived traditions to a general, that is, a universal hermeneutics (allgemeine Hermeneutik). He sought for hermeneutics an independent method irrespective of contents.

Second, Schleiermacher criticized hermeneutical study of his day as too highly technique-oriented, as an ad hoc compilation of rules. To counteract that situation, he sought a coherent statement of principles. "As long as hermeneutics," Schleiermacher writes,

is still treated as an aggregate of individual observations...no matter how fine and commendable they may be, it does not yet deserve the name of an art.

Understanding from his perspective operates according to discoverable laws. He summed up his hope in the word "science," a science of understanding which could guide the process of extracting meaning from the text.

Third, whereas the task of hermeneutics in its traditional form emphasized writing, Schleiermacher brought oral utterance back into consideration--perhaps not to the major extent of the Greeks, but at least he made all types of symbol-sets crucial once more to our investigation of the hermeneutical phenomenon.¹⁰ In fact, he views the dialogical relationship as the intense form in which understanding could best be investigated. In every communicative relationship, and most obviously in this one, he argued, a speaker expresses meaning and a hearer upon receiving words captures their meaning through some mysterious process. Schleiermacher considered such a divinatory experience the true locus of hermeneutics. In the post-Schleiermacher era, hermeneutics is no longer solely a theory about the exposition and interpretation of transmitted writings.

Nor did Schleiermacher see in traditional hermeneutics the disposition to examine the foundation of all hermeneutics--the art of understanding. In the process of re-establishing the hermeneutical enterprise, he returns us to the early Greek discovery of the interpretive consciousness. He shares Greek discontent with less specific terms such as speech, grammar, explanation, expression, and the rest. He views interpretation as more than a grammatical matter, as primarily a psychological moment in which the hearer experiences the mental life from which the communication arose. Objective analysis, he suggested, must be joined with an intuitive grasp of a work.

In explaining, expanding, and making this hermeneutical consciousness more explicit, Schleiermacher advanced us beyond less carefully articulated Hellenic constructs. But in the process he became heavily psychologistic, at least in his later years. He increasingly saw the psychological element

as the positive side of interpretation. The goal of hermeneutics eventually became for Schleiermacher the reconstruction of the author's mental experience.

In his earlier thinking, Schleiermacher firmly maintained that an individual's thinking and indeed his whole being are essentially determined through language. To the detriment of his own project he weakened this emphasis in subsequent years. The fruitful starting point apparent in his early thinking--a truly language-centered hermeneutics--is surrendered.¹¹ Hermeneutics becomes psychological, the art of determining or reconstructing a mental process (a process no longer seen as essentially linguistic at all).

This strong psychologizing element has become a recognized weakness in Schleiermacher's work. Moreover, he was not truly radical in breaking the traditional truncations. While seeking, for example, to overcome the narrowness of biblical hermeneutics, he consistently kept theology foremost, intending his work always to be helpful in interpreting Scripture. He abandoned a theological hermeneutics resting on verbal inspiration, but never became fully disengaged from dogmatic interests.¹² Also, he continued to maintain the hermeneutics-exegesis distinction as basically valid. And while affirming the benefit of oral expression, he never completely broke the dominance of written materials on his own mind; his claims to the contrary, his goal still centered on the exact understanding of written texts. Thus he did not thoroughly free himself from the limited aims which constituted hermeneutics in his predecessors.

Yet Schleiermacher's efforts are of historical importance. Historians typically consider him the founder of modern scholarly hermeneutics. His contribution to hermeneutics marks a turning point in hermeneutical

development. His observations are typically considered the best evaluation of one epoch and the generative beginning of another. Hermeneutics emerges from its parentage in biblical exegesis and classical philology. He pointed the theory of interpretation in a new direction, toward becoming a "science" built from a coherent and systematic set of laws.

Hermeneutics faltered somewhat in the decades following Schleiermacher. Various hermeneutical matters received attention from the von Rankes, Steinthals, and von Humboldts. But not until Hegel's influential successor at Berlin, Wilhelm Dilthey, did Schleiermacher's work advance significantly. As the 19th century closed, this gifted philosopher began to examine systematically the role of understanding. Under Schleiermacher's influence, he noted, hermeneutics had penetrated to an "analysis of understanding (Verstehen)," as "the sure point of departure for working out the [hermeneutical] rules."¹³ Verstehen thus becomes, for Dilthey, the important issue to be pursued and much of his career revolved around his putting this notion into an adequate epistemological framework. The concept of understanding, brought to the fore in Schleiermacher, Dilthey treated epistemologically.

Given his epistemological bearing, Dilthey pointedly rejected the idea that understanding is merely a matter of subjective intuition (Gemüt). Far from being a mystical Stimmungsverwandtschaft (vestige of spiritism), Verstehen, for him, could be subject to the critical controls of evidence, logic, and demonstration. Obviously, Dilthey agreed, Verstehen is not purely cognitive nor a conscious reflexive act. In spite of that, his self-defined goal was to provide this amorphous notion an epistemological foundation. Through Dilthey hermeneutics began to emerge as the philosophical investigation of understanding in a comprehensive sense.

Dilthey put Verstehen into the framework of Erlebnis (cognate of "to live" in emphatic German, translated as "lived experience"). A significant element in Schleiermacher's hermeneutics is the concept of understanding "out of a relationship to life." Dilthey starts here also, though his sophistication far exceeds Schleiermacher's. He defines Erlebnis as a basic unit held together by a common meaning:

That which in the stream of time forms a unity in the present because it has a unitary meaning is the smallest entity which we can designate as an experience.¹⁴

In the early Dilthey, the meaning of Erlebnis remained somewhat elusive, essentially a designation for that non-static, meaning-saturated realm underlying reflexive thought. In later, more technical usage, Erlebnis became the ultimate givenness and basis of knowledge.¹⁵ In contra-distinction from a prevailing positivism which made sensation the fundamental unit of consciousness, Dilthey postulated Erlebnis instead. Though he vacillates somewhat, Erlebnis is not an epiphenomenon for him, but an irreplaceable, inexhaustible, and immediate grasp of meaning. In order to indicate its connection with understanding generally, Erlebnis can be defined as self-knowledge. He proposes Erlebnis as setting the parameters for epistemology.

At an early stage in his thinking, Dilthey--once more influenced by Schleiermacher--sought to ground Erlebnis in psychology (to the point where he is sometimes called the "German William James"). Yet his pursuit made him increasingly dissatisfied with the existing schools; he decried their attempt to explain psychological events in terms of hypotheses to be verified by subsequent observation. Dilthey realized that this "scientific" psychology arbitrarily abstracts single functions of the human mind rather than illuminates such basic holistic matters as Erlebnis. All Dilthey's attempts

failed to make psychology more integrative and he concluded that his original hope could not be fulfilled.

Finally Dilthey realized that living experience is an everflowing stream, that man's relations of life are historical in nature. With that insight, he began extricating himself from Schleiermacher's tendency to psychologize. Our forms of consciousness and expression are determined by history, he argued. "Life contains as the first categorical definition, fundamental to all others, being in time (Zeitlichkeit)."¹⁶ Thus, in place of Schleiermacher's heuristic divination (comprised, said Dilthey, from a Romantic identification of spirit and nature), Dilthey now relied instead on history to get a proper epistemological orientation for Erlebnis. The problem of understanding became defined as recovering a consciousness of our own historicity. Dilthey realized that experience has an inner temporality or historicity which is not imposed extrinsically. Experience he saw as intrinsically temporal (historical in the deepest sense), and therefore our understanding of experience must also be commensurately temporal (historical). Dilthey considers historicity (Geschichtlichkeit) as essentially the affirmation of the temporality of human experience.

From such more general concerns for interpreting the expressions of life, Dilthey turned to those academic descriptions which formally concern man's "lived experience" (history, art, literature, law, political science, economics). He reasoned that if concrete historical experience was the basic reality, that must be the starting and ending for the Geisteswissenschaften also. Over against natural occurrences Dilthey emphasized his fundamentally different way of human knowing, "understanding." "We explain nature; we understand the life of the soul," he summarized.¹⁷ Given this insight,

Dilthey viewed the systematic study of Verstehen as a core matter for all the Geisteswissenschaften. Thereafter, he saw much of his career as formulating a truly humanistic methodology for the humanities. Dilthey turned to hermeneutics for grounding the Geisteswissenschaften in his effort to establish their epistemological limits; he made interpretativeness their essential component.¹⁹

In the process of working on these various matters, Dilthey provided some basic research into the nature of the interpretive consciousness and brought epistemological sophistication to the concept Verstehen. The old ancillary pursuit of hermeneutics--through Schleiermacher's work and his--was developed into a system which made it the basis of all the human sciences. It had obviously transcended its earlier pragmatic focus on literary texts. However, Dilthey's preoccupation with the methodological problems of the human sciences did not allow for as great a development of Verstehen as might be expected. Even his interests toward the end of his life in art and poetry did not result in a theory of understanding to the maximum elaboration possible. Rather than establish the epistemological foundations of hermeneutics, Dilthey became involved in classificatory matters. He never demonstrated how the richness and scope of the historical world can be brought fully to bear on the problem of interpretation.

Yet Dilthey's interest in anchoring Verstehen on life itself, in taking seriously the historical aspect of understanding, his sharp critique of scientism--all these have permanently influenced the character of hermeneutics as understood yet today. Though he did not extricate himself fully from the scientific ideals he wished to transcend, he did renew the project of a general hermeneutics and advanced it epistemologically.

Contemporary Theory

While the traditional concerns of hermeneutics have been epistemological (is there a form of knowledge other than the explanatory model on which the natural sciences are built?) and methodological (how does one interpret a particular text?), contemporary phenomenological hermeneutics is built upon a different set of concerns. Even when the more traditional questions are raised--as in the work of Paul Ricoeur--their contemplation rests upon the more ontological reflection characteristic of Martin Heidegger and Hans-Georg Gadamer. Hermeneutics in Heidegger became an investigation into the meaning of Being, language, and human existence. In the more recent work of Gadamer, hermeneutics is an investigation into the nature and structure of understanding and interpretation (again, not as epistemological questions but as the mode of existence definitive of human life). Hence, this brief exposition begins with such ontological concerns, focusing on the nature of meaning, language, and communication.

One of the major problematics of the western philosophical tradition has been the dichotomy of subject and object. It is out of this bifurcation that the major problems of epistemology have arisen. Traditional metaphysics postulates a knowing mind--an isolated consciousness--which finds itself "within" but separate from a world of external, objective entities. This dichotomy has resulted in the development of epistemologies built upon a mediated model of the relationship between man and the world. When this dichotomy has been called into question, it has usually been approached epistemologically as a question of the separation of the knower and the known, but the primordial nature of the relationship is not explored. Thus, the metaphysical dualism is redefined and a bridge is constructed between

the terms. Within the domain of discourse constituted by this dualistic metaphysics, man as the subject becomes the architect of meaning, the engineer who symbolically constructs his own world through a process of representational or objectifying thought.²⁰ Often, the relation between this symbolic world and some postulated Reality remains essentially clouded.

Language is seen as an instrument to be used by man, a tool of signification, a functional system for articulation, expression, representation, and communication.

Building upon the work of Edmund Husserl and Wilhelm Dilthey, Heidegger (and his student, Gadamer) have erected a philosophical edifice which radically rejects this metaphysical dualism.

Phenomenological hermeneutics, then, begins with the notion of relationship, with the assumption that existence, understanding, and meaning are based on a prior relationship of "belong to..." which can never become totally available to our awareness. That is, before any critical, conceptual, or categorical understanding is possible, there is always a participation, a proximity which constitutes the possibility of all comprehension because it is constitutive of meaning itself. Meaning is the very structure of this belonging together of man and world. That is, man exists as a being-in-the-world so that we find ourselves in a world always and already meaningful to us. Meaning is the structure of this dialectical relationship we have with a world. In the region of this belonging together, we find that the world gives itself to man as man opens himself to the world.

Within such a position, human existence is characterized chiefly by its finitude, by the fact that its being is already and always defined and limited by an Other since its life is always an interpretation of that

original unity:

the subject that interprets himself while interpreting signs is no longer the cogito; rather, he is a being who discovers, by the exegesis of his own life, that he is placed in being before he places and possesses himself. In this way, hermeneutics would discover a manner of existing which would remain from start to finish a being-interpreted.²¹

Subjectivity is no longer to be understood as Cartesian consciousness but as a moment of that structure of meaning and interpretation which is human existence.

As a result of this commitment to meaning as fundamental, phenomenological hermeneutics makes interpretation central, both as the method and substance of reflection. Insofar as consciousness is rejected, the traditional philosophical paths to self-understanding are similarly rejected. In fact, contemporary hermeneutics argues that the methods of such traditional positions (intuition, logic, empirical validation) all assume self-understanding, rather than acknowledging that this is the goal of reflection. That is, we can no longer assume that we possess some special, 'pure' knowledge of our self nor that the self or ego is autonomous (free), since this is only an interpretation of a more basic relationship. In committing itself to the study of meaning, modern hermeneutics argues that understanding is always mediated through a process of interpretation. In this way, hermeneutics commits itself to the investigation of what is commonly called the "linguisticity" of all experience. We understand ourselves as subjects and the world in which we live, only through an interpretation of the signs, the objectifications of meaning, within that world:

All language insofar as it says interprets. It is an interpretation at one and the same time of a reality and of the one who speaks about this reality.²²

That is, whatever we can observe and interpret are only public phenomena, objectifications of the structure of human existence. Such objectifications of meaning function as signs, already interpreted and yet calling for further interpretation. Thus, experience is not the ultimate ground of explanation since it is always interpreted. Nor does phenomenological hermeneutics argue that language is the fundamental characteristic of human existence; it does not begin with the linguistic character of all human experience. Language is given a "privileged yet subordinate place" within hermeneutics so that "language is only the locus for the articulation of an experience which supports it, and...everything, consequently, does not arrive in language, but only comes to language."²³ The more fundamental basis of hermeneutics is the very structure of belonging-together and the related ability to separate ourselves from such participation. This is the structure of historical existence itself.

Just as consciousness is rejected as a standard, so too is language, for language always has an allegorical quality: to say something is to say something else. Language may hide and distort the belonging-together just as the ego does in asserting its own primacy. To understand this notion, we must remember that phenomenological hermeneutics is concerned with the structure of human experience as real involvements in and with a real world. Whereas ancient Greece focused on interpretation in the linguistic realm, Schleiermacher on reconstructing the author's mental experience, and Dilthey on grounding the Geisteswissenschaften, our real relationships with a real world are the basic substance of hermeneutics today. Meaning is not reduced to a mere subjective addition onto a real objectivity, nor is the world to be objectified into a mere thing. Experience is neither subjective

nor objective but a belonging-together of man and world. Hermeneutics is presently concerned with the meaning structures contained within the objectifications of experience (rather than the processes or practices of experience) and hence entails an "investigation of meaning patterns which may not be subjectively intended."

From this perspective, then, meaning is the structure of the belonging-together of man and world, so that the world is always and already meaningful. It is not the creation or possession of the human subject projected out into a meaningless reality nor is it a mere object to be discovered passively within the world. As such, meaning simultaneously conceals from us and discloses to us this relationship. Within it, we reclaim an understanding of man as a being-interpreted. And we reclaim a more fundamental understanding of the world as the Other in the relationship, as historicity. All vestiges of Dilthey's scientism is removed, so that history is not an externally measured series of events taking place outside of human experience, nor is it a mere construction of human consciousness. History defines and constitutes the very possibilities of human existence. Heidegger has interpreted human existence in terms of the structure of temporality: man is that being who exists in a particular relationship to past, present, and future (the 'Care-structure').²⁴ Moreover--taking a cue from Dilthey's concern to make history central, but radicalizing that notion--the world itself is seen as essentially historical. The world is no longer the context of human actions, nor the set of objective entities, but the region within which man dwells, the possibilities of being-in-the-world open to man. The world is the Other in the relationship which both limits and frees man for his own existence.

As such, it is history as the medium within which man dwells, for the possibilities of relating to the world are themselves constituted by and within that historical tradition.

Thus, to summarize, subjectivity has been redefined as being-interpreted; ~~objectivity is redefined as historicity (the ongoingness of interpretation~~ beyond the existential possibilities of particular men). But it should be obvious that the notion of history encompasses that of a being-interpreted. By focusing on the Other, phenomenological hermeneutics always seeks to uncover that which appears to us in our understanding; but that which is given to us is also hidden from us, hidden behind the historical understandings of our tradition.

Rather than viewing language in terms of linguistic signs (as hermeneutics through the 19th century essentially did), language becomes an active presence in the constitutive structure of meaning. Existence in phenomenological hermeneutics, the latter interprets and understands objects in terms of the way they give themselves or are made present in human experience as man opens himself up to them. An object is the event of its presence within our experience; it is not an object, even a symbolic one, but an event of meaning in which we find ourselves interpreted in and with a meaningful world.

Consider the problem raised by numerous social theorists who have pointed out that man is always engaged in giving meaning to an already meaningful world. If it were not already meaningful, we would be unable to comprehend it as a socio-historically shared world. When I enter into a particular situation, no primary act of sense-making is requisite, for the situation gives itself to me as already meaningful, a meaningfulness I must then

articulate. The experience of seeking the mot just is one in which we struggle to listen to that which is being said to us. That is, we often find in describing some event or experience, that we are unable to articulate the full meaning presented to us in the experience itself, and we struggle to listen, to find that world being "spoken" to us--for the words we articulate do not capture the meaningfulness of the experience, the particular belonging-together we have experienced. As Merleau-Ponty has expressed it,

We live in a world where the spoken word is instituted....The linguistic and intersubjective world does not surprise us, we no longer distinguish it from the world itself, and it is in the interior of a world already spoken and speaking that we reflect [on it].²⁵

It is in language that the world shows itself as meaning what it does.

Thus, we might speak of the "Saying" of language, for it is only by listening to language that both the world and man come to be what they are. Although it may sound strange to talk of language as speaking, many theorists have begun to argue that in learning a language we learn a way of seeing the world. Of course, to talk in terms of "ways of seeing the world" throws us back into a subject/object dichotomy. The hermeneut argues instead that, in learning a language, in listening to the Saying of language, we find a world. It is language which discloses the world to us as already meaningful. That is, language is meaningful before it is spoken by any single person. That meaningfulness comes, not from individual acts of speaking subjects nor from social conventions but from language itself as the medium of tradition, of man's historical existence. The world has come to mean what it does for us through the course of the history of man's dwelling together with the world. Language saves this history for us and gives it to us in disclosing the world. The world is already meaningful because it is historical, and the historicity of that meaningfulness is embodied within language.

Language, therefore, is not a tool, a slave of man, for language always says more than we can hear. Language shows man a multifaceted meaningfulness of the world, but man as finite, opens himself to it only in part. Borges' image of language as a labyrinth is an appropriate one, for in every saying of language, numerous possibilities are disclosed to us, but we can follow only one. It is, if you prefer, like a multifaceted stone given to us to gaze upon, but we can only gaze upon one face at a time. Phenomenological hermeneutics draws attention and searches for the unsaid, the unthought which is present in language--for language conceals the world from us as it gives it to us. In fact, authors are often aware of creating possibilities of which they themselves are not cognizant. But language, as history, is finite as well. It limits man not only by concealing as well as revealing, but also by placing limits on the possibilities of meaning, by limiting my ways of being-in-the-world.

This view of language leads us to conclude that understanding is an event of language rather than a process of consciousness or a consequence of interactions as Schleiermacher and Dilthey tended to assume. Language is itself the revealing of understanding which man then rearticulates in his own interpretation and communication. Language is the locus of significance.

If both understanding and interpretation are disclosed in the conversation of language, then we are clearly operating with a new conception of communication as well. Communication is no longer to be understood merely as a purposeful activity, an exchange of signs through which we attempt to share our meanings with others. It is not just a tool for the production

of a shared reality, relationship, or definition of the situation. Communication is the medium of human existence as intersubjectivity, i.e., as belonging together with others in a community. It is "a living process in which a community of life is lived out."²⁶ That is, in our everyday communication, we do not produce a shared reality (including interpersonal relations) but reproduce it, for it must be assumed in all real communication that there exists both a real intersubjectively shared world (tradition) and a communication-community. Communication, then, cannot be conceptualized simply as an individual project (an instrument for man). Communication is not just a means by which we create intersubjective agreement, for it is in communication that we find ourselves already in agreement as the possibility of all existence. We find ourselves in agreement within a context of tradition, made manifest in language. This accounts for the fact that it is simply inappropriate to demand an answer to a "why question" in the ongoing context of conversation, for it is in the always and already ongoing context of conversation of language that purposes are constructed. It is within the context of our speaking a language that we come to learn and identify the appropriate functions to which conversation can be put, a context of ongoing conversation which is itself without the need or possibility of justification.

Communication is the ongoing process of interpretation within language. Communication is the attempt--in dialogue--to appropriate the world of another. Saying alongside our own and thus, to expand our own possibilities. As Merleau-Ponty has written,

Thought and expression...are simultaneously constituted....In order that I may understand the words of another person, it is clear that his vocabulary and his syntax must be "already known" to me. But

that does not mean that words do their work by arousing in me "representations" associated with them....Just as the sense-giving intention which has set in motion the other person's speech is not an explicit thought, but a certain lack which is asking to be made good, so my taking up of this intention is not a process of thinking on my part, but a synchronizing change of my own existence, a transformation of my being.

The dialogue, understood as the structure of question and answer, is always built upon our own being-in-the-world, our own listening to language, but the questions we ask are not subjectively determined so much as they are the questions of our relation to the world, i.e., of our own particular embodiment of language. Within phenomenological hermeneutics, this dialogic structure provides the model of communication.

Although both Heidegger and Gadamer have refused to explore the epistemological and methodological implications of their work, others--most notably, Paul Ricoeur--have attempted to return hermeneutics to its more traditional concerns. Ricoeur has constructed a theory of comprehension within which methodological questions are appropriately raised. In general, according to Ricoeur, what the reader must grasp in the act of interpretation is the nonostensive reference of the text, the kind of world opened up by the text and with that world, the way of dwelling or being in that world. Thus, the object of interpretation is the possibility of different relationships between man and world, and the act of interpretation involves the attempt to enter into the world of the text, a world disclosed in the language of the text rather than hidden behind it. Of course, each reader comes to the act of interpretation with his own world, a tradition reclaimed constantly in the language he speaks. Interpretation must then involve a clash of worlds--that of the text and that of the reader. This structure of interpretation, referred to as the "hermeneutic circle" is not, however,

an epistemological result of the subjectivity of understanding, as traditional hermeneutics (Schleiermacher especially) would have it. It is rather a relationship that exists "between the apprehension of those projected worlds [of the text] and the expansion of self-understanding in front of those novel worlds."²⁸ The hermeneutic circle describes the very structure of interpretation as it occurs within language itself; it has reference to the mediated nature of all understanding--I understand myself and the world within language, in front of the text. To restate this, interpretation is an event of language in which I must enter into the world disclosed by the text by allowing my own self to be constituted by that world. In that way, interpretation involves the expansion of my possibilities for dwelling within the world. While the text as an event of the Saying of language has its own truth (a world) which we experience as the "antagonistic character of the text." It also has a claim over us; it has a truth for us in terms of disclosing possibilities of our own being-in-the-world.

In addition, Ricoeur's general model (itself built upon Roman Jakobson's model of communication) enables him to identify and isolate the major moments and issues of any theory of interpretation. There are five such moments: text, author, structure, world, and self.

The first, a theory of the text, involves us in investigating the nature of the "object" of interpretation. Thus one must characterize "discourse," which Ricoeur describes as the last unit for semantics, and the first for hermeneutics. But hermeneutics is concerned only with that discourse which has been fixed and objectified (as in writing) and which, furthermore, exists as a work, a produced whole. Each of these delimitations

raises, of course, a set of questions rather than defining any particular hermeneutic theory. A theory of the text must, finally, deal with the nature of ambiguity in language which makes possible a plurality of readings of any text.

The second moment in what Ricoeur has called "the hermeneutic trajectory" is that of the author, and he takes his cue from Schleiermacher on this matter. What is the role of authorial intention in interpretation? Does it serve a criteriological role in disputes between conflicting interpretations? Or is the concept of the author itself an interpretation which marks the unity and individuality of the style of the text?

The third and fourth moments embody for Ricoeur the conflict between explanation and understanding as alternative epistemologies of interpretation. By including both, Ricoeur has attempted to find a way of including the claims of each to serve a vital function within the act of interpretation. The third moment of interpretation involves the structure of the work, as a closed system of signs with no relation to any reality outside the linguistic/textual code within which it exists. Included within this, for example, are questions of genre and formal structures. The fourth moment (as discussed above), reopens the text to a referential relationship with the world. It is only by following the trajectory through the explanatory third moment that one can understand the text as making a statement about some nonlinguistic reality.

Finally (and it is only at the end of the trajectory that it is possible), we can raise the question of the relations between the text and the reader. The reader "appropriates" the work, and so reconstitutes it as a communicative event. But the text plays an active role in the relation;

it is, in fact, the master for it creates the reader in its own image and produces the reader within the reading. Therefore, it is necessary to explore the complex ways in which reader and text are mutually interconnected at the end of interpretation. This, of course, raises ethical questions within the domain of hermeneutics--questions of prejudice (there are no innocent readings; presuppositions and expectations are a necessary part of interpretation) and the role of tradition and texts in the expansion or limitation of human freedom and possibilities.

Ricoeur himself has attempted to articulate an interpretive method by proposing solutions to each of these moments built upon the phenomenological hermeneutics articulated by Heidegger and Gadamer. However, the value of his work lies as much in the construction of a comprehensive framework of hermeneutic theory as in the particulars of his solution.

There has been at least one further development beyond phenomenological hermeneutics, located in the work of contemporary French "post-structuralists" (e.g., Barthes, Foucault, Derrida, Kristeva, Deleuze, etc.).²⁹ They argue that Heideggerian hermeneutics still assumes a metaphysical dualism in the separation and valorization of the signified over the signified. The "post-structuralists" refuse the idea of a signified, a meaning hidden beneath the surface waiting to be uncovered. They prefer to see the text in its play of signifiers; this "play" is a trace of a process of negation (contradiction, differentiation), a constantly demanded and constantly imposed distinguishing between self and other in which both are constituted and thus related. It is a process of the setting-up and setting-out of relationships, a process in which difference is the very possibility of identity.

From this perspective, phenomenological hermeneutics is still operating within a traditional metaphysics because it assumes a totalization or unity. The "post-structuralists" attempt to undermine unity in favor of discontinuities. They seek to show that oppositions and dichotomies are always operative, and that these in turn are always accomplished in the play between the two poles, that their identity is only constituted in their mutual contradiction. They seek to "deconstruct" all structures and totalities in favor of the ongoing process of negation which leaves its mark in the play of signifiers by focusing on the "structured absences" of texts.

The "post-structuralists" argue that phenomenological hermeneutics still assumes the unity of both text and reader. They propose, instead, to see each as having existence only in the "indefinite chain of readings" of our cultural texts. Texts are merely moments in this "chain" of signifiers which have been isolated and which can be analyzed as a web of codes. The reader as well, has no existence outside of the reading process. That is, the idea of some permanent, unified, or essential aspect constitutive of the reader's selfhood is itself to be seen as a construction of our cultural readings. The notion of an indeterminate and uncontaminated subject--uncontaminated by the structures of our cultural textuality (ideology)--is undermined. But even more radically, the assertion that the structures or nature of this contamination are stable and describable is also undermined in favor of an ongoing movement of determination. The humanism associated with the Renaissance idea of an autonomous subject is rejected as one recognizes the need to talk about a subject in process. Reading, then is a process of mutual and simultaneous determination of both text and reader in a

reading which is itself determined by its positioning with an historical chain of readings. The subject has no status except as a particular code of our own readings at the present moment, readings which are responsible as much for our experience as for what appear to be our interpretations of these "real" experimental foundations.

The most radical consequence, epistemologically, of the "post-structuralist" position results from its playful embracing of a totally relativistic position. The possibility of hierarchies--either epistemological or axiological--is negated. There is no knowledge which is not itself merely another determined moment in the chain of cultural readings; consequently, the very possibility of scientific or reflective knowledge is undermined. In fact, the very relationship between theory and practice has been called into question. On this rather queer note, let us turn our attention to more immediate concerns.

Conclusion

However, as soon as one tries to isolate and identify, for example, the methodological implications of hermeneutical theorizing, one encounters at least three stumbling blocks.

First, because hermeneutics sees itself (like everything else), as an ongoing historical set of practices, it cannot be identified with a single author nor a single position. The disagreements and differences between the positions and practices of various authors cannot be overlooked in the attempt to define some general contemporary theory. Not only is it impossible to define a theoretical/methodological stance, it is also impossible to look to hermeneutics for a broad framework. In fact, perhaps hermeneutics cannot even supply a vocabulary within which to locate communication

research as an interpretive endeavor. Even fundamental terms like meaning and interpretation must be questioned within a hermeneutic stance as still standing within the transcendental tradition of philosophy; such terms assume unity, continuity, and totality. Thus, hermeneutics as presently conceived (as well as certain Marxist discourses) stand outside positivistic methods and also outside the current interest in highly subjectivistic, action-oriented, meaning-centered or person-centered theories of communication and social theory.

The second stumbling block one encounters is the explicit rejection of methodological concerns in many hermeneutical discourses; Ricoeur is the obvious exception. Heidegger and Gadamer, on the other hand, argue that hermeneutics is not concerned with the methodological questions of interpretation. The post-structuralists do certainly care about methods--of reading, for example--but they seldom talk about them. They make a strong case for avoiding prescriptive and methodological statements, for not allowing their own discourses to become either static models of or treatises on methods. Instead, when successful, their discourse sustains a tension--between theory and practice, between asserting itself and reflexively dismantling that assertion. Their discourse is constantly withdrawing from itself, constantly undermining and dispersing any claims it may have made to unity, to offering an uncontaminated truth.

The third block we face arises from contemporary hermeneutic's refusal to be relegated to the status of academic discipline because it rejects the separation between life and thought. Hermeneutics is as much our own existence as it is an intellectual endeavor. Therefore, its implications for

communication and communication research cannot be isolated from its broader readings of our discursive existence.

But if hermeneutics provides neither a new theory/method nor a new framework/vocabulary, then what are its implications for current social theorizing in general and communication research in particular? Hermeneutic discourse situates itself in opposition to (as being different from) the tradition of knowledge in our culture. It offers a radical challenge to the system of differences upon which our current conceptions of reality, truth, etc. are construed. It attempts to speak that which is not speakable, which is excluded from our discipline: discourse, difference, discontinuity, chance, power, desire, etc. Thus--at least for the primary author of this essay--the question of whether hermeneutics is true, or at least offers a significant improvement over existing communication theories, is irrelevant. It is right only insofar as it stands in opposition, as it leads us off the wrong track. Its power is that of disruption, of breaking the domination of existing systems of discourse--intellectual, economic, political, etc. The capitulation to exegetical method in the Middle Ages makes it obvious that hermeneutics can be successful only as long as it can avoid being co-opted and made a part of the allowable discourse, that is, as long as it can avoid being totalized as a new theory. Thus, it is always constantly struggling against its own articulations.

This is not meant to assert that hermeneutics has no relevance or implications for communications. In particular, we mention three: (1) Hermeneutics opens up the discipline to the consideration of texts and discourses not normally included within the purview of communications. In

fact, it might be said that hermeneutics is continuously exploding our accepted disciplinary boundaries and definitions. (2) Hermeneutics opens up, for reading, that system of discursive rules that differentiates (and thus constitutes) the sayable and unsayable. In this way, hermeneutics is a critical discipline: it confronts us with the principles of domination and exclusion upon which our illusions of freedom and knowledge are constructed. (3) Perhaps hermeneutics' major substantive implication for communication research is the discovery that the human individual--the speaker or language-user--is not the central concept of a contemporary theory of communication. Instead, communication is always a socio-historical, discursive event within which the speaking of individuals is itself both evidence of and determined within that historical discursive process. It is the human subject which is the stumbling block, finally, according to hermeneutics. But one needs then to ask how a writer (author) can deny the subject (author?).

In fact, there can be no conclusion to hermeneutic reflection, nor to a reflection on hermeneutics. It is an ongoing process in which we are all already implicated, implicated not as subjects, not as initiators and directors of change, but as the creations of change, as points of historical and chance intersections not in control of our own history although we are constantly making it.

NOTES

1. The famous Peri hermeneias, "On Interpretation," in the Organon.

2. Like flames flashing up from two sticks, so we interpret for ourselves the conversation of others and thereby understand its meaning.

Epistle VII, 341c-344b.

3. Aristotle established the classical definition of man in terms of Logos. In the West, this definition became canonical as animal rationale (man distinguished from all other animals by his rational capacity). Thus tradition has rendered Logos as reason or thought when the term essentially means "language." Aristotle sought to give language a privileged place in our thinking about man.

4. In addition to the works cited so far, hermeneia and its cognates appear in such familiar ancients as Plutarch, Xenophon, Euripedes, Longinus, Epicurus, and Lucretius.

We are well aware of the disputed etymology of the word. Gerhard Ebeling, for example, suggests that initially it was similar to the Latin sermo (to say) and to Latin verbum (word); cf. his "Hermeneutik," in Die Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart, ed. Kurt Galling, 3rd ed., vol. III (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1959), pp. 242-262. According to August Boeckh, hermeneia is derived from an older, uncertain root that antedates both the messenger god and the process of interpreting; cf. his Encyklopädie und Methodologie der philologische Wissenschaften, ed. Ernst Bratuscheck (Leipzig: Teubner, 1877), pp. 11-12.

5. Ion, 534e-535a.

6. See Legation to Gaius (278), a 1st century A.D. Stoic piece where some principles of interpretation are outlined--e.g., Homer's heroes are said to live in a different place; they are types, that is, personified virtues.

7. The penchant to return to classical Greece during the pseudo-classicism of the 17th century is responsible for coining--alongside the already existing Latin expression ars interpretandi--the Greek-sounding term "hermeneutics." The Greek hermēneia had long since disappeared from scholarship's Latinized vocabulary. The first work to use this term in a title was Johann C. Dannhauer, Hermeneutica Sacra, sive methodus exponendarum Sacrarum Literarum (Strasbourg: J. Staedelii, 1654).

8. His best known work, Postillae perpetuae in Vetus et Novum Testamentum, exercised great influence.

9. Friedrich Schleiermacher, Kurze Darstellung des theologischen Studiums, 2nd ed. (Berlin: G. Reimer, 1830), pp. 59 ff.

10. Friedrich Schleiermacher, Sämmtliche Werke, vol. III (Berlin: G. Reimer, 1884), #73-74, pp. 389-401.

11. Though some of this development is still disputed, at least the patterns can be determined by the resources we have available. As early as 1805 Schleiermacher lectured on hermeneutics at Halle. This was followed by six more lectures. Only two of the full addresses have been published. Friedrich Lucke supplemented these materials by compiling Schleiermacher's lecture notes and student notes in 1838 [Sämmtliche Werke, vol. 1 (Berlin: G. Reimer, 1843), sec. 7]. Additional fragmentary lecture notes from 1805

to 1833 have been published separately by H. Kimmerle; cf. Friedrich Schleiermacher, Hermeneutik, ed. Heinz Kimmerle (Heidelberg: Karl Winter, 1959).

12. Sammelte Werke, I/7, p. 262, e.g.

13. Cf. Wilhelm Dilthey, "Die Entstehung der Hermeneutik," Gesammelte Schriften, vol. V. (Leipzig und Berlin: B. G. Teubner, 1924), p. 320.

14. Wilhelm Dilthey, Der Aufbau der geschichtlichen Welt in den Geisteswissenschaften, ed. Bernard Groethuysen, 2nd ed., Gesammelte Schriften vol. VII (Stuttgart: B. G. Teubner, [1927] 1958), p. 194.

15. Dilthey's famous title, Das Erlebnis und die Dichtung: Lessing, Goethe, Novalis, Hölderlin, gave conceptual formation to the word. 13th ed. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, [1906] 1957).

16. Gesammelte Schriften, VII, p. 192.

17. Wilhelm Dilthey, Die geistige Welt: Einleitung in die Philosophie des Lebens, ed. Georg Misch, 3rd ed., Gesammelte Schriften, vol. V (Leipzig und Berlin: B. G. Teubner, [1924] 1958), p. 144.

18. Dilthey's Einleitung in die Geisteswissenschaften in 1883 (Gesammelte Schriften, vol. I) first brought him public attention as more than a student of Schleiermacher. In this first volume he largely distinguished the two domains by their subject matter rather than by their methodology. The ensuing debate promoted his response, in 1895, "Naturwissenschaften und Geisteswissenschaften," Gesammelte Schriften, vol. 5, pp. 242-258.

19. Cf. Gesammelte Schriften, vol. VII, pp. 191-226.

20. See Calvin O. Schrag, Experience and Being (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1969), ch. 7.

21. Paul Ricoeur, The Conflict of Interpretations, ed. Don Ihde (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1974), p. 11.
22. Paul Ricoeur, cited in Don Ihde, Hermeneutic Phenomenology (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1971), p. 89.
23. Paul Ricoeur, "Ethics and Culture," Philosophy Today, 17 (1973), 162.
24. For Heidegger's theory, see Being and Time, trans. John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson (New York: Harper and Row, 1962) and On the Way to Language, trans. Peter Hertz and Joan Stambaugh (New York: Harper and Row, 1971). Gadamer's theory is best found in Truth and Method (New York: Seabury, 1975).
25. Maurice Merleau-Ponty, cited in Jacques Lacan, The Language of the Self, trans. Anthony Wilden (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 1968), p. 203.
26. Gadamer, p. 404. See also Karl-Otto Apel, "The Problem of Philosophical Fundamental-Grounding in Light of a Transcendental Pragmatic of Language," Man and World, 8 (1975).
27. Maurice Merleau-Ponty, Phenomenology of Perception, trans. Colin Smith (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1962), pp. 183-4.
28. Paul Ricoeur, Interpretation Theory: Discourse and the Surplus of Meaning (Fort Worth: Texas Christian University Press, 1976).
29. Good discussions concerning this group may be found in Rosalind Coward and John Ellis, Language and Materialism (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1977) and Lawrence Grossberg, "Language and Theorizing in the Human Sciences," Studies in Symbolic Interaction, vol. 2, ed. Norman K. Denzin, forthcoming. See also Editors, Cahiers du Cinema, "John Ford's

Young Mr. Lincoln," in Movies and Methods, ed. Bill Nichols (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1976), pp. 493-528.