

## 6

# HERMENEUTICS: SCHLEIERMACHER AND DILTHEY

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### I. INTRODUCTION

The thought of the German philosophers Friedrich Schleiermacher<sup>1</sup> and Wilhelm Dilthey<sup>2</sup> is often assessed and criticized according to the interests and standards of twentieth-century philosophical hermeneutics. This common yet increasingly questioned account is misleading insofar as these two authors have divergent research agendas, approaches, and contexts, including the notion of hermeneutics itself, from each other as well as from later hermeneutical philosophy.<sup>3</sup>

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1. Friedrich Daniel Ernst Schleiermacher (November 21, 1768–February 12, 1834; born in Breslau, Silesia; died in Berlin) was educated at Moravian Brethren institutions in Niesky and Barby (1783–87), and the University of Halle (1787–90). His influences included Fichte, Herder, Kant, Plato, Schelling, Friedrich Schlegel, and Spinoza, and he held academic appointments at the University of Halle (1804–1807) and University of Berlin (1810–34).
  2. Wilhelm Dilthey (November 19, 1833–October 1, 1911; born in Biebrich am Rhein, Hesse; died in Siusi allo Sciliar, Italy [Seis am Schlern, South Tyrol]) was educated at the Universities of Heidelberg and Berlin (DPhil., 1864). His influences included A. Boeckh, K. Fischer, Hegel, Kant, John Stuart Mill, L. v. Ranke, Schleiermacher, and F. Trendelenburg, and he held appointments at the Universities of Basel (1866–68), Kiel (1868–71), Breslau (1871–82), and Berlin (1882–1905).
  3. On the inadequacy of Gadamer’s approach to Schleiermacher, see Andrew Bowie, *Aesthetics and Subjectivity: From Kant to Nietzsche*, 2nd ed. (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003), 183–219; “The Philosophical Significance of Schleiermacher’s Hermeneutics,” in *Cambridge Companion to Friedrich Schleiermacher*, Jacqueline Mariña (ed.) (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 75; and my “Schleiermacher on Language, Religious Feeling, and the Ineffable,” *Epoché* 8(2) (Spring 2004). On the problematic character of Gadamer’s reading of Dilthey, see my “Disturbing Truth: Art, Finitude, and the Human Sciences in Dilthey,” *theory@buffalo* 11 (2006): 121–42. Bowie argues that these distortions

Schleiermacher and Dilthey are frequently mentioned together as representatives of nineteenth-century hermeneutics and hermeneutical philosophy. This portrayal is problematic given the historical breaks and philosophical differences between their positions, and the more limited sense of the term “hermeneutics” in their writings. Despite Schleiermacher’s formative influence on Dilthey, and the centrality of Dilthey’s interpretation of Schleiermacher to his subsequent reception, there are crucial differences between them. Schleiermacher’s thought occurs within the context of the modern appropriation and transformation of traditional metaphysics and Protestant theology. His basic point of departure is the felt intuition of the infinite in his early Romantic works and the feeling of absolute dependence on God in his mature academic works. The latter claim is not only a religious and theological one. The prereflective feeling of God replaces the Cartesian *cogito* in grounding both knowledge and metaphysics in his *Dialectic*, and is the only locus of certainty in the face of skepticism.<sup>4</sup>

In contrast with Schleiermacher, whose thought he helped to revive and reinterpret, philosophy took an epistemic, social-historical, and social-scientific turn in Dilthey. Instead of asserting the unity of the world and the sciences, of being and knowledge, Dilthey developed an epistemic pluralism or nonreductive empiricism in relation to knowledge, and moderate skepticism in response to metaphysics.<sup>5</sup> Without the inherent unity of nature and spirit as an object of knowledge, Dilthey differentiated the natural and human sciences according to their contexts, methodologies, and objects. Even if all sciences involve previous processes of interpretation and meaning-formation, insofar as knowing is never free of presuppositions and a larger human context of significance, the human sciences are concerned with self-experiencing and self-interpreting individuals and groups for whom the first-person perspective of relations of meaning is – at least in part – performatively constitutive of practices or how they act and do not act.<sup>6</sup>

The distance between these two authors can be further seen in their attitude toward metaphysics and ancient Greek philosophy. Schleiermacher belonged

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begin with Dilthey and become canonical in Gadamer in a note to Friedrich Schleiermacher, *Hermeneutics and Criticism*, Andrew Bowie (ed.) (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), xxxiv–xxxv. Hereafter cited as HC followed by the page number.

4. Gunter Scholtz, *Ethik und Hermeneutik* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1995), 239.

5. On Dilthey’s empiricism without doctrinal empiricism, or “*Empirie, nicht Empirismus*,” see my “Empiricism, Facticity, and the Immanence of Life in Dilthey,” *Pli: Warwick Journal of Philosophy* 18 (Spring 2007): 108–28.

6. Rudolf A. Makkreel notes how interpretation in the human sciences involves reinterpretation of previous interpreted realities in *Dilthey: Philosopher of the Human Studies*, 2nd ed. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992), 152; on the priority of practice in Dilthey, see my “Interpreting Practice: Epistemology, Hermeneutics, and Historical Life in Dilthey,” *Idealistic Studies* 38(1–2) (2008).

to the generation of early German Romanticism that was more empirically and realistically oriented than German idealism. He remained committed to a revised form of Platonic metaphysics, influenced by his engagement with early modern and German idealist philosophy, and translated the works of Plato in an influential German edition still in use today.<sup>7</sup> Dilthey, however, interpreted modernity – prefigured in thinkers such as Augustine, who opened up the first-person perspective of already meaningful individual lived-experience (*Erlebnis*) in contrast to impersonal objective structures of classical ontology – as an irrevocable break with premodern forms of thought, which included Schleiermacher’s dialectics.<sup>8</sup> While dialectic was the central philosophical discipline for Schleiermacher, to which hermeneutics was subordinate, epistemic logic in the context of the fullness of social-historical life played the primary role for Dilthey.<sup>9</sup> In conjunction with his organic and vitalist yet still causal conception of the universe, Schleiermacher was a post-Kantian thinker of religious transcendence and of the ethical ideal of the highest good that informs and orients ordinary life.<sup>10</sup> Dilthey was a philosopher of experiential immanence, as he reformulated the Kantian project as a “critique of historical reason” in his early work *Introduction to the Human Sciences*. There Dilthey describes a critique of historical reason as “a critique of the capacity of man to know himself and the society and history which he has produced.”<sup>11</sup> Schleiermacher’s faith and intuition of the divine lose their priority as they become one way of expressing lived-experience, mood, and worldview, and infinity is transformed into an immanent yet self-interrupting characteristic of life itself that does not necessarily entail a transcendent God.<sup>12</sup>

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7. On Schleiermacher’s revised Platonism and his translations of Plato, see Julia A. Lamm, “The Art of Interpreting Plato,” in *Cambridge Companion to Friedrich Schleiermacher*, Mariña (ed.), 91–108.

8. Scholtz, *Ethik und Hermeneutik*, 243.

9. *Ibid.*, 236–7.

10. God is transcendent and the world is an immanent organic whole for Schleiermacher, who transformed Spinoza’s metaphysics in an individualistic and vitalistic direction oriented by a transcendent God and the highest good as the realization of individual personality. Compare the discussion of these issues in Frederick C. Beiser, “Schleiermacher’s Ethics,” in *Cambridge Companion to Friedrich Schleiermacher*, Mariña (ed.), esp. 61, 65, 67, 69.

11. Wilhelm Dilthey, *Introduction to the Human Sciences*, Rudolf A. Makkreel and Frithjof Rodi (eds), Michael Neville (trans.) (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1989), 165. Hereafter cited as IHS followed by the page number. Michael Ermarth pursues this central thread in Dilthey’s works in *Wilhelm Dilthey: The Critique of Historical Reason* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1978).

12. On the argument that Dilthey secularized the feeling of God into the feeling of life, moving from the feeling of faith to a more general “reflexive awareness” (*Innewerden*), see Scholtz, *Ethik und Hermeneutik*, 240, 250–51.

## II. SCHLEIERMACHER: LANGUAGE, PSYCHOLOGY, AND INTERPRETATION

Friedrich Schleiermacher led an intellectually and publicly active life as a Romantic literary figure, reformed pastor, theologian, university teacher and administrator, public intellectual, and political reformer.<sup>13</sup> The son of a reformed clergyman, he was educated by the Moravian Brethren, who advocated a strict devotional Pietism, and subsequently at the more liberal University of Halle where he continued his studies of early modern and Enlightenment era philosophy and the classics. He is well known for his youthful associations with German Romantic literary circles<sup>14</sup> and the celebration of religion as an intuition and feeling of the universe and the infinite in early writings such as *On Religion: Speeches to its Cultured Despisers*, and he is also noted for being the primary proponent of liberal Protestant theology in his mature theological works such as *The Christian Faith*.

Schleiermacher's writings concerning hermeneutics are all based on lecture courses and lectures, and consequently have a fragmentary character. They continue and transform the early modern Protestant and Enlightenment trends in hermeneutics from the eighteenth century, which are primarily concerned with the interpretation of biblical and classical texts as well as related to rhetoric and Aristotelian logic.<sup>15</sup>

Hermeneutics is a doctrine of art (*Kunstlehre*) oriented according to the idea of understanding given the universality of misunderstanding, which is caused by hastiness or prejudice (HC 23). For Schleiermacher, non- or misunderstanding is the ordinary condition, and understanding needs to be pursued in order to be achieved.<sup>16</sup> That is, where the laxer practice of hermeneutics assumes that understanding is automatic and misunderstanding to be avoided, "[t]he [stricter] practice assumes that misunderstanding results as a matter of course and that understanding must be desired and sought at every point" (HC 21–2). As in Kant, the practice of art is not the doctrine of science, nor does art deductively or mechanically apply rules and method.<sup>17</sup> Art can never be solely based on

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13. This section refines my interpretation in "Schleiermacher on Language," 297–312.

\*14. For a discussion of German Romanticism, see the essay by Daniel Dahlstrom in *The History of Continental Philosophy: Volume 1*.

15. Matthias Jung, *Hermeneutik zur Einführung* (Hamburg: Junias, 2001), 46.

16. *Ibid.*, 59.

17. See Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, Joel Weinsheimer and Donald Marshall (trans.), 2nd ed. (New York: Continuum, 1989), xxiii. Compare my discussion of the distinction between art and science in Kant and Schleiermacher in "Moral and Political Prudence in Kant," *International Philosophical Quarterly* 44(3) (September 2004), 307, and "Schleiermacher on Language," 299–300.

rules insofar as this involves the infinite regress of always needing another rule to apply a rule. Art requires judgment or a sense of appropriate application that is cultivated. Kant clarifies this distinction in the *Critique of Judgment*: whereas science demands determinate judgment, which subsumes a particular under a concept, art calls for reflective judgment, which articulates the general from the particular – that is, without a pre-given rule.<sup>18</sup>

Art is not the imposition of science on tradition or system on the life-world for Schleiermacher. Art originates in ordinary experience itself. It is always already at work in ordinary understanding to the degree that even the child is engaged in the art of hermeneutics in language acquisition.<sup>19</sup> Because there is no rule for how to apply a rule, art is a practice of a finite sensuous being. Method alone is inadequate for Schleiermacher and Dilthey, since it is the cultivation of a sense already at work in everyday communication and as such it requires lived-experience.<sup>20</sup> Although the goal of truth or correctness is an important one in Schleiermacher's hermeneutics, as Dilthey noted, art and imagination characterize all knowing (HSH 695). Cognitive representation is indispensable to the work of the sciences. Yet it is not itself primary since it is always based on prior feeling. Schleiermacher is consequently already engaged in a critique of a purely representational model of knowledge. Schleiermacher insisted on the priority of feeling in understanding the human agent and, as we shall see, the receptivity and responsiveness of the imagination in interpreting others through their expressions, which is the medium of understanding and interpretation.<sup>21</sup> To this extent, one strength of "Romantic" hermeneutics – in contrast with its impersonalist opponents – is its recognition of the role of feeling, desire, and affectivity as part of linguistic interaction, interpretation, and

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18. For an examination of this distinction and its implications see Rudolf A. Makkreel, *Imagination and Interpretation in Kant* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1990).

19. Friedrich Schleiermacher, *Hermeneutics: The Handwritten Manuscripts*, James Duke and Jack Forstman (trans.), 2nd ed. (Atlanta, NJ: Scholars Press, 1997), 49, 52; hereafter cited as HHM followed by the page number. Compare Bowie's discussion of interpretation and language acquisition in *Aesthetics and Subjectivity*, 207–8.

20. Wilhelm Dilthey, "Das hermeneutische System Schleiermachers in der Auseinandersetzung mit der älteren protestantischen Hermeneutik," in *Gesammelte Schriften* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1985), vol. 14, 605; published in English as "Schleiermacher's Hermeneutical System in Relation to Early Protestant Hermeneutics," in *Selected Works*, vol. 4, *Hermeneutics and the Study of History*, Rudolf A. Makkreel and Frithjof Rodi (eds), Theodore Nordenhaug (trans.) (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996); hereafter cited as HSH followed by the page number in the German *Gesammelte Schriften*, which appears in the margins of the English translations in Dilthey's *Selected Works*. Dilthey critiques rule-based hermeneutics in HSH 710.

21. Jung, *Hermeneutik zur Einführung*, 64.

individuation.<sup>22</sup> Schleiermacher and Dilthey do not segregate the subjective, psychological, or emotional dimensions of interpretation from their linguistic and social-historical contexts.<sup>23</sup>

Hermeneutics, according to Schleiermacher, is the art of understanding. Understanding is an art to the extent that it is neither fully reducible to nor independent of the application of rules (HC 6). Hermeneutics is an art, concerned with language, through which we interpret texts and indirectly understand others. This art has three levels operating between the minimum degree of reflection in ordinary common discourse and the maximum degree of interpretative and reflective effort in approaching classical or original texts (HC 13): that is, (i) the everyday prereflective use and interpretation of language; (ii) the skilled interpretation of language; and (iii) the reflective interpretation of language. Hermeneutics, which does not constitute the whole of philosophical, theological, and scientific inquiry for Schleiermacher, is concerned with understanding only as it occurs through language: “Language is the only presupposition in hermeneutics, and everything that is to be found, including the other objective and subjective presuppositions, must be discovered in language” (HHM 50).

Dilthey unfolded in his work *Schleiermacher’s Hermeneutical System in Relation to Earlier Protestant Hermeneutics* of 1860 how hermeneutics is essentially concerned with language. Further, language and language acquisition have, for Dilthey, an interpretive character from the beginning (HSH 745). Accordingly, hermeneutics shares the structure – both the limits and possibilities – of language. If language is always already related to what cannot be said, then the incommunicable does not occur only as a limit for hermeneutical understanding but as a condition that cannot be sublimated and thus positively defines the tasks of interpretation. The object of understanding demands that it be understood immanently from out of itself and accordingly that the one addressed be receptive to the claim being made.<sup>24</sup>

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22. In *Hermeneutics and Criticism* (HC 93), Schleiermacher associated divination – as receptivity to others and their individuality – with the feminine, and the comparative approach – emphasizing universality – with the masculine. Philosophers and men tend to one-sidedly stress their own thoughts in approaching others (HC 6, 93, 135). Julie Ellson analyzed the “hermeneutics of desire” and its gendered character in Schleiermacher, who often ethically and aesthetically privileges the feminine, and in Romanticism in *Delicate Subjects: Romanticism, Gender, and the Ethics of Understanding* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1990).

23. Bowie demonstrates how divination in Schleiermacher is not the emotional-psychological felt projection of *Einfühlung*, yet misses the expressive-linguistic and social-historical character of interpretation in Dilthey in *Aesthetics and Subjectivity*, 207.

24. Friedrich Schleiermacher, *Über die Religion* (Stuttgart: Reclam, 1969), 28; published in English as *On Religion: Speeches to Its Cultured Despisers*, Richard Crouter (ed. and trans.) (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988). This connection between responsiveness and immanence is further developed by Dilthey – for example, in the thesis that life needs to be

The further claim that hermeneutics is the art of understanding “the utterance first just as well and then better than its author” seeks to bring to consciousness what remained unconscious in the author (HC 23). This task is driven by the absence of any immediate knowledge of what is within an author (*ibid.*), and indicates, as Dilthey noted, the need in interpretation to consider the unthought of an author (HSH 707). Articulating the unconscious in consciousness follows the hermeneutical model of receptively determining the indeterminate through interpretation (HC 33, 49), and of bringing to concepts the sensual and pre-conceptual sources of language (HC 34–8). For Schleiermacher, and to the chagrin of Karl Barth and neo-orthodoxy, even the divine word of the Bible is available only through interpretation (HC 41). Inspiration and enthusiasm cannot eliminate the need for contextualization and mediation in order to articulate God’s word (HC 82). Owing to the potential infinity of interpretation, as both past origins and future possibilities and transformations are not directly given, and “because it is an infinity of past and future that we wish to see in the moment of the utterance,” hermeneutics is an infinite or “endless task” that no synthesis or fusion can overcome (HC 23, 31).

In addition to the interpretation of language that Schleiermacher called “grammatical,” there is also “psychological interpretation” involving receptiveness to the traces of the singularity of the other as they are indicated in communication. As Dilthey argued in his reading of Schleiermacher, the individual and the singular would be lost in a discourse that denies the possibility of psychological interpretation (HSH 717–18). Individuals do not only instantiate a pre-given language, and even as the individual is placed within a general location and context, it is irreducible to it (HC 279). Language is used and created through the language-forming power and style of individuals, such that it is inadequate to consider language purely in propositional or structuralist terms. The emphasis on psychological understanding is subsequently not so much the correct representational reproduction by the interpreter of some “mental content” of the author. The “psychological” concerns the individual side of interpretation just as “grammatical” concerns the structural and more universal side of linguistic mediation as a relational system (HC 8–9, 67). Although psychological interpretation has priority from the perspective of the individual and grammatical from the perspective of language as a systematic impersonal whole, both sides are equal and necessary for interpretation (HC 10). Both varieties of interpretation, which are ends of a continuum rather than contraries, are needed, as propositions can be interpreted in relation to individual life-acts, linguistic systems, and the provisionally and indeterminately given whole of a life that is

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articulated from out of itself – and by Heidegger (*circa* 1920) in describing the hermeneutics of facticity as the self-articulation of life in its enactment.

the intersection of both moments.<sup>25</sup> They are a spectrum and yet each side has to be grasped in its own terms as one transitions between the grammatical and the psychological without either one being complete or sufficient in itself and without there being determinate rules for how these transitions can be accomplished (HC 10–11).

Schleiermacher's approach is no mere "external reconstruction" aiming at correctness, as Gadamer contended.<sup>26</sup> It is oriented toward the question of truth through receptivity to what addresses and claims us, as hermeneutics is constructive in order to envision an organic whole (HC 65). Schleiermacher also noted the integrating and mediating character of language. Although he emphasized the unifying and conforming power of language and tradition, Schleiermacher showed the importance of linguistic transformation such as in the artist of language who each time individualizes language anew (HHM 49), and in the language-forming power of the new and the individual (HC 12, 86).

Schleiermacher's approach to language emphasized the differences that occur in relation to the identity of language; that is, with that which differentiates languages and, further, with that which resists and withdraws from linguistic mediation. Hermeneutics concerns language, which is the only presupposition and defines the scope of hermeneutics (HHM 50). Yet language is not a system that can close itself to what is other than language in a pure immanence of linguistic integration or mediation. Despite the limits that language and its interpretation impose, such limits cannot eliminate the infinity of sense, such as the infinite significance of a book such as the Bible, or the relation of the finite to the infinite (HHM 53, 55). The incommunicable confronts language on the side of both the whole and the individual.

Jean Grondin has emphasized the quest for the whole understood as completeness in Romantic hermeneutics.<sup>27</sup> Yet the whole is not so much a complete system as it is an infinity of intercrossing relations that are ultimately referred to the nonrelational. In this way, Dilthey characterized three senses of "whole" in Schleiermacher's thought: (i) organizing inner form, (ii) system, and (iii) relational context or *Zusammenhang* (HSH 679). Whereas organizing inner form refers to an organic immanent teleology and the idea of a system points to the completeness of a totality, *Zusammenhang* indicates the nexus or contextuality that allows singularity to be interpreted in relation to the infinite. If there is a common quest in "Romantic hermeneutics," it is characterized more by the question of the singular and the ineffable than it is by the systematic complete-

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25. This is an implication, for instance, of HC 18–19, 92.

26. Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, 165–9; Scholtz, *Ethik und Hermeneutik*, 124.

27. Jean Grondin, *Introduction to Philosophical Hermeneutics* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1994), 64.



ness of representational knowledge. Dilthey could therefore suggest that individuality is the form of the whole (HSH 709). If we could know the whole, then we would know the whole in its concrete singularity rather than as a universal or concept.

If Schleiermacher's hermeneutics emphasized the correctness of an understanding to be guided by the theoretical articulation of an art and practice, this is far from meaning that he presupposed correctness as the sole model of truth, since interpretation calls for responsive feeling and imagination. Nor does this imply that the world is inherently and fully comprehensible and intelligible, since as finite beings we relate to the infinite through what Schleiermacher called in various places traces and seeds (*Spuren und Keime*). The notion of trace or seed is helpful for interpreting its use in Schleiermacher and the paradox of speaking about that which cannot be spoken. The trace is that which is given as not being able to be given, the presence of that which cannot be thought as presence, the disclosure of nondisclosedness, the revelation of that which is concealed *as* concealed.<sup>28</sup> This trace does not stand alone as a brute singularity or fact, since it bears a fundamental relationship to the word for Schleiermacher.

### III. DILTHEY: INTERPRETATION AND THE HUMAN SCIENCES

Wilhelm Dilthey was a philosopher, intellectual and cultural historian, and social thinker, who is most recognized for his contributions to hermeneutics, the human sciences, aesthetics and literary criticism, interpretive psychology, and what later became known as "life-philosophy" (*Lebensphilosophie*). As with Schleiermacher, the hermeneutical tendencies of Dilthey's thought, which concerned understanding and interpretation as epistemic and social-historical phenomena, should be placed in the larger context of Dilthey's project.

Dilthey's primary early work *Introduction to the Human Sciences* (1883) is an attempt to develop a postmetaphysical epistemology of the human sciences, without positivistically truncating human experience, by systematically and historically investigating "the whole of human nature as it is revealed in experience, in the study of language, and in the study of history, and thus seek the connection of these components" (IHS 51). Dilthey developed his analysis of the human investigation of the human world in the context of his early epistemological project of explicating "the empirical without empiricism" in order to

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28. One of the few thinkers to explore Schleiermacher's appeal to the "trace" in the context of recent literary theory is Werner Hamacher; see his "Hermeneutic Ellipses: Writing the Hermeneutic Circle in Schleiermacher," Timothy Bahti (trans.), in *Transforming the Hermeneutical Context: From Nietzsche to Nancy*, Gayle L. Ormiston and Alan D. Schrift (eds) (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 1990).

unfold a “critique of historical reason” that would clarify, validate, and extend the distinctive forms of inquiry of the human sciences in the context of social-historical life (IHS 165).

The human sciences can be grounded only through immanent self-reflection on experience, based in and interpreting the “feeling of life” or precognitive reflexive awareness, which includes epistemological and psychological inquiry (IHS 174, 227–8). Dilthey argued for a nonreductive experientialism in epistemology, which expanded it beyond cognitive or theoretical knowledge and hence transformed it. According to Dilthey:

All science is experiential; but all experience must be related back to and derives its validity from the conditions and context of consciousness in which it arises, i.e., the totality of our nature. We designate as “epistemological” this standpoint which consistently recognizes the impossibility of going behind these conditions. (IHS 50)

In his critique of reductive forms of empiricism and positivism, Dilthey argued for the irreducible richness and variety of experience understood and articulated from out of itself. Experience is bound to meaning-relating activities and structures that are only understandable in their life-context (*Lebenszusammenhang*). Dilthey utilized this account of lived-experience to reject traditional and speculative metaphysics. Metaphysics conceives the world through a unified point outside the world, assumed to be inherently intelligible, in order to represent the world as a systematic totality. Metaphysics separates knowledge from its historical context and the “totality of human nature,” whereas what is called for is “historical reflection together with epistemological self-reflection [*Selbstbesinnung*]” (IHS 52).<sup>29</sup>

In his *Life of Schleiermacher* (1870) and *Introduction to the Human Sciences*, Dilthey interpreted the processes of life immanently and in relation to a dynamic context that is never fully visible. This “inner” perspective of life implies the original givenness from the first-person perspective of co-agents or participants of meaningful social-cultural structures and processes. “Inner” thus refers to the first-person life-context, which is inherently bodily, perceptual, and worldly as well as social-historical, and in which objects are preconceptually “understood.” In contrast, “outer” or “external” refers to the abstraction of objects from their life-nexus in the third-person perspective of observation and explanation characteristic of modern natural sciences (IHS 61–2, 67). Without the metaphysical unity of the world, which has collapsed into paradox and aporia, we are faced

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29. On life-reflection (*Besinnung*), see Makkreel, *Dilthey: Philosopher of the Human Studies*, 376–80.

with incommensurable data derived from myriad sources that cannot be conclusively combined insofar as they are explained and interpreted phenomenally and immanently from out of themselves rather than related to an external standard (IHS 61–4). Although Dilthey is repeatedly misinterpreted as an idealist philosopher of spirit or an epistemological dualist, radically opposing causal explanation of nature from the interpretive understanding of human life, the incommensurability of the natural and human sciences does not exclude their overlapping or pluralistic employment in inquiry: “Knowledge of the natural sciences overlaps with that of the human sciences” (IHS 70). Accordingly, for instance, the human sciences are irreducible to causal explanation even as they continue to use it. Third-person causal and structuralist-functionalist approaches in the human sciences, which analyze persons as the results of previous natural causes or as the tools and mechanisms of greater social forces and structures, are legitimate for Dilthey to the extent that they can be related to the perspective of persons as conscious co-agents involved in the formation of social life (IHS 55). Social forces, structures, and processes are in turn necessary for interpreting and explaining the phenomena associated with “spirit” in German idealism, including the individual person, groups, eras, and nations (IHS 56, 58). Nature as a causal order conditions individual and social life, just as that life in turn impacts and reshapes nature (IHS 69). History cannot be understood except through its natural conditions and as the “domination of nature” that is a primary purpose of human social activity from agriculture to technology (IHS 71).

Pluralism is necessary for the human sciences given their distinctive kinds of objects: “the external [or structural] organization of society, the cultural systems [of the reproduction of meaning] within it, and individual peoples” (IHS 93). The latter is the most complex object, since it does not correspond to an entity insofar as there is no such thing as a soul, organism, or essence to a nation or people (IHS 55, 121). Dilthey rejected what is now called “strong holism” in the philosophy of the social sciences, that is, the assertion of the existence of collective entities, while retaining a role for a “weak holism” that allows statements about collective or group phenomena such as an era, generation, or nation. Dilthey’s focus on the context of individual life thus differs from the methodological individualism that reduces individuals to the ahistorical self-interested monadic agents of rational choice.

The primary intention of the human sciences is the empirical description of individuality in its life-context. Consequently, in an argument that would arouse neo-Kantian criticism insofar as they excluded psychology from the cultural sciences in classifying it as a natural science, the human sciences require descriptive and empirical psychology (IHS 109). Psychology is not then purely a natural science, as it involves purposes, norms, and values, as seen, for instance, in

ethical, legal, and other practically oriented claims. The individual presents itself as both the goal and limit of understanding, which is explicative through the expressions and practices of the individual rather than directly intuited or introspected, as individuality evades full disclosure and articulation.<sup>30</sup> For Dilthey, we often know expressions that have a kind of objectivity for understanding while being uncertain of the life being expressed.<sup>31</sup>

During his middle period from 1883 to 1896, Dilthey focused on developing his aesthetics and a descriptive and interpretive psychology, including his argument for the “acquired psychic structural nexus” from the tension and differentiation of self and world in the experience of resistance via reflexive awareness to the fullness and specificity of an individual life. In this context, Dilthey articulated the lived – or performatively enacted rather than purely transcendently constitutive – “categories of life” or life’s immanent articulation-character that proved so significant for the early Heidegger.<sup>32</sup> The acquired psychic nexus indicates the complexity of overlapping functions of the individual as it develops in a historical situation. Dilthey’s “proof” of the external world through the experience of resistance indicates the thereness and co-givenness of self and world.

Dilthey’s writings from the early 1890s should be interpreted in the context of his articulation of an interpretive psychology occurring in the space and intersection of epistemology and life. In his *Beiträge zur Lösung der Frage vom Ursprung unseres Glaubens an die Realität der Außenwelt und seinem Recht* (1890), Dilthey formulated the basis for such a project by arguing for a phenomenality or immanence prior to the intellectualism of phenomenism and for the independence of reality from the subject through the resistance and tension of the co-givenness of self and world. Under the traditional guise of an argument for the “external” existence of the world, Dilthey would radicalize this canonical epistemological problem by anticanonically showing the bodily-worldly character of human life. This work suggests a hermeneutics of bodily being in the world that provides the basis for interpretive psychology. Epistemological categories have their basis in the bodily-perceptual and social-historical character of life. Categories such as substance and cause are derived from the pre-intentional and prereflective categories of life through which the world is experienced and expressed.<sup>33</sup>

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30. On the explicative character of understanding, see Jung, *Hermeneutik zur Einführung*, 84.

31. *Ibid.*, 86, 88.

32. Wilhelm Dilthey, *The Formation of the Historical World in the Human Sciences, Selected Works*, vol. 3, Rudolf A. Makkreel and Frithjof Rodi (eds), Rudolf A. Makkreel et al. (trans.) (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2002), 228–45; hereafter cited as FHW followed by the page number; Makkreel, *Dilthey: Philosopher of the Human Studies*, 381–91.

33. Compare Frithjof Rodi, *Erkenntnis des Erkannten: zur Hermeneutik des 19. und 20. Jahrhunderts* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1990), 159.

Schleiermacher's "hermeneutical circle" is a model of education or cultivation. As one moves between the particular and general, each movement enriches one's previous understanding (HC 24). For Dilthey, it is the unending and irreducible intersection of and movement of prereflective elementary understanding and reflective interpretation between self and other, individual and context, and singular and whole. This dynamic of the determinate and the indeterminate is productive of understanding, which is practical rather than theoretical, selective rather than universal, and productive rather than merely reconstructive.<sup>34</sup> Understanding attempts to move from the exteriority of the utterance to the internal first-person perspective of the speaker or writer.<sup>35</sup>

In the final phase of his work, from 1896 until his death in 1911, Dilthey focused on the hermeneutical and social character of sense and meaning in the context of Hegel's objective spirit, which signifies the constitution of intersubjectivity in and through human practices and products. Dilthey analyzed historical life in *The Formation of the Historical World in the Human Sciences* (1910) through the relation of lived-experience (*Erlebnis*), expression (*Ausdruck*), and understanding (*verstehen*). He further articulated a "philosophy of worldviews" in order to account for the genesis and conflict of systems of interpretation of meaning in relation to the feeling and nexus of life. Worldviews express the tendency to unify experience even as the conflicts (*Widerstreit*) inherent in life prevent the closure of life in conceptual systems, since they inevitably face their limits in the antinomies and aporias generated by life itself.

It is in this late period that Dilthey explicated the experiential structures of consciousness in his three preliminary "Studies toward the Foundation of the Human Sciences," his exploration of the import of the productive systems of historical life for knowledge in *The Formation of the Historical World in the Human Sciences*, and his final and perhaps best formulation of hermeneutics in "The Understanding of Other Persons and Their Manifestations of Life." While Rudolf Carnap and others utilized the word *Aufbau* in the sense of epistemic "construction," Dilthey stressed the formation-character of both the human sciences and the historical reality that they investigate.<sup>36</sup> That is, the formation

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34. Jung, *Hermeneutik zur Einführung*, 83.

35. Wilhelm Dilthey, *Die Entstehung der Hermeneutik*, in *Gesammelte Schriften*, vol. 5, 318–19; published in English as *The Rise of Hermeneutics*, in *Selected Works, Vol. 4: Hermeneutics and the Study of History*, Rudolf A. Makkreel and Frithjof Rodi (eds), Fredric R. Jameson and Rudolf Makkreel (trans.) (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996); hereafter cited as HSH followed by the page number in the German *Gesammelte Schriften*.

36. On Dilthey's significance for the early Carnap, particularly on metaphysics as a feeling of life and worldview, which Carnap employed in his critique of Heidegger, see Gottfried Gabriel, "Introduction: Carnap Brought Home," in *Carnap Brought Home: The View from Jena*, S. Awodey and C. Klein (eds) (Chicago, IL: Open Court, 2004), 3–20.

of the historical world refers to its articulation in the human sciences, which themselves theoretically reflect this historical world (FHW 1). Dilthey's theory of the human sciences is not merely an epistemology (*Erkenntnistheorie*) in the conventional sense, but a theory of knowledge (*Theorie des Wissens*) that relates knowing to its context. Whereas epistemology seeks to establish the foundations of conceptual cognition (*Erkenntnis*), Dilthey places the epistemology of the human sciences within a larger context of the knowledge (*Wissen*) embodied in social practices and historical forms of life.

Thought can and does generalize, intensify, and transform life, even as it remains bound to the factual and empirical context of that life (FHW 27). Knowledge encompasses not only the conceptual cognition of reality, but also the values and purposes established concerning it. It is inevitably selective and bound to a perspective. Dilthey accordingly situated the human sciences, which are determined by their respective object and how the object is given, in relation to a pretheoretical life-nexus and its forms of elementary or ordinary understanding (FHW 38). These are tied up with the temporality, historicity, and structures of social life; with an epochal "objective spirit." Objective spirit indicates the ways in which the past has been objectified and continues to shape contemporary practices, and it is analyzed in the human sciences as cultural systems and the external organization of society.

A significant characteristic of the *Formation of the Historical World* is the development of the notion of "productive system or nexus." *Wirkungszusammenhang* suggests a historical efficacy or productivity prior to any analysis of it as either causal or teleological (FHW 4). The human sciences involve the study of dynamic interconnected systems that articulate the intersection of meaning, value, purpose, and force. Dilthey interpreted these temporally, such that meaning primarily concerns how humans are determined by their past, value is based on their present feeling of life, and purpose is projective striving into the future in the face of productive forces (*Kräfte*) that cannot always be predicted or controlled.<sup>37</sup>

Understanding, which should be construed verbally as "to understand" (*verstehen*), is intrinsically interpretive for Dilthey. Since human agents are conscious and reflective beings who are bound to the facticity of their bodies and world, they can cognize themselves and others only indirectly through expressive and interpretive means (FHW 108). Given that we know ourselves and others primarily through actions, life-expressions, and their effects – rather than through introspection or intuition – and that everyday understanding can

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37. Heidegger's portrayal of the unity of the temporal ekstases is in part a response to temporality in Dilthey. See Ilse Nina Bulhof, *Wilhelm Dilthey: A Hermeneutic Approach to the Study of History and Culture* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1980), 172.

face breakdowns and what seems distant or strange, elementary understanding leads to higher forms of understanding and interpretation; that is, hermeneutics. Dilthey's project of a critique of historical reason proceeds from the context of life in all of its complexity and concreteness to the conceptual cognition of the sciences and, finally, to reflective awareness (*Besinnung*). This reflection is made possible by the prereflective reflexivity (*Innesein* or *Innewerden*) of the human subject and, with its double meaning of "sense" (*Sinn*) as meaning and bodily awareness, constitutes the basic movement of Dilthey's thought. Understanding is not merely subjective but mediated through the expressions and practices of human life. It also provides more than a scientific access to objects; it is fundamentally world-opening (FHW 226).

Understanding aims at truth or validity, and such understanding is described as being the most complete (FHW 227). Yet understanding is also concerned with the contextuality and facticity of human expressions. The objectifications of human life in practices and institutions, in behaviors and expressions, are the medium through which we understand and interpret others and ourselves. Dilthey's phenomenological descriptions of kinds of attitude (*Verhaltensweise*), taking a stance (*Stellungnahme*), and life-concern (*Lebensbezug*) show how historical life is both about and matters to the individual in its relational context (FHW 2). The human sciences justifiably strive to this extent for objectivity, universality, and truth.

Objectivity in the human sciences links lived-experiences with the social-historical structures that inform them. Yet this objectivity cannot consist of a mimetic copying of reality "as it is" (FHW 23). The human sciences relate the unique, the accidental, and the momentary to the nexus of norms, values, and meanings operative in social-historical reality. They explicate the intersection of the unique and the general in the "historical presentation of the singular occurrence [*die historische Darstellung des einmal Geschehenen*]." <sup>38</sup> The significance of the singular in relation to its context indicates that Dilthey's concern is not exclusively epistemological or scientific. It is practical, and the human sciences cannot extricate themselves from this non-"value-free" context. Possibilities for historical vision need self-reflection (*Selbstbesinnung*) if we are to be truly responsive to our own hermeneutical situation.

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38. Wilhelm Dilthey, *Der Aufbau der Geschichtlichen Welt in den Geisteswissenschaften*, B. Groethuysen (ed.), 2nd ed. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1956), 3, my translation.

IV. HERMENEUTICS AND PHILOSOPHY IN  
SCHLEIERMACHER AND DILTHEY

The word “hermeneutics” retained its early modern meaning and function in the writings of Schleiermacher and Dilthey. Although they intermittently gave the word more extensive meanings, hermeneutics is principally the art of understanding another’s utterance through interpretation (HC 3–5). Hermeneutics is one discipline among other disciplines, correlated in particular with its fellow philological discipline of criticism as the art of evaluating the authenticity of texts rather than a style of philosophizing as a whole (HC 3).<sup>39</sup> It is further subordinate to ethics, which concerns any form of human activity, and dialectic – or the art of thinking – for Schleiermacher.<sup>40</sup> Hermeneutics refers to the exegesis of texts or, more broadly, communicative utterances in terms of their sense and meaning. Whereas earlier Protestant and idealistic hermeneutics stressed the “spirit” of the text, Schleiermacher and Dilthey focus on the individuality, personality or style, and sensibility of the author in his or her historical context.<sup>41</sup> Despite this more limited use of the word hermeneutics, their thought has been retrospectively designated as “hermeneutical” owing to their interest in associated issues of sense and meaning, context and historicity, understanding and interpretation, and in the communicative and explicative dimensions of human life and inquiry.

Even given this potential continuity through issues of interpretation, their responses to such issues are distinct. Schleiermacher and Dilthey emphasized the central role of language in hermeneutics and inquiry but they did not minimize or neglect the material-empirical, social-historical, and biographical-psychological dimensions of human life and knowledge. The art of interpretation is the art of understanding communication, involving the reflective and philosophical elaboration of understanding, within a larger context of intellectual and empirical inquiry. Twentieth-century hermeneutics – beginning with Heidegger’s critical reception of Dilthey in the 1920s – is largely hostile to these merely ontic empirical, historical, and psychological moments in Schleiermacher and Dilthey. Where later hermeneutically defined philosophy stressed the integrating power and truth of language, narrative, and communication to disclose, construct, and mediate the world through basic concepts such as linguisticity (Gadamer), narrativity (Ricoeur), and mutual consensus (Habermas), Schleiermacher and

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39. Compare Jung, *Hermeneutik zur Einführung*, 72; Scholtz, *Ethik und Hermeneutik*, 235.

40. On the ethical and dialectical context of hermeneutics, note Schleiermacher, HC 8. One flaw of the twentieth-century hermeneutical reception of Schleiermacher’s hermeneutics is that it ignores its context in his dialectic, the art of thinking in conversation that is the basis of both ethics (to which hermeneutics belongs as a variety of human activity) and physics. On the dialectical context of hermeneutics, also see Bowie, “The Philosophical Significance,” 76.

41. Jung, *Hermeneutik zur Einführung*, 56.



Dilthey emphasized not only the linguistic character of thought and the disclosive power of language but also its reversals, limitations, and breakdowns. Since everything cannot be said in language given the conflict, facticity, and resistance constitutive of life, and language is as much evocative as representational, all the resources of indirect communication are needed in order to articulate the singularity and affective life of the individual, on the one hand, and the complexity of any given context or nexus (*Zusammenhang*) of relations, on the other.

Besides the inability to fully determine or signify the individual and the whole in language, which calls forth and demands the interpretive oscillation and circling between them, communication and interpretation were confounded and inspired by the transcendence and ineffability of God in Schleiermacher and the unfathomable and ungroundable immanence of life in Dilthey.<sup>42</sup> This finitude and facticity in relation to the infinite beyond in Schleiermacher, or infinite empirical plurality in Dilthey, orients their intellectual endeavors.<sup>43</sup> Instead of being directly or immediately disclosed to intuition or reason, phenomena require interpretation, which indirectly addresses, articulates, and indicates the singular and complexly mediated phenomena of human existence. Given this context, the work of interpretation is tied to empirical scientific research.

The need for reflectively informed interpretation emerges when elemental or ordinary everyday understanding is confounded by that which is not communicated or understood – whether it is a text (the domain of traditional hermeneutics), the author, other persons, the historical context, life itself, or God. As there is no absolute difference between the transcendental and the empirical, or the ontological and the ontic, interpretation cannot be purely philosophical. Whether in Schleiermacher’s dialectic or Dilthey’s epistemic logic, philosophy thinks through scientific inquiry and cannot be separated from it without dogmatism. It accordingly cannot avoid or bracket empirical and ontic inquiry into the anthropological, natural, psychological, and social-historical dimensions of human life. Whereas traditional hermeneutics is primarily concerned with the explication of biblical and classical texts, understanding and interpretation are increasingly associated – already in Schleiermacher to a lesser degree, and for Dilthey more centrally – with the first-person participant perspective of lived-

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42. On Dilthey’s notion of life and its epistemic role, see my “Self-Reflection, Interpretation, and Historical Life in Dilthey,” *Dilthey International Yearbook for Philosophy and the Human Sciences*, vol. 1 (2010), and “Impure Phenomenology: Dilthey, Epistemology, and Interpretive Psychology,” *Studia Phaenomenologica* 10 (2010).

43. On facticity in nineteenth- and twentieth-century European philosophy, see the introduction to François Raffoul and Eric Sean Nelson (eds), *Rethinking Facticity* (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2008), 1–21. On Dilthey as a thinker of finitude, see Jos de Mul, *The Tragedy of Finitude: Dilthey’s Hermeneutics of Life* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2004).

experience (*Erlebnis*), epistemic and social-historical reflection (*Besinnung*), and the empirically oriented inquiry of the human sciences (*Geisteswissenschaften*).

It is striking that Schleiermacher and Dilthey conceive of interpretation as aiming both at the individual and the singular *and* at the context and the whole in their relational interdependence. Understanding and interpretation occur to one degree or another as an oscillation between these two poles, as universality demands returning to particularity and particulars require universalization in order to begin to be recognized and understood. The oscillation between the conceptual and the nonconceptual, the universal and the particular, and the individual and the whole became characterized as the “hermeneutical circle,” which Schleiermacher adopted from Friedrich Ast.<sup>44</sup> Rather than being a closed system or hierarchy of meanings, where particulars are subsumed under universals never to be heard from again, interpretation occurs through both contextualization and individuation. It is a potentially infinite iteration of departure and return to its object. Similar to empirical research, interpretation is provisional and can always begin anew as more is learned about the individual and the context.

Interpretation is not only the analysis of language, narrative, or communicative action for Schleiermacher and Dilthey; it concerns “meaning” in all its potential guises and expressions. This includes the disruption and incompleteness of meaning in encountering “non-meaning” and the counter-purposive. This insight is related to the role of the nonconceptual and prereflective in experience, the affectivity and emotional character of lived-experience and understanding, and the priority of music and art as expressions of human life. Instead of highlighting reason or intuition alone, they emphasized the need to address human existence in its fullness and variety, which embraces rationality and affectivity, reflection and the basic “feeling of life” (*Lebensgefühl*).<sup>45</sup>

Meaning is “holistic” in the sense of its being relational and interconnected. Yet, in contrast with visions of an impersonal systematic integration in a conceptual or social totality, or the “occult subordination” of every aspect of the text to an esoteric doctrine (HC 17), this is an open-ended, interpretive, and “first-person” holism that is constantly referred back to the experience and interpre-

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44. Friedrich Ast (1778–1841), one of the leading philologists of the nineteenth century, initially formulated the circle in Section 78 of his *Grundlinien der Grammatik, Hermeneutik und Kritik*, published in 1808, as Schleiermacher himself noted (HHM, 195). See Ronald Bontekoe, *Dimensions of the Hermeneutic Circle* (Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press, 1996), 8, 23.

45. On *Lebensgefühl* from Kant’s third critique to Dilthey, see Rudolf A. Makkreel, “The Feeling of Life: Some Kantian Sources of Life-Philosophy,” *Dilthey-Jahrbuch für Philosophie und Geschichte der Geisteswissenschaften* III (1985).

tation of individuals.<sup>46</sup> Even as the individual is in a sense fundamental, the interpretation of the individual leads back to the context and the potentially universal through the comparative, the generalizable, and the typical. Both the individual and the whole are more or less indeterminate, as interpretations attempt to increasingly articulate their determinateness.<sup>47</sup> In this process, both sides change, readjust in relation to one another, and are reinterpreted.

The provisional character of interpretation does not only hold for the interpretation of other humans. Self-understanding is more complex and questionable than is usually thought, as the self does not have direct or self-certain access and knowledge of itself. Self-knowledge consequently proceeds through self-interpretation, with all the risks that this involves. The individual does not have direct or unmediated self-knowledge, much less an intuitive self-transparency, as evident in biographical and autobiographical writing. The motto of Dilthey's unfinished multivolume biography of Schleiermacher is "the individual is ineffable."<sup>48</sup> Rather than being statically given as an unalterable boundary, or posited as being outside interpretation, the unsayable occurs in the context of communication.<sup>49</sup> It is owing to finitude and alterity that all words and expressions call for interpretation and assessment – whether they are our own or even those of God. Andrew Bowie notes that Schleiermacher's self "is not an absolute point of beginning"; the self is infinitely reflective and interpretive, as it lacks presence to itself and at the same time needs to respond to this lack.<sup>50</sup>

Meaning is inevitably of "diverse provenance," or pluralistic.<sup>51</sup> It involves a multiplicity of elements and sources that entail, for example, addressing and researching the text, the author, the context, and the truth claims of a work in order to interpret and evaluate it. These myriad elements and resources cannot be eliminated prior to the work of interpretation, even as some are highlighted and others remain in the background, depending on the interpretive task. Hermeneutics is methodologically pluralistic in drawing on both generalizing (linguistic) and individualizing (psychological) tendencies, which exemplify the

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46. Jung discusses the "holism of the first-person perspective," which also differentiates the human from the impersonal third-person perspective of the natural sciences, in *Hermeneutik zur Einführung*, 76.

47. On the difference between an indeterminate and a determinate whole, and the necessity for contextualization in making an utterance more determinate, see HC 28–30.

48. Wilhelm Dilthey, *Leben Schleiermachers: Auf Grund des Textes der 1. Auflage von 1870 und der Zusätze aus dem Nachlaß*, M. Redeker (ed.), in *Gesammelte Schriften* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1970), vol. 13, 1; also note HSH 330.

49. Scholtz, *Ethik und Hermeneutik*, 111, 125.

50. Bowie, *Aesthetics and Subjectivity*, 249.

51. This is a key point of contention for Heidegger in *Einleitung in die Philosophie (Gesamtausgabe 27)*, 2nd ed. (Frankfurt: Klostermann, 2001), 347–9. On Heidegger's critique and Misch's defense of Dilthey's meaning pluralism, see Frithjof Rodi, *Erkenntnis des Erkannten*, 137–40.

two primary tasks of hermeneutics for Schleiermacher and Dilthey. Likewise, ordinary life is differentiated by a diversity of practical interests, and scientific inquiry by its objects and how they are approached.

## V. CRITICISMS AND CONCLUSIONS

Despite the incorporation of many of their insights by philosophers as diverse as Heidegger and Habermas,<sup>52</sup> a number of overlapping critiques of Schleiermacher and Dilthey emerged in reaction to their thought. Owing to their concern with the psychological and aesthetic dimensions of human existence, some critics accused them of “psychologism” and “aestheticism,” that is, the reduction of truth or validity claims to psychological dispositions and the overprioritizing of art as a model of human activity.<sup>53</sup>

Likewise, on account of their attention to the historical nexus or context in which individuals and groups live, act, and produce, they were criticized to varying degrees for “historicizing” texts and experiences in a way that threatened their truth or cognitive validity; for example, the truth of the Bible (by Orthodox and neo-Orthodox theological critics of Schleiermacher such as Barth<sup>54</sup>), the sciences (by positivism and logical positivism), philosophy (twentieth-century hermeneutics<sup>55</sup>), or the very idea of validity itself (by Neo-Kantianism and Husserl).

Finally, because of their accentuation of the ineffable, individual, and affective aspects of human life and on the epistemology, methodology, and rationality of philosophical and human scientific inquiry, opponents of Schleiermacher and Dilthey – especially Gadamer – have criticized their works for being incoherently beholden to positivistic scientism and Romantic aestheticism, Enlightenment rationality and the irrational affirmation of God or life.<sup>56</sup> Nonetheless, insofar as philosophy does not one-sidedly abandon reflection or feeling, reason or

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\*52. For a discussion of Heidegger’s hermeneutic theory, see the essay by Daniel L. Tate in *The History of Continental Philosophy: Volume 4*. Habermas’s relation to hermeneutics is discussed in essays by Christopher F. Zurn and Wayne J. Froman in *The History of Continental Philosophy: Volume 6*.

53. On the role of art and aesthetics, and a response to the aestheticism charge, see Nelson, “Disturbing Truth,” 121–42.

\*54. For a discussion of Barth’s theology, see the essay by Felix Ó Murchadha in *The History of Continental Philosophy: Volume 4*.

\*55. Twentieth-century hermeneutics is discussed in detail in the essays by Daniel L. Tate in *The History of Continental Philosophy: Volume 4* and Wayne J. Froman in *The History of Continental Philosophy: Volume 6*.

56. Hans-Georg Gadamer, “Wilhelm Dilthey nach 150 Jahren: Zwischen Romantik und Positivismus,” in *Dilthey und Philosophie der Gegenwart*, E. W. Orth (ed.) (Freiburg: Karl Alber, 1985), and *Hermeneutik in Rückblick* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1995), 9, 186.

imagination, science or art, or universality or individuality, their work continues to be significant in elucidating a nonreductive interpretive experientialism in both knowledge and practical life.

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