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HANS-GEORG GADAMER'S HERMENEUTIC AS A CRITIQUE OF HISTORICAL REASON.

Rice University, Ph.D., 1968 Philosophy

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1968
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Hans-Georg Gadamer's Hermeneutic as a Critique of Historical Reason

by

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A THESISSubmitted IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF Doctor of Philosophy

Thesis Director's signature:

Houston, Texas
June, 1968
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PREFACE

I would like to take this opportunity to thank some of the people who have been so kind in helping me finish this work. I owe great debts to both Dr. James Street Fulton and Dr. Charles Garside, Jr., for their valuable suggestions and for the encouragement and criticism they so unselfishly gave. To Dr. Niels C. Nielsen, Jr., I owe a special debt for he not only read the manuscript many times at its various stages of progress, but he also suggested the topic itself in a seminar. In addition I would also like to thank my parents for their encouragement. Finally, I want to thank my wife for her long hours of typing and of other work, for without her assistance this work would have been greatly prolonged.
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

Hans-Georg Gadamer is not well-known in the English-speaking philosophical world, since none of his works have been translated. However, occasional references to his work may be found in a few studies dealing with current Continental philosophy. Even though his works are comparatively unknown in this country, his influence in Germany is considerable; numerous reviews attest to the importance of his major work, Wahrheit und Methode.¹ A part of the reason for the comparative lack of recognition of Gadamer in England and America is, of course, that he stands in the German tradition. Although as a pupil of Martin Heidegger he perhaps receives less attention than one who might have been a student of some other philosopher, the esteem with which his work is held in Germany is ample justification for treating his work.²

¹ J.C.B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1960. A second edition with an article added appeared in 1965. References to this volume will be abbreviated as WuM.

² Approximately ten reviews have appeared in response to Gadamer's work. They range from short accounts of some claims to critical discussions of various points or sections. Numerous articles treat or mention his works. Some of these latter papers are mentioned in the bibliography.
Perhaps another reason Gadamer is not well-known outside Germany is that many of his most significant works were written after 1950, and possibly there has not been sufficient time for his influence to spread. Since 1950, however, Gadamer has been active in attending various national and international philosophical meetings, often contributing short articles on detailed points of aesthetic theory and the theory and problems of the historical studies. In addition to articles and books dating from this period, Gadamer has served as a consulting editor of *Kant-Studien* since 1955 and of *Revue internationale de Philosophie* since 1965. He has also been a co-editor with Hans Kuhn of the *Philosophische Rundschau* since its inception in 1953, contributing a steady supply of book reviews for it, although he has published only two articles in the journal.

Additional justification for examining the work of Gadamer is that he is concerned with problems that have been raised—in the first part of this century by Wilhelm Dilthey and Heidegger. The claim of this writer is that Gadamer has given a solution to a group of problems which are roughly connected with those examined in the studies of hermeneutic. Although the problem of hermeneutic may be roughly characterized as the theory of the understanding which takes place in response to reading a text, the goal
of hermeneutic was originally to understand the biblical texts. It soon became apparent, however, that any theory of interpretation would also apply to other texts. Gadamer has re-examined these traditional problems, and his work provides important analyses of the instances of understanding which take place in response to a text, especially texts written from within another historical situation. Although he has given a solution to some of the difficulties surrounding the concept of understanding, Gadamer's attempt to solve another important problem raised by Dilthey, namely the problem of the concrete object of study for the Geisteswissenschaften, requires some revisions. A particular claim of this work is that Gadamer's work must be seen in connection with the work done by Dilthey under the label, Kritik der historischen Vernunft. It is, I believe, important to call attention to this aspect of Gadamer's work, since most reviews of Wahrheit und Methode have, for the most part, failed to mention this. In an important sense, it will become clear that Gadamer does not attempt to propose something entirely new; he intends to solve problems raised by Dilthey by means of concepts and ideas drawn from Heidegger.

It is, therefore, necessary to describe both Dilthey's problem and Gadamer's solution to it. To do this, several expository sections will be required, for
such a claim is essentially one which belongs to the history of philosophy. The claim is that Gadamer works on problems raised by Dilthey and that his analysis is an attempt to provide solutions to these difficulties. The primary task is that of showing the relationships and similarities between the works of Dilthey, Heidegger, and finally Gadamer. Although Dilthey is discussed rather extensively in Wahrheit und Methode, two important problems, which will be pointed out later, are not carefully singled out for consideration by Gadamer. In a study of the crucial texts in Dilthey, these problems have been clarified independently of Gadamer's treatment, although these difficulties are commonly mentioned in any extensive treatment.

Since the work in some sense makes an historical claim and is not primarily a work "on Gadamer," no attempt has been made to treat each of his works or articles. Although such an approach might have the value of showing the development in Gadamer's thought, this study has centered primarily on limited aspects of his later works. Even though many interesting notes which foreshadow later formulations can be found in Gadamer's earlier writings, the primary aims of the study preclude their systematic inclusion in the text; however some of the more significant points of comparison will occasionally
be mentioned in notes. In general, however, the earliest works, those dealing primarily with Plato and the early Greek tradition, are not directly pertinent to the main flow of arguments which are examined here, even if Gadamer often draws on them for illustrations of various points.

Since Gadamer is only becoming known in English and American philosophy, it will be worthwhile to give a short biographical sketch of his career. Born in Marburg on February 11, 1900, he received his education in Breslau and Marburg, studying under Paul Natorp, Richard Honigswald, and Martin Heidegger. As a student of Heidegger, he worked with such men as Karl Löwith and Gerhard Krüger in Marburg. After his Habilitationsschrift, which was written under Heidegger in 1929, Gadamer became Privatdozent at Marburg and later at Kiel. In 1937 he he served as ausserordentlicher Professor at Marburg, and in the years after World War II he was Rektor at Leipzig (1946/47), after having become ordentlicher

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Professor there in 1939. In 1947 he went to Frankfurt, remaining there for two years until he succeeded Karl Jaspers at Heidelberg. Since 1949, Gadamer has remained in Heidelberg.

During his years as student and teacher, he has been interested in Germanic studies, history, history of art, philosophy, and even philology. These interests are still apparent in his later works, although his special concerns have changed. Two early books on Plato attest to an interest which continues in articles and books down to the present. After his early work on Greek philosophy, which includes numerous reviews of books in addition to his own publications, Gadamer's interests turned toward literature, and in the period roughly corresponding to his stay at Leipzig, a number of articles and pamphlets dealing primarily with literary topics were written. Usually, the articles treat either Goethe or Hölderlin, and the interest in Hölderlin may very well be evidence of Heidegger's influence.

After approximately 1948, in the periods at Frankfurt and Heidelberg, Gadamer's interest again shifts, this time to the philosophical problems of aesthetics and the historical studies. A large group of essays dating from 1948 to the present center around the problems which will occupy him in Wahrheit und Methode,
although occasional short articles of introduction to
texts of Natorp, Nicholas of Cusa, and others appear.

Although Gadamer has recently done a large amount
of work in the area of contemporary philosophy, he still
maintains a lively interest in his first specialty, ancient
philosophy. In addition to a recent book on Plato's
Seventh Letter, he has assisted with a series of lectures
which were later published as the ninth volume of Archiv
für Begriffsgeschichte. In four meetings over a period
from 1958 until 1962, the papers ranged from discussions
of the pre-Socratics to an examination of the concepts,
"memory" and "knowledge (Wissen)," even including a paper
by Gadamer on sensus communis which was later incorporated
into Wahrheit und Methode. The later interest in Greek
philosophy does tend to shift, however, from an examination
of Plato to an intense interest in the sixth book of
Aristotle's Nichomachean Ethics.

Since Gadamer himself stands in the German idealist
tradition, he is interested in Kant and Hegel. In parti-
cular, Gadamer is interested in parts of the Kritik der
Urteilskraft, and this interest fits together nicely with
his work on Hölderlin and Goethe, for he insists that he

5 This is the publication of the Kommission für
Philosophie der Akademie der Wissenschaften und der
came to the solution of the problem of hermeneutic by way of an analysis of the problems of aesthetics. Kant's third *Critique*, which provides the basis of much of the Idealist tradition, is the central Kantian work for Gadamer, although he thinks the work treats a much too limited area. Even though the attempt to expand the results of the *Kritik der Urteilskraft* to cover ethics and law in addition to aesthetics forces him in the direction of Hegel and Gadamer readily accepts many consequences of such a move, the acceptance of Hegel is certainly not uncritical, since it usually means seeing Hegel through Heideggerian glasses. Similarities to Hegel are seldom, if ever, played down, and the use of Hegel is justified, according to Gadamer, by the fact that Hegel is again becoming prominent. Gadamer, himself, has contributed to the new popularity of Hegel as a member of the *Hegel-Kommission der Deutschen Forschungsgemeinschaft* which has published the *Hegel-Studien* since 1961; during that time he has written two articles on Hegel for the journal.

Of the three periods which have been mentioned in Gadamer's career, only the last will be examined in detail, and among the works of the last period only the writings

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6 Bonn: H. Bouvier und Co.
dealing with the epistemological problems of hermeneutic theory are treated extensively. Works from other periods provide ample evidence of a continuity in thought, and Gadamer himself testifies to the fact that his interest has always been guided by the influence of Heidegger. In this study no particular note is taken of the historical studies except where they may serve to clarify points of the analysis, and no remarks are made about the works on Goethe and Hölderlin as such, since they also fall outside the scope of this work. Hence, the problem is not that of consecutively examining the works; nor is the problem one of discovering the center of Gadamer’s philosophy, for his interests run over an extremely broad range. The problem is to examine the most important problem treated by Gadamer, to see something of its origins, and to explicate and evaluate the solution, suggesting alternate courses where that may seem necessary.

It was mentioned above that Gadamer’s work stands in the Idealist tradition of German philosophy, and it is now necessary to expand this with a few general notes about his place. As a student of Heidegger in the early years of

the century, Gadamer also rebelled against the neo-
Kantianism of that period. Although an earlier rebellion
against Hegel and idealism had resulted in a "back-to-Kant"
movement, Heidegger held that the tendency towards a
positivism was just as much an error as Hegelian idealism.
Heidegger proposed to steer a path between any pretensions
of Hegelianism to an absolute knowledge, while at the same
time emphasizing that neo-Kantianism had also made an
error. Phenomenology became his tool for cutting through
the underbrush of theories and dogmas in order that the
facts themselves could be clearly seen. Heidegger began
to point out what the facts were in order to provide a
basis for further philosophical work. In a rough way,
Heidegger's solution may be seen as taking elements from
Kant and Hegel and combining those elements into a result
different from each, a result which both partakes of
Hegel's insights into the nature of historical reality
and heeds strictly Kant's claim that human knowledge is
finite by its nature.

The problem that was to be solved was a difficult
one. The neo-Kantian tendency toward positivism had
emphasized Kant's Kritik der reinen Vernunft, often
leaving behind the problem of ethics and aesthetics.
Gadamer, on the other hand, is more interested in the
Kritik der Urteilskraft, which he thinks offers the
possibility of a type of knowledge different from that of the natural sciences. Although Gadamer does not usually speak of his problem in these terms, the difficulty is partly based on the problem of differentiating between the *Naturwissenschaften* and the *Geisteswissenschaften*. Gadamer does not examine this problem directly, since he is willing to allow his solution to follow Heidegger's, and Heidegger's solution is patterned on the work of Dilthey.

Since the problem treated in this study is based on distinguishing the *Naturwissenschaften* from the *Geisteswissenschaften* and finding the type of knowledge appropriate to each, in some sense the problem is an epistemological problem, although both Gadamer and Heidegger usually avoid the term. They see the problem of epistemology, when it is presented as a "traditional" philosophical problem, as the result of a mistaken approach. There seems to be no good reason for throwing out the term aside from the fact that doing so calls attention to a different approach, and since it has a certain usefulness, the term will be retained. Hence, the problem of hermeneutic, as Gadamer poses it, is an epistemological problem, for there must be a clarification of what takes place in certain situations of knowing and understanding.

The *Naturwissenschaften-Geisteswissenschaften* distinction has had a long background within the German
philosophic tradition, the latter term having been introduced into philosophical language as the translation of J.S. Mill's phrase, "moral sciences." The term was accepted, although if Gadamer is correct, no methodological distinctions separated it from the concept, "natural sciences." Gadamer believes that a crucial distinction needs to be made between them, and that if it is correctly made the problem of understanding can be clarified. Unfortunately, Gadamer never characterizes in a thorough manner the nature of the "objects" of the historical studies; hence, a part of the work of this study will be a critical appraisal of some logical consequences of Gadamer's claims, for only hints and suggestions for much of the groundwork are provided.

Since a part of the claim is an historical one, it will be necessary to have several sections which are primarily exegetical. Three sections will be done in this manner, calling attention to the similarities between Dilthey, Heidegger, and Gadamer. None of the exegetical studies makes any claim to be a complete analysis of the works, or even one work, of a philosopher. A primary goal of these sections is to show the similarity between the works of Dilthey and those of Heidegger. Although Heidegger is usually seen as a follower of Husserl (I do not intend to imply that the debt to Husserl
is insignificant), an important comparison between Heidegger and Dilthey can be made. The relationship between Heidegger and Gadamer is not so easily mistaken, so it will pose no particular problems.

The exegesis of sections of Dilthey deals with the *Entwürfe zur Kritik der historischen Vernunft*, a set of fragments of a work proposed by Dilthey at the time of his death. The first section considers Dilthey's assessment of his own position within the philosophical tradition in order to show both Dilthey's relationship with the tradition and the setting of the contemporary work on hermeneutic. After a general statement of the problem, it is necessary to consider certain details carefully, so that the similarities to Heidegger's work may become clear. The conclusion will raise two major difficulties that Dilthey faced as he attempted to solve the problems he had raised. Also, a suggestion for the clarification and analysis of some of the difficulties facing Dilthey is made, pointing out the direction for the further development of the problem.

The exegesis of Heidegger's works primarily treats several sections of *Sein und Zeit*. It is necessary to show a general orientation towards Dilthey's problem and the beginning of the solution to it. Since some of the basic Heideggerian concepts are a necessary foundation for
understanding the work of Gadamer, the examination of them is required, although at first it is done in a more or less provisional manner. Following the explication of such concepts as world, Being, and so forth, comes a brief discussion of methodology. Since the method Gadamer uses is quite similar to that used at times by Heidegger, the explication of methodological problems treats both writers, using examples drawn primarily from Heidegger. It is included in the chapter on Heidegger because it suggests important features of the Heideggerian philosophy.

The major exegetical section examines both the last parts of Wahrheit und Methode and various articles by Gadamer which shed light on his solution to the problems raised by Dilthey. The mere exegesis of these parts of the works will be incomplete, primarily because neither Heidegger nor Gadamer lay the foundation for the results. Nevertheless, the exegesis roughly follows Gadamer's treatment, although attention is called to the similarities to Dilthey and to the solutions which are given to the problem.

The section on Gadamer needs to be completed by an examination of some basic concepts which are central to both his work and Heidegger's. Perhaps a part of the reason that Heidegger and Gadamer are so mystifying at times is that they never bother to project back to the
premises necessary for their conclusions. The most important section in this work is devoted to an analysis of what is required for the conclusions which are drawn. Although several hints and suggestions are offered by both Gadamer and Heidegger in a few places, the bulk of the work is an extrapolation from these remarks and from the conclusions which are stated. The section provides a more careful working out of the foundations for the conclusions than either Heidegger or Gadamer have given thus far. Also, by carefully considering what is necessary for the conclusions Gadamer draws, there will be an opportunity to see clearly the basic factors leading to the conclusions. This critical work lays a foundation for a basic criticism of Gadamer's work.

A final, concluding section allows the results to be drawn together and makes suggestions for possible directions of research. This should clarify the extent to which Gadamer is actually working on the problems Dilthey raised, and it evaluates the arguments which are made. Although occasional citations from works not belonging to the last period are given, they are mentioned primarily as examples of points to be considered; in general, their validity depends on the correctness of other parts of Gadamer's arguments, and the points will not be argued individually, unless they contribute to individual
claims. The primary critical aim will be that of discovering the main features which are necessary for Gadamer's results and examining their validity.

Although Gadamer has reached important conclusions, a considerable amount of work remains to be done in the exploration of various consequences of his studies. Gadamer has attempted to indicate in several cases what these consequences will be, but this is necessarily beyond the scope of the present study. Later work on the subject will need not only to draw conclusions from the features Gadamer describes, but also to clarify certain points and perhaps change others. Nevertheless, I believe Gadamer has made significant steps towards the solution to a set of particularly difficult problems and that this solution will bear further examination.
CHAPTER II

DILTHEY AND A CRITIQUE OF HISTORICAL REASON

The problems of a Critique of Historical Reason were foreshadowed by Fichte and Hegel, although Wilhelm Dilthey was among the first to attempt to work out such a critique in a concrete way. In diary entries from his early life the problems were set out, and at his death he was still working with them. This section is a brief sketch of these problems. The first part examines Dilthey's assessment of the philosophic tradition; the second part deals with Dilthey's specific criticisms of that tradition; the final pages contain a discussion of a few problems that are found in Dilthey's solution.

One of the many difficulties that arises in the examination of Dilthey's work is the problem of determining Dilthey's use of certain key terms, for although he is reasonably careful to clarify them, he suffers from misunderstandings. Part of the misunderstanding stems from his use of phrases or words drawn from Hegel. In beginning it will be useful to clarify the term, Bedeutung, which can be systematically misleading. Bedeutung should be translated "meaning" or "significance," but Dilthey is primarily interested in the concept because it indicates the relationships between various objects. The important phrase, Bedeutung des Lebens, while it will be translated
as "meaning of life," indicates these relationships between various objects and the actions in a life. Dilthey often points out that the "meaning of life" is simply the system which is formed by the events occurring within a life. The events in a life are seen as in a relationship such that if the events were changed, the system would be different. Beyond this no further sense is allowed to the questioning after the "meaning of life," since the question is carefully directed only to that which can be experienced. Beyond that the question becomes illegitimate.

Although Dilthey's use of the idea, "meaning of life," reflects his dependence on the empiricists, Mill and Comte, a fundamental similarity to Kant is exhibited as well, for the field of knowledge is carefully restricted to the range of experience, or possible experience. Questions which exceed the bounds of experience, e.g., to ask for the meaning of history in the sense of a theodicy, are simply unanswerable, even if certain historical systems, such as political and ethical systems, may be determined.¹

A. The Origin of the Critique of Historical Reason

Dilthey develops his *Kritik der historischen Vernunft*

around concepts similar to "meaning," and although the title implies a criticism of Kant's *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*, the relationship to Kant is still complex. Dilthey raises the question: "How can the understanding comprehend historical phenomena?"

Whereas Kant had begun with the question about the possibility of the natural sciences, Dilthey begins with the problem of understanding in the mental world and asks how it is possible. The question assumes that history is not a "natural science," for if history could be subsumed under Kant's work, there would be no point in asking the question.

The Kantian understanding of phenomena is inadequate for the task of historical knowledge for two closely connected reasons: (1) the categories developed in the *Kritik der reinen Vernunft* are inadequate for historical studies, and (2) the Kantian position leaves no room for a distinction between the *Naturwissenschaften* and the *Geisteswissenschaften*. The inadequacy of the epistemological position of Kant in Dilthey's opinion is summed

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2 Wie kann das Verstehen die geschichtlichen Phänomene erfassen? (*Gesammelte Schriften*, Vol. VII, p. 277). All notes to this will be indicated with volume and page numbers in the usual manner.

up in the famous sentence, "In the veins of the knowing subject which Locke, Hume, and Kant constructed, real blood does not run. In its place is the thin sap of reason as mere thought-activity." But this inadequacy, as Bollnow points out, is not so much an erroneous procedure as an incorrect beginning point, for Dilthey has a great sympathy with the Kantian procedure. He says, "The basic problem of philosophy appears to me to have been fixed by Kant for all times," and "We must continue the work of this transcendental philosophy."

Dilthey found Kant's analysis inadequate for the Geisteswissenschaften, because it essentially rested on an abstraction. If with Dilthey we direct the question,


6 Mir scheint das Grundproblem der Philosophie von Kant für alle Zeiten festgestellt zu sein. (V, p. 12).

7 Wir müssen das Werk dieser Transzendentalphilosophie fortsetzen." (VIII, p. 14).

8 For convenience, at this point the Geisteswissenschaften will be assumed to include primarily the historical studies. Later, more will be said of Dilthey's attempt to characterize them in a thorough way.
"How is understanding possible?" to the characteristics of the Geisteswissenschaften, we will come to see the inadequacy of the Kantian categories for the study of historical existence. The analysis of the question will show how Dilthey came to see Kant's work as an over-simplification of phenomena.

Dilthey's claim was foreshadowed by Hegel, and its basic features were drawn from Hegel's insights into philosophical problems. The concept of objective mind\(^9\) indicates the insight while at the same time recognizing validity in the Kantian idealism. Hegel meant to express by objective Spirit a reality which could not be treated by the laws of causality, and Dilthey indicates by the idea a reality that may be examined according to its objectifications.\(^10\)

Since the critique of Kant which is implied by a Kritik der historischen Vernunft is primarily a claim that it is based on a simplification, Dilthey also calls Kant's

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\(^9\) In the Encyclopedia, Hegel lists law (Recht), Morality (Moralität), and ethics (Sittlichkeit) under objective mind; under subjective mind, anthropology, phenomenology of mind, and psychology are listed. As far as I know, Dilthey is only concerned with objective mind, although some of the divisions of subjective mind appear with it.

work incomplete. Because he thought the Kantian categories developed in the *Kritik der reinen Vernunft* were incomplete for treating the subject matter of the Geisteswissenschaften, Dilthey poses this problem: "But the question is whether an epistemology of history, which he (Kant) himself has not given, is possible within the frame of his concepts." The implied answer is, of course, that the Kantian categories are inadequate for the treatment of historical reality.

Dilthey saw his work as a continuation of the critical approach. In an important diary entry of March 26, 1859,\(^\text{12}\) he says that the relation of religion and philosophy has been inadequately sketched, for philosophy has been portrayed only in a purely formal way. Since the Kantian approach is viewed as a simplification, it may be seen that Dilthey intends that philosophy must be an examination of the whole of experience. Kant's examination of the categories and Fichte's attempt to derive them found their continuation in Hegel's attempt

\(^{11}\) Aber die Frage ist, ob eine Erkenntnistheorie der Geschichte, welche er selbst nicht gegeben hat, in dem Rahmen seiner Begriffe möglich ist. (VII, p. 192).

to construct the world in its unity, but unfortunately that attempt went astray through the assumption of an a priori. The categories should be seen only as "vorhandene Gedankenformen," which disclose the nature of human reason; Dilthey had no use for the metaphysical aspects of Hegel's dialectic.

As Dilthey points out, for him "the categories are the fruitful central point of the Critique of Pure Reason." But whereas Kant had examined the natural sciences and gone beyond the mere list of categories, Dilthey seems content at times to stop with the exposition of the historical categories. Since the projected continuation of the Kritik der historischen Vernunft requires an analysis which is representative of all types of experience, part of the task is to point out categories adequate for the description of the various types of experience.

Dilthey explains more precisely what he means by saying that philosophy is only inadequately distinguished

13 Ibid.

14 Dilthey speaks of "das a priori Mitgebrachte." (p. 79). Perhaps it should be translated roughly as "the dowry which is a priori." What is intended is an ironic remark about the Hegelian "Geist" and its movement, for Dilthey here is speaking of "the movement of the spirit toward (nach) the unity of the world."

15 Die Kategorien sind der fruchtbare Mittelpunkt der Kritik der reinen Vernunft. (Ibid., p. 80).
from religion if philosophy is portrayed in a formal manner. For philosophy to be philosophy and not a simplification, it is absolutely necessary that it take into account the religious experience, and the religious experience must include among other things the examination of the claims of the "unity of the world, the meaningfulness of this in its parts, (and) the striving for the simplification of the world-view by a reduction of the particular to common notions."\textsuperscript{16} Categories suitable for at least these experiences are necessary if philosophy is to be adequate, and for this reason Dilthey proposed the continuation of the Kantian problem as early as 1859.

In a section of the diary begun on April 7, 1859, Dilthey points out that Kant gave a great impetus to historical studies through his derivation of the representations of God and Soul from categories which had subjective validity. It is now necessary to examine the historical studies, since the history of ideas contains

\textsuperscript{16} ...Einheit der Welt, Bedeutsamkeit derselben in ihren Teilen, Streben der Vereinfachung der Weltanschauung durch Zurückführen des Einzelnen auf Gemeinvorstellungen... \textit{Ibid.}, p. 80. Although Dilthey was a son of a minister and at his father's insistence finished a theological degree himself, in later years he gradually moved away from an orthodox position toward a secularization of the religious experience. In this change he became more interested in examining the religious experience from a philosophical point of view.
necessities which are derived from the essence of man. 17 In the diary entry Fichte's statement, "the I is activity," is also quoted; Fichte showed the dynamic nature of the I by noting that thoughts, which are elements of the I's activity, can not be seen as static elements. 18

With these two suggestions, i.e., Kant's derivation of God and Soul from categories and Fichte's mention of the dynamic nature of the I, Dilthey attempted a sketch of the problem of a new critique of reason in 1859:

A new critique of reason must start:
1) From the psychological laws and motives which arise equally from art, religion, and science.  
2) It must analyze the systems as natural products, as crystallizations, whose archetypes are schemata; schemata which follow from the basic features in 1).  
3) It does not arrive at scepticism, but in those necessary and universal modes of operation of the human spirit, (it) has the basis for treating all sense-perception scientifically.

For we can still not dispense with this fundamental, ethico-religious hypothesis: the nature of our spirit is not deception; God does not deceive. We can not go beyond our nature; we can only grasp it. 19

17 Ibid., p. 92-93. I think Dilthey has in mind a rough formulation of his claim about objective mind.

18 Ibid., p. 93.

19 Eine neue Kritik der Vernunft muss ausgehen:  
1) Von den psychologischen Gesetzen und Antrieben, welchen Kunst, Religion und Wissenschaft gleichmässig entspringen.  
2) Sie muss die Systeme wie Naturprodukte analysieren, als Kristallisationen, deren Urform Schemata
The complete task will involve an examination of the philosophical and religious-poetic mind.\textsuperscript{20} Dilthey adds that it is not possible for him to treat the problem adequately, for it would involve a new critique of reason on the grounds of an historico-philosophical Weltanschauung. This early note, however, shows that Dilthey sees a need for a complete re-writing of the \textit{Kritik der reinen Vernunft} in order to incorporate into it the philosophical and religious-poetic mind. The re-writing will involve the addition of categories which are present in the structure of the religious and philosophical outlook, and the \textit{Kritik der reinen Vernunft} will itself need to be re-worked to provide a philosophical foundation for this expanded set of categories.

The problem of Dilthey's relationship to Kant is more acute and difficult in the fragmentary \textit{Entwürfe zur historischen Vernunft}.\textsuperscript{21} The series of fragments begins

\begin{quote}
\textit{sind; Schemata, welche aus jenen Grundzügen in 1) folgen. 3) Sie gelangt von da aus nicht zur Skepsis, sondern hat in jenen notwendigen und allgemeinen Wirkungsweisen des menschlichen Geistes die Basis, wie alle Sinnenwahrnehmung wissenschaftlich zu behandeln ist. Denn dieser ethisch-religiösen Fundamentalhypothese können wir doch nicht entraten, die Natur unseres Geistes ist nicht Täuschung, Gott läßt nicht. Über unsere Natur hinaus kommen wir nicht, wir können sie nur begreifen.}\n\end{quote}

\textit{Ibid.}, pp. 80-81. Diary note of March 26, 1859.

The note appears to be hastily written.

\textit{20 Ibid.}, p. 120. April 1, 1860.

\textit{21 VII}, pp. 191-291. These fragments probably date from around 1907-1910.
with a statement of the problem of a critique of historical reason. At the end of the first fragment Dilthey says of Kant that "the greatness of his accomplishment lay in a complete analysis of mathematical and scientific (naturwissenschaftlichen) knowledge." Dilthey's question is still whether an epistemology of history is possible within the Kantian categories, but now the difficulty lies in the approval which Dilthey gives to Kant's solution of the problems of science. He could scarcely mention the "completeness" of Kant's analysis if he meant to alter it radically. The problem is how Dilthey can accept Kant's analysis of the natural sciences and yet claim that this is inadequate for the Kritik der historischen Vernunft.

Dilthey thought this dilemma could be solved by accepting the adequacy of Kant's analysis and by also recalling that the Kritik der reinen Vernunft is a simplification, even if a legitimate one. In a general way Dilthey could agree with Kant. First, the categories were those required for the natural sciences, and secondly, in a rough way the relationships of the world as it is apprehended are in part due to the objectification of mind. Roughly, Dilthey perhaps saw a correspondence between Kant's appearance-as-in-part-objectification-of-mind, i.e., appearance as conditioned by the categories, and the Fichtean-Hegelian "objective Spirit" as a system (moral,
political, ethical) which arises from mind. The problem of the *Kritik der historischen Vernunft* requires a solution to the problem of objectifications of spirit.

The solution to this set of problems in the *Kritik der historischen Vernunft* falls into two parts. The first part corresponds to an exposition of the categories of the *Geisteswissenschaften* and could be completed by an examination of the categories used in historical studies. The procedure is empirical here. Certain categories are required for an adequate description in the *Geisteswissenschaften*, and Dilthey only describes what-in-fact is done by one who studies the *Geisteswissenschaften*.

The second part of the problem of the *Kritik der historischen Vernunft* is to provide a philosophical foundation for the procedure. Though this problem is difficult since it involves going beyond the abstraction, it must be solved in order to continue the Kantian program.

In the diary from the early years, Dilthey admitted that he knew no way to provide a philosophical foundation for augmenting the set of categories. Later,\(^{22}\) he pointed out which categories needed to be added and felt that he had begun to solve the first part. He also had ideas and suggestions for the philosophical foundation, but these were

\(^{22}\) For example in the *Entwürfe zur Kritik der historischen Vernunft*. 
never sufficient for anything beyond the barest sketches of the problems. His work was primarily a description of the categories of the Geisteswissenschaften, showing how these categories differed from Kant's categories. In this work he often drew from Hegel, and his admiration for Hegel is shown in the diary entry for April 1, 1860.

Hegel is judged very curiously. His inmost nature strove after the concrete concept; he struggled to overcome the abstractness of subjective idealism, such as Schelling's. There was in him a powerfully realistic, objective strain. Why does the designation objective agree so well with the impression of his striving? Because the impression points to penetration into the essence of each phenomenon for itself, not the search for a law.23

He says, "the warm plenitude of nature, which shapes itself in thousands of wonders, withers away, in this (empirical science) to dry forms and shapeless generalities, which are like a murky, northern fog." 24

23 Again this diary entry is vague. Although the preceding two sentences are extremely vague, I think Dilthey is claiming that Hegel's real interest is the description of the phenomena of history. It may reflect Hegel's unconcern for epistemological problems. Cf. "Einleitung" to Phänomenologie des Geistes, ed. Johannes Hoffmeister (Hamburg: Felix Meiner, 1948), pp. 63 ff.


Er sagt: "Die warme Fülle der Natur, die in tausend- fältigen anziehenden Wundern sich gestaltet, verdorrts in dieser (der Erfahrungswissenschaft) in trockenen Formen und zu gestaltlosen Allgemeinheiten, die einem trüben, nördlichen Nebel gleichen." Ibid., p. 120-121.
Dilthey constantly tried to do justice to the insights of both Kant and Hegel. He pointed to the care which Kant took in the proposal and analysis of the problems, i.e., analysis in terms of what Dilthey calls, *Diesseitigkeit*. But Hegel was also extremely important because he saw the complexity of the world and tried to treat it in all its complexity. Dilthey required an analysis in the Kantian style of the idea of "objective Spirit" in order to begin with what is given in all its complexity and analyze it in its wholeness. The acute awareness of the complexity of objective mind forces the adoption of a new method. Since Dilthey constantly attempts to give partial solutions to the problems which he has raised, his writings are often fragmentary. Realizing the complexity, Dilthey turns to a descriptive procedure which sketches the field in a provisional manner. Thus the *Entwürfe zur Kritik der historischen Vernunft* does not attempt a critique of historical reason, but only points out certain features that must be taken into account. In it there are brief descriptions of the historical categories, suggestions for procedures, and occasionally even suggestions pointing in the direction of solutions to the problems. More often the problems are only posed and left.

B. Dilthey's Sketch of Solutions to the Problems

The categories, according to Dilthey, indicate
concepts, which are ways of comprehending. Since a rule of relation is contained in each way of comprehending, each of the categories determines a characteristic world of predicates. In addition the categories themselves form a system. The categories arise from experience (Erleben) as the general predicates in the structure of that experience for an individual, and gradually they may receive the dignity of categories of the mental (geistigen) world.

Although it is not quite clear what Dilthey means in this section, apparently he intends a discussion of the nature of the categories to show how they arise. The knowledge of the categories which are characteristic of the mental world is derived from experience. Categories are derived from how-in-fact the world is ordered by the mind, and since history is characterized by the objectification of mind, it is possible to understand history. The one who understands history has the same nature as the one who makes history. That is, the features of the mind as described in psychology or anthropology must be similar to the features of history or objective mind.  

25 VII, p. 192.

26 VII, p. 208 f. Der Objektive Geist und das elementare Verstehen.
Before attempting a sketch of the categories which Dilthey develops, it is necessary to be a little more precise about Dilthey's use of categories. A claim is made about the structure of the mind, and the claim might be called psychological. Dilthey claims that all of history may be understood, since it is all objectification of the same type of psychological structures. The categories characteristic of the mental world may be treated as forms of categories into which no particular content need be placed. For example, the category of value need say nothing about particular values, but may only describe what characterizes a value.27 Yet the category of value cannot be reduced to a causal relationship alone, for it is more complex than simple causality. The categories characteristic of understanding do not apply in the natural sciences, and the categories of causality do not apply to understanding.

There is another sense in which the form of the category is given by Dilthey. Dilthey does attempt to sketch in a concrete way exactly what are the characteristic

27 Perhaps this shows the influence of the English empiricists, for in The Treatise of Human Nature, Book III, Hume developed something very similar. In society there must exist certain rights, duties, and obligations, although this does not need to imply that X is a right. It only implies that societies require these characteristics in order to be stable or viable. Cf. Jean-François Suter, Philosophie et Histoire chez Wilhelm Dilthey (Basel: Verlag für Recht und Gesellschaft, 1960), pp. 57 ff.
features studied by the *Geisteswissenschaften*. The structure of the categories and their difference from the categories of natural science is shown by exhibiting the relationships in the *Menschenwelt*.

The object of study for the *Geisteswissenschaften* is the reciprocal relation existing between persons who are limited by the objective world, and the characteristic relation which Dilthey explicates is that of the parts to the whole. This relation which is found in the *Geisteswissenschaften* shows the particular features of the object of study, and here Dilthey points out what he sees as the abstraction of the *Naturwissenschaften*. The natural sciences are studies which are able to abstract the parts from the whole and to build the whole from the parts, since the parts may be examined in relative independence. On the other hand, this reduction may not be made in the *Geisteswissenschaften*: in the historical studies the parts may not be separated from the whole without somehow reducing or changing the phenomenon to be studied. Since the categories Dilthey notes for the historical studies are all characterized by the part-whole relationship, the historical studies are related structurally to each other. 29

28 VII, p. 228.
29 There is a similarity between Dilthey's categories and Peirce's category of Thirdness. Thirdness is a category-type.
This relationship of the part to the whole is peculiar to the Geisteswissenschaften and cannot be treated with the Kantian categories. Any adequate representation of life must present life as a structural system, (Strukturzusammenhang); it will simplify the phenomena if it does not. A primary characteristic of the structural system is that it may not be constructed from elements; it must first be grasped in its completeness. O.F. Bollnow points this out as a characteristic difference between Dilthey and Kant. Dilthey emphasizes the completeness and dynamic nature of life, opposing this to the mere knowing subject. Hegel makes a similar critique of Kant in the preface to the Phänomenologie des Geistes by pointing out that it is necessary to grasp and express "ultimate truth not as Substance, but as Subject as well." To grasp "truth" as Substance is to see it as "abstract universality" or "abstract simplicity." To grasp it as Subject indicates grasping it as real and actual, or as dynamic. True reality "is the process or its own becoming, the circle which presupposes its end as its purpose, and has its end.

30 Depending on the context, Dilthey will indicate this relationship by the terms Wirkungszusammenhang, Strukturzusammenhang, Bedeutungszusammenhang, etc. Emphasis is primarily on the idea of system. Cf. Bollnow, op. cit., p. 162.


for its beginning; it becomes concrete and actual only by being carried out, and by the end it involves." 

In his emphasis on totality and completeness Dilthey is leaning on Hegel's insight, for in a system the parts do not function only as substances, but are working together according to the laws characteristic of the subject. "Distinct from the inorganic world, this system is not solely given from the outside and hence ultimately mysterious. Rather the system is somehow lived." The parts of the system are bound together in such a way that each part makes a difference to the whole, yet the whole can not be described simply as the juxtaposition of parts, for in addition to the parts there is a system, or a systematic ordering to the parts.

The dynamic system of life, according to Dilthey, is determined by the fact that changes have been made by action. Actions performed in the human world bring about a change in both the subject who acts and the historical

33 Ibid. Baillie, p. 81.

34 Und unterschieden von der anorganischen Welt, ist dieser Zusammenhang nicht von aussen, nur gegeben, daher schliesslich rätselhaft, sondern der Zusammenhang ist erlebt, irgendwie. (VII, p. 263).

35 Hodges, op. cit., p. 271.

structures; hence the system is dynamic and teleological—teleological because it is directed toward goals,\(^{37}\) and dynamic because the results to which it is directed are influenced and affected by the actions. I think Dilthey means that the actions which are performed may force a change in the result. Spraying crops to get rid of insects might cause poisoning of the food and a subsequent food shortage, although the reason for spraying would be to protect the crops.

In the dynamic systems the characteristic relation of part and whole is apparent, and the claim is that these relationships are found primarily in history and society. Dilthey offers a fairly simple example to illustrate his point.\(^ {38}\) A person who has certain aims in mind will devise instruments and tools in order to achieve his goal. The carpenter will use saw, hammer, and nails, for these tools are created with definite ends in mind. To describe the saw as a flat piece of metal with a rippled edge somehow misses the point. From this description one either might be able to identify a saw, if he came upon such a thing, or might be able to guess that it will sink in water.

\(^37\) Dilthey says immanent teleology. By it he indicates any activity which is directed toward some goal.

\(^38\) VII, p. 209. Heidegger also uses this example, and I will have occasion to use it several times.
Yet, this still fails to describe what a saw is in an adequate way, for only a description in terms of the ability of the saw to cut wood and its use by the carpenter is satisfactory. Beyond the object alone it is necessary to know something of its relationships with other objects. In a rough way this characterizes Dilthey's point although the problem is much more complex in the realm of objective mind.

The list of categories which Dilthey points out, Wert, Entwicklung, and Bedeutung, are themselves organized in accordance with the comprehensiveness of the view they give, and of these categories the category of meaning (Bedeutung) is the most comprehensive and hence the highest category, since it determines the relationship of the parts of life to the whole of the life.39 As such the category is only possessed in memory, for there must be some objectification of the meaning before it can be examined. It can, therefore, be grasped more adequately toward the end of life. There is a Bedeutung des Lebens, but this only means that there are complex relationships which are objectified in the actions of life. Dilthey describes other categories, but since they are all similar it is not necessary to discuss each of them.

Dilthey did not attempt to present formal arguments for the historical categories, for he did not think he could complete Kant's work. He did give suggestions for solutions to the problems that would be encountered, although he was aware that these suggestions were only very rough sketches of the solutions. His further discussion of the categories shows a dependence upon Hegel and perhaps upon Kant. Kant suggests that there might be a "privileged access" to the inner determinations by saying that one is a phenomenon to himself and also that there are certain faculties which are not phenomenal. This suggests a similarity also to Hegel's objective mind, since Hegel saw ethical institutions and laws as the objectifications of the will of a group. Dilthey begins from a similar position and continually maintains that the one who studies history is the same as the one who makes it. The categories are not a priori applied to life as to a foreign object, but rather lie within life. Since historical studies are attempts to grasp the dynamic system in ways appropriate to the historical reality, the


examination of history shows something of the system of the mind that is objectified in it. It is possible to understand historical reality since the mind is similar to it; the mind itself is a system. Thus the subject matter of the Geisteswissenschaften becomes the objectification of mind.\textsuperscript{43}

The problem of understanding is important for Dilthey, and he distinguishes between an elementary understanding and higher forms.\textsuperscript{44} The forms of similarity which exist between individuals are objectified in the sensible world. For example, Dilthey points to the fact that children are in a system and soon learn to operate within it. Since understanding is to be clarified as the ability to operate or to know what is appropriate within the system, each expression of life (Lebens- Ausserung) is both related to the individual and directed by a knowledge of the existing community.\textsuperscript{45} Only in relation to the community can understanding occur, even if the various single expressions may be seen as belonging to a type.

\textsuperscript{43} VII, p. 191. Occasionally Dilthey calls this objectification Geist.

\textsuperscript{44} VII, pp. 207 ff.

\textsuperscript{45} VII, p. 208.
Although understanding usually occurs unconsciously, in particular cases, a higher form of understanding arises when a usual procedure is inadequate. In such cases a difficulty forces one to go back to some deeper system of life in order to reach a decision about doubt. 46 Only when the usual response to a situation is inappropriate is one suddenly faced with the problem of how to proceed, but in such instances it is necessary to discover a more comprehensive structure. Although this is an important problem, a more characteristic difficulty in a Kritik der historischen Vernunft is that of understanding the past, and here Dilthey moves into the realm of hermeneutic.

In the case of simple understanding there is no great problem, since one is raised within a system, and living in the situation one knows the appropriate action in accordance with it. 47 However, the system is also a Wirkungszusammenhang, a dynamic system, which is constantly in the process of change. As long as one lives within the system, the problem is greatly simplified, but it becomes much more complex when one does not participate in the structure. In studying history, for example, one does


47 Of course, this is greatly simplified. Dilthey recognized the complexity of the relation between individual and the general relationships.
not always live within the structures one seeks to understand; hence, the problem of understanding history is related to, but not the same as, that of understanding what one should do in a given present situation.

Dilthey's attempt to solve the first part of the problem in the *Entwürfe zur Kritik der historischen Vernunft* revolves around a claim that the structures of the mind and of historical reality are all related. Thus the notion of value is essentially fixed although the particular values may change. Moreover, the value relationships will always be present in any objectification of mind, and since there is such a similarity in structure, it is possible in principle to understand any objectification of mind. Then the problem becomes that of finding the system of life in what is given. In the *Entwürfe zur Kritik der historischen Vernunft* Dilthey proposes to solve this problem by a "putting oneself into the place of" (Sichhineinversetzen);\(^\text{48}\) to understand the historical situation one must be aware of the possibilities that existed for the person in that situation. In fact, a person must understand more about the situation than the agent ddd.

A more basic problem is the one upon which any

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\(^{48}\) VII, p. 213 f.
transferring oneself into must be based, and that is the problem of interpretation.\textsuperscript{49} In this Dilthey largely follows Schleiermacher by treating hermeneutic as an artistic understanding.\textsuperscript{50} By \textit{Auslegung}, or construing, Dilthey means "the artistically sound understanding of permanent, fixed expressions of life,"\textsuperscript{51} and \textit{Auslegung} becomes an ideal of understanding for Dilthey, which is only \textit{completed} by the interpretation of the remains of human existence which are contained in writings. On the other hand, \textit{Auslegung} treats \textit{more} than just the written remains, although they are the most important source. It is completed by the art which interprets written records, and for this reason must be closely connected with a \textit{critique} of the writings.\textsuperscript{52} For example, the examination of monuments, buildings, or other remains may suggest that

\textsuperscript{49} VII, p. 216. Dilthey has two terms, \textit{Auslegung} and \textit{Interpretation}. \textit{Interpretation} will be translated by interpretation. \textit{Auslegung} will simply be put into the text. Occasionally they appear to be interchangeable, although in general \textit{Auslegung} refers to an examination of such things as monuments, coins, and buildings in addition to the texts. However, texts are necessary to have a complete understanding. \textit{Interpretation} is usually restricted to texts, or other forms of language.

\textsuperscript{50} Hodges, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 138.

\textsuperscript{51} Das kunstmässige Verstehen dauernd fixierten Lebensausserungen... VII, p. 217.

\textsuperscript{52} \textit{Ibid}. 
the texts have to be treated in certain ways.

Dilthey points out that ways have been developed to solve the set of difficult problems that center around *Auslegung* and *Kritik*, for Schleiermacher and others attempted to give rules which would be adequate to the solution of the problems. On this is based Schleiermacher's claim: "It would be valid to understand the author better than he understood himself." Thus arises the epistemological problem of hermeneutic: how is knowledge of the system of the historical world possible? With this question Dilthey shows that the historical studies are to be grounded in hermeneutic, since a *Kritik der historischen Vernunft* should lie behind such work.

Hermeneutic, as Dilthey saw it, was primarily a method, "the science of the art" of interpreting written records. Any such interpretation involves a logical circle, since to understand the parts of a literary work it is necessary to understand the whole, but the whole can be gained only from the parts. Dilthey mentions the impossibility of understanding anything that was completely

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53 Ibid.

54 ...es gelte, einen Autor besser zu verstehen als er sich selbst verstand. Ibid. Also important is the essay "Die Entstehung der Hermeneutik." (V, p. 317-338).

55 V, p. 333.
foreign, apparently intending that the structures must not be totally strange, and he claims that all activity of the human mind can be understood in principle, although hermeneutic may proceed only when the expression to be understood is not totally strange. Were it totally familiar, on the other hand, there would be no need for hermeneutic.

From a realization of the problems found in historical understanding Dilthey attempted to show the solution. In the essay "Die Entstehung der Hermeneutik," he sketched the history of hermeneutic down to the time of Schleiermacher in order to show what advances had been made by the genius of interpreters. From great interpreters arise rules of procedure, and in the conflict of such rules arises the science of hermeneutic. Of the great work in hermeneutic, the work of Schleiermacher is the most significant, for it points out that hermeneutic is only an instance of the more general process of understanding. Schleiermacher attempted to examine hermeneutical rules to see why they were successful and concluded that re-living imaginatively the process and situation of the historical individual was the only way in which one could

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56 VII, p. 225.

understand. Yet, this demand was never one which might be completed. Although the proposition "to understand the author better than he understood himself" was the theoretical goal of interpretation, it was a goal which could never be reached.\textsuperscript{58} Since this was a necessary consequence of Schleiermacher's general theory about philology and grammatical interpretation, Dilthey also had to claim that hermeneutic is divinatory and never gives demonstrative certainty.\textsuperscript{59}

This raises a problem for Dilthey, and he calls the problem that of historical scepticism. One is forced into an historical scepticism if it becomes necessary to assign motives for specific historical actions--one scarcely knows his own motives in many cases.\textsuperscript{60} Historical scepticism disappears when reference to motives is no longer made; now the goal must be to understand the relationships in the mental world. Those relationships are objectified and, hence, in Dilthey's opinion may be the object for an understanding which is artistically sound. Schleiermacher offered a set of \textit{practical rules} which allowed one to proceed in the historical studies,

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{58} V, pp. 330-331.
\item \textsuperscript{59} VII, p. 226.
\item \textsuperscript{60} VII, p. 259 f.
\end{itemize}
but the process can be complete only to a certain degree. Dilthey says, "Individuum est ineffabile." With him as with Schleiermacher, hermeneutic becomes divinatory, and the theoretical goal of the procedure is to understand the author better than he understood himself.

C. Concluding Remarks

Difficulties arise in Dilthey's arguments in the Kritik der Historischen Vernunft, and for the most part he was aware of them. First, he attempted to show the impossibility of developing an epistemology of history out of a psychology limited to the Kantian categories. Specifically, it was impossible to develop the historical studies from "introspection," for introspection missed the characteristically social nature of the historical studies. Yet, the notion of "objective mind" is also inadequate as a solution, since in his discussion of objective mind Dilthey was never able in a concrete way to point to the "object" to be studied. Although he speaks of many systems

61 V, p. 330.

62 The term psychology for Dilthey may mean several things. Psychology as descriptive psychology plays an important part in the study, but psychology as explanatory psychology, i.e., as a natural science, was viewed as a misguided attempt. Cf. Hajo Holborn, "Dilthey's Critique of Historical Reason." Journal of the History of Ideas, XI (1950), p. 106.

63 Ibid., p. 127.
as objectifications of mind, these are not presented in such a way that they may be examined concretely. He does try to solve the problem by pointing to works of art as adequate objectifications of the system, but his arguments lack persuasiveness when he only says that there is no dissimulation in works of art.64 Although the statement that there is no deception in art is offered as an observation, the implication is that other expressions are subject to deception since they may be made for practical reasons. Though employing the idea of objective mind in an ingenious manner, he still is unable to point to anything in particular and with good reason as the objectification of mind.

Another problem which Dilthey faced was that centered around the concept of re-living. Even if Dilthey takes the Sichhineinversetzen in a metaphorical way, a critical difficulty is at hand, because the assumption of the possibility of re-living in any sense whatsoever makes some claims which may not be valid. Dilthey had worked out his critique of historical reason in such a way that the concept, historical reason, was

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64 VII, p. 207. Art is the work of a person who is moved by no special interests; the artist only wants to reflect his experiences. Cf. Hodges, The Philosophy of Wilhelm Dilthey, p. 133.
tantamount to "understanding from within an historical situation." The entire concept of historical reason was ultimately based on the idea of historical systems which were dynamic and changing, and these changes implied that understanding could not always occur as an "elementary understanding" similar to what occurs in ordinary conversations.

The change in historical concepts raises the problem about understanding both the past and other cultures. Dilthey tried to solve the problem by using the concept, Sichhineinversetzen: this would be a legitimate move if it could be assumed a priori both that there is a fundamental similarity between historical contexts and that somehow one could obtain enough knowledge of the historical system to "transpose himself into" it. Dilthey believed that there was a similarity between historical situations, since the historical categories, or at the very least their types, were necessary to explain each historical system, and he also thought that one could immerse himself so completely in the historical situation that by a final divinatory act it would be possible to understand the situation better than a person actually in it.

If Dilthey's claim can be broken up into these two parts, the process becomes clearer. Part of the problem might be the juxtaposition of arguments of different types,
for there is, on the one hand, a claim that all historical contexts are fundamentally similar. This claim is similar to claims of the natural sciences, for it is a projection of observations about the structure of the mind, and these structures are assumed to be universally valid. The second argument which claims that there is sufficient knowledge is of a different type, since it says that there is enough information about this particular situation. Results of such a claim can not be projected, and even the claim needs a great deal of justification, for can there ever be "enough information" for the Sichhinenversetzen? In addition, it is not clear what "enough information" entails.

Then can these assumptions be made? As Dilthey posed the problem the assumptions appear reasonable. If he is correct, any historical situation can be understood so that one could conceivably re-live imaginatively the chain of events which had occurred. With the arguments that have been given the claim is that the required information is available or could be available. However, in order to evaluate Dilthey's claim, it will be necessary to make the important distinction between how understanding occurred in a previous historical context and how it takes place now. The point is that something which at one time seemed clear may not be clear now. If "understanding" itself happens to
be an historical concept, there is a fundamental difficulty in Dilthey's argument; if a clarification of "historical situation" is performed, the claim about the sufficiency of information might be seen to be invalid. Heidegger's analyses begin to provide the background for deciding whether or not Dilthey's *Sichhineinversetzen* is possible.
CHAPTER III

ELEMENTS OF HEIDEGGER'S PHILOSOPHY

The purpose of this chapter is to examine some of the basic concepts found in Heidegger's work. This is not an attempt to treat Heidegger in a thorough way, for the goal is only to examine the elements of Heideggerian philosophy which are most significant for the work of Gadamer. For that reason some of the leading elements of Heidegger's own work are sketched in the first section, while the second section treats the problem of methodology in both Heidegger and Gadamer. The primary aim of both sections is to exhibit the arguments which later lead to Gadamer's works.

A. General Sketch of Important Concepts.

The two important early works of Heidegger, Sein und Zeit\(^1\) and Kant und das Problem der Metaphysik,\(^2\) treat a set of problems which are quite similar to the problems Dilthey posed. In Sein und Zeit Heidegger raises the question about Being, and his analysis of the question


attempts to show at least two things: (1) the answers given by the philosophic tradition are inadequate, and (2) a new approach to the problems is needed. This section is a sketch of some of the leading ideas in the early Heidegger, and it will be noted that the problematic ideas are similar to difficulties raised by Dilthey. The difficulties Heidegger left unsolved will be sketched also.

*Sein und Zeit* begins with the question about Being (*Sein*). By asking the question Heidegger intends a criticism of Dilthey and the tradition of metaphysics, for asking the question implies that the wrong answers have been given. Heidegger poses the question in a traditional way: "*What is asked about* is Being—*that which determines entities as entities, that on the basis of which* (*woraufhin*) *entities are already understood, however we may discuss them in detail.*"³ Since "the Being of entities is not itself an entity," Heidegger points out that any approach to the problem which "tells a story" is incorrect. A different approach must be made which takes into account the difference between Being and entities non-mythologically.

Although the question about Being has been posed by Heidegger in a traditional way, some very important distinctions need to be made.⁴ A question may include what

³ *SuZ*, p. 6.

⁴ *SuZ*, pp. 5 ff.
is asked about (das Gefragte), the entity which is asked (das Befragte), and what is expected (das Erfragte). Although in certain cases some of these distinctions might be unimportant (e.g. if one wants to know the position of a rock), in the question about Being these distinctions are necessary. In that question, what is asked about is Being (Sein). The entity which is asked must be some particular entity, and its Being (das Gefragte) is asked about. (Das Befragte must be some entity since a questioning can only be a questioning of entities.) Finally, what is expected is the meaning of Being (der Sinn von Sein). The distinctions are necessary in the inquiry after Being, since the search is for the Being of an entity, and not a search for an entity. The search is for what "determines entities as entities," and this is not an entity. But something is all that may be observed, so the enquiry must be an enquiry which looks at entities. Heidegger says, "These are, so to speak, questioned as regards their Being." The last

5 Das Befragte indicates not only which entity in general must be asked; it may also indicate which entity in particular is asked.

6 ...Seindes als Seindes bestimmt... SuZ, p. 6.

7 SuZ, p. 6.
distinction, which Heidegger indicates by distinguishing "Being" and "the meaning of Being," is crucial to the present argument.

The phrase, "the meaning of Being," must be examined with Heidegger's discussion of "meaning" in mind. Although Sinn is usually translated as "meaning," such a translation is misleading, since it fails to call attention to the close connection between Sinn and Verstehen. Heidegger brings them together in the sentence: "When entities within-the-world are discovered along with the Being of Dasein—that is, when they have come to be understood—we say that they have meaning (Sinn)." Roughly, "the meaning of Being" indicates the projection of Being onto Dasein, or Being in so far as Dasein understands it. Here Heidegger has in mind a projection onto some particular Dasein. In such a case since Being is independent of any particular Dasein, the following rough comparison to Kant holds, for an individual's understanding of Being does not accurately reflect Being.

8 The connection will be briefly characterized below.

9 SuZ, p. 151.

If Heidegger's distinctions are kept in mind then "Being" may be used in the following ways.\footnote{This list is not intended to be exhaustive. Only some of the more prominent uses are indicated.}

1) When Heidegger speaks of "Being" he often means to indicate "that which is asked about in the question of Being." In formulating the question in this way, Heidegger has made the important distinction between "what is asked about" and "what is found out in the asking." The distinction is similar to the Kantian distinction between appearance and thing-in-itself, since by using the term "Being," Heidegger does not mean that he expects to discover Being. However, Being is technically the "object" of the inquiry, even if it may only be recognized as appearance. Occasionally, Heidegger uses "Being" to indicate this correspondence to thing-in-itself. In such uses, however, Heidegger is pointing to what is asked about, recognizing that he can not get at \textit{Being} by asking an individual.

2) The difficulty of discovering what is intended by "Being" is made more complex, since Heidegger occasionally uses the term elliptically. "Being is always the Being of an entity." However, even if in some cases Heidegger does not indicate what entity (or entities) he is discussing, usually the phrase can be completed
easily. Occasionally, however, Heidegger uses "Being" to indicate "Being of what exists." Although the "Being of the totality of entities" appears to be intended, Heidegger is not asking an illegitimate question, for even if the totality of entities is intended, this is always das Gefragte and never das Erfragte.\(^\text{12}\) By "Being" Heidegger does intend the "Being of an entity" (or some entities).

3) Often Heidegger is explicit in using the term "Being." He may point to the Being of Dasein, or the Being of an entity, indicating by this an inquiry into what determines an entity as the entity it is. This use is closely related to the first two, and in general there is no problem with it.

4) Heidegger also speaks of "modes of Being." These apply to Dasein and indicate the way in which Dasein relates himself to other entities. Heidegger points out that "looking at something, understanding and conceiving it, choosing, access to it—all these ways of behaving... are modes of Being for those particular entities which we, the inquirers, are ourselves."\(^\text{13}\) The phrase "mode of Being" is also incomplete, since "mode of Being of Dasein" is intended. Perhaps this mention of modes also indicates

\(^{12}\) It can not be das Erfragte because some particular entity is asked.

\(^{13}\) SuZ, p. 7.
Heidegger's critique of the tradition, for Heidegger's list of ways of behaving suggests that Being is to be found in the relationships between entities, not in the entities themselves. Particularly, the list indicates that Dasein is active in its relation to other entities.

5) Heidegger makes another use of "Being" in the above-mentioned phrase "meaning of Being." The meaning of Being is the preliminary aim, or what is to be found out in the inquiry that Heidegger undertakes, although technically, Being is what is understood. Heidegger makes this clear in several places, and this question is posed at the beginning of Sein und Zeit.

Do we in our time have an answer to the question of what we really mean by the word "being"? Not at all. So it is fitting that we should raise anew the question of the meaning of Being. Our aim in the following treatise is to work out the question of the meaning of Being and to do so concretely.

Heidegger wants to ask the question about Being, "in so far as Being enters into the intelligibility of Dasein." Although the inquiry may be divided into several parts in order to clarify the question, an important part is the examination of what is indicated by Being, in

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14 SuZ, cf. pp. 6, 8, 39, 151-152.

15 SuZ, p. 152.
order to show that the traditional answers were inadequate. Some justification for the inquiry after Being is required to show that there is "something" to be studied, and this requires a description of "what is given." After showing that there is a problem, it is necessary to show how the problem may be attacked, and this again involves a description of the facts that are given. The approach to the problem must keep in mind the distinction between Being and the meaning of Being and should indicate some reason for the difference. Since Heidegger has indicated that only entities can be examined for their Being, the entities which are significant for the problem must be pointed out. These are some of the problems which Heidegger raises in these early works.

A part of Heidegger's aim in *Sein und Zeit* and *Kant und das Problem der Metaphysik* is to provide answers to these problems. A large part of Division One of *Sein und Zeit* is an analysis of the Being of Dasein, and the examination which Heidegger makes of Being-in-the-world corresponds in an important way to descriptions made by Dilthey in his analysis of historical categories. Heidegger admits his use of Dilthey,\(^\text{16}\) although he is careful to point out that only "superficially" is Dilthey providing

\(^{16}\text{SuZ, p. 397 ff.}\)
a correct analysis. Heidegger admits that Dilthey's attempt to distinguish Naturwissenschaften from Geisteswissenschaften is important, even if his distinction was not wholly accurate.\(^\text{17}\)

The attempt to distinguish natural sciences from the historical sciences was primarily a description of historical "objects." This was done to show that the categories of natural science were inadequate; Heidegger now moves further in this direction by describing carefully the fact that Dasein is in a world. There are at least two reasons for this. First, although the question of the meaning of Being is the "most universal and the emptiest of questions,"\(^\text{18}\) the question may be individualized for a particular Dasein. A particular Dasein is needed in order to have a concrete starting-point for the analyses. Second, the analysis of Dasein's Being-in-a-world is an analysis of a fundamental fact, and from its description many of the problems are presented.

As Heidegger maps out what is to be analyzed in the introduction to Division One, he finds it necessary to

\(^{17}\) SuZ, p. 403. Heidegger's main criticism of Dilthey and Yorck is that they remained within the traditional ontology. They failed to see that there is a more fundamental unity behind the natural sciences and the historical sciences.

\(^{18}\) SuZ, p. 39.
show first that Dasein is not some thing among other things, that the analysis of Dasein is to be distinguished from other investigations which appear to be similar. Heidegger briefly sketches the difference between Dasein and other entities by pointing to Dasein's essentially historical nature and by showing that Dasein is characterized by possible ways in which it can relate to other entities, not by properties which are "in" Dasein as present-at-hand. Heidegger says, "when we designate this entity with the term "Dasein", we are expressing not its what (as if it were a table, house or tree) but its Being."¹⁹ Hence, he claims that Dasein is characterized by the possibility of relating itself to other entities in various ways.

A large part of Division One is taken up with a description of the basic state of Dasein which Heidegger calls Being-in-the-world (In-der-Welt-Sein). By hyphenating the expression Heidegger intends it to be taken as a unit,²⁰ for Dasein's Being-in-the-world is not constituted by Dasein as an entity and world as entity simply placed together. Being-in-the-world may be broken down into constituent items, but the whole

¹⁹ SuZ, p. 41.
²⁰ SuZ, p. 53.
phenomenon must always be kept in mind. Heidegger's insistence upon this wholeness corresponds to Dilthey's discussion of the historical categories, since in both cases the phenomenon cannot be merely broken up into its constituents without reducing it. Dasein cannot be understood except in terms of a "world" which he is "in," for a "world" cannot be separated from Dasein; all of the items making up Being must remain together in a totality.

The analysis of In-der-Welt-sein is important enough for the later development of hermeneutic that it should be sketched. Heidegger separates the totality into three parts: 1) the world; 2) Dasein, and 3) Being-in. Although these may be analyzed separately, the totality must always remain in view. The analysis will show that Dasein's Being-in-the-world is made up of "definite ways of Being-in" such that each way of Being-in indicates a different relationship to the world of Dasein. The different relations to the world will be come apparent as moods in Heidegger's later analysis.21 Being-in-the-world is a basic state for Dasein, since Dasein must always have a relationship to a world, and this relationship to a world provides the first step toward access to the meaning of Being.

Entities which are seen as within-a-world are taken as a primary example of the Being of some entity, although this has usually meant that Dasein merely knows an object in his world as a thing essentially unconnected with a world. Heidegger points out that this claim has given rise to the subject-object distinction for the tradition and has covered up Dasein's Being-in-the-world. A new analysis needs to show what has been covered up by pointing out that one mode of having a relationship to a world has been mistaken for the relationship of Dasein to a world. 22 It is necessary to analyze the fact that Dasein is in a world to show how the former approach was inadequate.

Heidegger's analysis of the worldhood of the world is extremely important for his attempt to break down the subject-object approach to the world. The analysis, however misses the point if it simply enumerates entities which Dasein can encounter; the search must uncover the Being of the entities which are in-the-world. This involves an analysis of things which are seen as having value and usefulness as well as entities which just "are." Although some things in Dasein's world are useful

22 Heidegger argues that the Greek word for things indicated "that which one has to do with in one's concernful dealings." (68). A similar approach is found in "Das Ding," Vorträge und Aufsätze (Pfüllingen: Günther Neske, 1954).
and valuable, use and value are not things attached to entities; they indicate ways in which Dasein relates to them. Since any orientation towards things which are not Dasein may lead the analysis in the wrong direction, Heidegger points out that "worldhood" is a structure of Dasein itself. "Worldhood," then, indicates Dasein's prior structuring of entities that are not Dasein.

The basic relationship which Dasein has to things which are not Dasein is not a relationship of knowing; it is one of using and manipulating. It has its own type of "knowledge," since the using and manipulating of tools is evidence that "one knows his way about." This "knowing his way about" among objects in a world is evidence of the Being of a Dasein. Because the way in which entities are treated gives them their characteristic Being in the world of a Dasein, the basic relationship that Dasein has with entities is pragmatic.23 The entities which Dasein works with in most of his dealings are entities which are seen as in a relational context, for when entities are seen as in a relationship there is a "reference of something

23 This involves Heidegger's famous "Ueberwindung der Metaphysik." The tradition, which was oriented to an analysis of Being as present-at-hand, is to be dismantled. Cf. Werner Marx, Heidegger und die Tradition (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 1961), p. 93. Also Cf. pp. 83-127. Marx rightly finds the destruction of the tradition one of the most important ideas in Sein und Zeit.
to something."^{24} Entities in a context can point to that context, and any description which does not take these relationships into account is an abstraction from the Being of the entity.

Heidegger breaks down the subject-object distinction in his further discussion of entities in a system. The entities in the system are encountered as a totality, i.e., as the tools for a job, and using such tools is the most basic relationship to them. The use of tools indicates that the tools are in a system, and to be able to use them indicates that Dasein already knows his way about among the relationships that exist. The use is not something that may be found by looking at an object, however, for the use can be discovered only when Dasein sees what the thing is for.

The work to be produced, as the "toward-which" of such things as the hammer, the plane, and the needle, likewise has the kind of Being that belongs to equipment. The shoe which is to be produced is for wearing (footwear) (Schuhzeug); the clock is manufactured for telling the time. The work which we chiefly encounter in our concernful dealings—the work that is to be found when one is "at work" on something (das in Arbeit befindliche)—has a usability which belongs to it essentially; in this usability it lets us encounter already the "toward-which" for which it is usable. A work that someone has ordered (das bestellte Werk) is only by reason of its use and the assignment-context of entities which is discovered in using it.^{25}

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24 Suz, p. 68.

25 Suz, p. 70.
Heidegger's arguments show that the context of tools must be seen in its relation to Dasein. This does not indicate that seeing the use is a secondary way of seeing them, for Heidegger argues that seeing things as tools is the more primary knowledge, and that seeing things as things is derived from the primary way of seeing. It is necessary to remember both the totality of Being-in-a-world and that entities which are in a world are always seen in terms of that world. Dasein always encounters entities in terms of the world of the Dasein. That is, Dasein's encountering a tool which is not usable can only occur if Dasein already has a world structured so that the tool has no use (it is broken or it is the wrong tool). Being-in-a-world indicates that entities which may be encountered already "fit" (or don't fit), since relationships in Dasein's world already have places for certain kinds of equipment. "Being-in-the-world...amounts to a non-thematic circumspective absorption in references or assignments constitutive for the readiness-to-hand of a totality of equipment."26

The place in the system, however, is not a property of the entity, just as "the 'indicating' of the sign and the 'hammering' of the hammer are not properties of entities." In fact, since these are not properties at all, they cannot be properties which entities possess. But since this is

26 Suz, p. 76.
what makes these tools what they are, the nature of the Being of such tools must be a position in a system. Heidegger says, "When an entity within-the-world has already been proximally freed for its Being, that Being is its "involvement." The analysis of world shows that the Being of entities within the world is closely connected with the relationships in that world; the Being of the entity is its place in the system of relationships. For example, the Being of a tool is its use in a context of other tools and its relationship to Dasein. Heidegger points out that the hammer is for building a house, and the house is to protect Dasein. These relationships make up the world for Dasein, since Dasein is familiar with them and operates in them.

The ability to operate within the relationships in his world is Dasein's understanding of the world, since Dasein is said to understand a world which includes carpentry, if he knows how to use the tools of the carpenter. However, the knowing his way about cannot be looked at simply as something acquired. Heidegger insists that there is a pre-understanding, that Dasein always knows his way about a world prior to the presentation of

27 SuZ, p. 84.
28 SuZ, p. 143.
it. The description of this pre-understanding is another important part of Division One, and this argument is continued in Kant und das Problem der Metaphysik. There Heidegger takes seriously Kant's claim of man's finitude, saying that any finite being must operate within a pre-understanding of a world.29

The problem of "fore-sight," "fore-having," and "fore-conception" is a central part of Being-in-the-world, and in claiming such "fore-structures" (Vorstruktur), Heidegger is following the German idealist position. This involves what Klaus Hartmann calls "taking the transcendental turn."30 The explication of the fore-structures of understanding is in the tradition of Kant and Hegel, although the method of approach is changed in most cases. Heidegger avoids the difficulties of a Phänomenologie des Geistes, which starts from perception and gradually "adds on" in order to explain more difficult phenomena.31 Although Hegel had been forced to show at each stage precisely what needed to be "added on" in order to complete the picture, Heidegger begins with an essential completeness, i.e., Being-in-the-world, and

29 Cf. p. 236.


31 Cf. Hartmann, op. cit.
claims that this completeness is the fact which must be examined. Roughly, Heidegger is proceeding descriptively and not constructively, for Being-in-a-world is already a fact, and there is no need to construct it from elements. Actually, the construction cannot be performed at all, for the mere elements together do not form Being-in-a-world. Construction, according to Heidegger, will miss Being and only finish with things-in-a-world-together, since from such a construction, the essential relatedness of the entities could never be derived.

Because Being-in-a-world is a unity, Dasein knows a world before entities in the world are presented, for Dasein has already arranged entities within its world in characteristic ways. Heidegger points out that entities in Dasein's world are seen as entities to deal with, that entities are seen as in relation to Dasein already. Here, Heidegger is explicating a basic kind of relationship Dasein has with entities in his world, for a stick of wood with metal on one end is not seen as stick-of-wood-with-metal-on-one-end-which-can-be-used-to-hit-nails. Primarily, it is not even seen as a hammer except when it may be too heavy or too light, for in the most basic relationship, the hammer is simply picked up and used. Dasein already knows what the hammer is for, since it is a tool in his world. Similarly, Dasein may know what a
tool is for, even when he has never seen a tool of that type; knowing that a particular job must be done, one can imagine what sort of tool is required.

The development of the fore-structures of understanding is important for Heidegger, since it is an attempt to break down the tradition. The traditional subject-object distinction is to be broken down in order that the features of the more basic relation of Dasein to entities in his world may be developed. The claim is similar to Kant's in the *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*, namely that Dasein can have *a priori* knowledge of his world, since "Dasein, as essentially understanding, is proximally alongside what is understood."32

Several times in *Sein und Zeit* Heidegger raises the objection against himself that his approach is circular, for if it is first necessary to operate within a pre-understanding to understand, then the argument is circular. Although in a way Heidegger accepts the objection and claims only that it is not a vicious circle, in an important sense any objection about circular reasoning misses the point entirely, for such an objection fails to take into account the transcendental approach.33

32 SuZ, pp. 149, 164.

The procedure is not circular for the same reason that Kant's question about natural science is not circular. Heidegger approaches the problem in precisely the same manner that Kant had approached the problem of the natural sciences and mathematics. In the first parts of the Prolegomena, Kant raised the problem as: "How is pure natural science (or mathematics) possible?" Proceeding analytically from what he assumed to be the existence of pure natural science (or mathematics), Kant attempted to show what it involved. Hence, the existence of the object of study is a given. Heidegger proceeds in the same manner: the average, vague understanding of Being already exists, since Dasein already has some understanding of its own Being. One is not forced to "break into a circle," because the point of departure is from what is given. Heidegger says, "this guiding activity of taking a look at Being arises from the average understanding of Being in which we always operate and which in the end belongs to the essential constitution of Dasein itself." 34

From the sketch of Being-in-the world and the question about the meaning of Being, the relation between understanding and Being becomes clearer. The pertinent parts of Sein und Zeit are in the section entitled "Understanding and Interpretation."

34 SuZ, p. 8.
And if we are inquiring about the meaning of Being, our investigation does not then become a "deep" one (tiefsinnig), nor does it puzzle out what stands behind Being. It asks about Being itself in so far as Being enters into the intelligibility of Dasein. The meaning of Being can never be contrasted with entities, or with Being as the 'ground' which gives entities support; for a 'ground' becomes accessible only as meaning, even if it is itself the abyss of meaninglessness.

As the disclosedness of the "there", understanding always pertains to the whole of Being-in-the-world. In every understanding of the world, existence is understood with it, and vice versa. All interpretation, moreover, operates in the fore-structure, which we have already characterized. Any interpretation which is to contribute understanding, must already have understood what is to be interpreted. 35

Although the question about the meaning of Being asks about Being, "that which is understood, taken strictly is not the meaning but the entity, or alternatively, Being." 36 "Meaning" (Sinn) is not something belonging to entities; it is a feature of Dasein itself, since according to Heidegger, it gets its structure from the understanding of Dasein. Only by being projected upon this structure may anything be understood, and what cannot be projected upon Dasein's understanding is simply not understood. The problem is the same for Dasein's understanding of the Being of entities, for their Being is only understood in so far as it is projected upon the

35 SuZ, p. 152.

36 SuZ, p. 151. The translation is misleading, for the construction of Heidegger's German is not at all difficult. The last three words, "or alternatively, Being" correspond to "bzw. das Sein." Heidegger means that in the case of this inquiry Being is understood, i.e., this inquiry is not after entities.
pre-structures of Dasein. Then the question about the meaning of Being becomes the question about Being in so far as it is intelligible to a particular Dasein. This is a partial correspondence to the Kantian distinction between appearance and thing-in-itself. Kant asks about the thing-in-itself and discovers appearance; Heidegger asks about Being and finds out the meaning of Being. However, the correspondence ends here, since Heidegger thinks that one can ultimately get at Being. That problem has to be treated later, however.

Since the close relationship between "understanding" and "meaning" is important, Heidegger discusses it briefly. Understanding was taken as the possibility of operating within the relationships of a world, and Heidegger pointed out that "meaning" was not attached to entities—it was a feature of Dasein. Meaning is related to understanding and is structured by pre-structures. In particular, it is that in Dasein upon which the Being of an entity is projected.

The concept of meaning embraces the formal existential framework of what necessarily belongs to that which an understanding interpretation Articulates. Meaning is the upon-which of a projection in terms of which something becomes intelligible as something; it gets its structure from a fore-having, a fore-sight, and a fore-conception.37

37 SuZ, p. 151. Additional hints about Heidegger's use of meaning may be found in the discussion of "care." Cf. SuZ, p. 323 ff.
"Meaning" indicates the part of Dasein's structure which makes an understanding of something possible. It is that structure of Dasein "in" which the order of its world rests, and understanding operates within the order of that world. When Heidegger uses the phrase "meaning of Being," he is pointing out the structures of some particular Dasein which make possible any understanding of Being. Hence, the question about the meaning of Being is a question about the structure of some Dasein's world, and a question about understanding is asking about that Dasein's ability to operate within these relationships. To say that Dasein "knows his way about" is to indicate that he has sufficiently ordered his world so that he is aware of its possibilities.

An important part of Heidegger's discussion of Being-in-the-world is an examination of the case in which Dasein already has its choice made, for Dasein mostly lives in a restricted range of possibilities, and the actions are determined by what "one should do in this case." In most cases Dasein does what everybody else does in such a position, simply blending in with the crowd; he knows to do what they do. In this state there is a general understanding which each person possesses. Heidegger says,

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38 *SuZ*, p. 126 ff. The impersonal is an attempt to indicate Heidegger's use of 'das Man.'
in utilizing public means of transport and in making use of information services such as the newspaper, every Other is like the next. This Being-with-one-another dissolves one's own Dasein completely into the kind of Being of 'the Others' in such a way, indeed, that the Others, as distinguishable and explicit, vanish more and more.

There is a general community in which everybody is like everybody else, and this sameness makes possible the communication of information, giving of instructions, and agreements in general. Heidegger calls this feature, "das Man," and it is the basis of being together with other Daseins, always decreeing the "right way" to do something.

The way in which Dasein interprets the world first is decreed by this community, since "Dasein is for the sake of the 'they' in an everyday manner, and the 'they' itself Articulates the referential context of significance." 39

Every Dasein must participate in these relationships, for only on the basis of this limitation of possibilities is Dasein able to get along in a world shared with others. (In addition to these possibilities, there are other possibilities which may or may not be understood by the community.) Only where a world is shared can one Dasein understand another, and this shared-world is the public world. Since the extent of the sharing is indicated by the extent of "das Man," a concrete approach to "das Man" is necessary in

39 Suz, p. 129.
order to determine how the shared world is structured.

An important part of Heidegger's contribution to the problems of a critique of historical reason is that which points to the close relationship between language and understanding. Heidegger shows that language and understanding are tied together in an extremely close way, since language arises from the situation of understanding. In the case of assertion entities already understood in a context are presented as things partially separated from their relationships. For example, the hammer is called "too heavy" and is seen as too heavy. In this case, since the relationship which is understood with the tool in its use tends to be separated from it, the hammer becomes conspicuous because it does not fit into the framework. For this reason, in assertions a part of what is understood is drawn from the context (i.e., the hammer) and shown to relate to that context in a definite way (it is too heavy). In assertions the relationships of the entities become hidden, so that entities are seen as next to each other only. This pushes one type of relation to the front, and other relations are no longer seen as

40 Heidegger uses assertion as an example of a type of language. It is an extreme type which tends to separate entities from their contexts. (Cf. SuZ, p. 165).

41 SuZ, p. 158 f.
possibilities.

Other possibilities, however, are present in the uses of language, for "discourse or talking is the way in which we articulate 'significantly' the intelligibility of the world." "The totality-of-significations of intelligibility is put into words,"\(^4\) and in addition to assertions, there are commands, questions, warnings, and intercedings. The use of these types of language indicates the way in which Dasein is in a world and also indicates the way in which Dasein is with others. "What the discourse\(^4\) is about is a structural item that it necessarily possesses; for discourse helps to constitute the disclosedness of Being-in-the world, and in its own structure it is modelled upon this basic state of Dasein."\(^4\) Since an important part of Being-in-a-world is Being-with Others, Heidegger recognizes the importance of language for understanding others. Communication is a sharing of a world with another Dasein, and it proceeds from a shared world.

... the phenomenon of communication must be understood in a sense which is ontologically broad. 'Communication'

\(^4\) Suz, p. 161.

43 Actually for Heidegger discourse gets expressed in language. (Suz, p. 161) Heidegger appears to see the actual expression as a covering-up of discourse.

\(^4\) Suz, p. 162.
in which one makes assertions—giving information, for instance—is a special case of that communication which is grasped in principle existentially. In this more general kind of communication, the Articulation of Being with one another understandingly is constituted. Through it a co-state-of-mind (Mitbetroffenheit) gets 'shared', and so does the understanding of Being-with. Communication is never anything like a conveying of experiences, such as opinions or wishes, from the interior of one subject into the interior of another. Dasein-with is already essentially manifest in a co-state-of-mind and a co-understanding. In discourse Being-with becomes 'explicitly' shared; that is to say, it is already, but it is unshared as something that has not been taken hold of and appropriated.\textsuperscript{45}

At this point Heidegger changes his approach slightly. Beginning from Dasein's understanding of Being, Dasein has been analyzed, and in the analysis, Heidegger has uncovered language. Language requires a shared world in which the meaning of Being is common; likewise, understanding, taken as the possibility of operating within the structures of the meaning of Being, must also be shared. Although Heidegger does appear in places to remain with the individual Dasein's understanding of Being, the development shows that he is well aware of the shared world as a primary fact. Language and understanding of others are possible only on the basis of the shared world, i.e., the public world of "das Man," and language is related to this shared world. Hence, Heidegger points to a series of problems which are extremely important in the later development of hermeneutic.

\textsuperscript{45} SuZ, p. 162.
In the last resort, philosophical research must resolve to ask what kind of Being goes with language in general. Is it a kind of equipment ready-to-hand within-the-world, or has it Dasein's kind of Being, or is it neither of these? What kind of Being does language have, if there can be such a thing as a 'dead' language? What do the 'rise' and 'decline' of a language mean ontologically? We possess a science of language, and the Being of the entities which it has for its theme is obscure.46

These problems show Heidegger's orientation toward language, and they show that language must become one of the central problems in the analysis of understanding i.e., in the problems of a critique of historical reason.

The similarity between Dilthey's discussion of the historical categories and Heidegger's analysis of Being is obvious. Since Heidegger has the benefit of Husserl's work, his analyses can be drawn with more care and accuracy than Dilthey's could; however, the similarity in the problems treated is clear. Although Heidegger does not attempt to write a critique of historical reason, his work on Being lays a groundwork for a solution to Dilthey's problems by sketching the features of understanding from within an historical situation. The discussions of certain limited cases of understanding analyze features which will be important for other instances of understanding, and the discussion of language suggests a solution to the other aspect of Dilthey's problem.

46 SuZ, p. 166.
B. Methodology in Heidegger and Gadamer

There are difficulties in examining Gadamer's methodology, for he never gives careful methodological discussions. Primarily he is interested in the problems which may be treated, and his concern for the problems usually prescribes the writers who are treated. For example, a series of lectures, *Le Problème de la Conscience Historique*, given before the philosophical faculty at Louvain, shows such an approach.\(^{47}\) Although the lectures include chapters on Dilthey and Heidegger, Husserl is only briefly mentioned as a predecessor of Heidegger. Roughly the same approach occurs in *Wahrheit und Methode*, for there the methodological problems are suppressed, and the primary concern is Husserl's examination of concepts similar to those treated by Dilthey. Though Gadamer goes to great pains to mention Schleiermacher, Ranke, and Herder, the difficult problem of philosophic method is assumed to be clear.

Although Gadamer is concerned with experiences which differ from those of the natural sciences, these experiences are still experiences and, according to him,

\(^{47}\) Louvain: Publications Universitaires de Louvain, 1963. The lectures were given in 1958 and antedate the publication of *Wahrheit und Methode*. 
provide knowledge. Roughly, he wants to follow Heidegger, who claims that man has a primordial ability to deal with a world and that this ability is more basic than the natural sciences. In fact, Gadamer says that the natural sciences are amplifications of one aspect of this primordial ability, for in addition to the ability to deal with objects in the world, there is agreement about morals, customs, and beauty. The latter areas do not deal directly with objects as such.

Philosophical research must treat both areas of knowledge. That is, since philosophy needs to clarify what occurs in all cases of knowledge, it is necessary to discuss a method by which experience in general may be treated. This presents a difficult situation for Gadamer, for it is necessary to use a method which is quite similar to a method of the natural sciences in order to clarify an area of experience which differs from that of the natural sciences. One must, so to speak, stand outside of the agreement about morals in order to describe the agreement about them, since the one who examines morals must take a position outside of the immediacy of the knowledge about morals. Gadamer assumes that this can be

48 Ibid., p. 12.
49 This will have to be clarified later.
50 Ibid., p. 11.
done and that the method which does it is phenomenology. Gadamer's procedure is similar to Husserl's \textit{epoche}, which is called transcendental-phenomenological reduction.\footnote{Cf. Husserl, \textit{Cartesian Meditations}, tr. Dorian Cairns (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1960), p. 72 f. The page numbers of the German edition are cited.} Since the lack of methodological arguments indicates a gap that should be filled, the problem of describing the methodology which examines experience in general is the important one here. A brief discussion of important features in the work of Heidegger and Gadamer will help clarify the procedure which is used.

Only the barest of hints are given about procedures. Although Gadamer calls his approach phenomenological, with reference primarily to Heidegger and not Husserl, the problem of determining Gadamer's methodology is still difficult, since Heidegger has never been very explicit about his approach. Roughly, Gadamer believes Heidegger is taking up Dilthey's concern for the historical reality and combining it with Husserl's phenomenological descriptions.\footnote{\textit{WuM}, p. XXIX.}

Gadamer poses a question which is similar in structure to the formulation of Kant's problems, by asking: "How is understanding possible?" Because the question is referred to all human experience and is not limited to
understanding in the Geisteswissenschaften, it applies equally to the natural sciences. In fact, it must clarify the structure of the natural sciences. However, although the question will have consequences for the theory of the natural sciences, it will not affect their method; certainly it is no attempt to deny the results that are obtained by them.

Since Gadamer's phenomenological procedure refers back to Heidegger's, Heidegger's description of phenomenology is pertinent. Heidegger argues that phenomenology ultimately is characterized by the slogan: "To the things themselves." Yet, the term "phenomenology" does not designate any particular entities which will be studied; it only describes a method which is followed in the study. Although Heidegger says that it is descriptive, phenomenology is not descriptive in the sense of a morphology of plants. Because it is an attempt to describe what it is "in" an object which makes it the object that it is, phenomenology will be concerned with the Being of the object.

The use of the term phenomenology is closely connected to the distinction between Being and entities. To make the distinction Heidegger has argued that there is a


54 Cf. SuZ, p. 34. Sachen is translated "things."

55 Ibid., p. 35. Heidegger uses plant morphology as an example.
difference between observing an object as a pièce-of-wood-with-metal-on-one-end and observing it as a hammer. This does not imply that either way of observing the object is wrong; they are just different relationships one may have to the object. In the first case, a description of the object will presumably be limited as much as possible to a description which points out what it is "in itself." That is, the description is an attempt to describe the "physical properties" of the object, and it will be pertinent to say: "This object weighs five pounds", "It sinks in water", "The end rusts", etc. All of this will be directly visible in the object. This type of description has its validity in the natural sciences, for in them the objects are described apart from their relationships; connections with other objects are secondary. 56

In some cases projections may be made of the results of descriptions. Botanical morphology, for example, goes beyond the mere description, because it is an attempt to sketch the structure of all plants of a particular type.

56 Heidegger's account of the natural sciences always portrays entities as discrete objects. Physical laws are seldom, if ever, mentioned by Heidegger or Gadamer, and this probably follows from their relative unconcern for problems in the philosophy of science. Their point is that the "objects" of the natural sciences are independent of our desires, wishes, etc. In general I have followed their language.
If one looks at it pragmatically, it is necessary to say that the procedure is valid since it is done—a projection can be made of the structure of all plants of a certain type. Yet phenomenology, as Heidegger had described it, does not go beyond the description, for he says, "To have a science 'of' phenomena means to grasp it objects in such a way that everything about them which is up for discussion must be treated by exhibiting it directly and demonstrating it directly."57 Since the examinations which are planned will only treat what can be exhibited, Heidegger wants to contrast phenomenology with a science such as plant morphology.

Heidegger's projected method does not imply that a science such as plant morphology is incorrect or illegitimate; he only means that his analysis will be dealing with a subject matter in which that type of generalization will be impossible. If it is impossible to project the results of descriptions, one is forced to stop with the descriptions, and in such instances what is up for discussion must be directly exhibited. In this situation an object is seen as a hammer, a tool which has been made for a fairly definite purpose. Because it is for driving in nails, forcing boards into place, and other particular things, the description of the object

57 Ibid., p. 35.
as a hammer differs from the first description, since in the latter we are required to say what the hammer is for, i.e., how it is used. Such a description requires a reference to a series of relationships within which the hammer is situated, and such a reference (either explicit or implicit) must be made if the description is to be adequate.

The reference to the context is necessary, since a projection cannot be made about the object as a hammer. The object need not have the same function in all contexts; for if there are no nails or boards around, the function of the hammer might be different. In some cases it might be correct to describe the hammer as a weapon; at other times it might variously be a paperweight, a doorstop, a prybar, or something else. In each case it is the same "object" which may be used for a variety of purposes in a variety of contexts.

Since neither of the two types of descriptions mentioned is wrong, it is important to note that each is adequate in its place. In a certain sense, however, the second description is based on the first. For example, the fact that the metal is heavy allows the hammer to be used to drive nails, and likewise, the fact that the handle does not bend makes it possible to use the hammer to pry. Although the second description is based on the
structural properties discovered in the first description, there is a way in which the second description is primary, since in general no questions are asked about the structural properties. The hammer is simply picked up and used; it becomes almost an effort to see the hammer as metal and wood. Similarly, it is difficult to "see" drawings as so many lines on paper.

The latter description, which points out the relations with other objects, more nearly approaches a description of Being, for the Being of the hammer is not its woodenness and heaviness. The Being of the hammer lies in the fact that it can be used in certain ways. These ways in which it may be used do depend on the "physical properties" of the hammer, for if the metal were not heavy it could not even serve as a paper-weight. Roughly, although the Being of the hammer is loosely structured around its physical properties, yet its Being is not "something in" the hammer. Rather the Being of the hammer is the place it has in some context; its Being lies in the fact that it may be used to hammer.

The features Heidegger has mentioned become clear in the case of the hammer. One may ask about the hammer as an object which has certain structural properties, or one may ask about the hammer's Being. In the latter case, even if one must still investigate things, such as hammers, nails, and boards, the problem is no longer that of
discovering the "properties" of the things. Now the search is for the relationships which exist among them, and such relationships are of course not entities. That is, the search for Being is not a search for an entity, but rather a search for what makes an object what it is. It is a search for the context within which the object is not just metal and wood. An object is a hammer because it fits into the context of nails, boards, and carpenters.

Heidegger is examining the problem of Being, and is not concerned to examine objects qua objects. That, he thinks, can be left to the natural sciences. Phenomenology,\(^\text{58}\) on the other hand, looks at the object, but it does so with a view to what is not immediately visible in the object as such. Phenomenology is an examination of objects which looks for the context into which the objects fit. The search is for the use of the hammer and only indirectly deals with its "woodenness" or "metalness." The use of the hammer does not immediately appear when one simply looks at the object, and for that reason Heidegger says that it does not show itself directly. However, even if it is not "something" which may be seen

\(^{58}\) Heidegger argues that the nature of the term indicates that phenomenology must examine Being. The arguments that are given are not convincing. Tracing the components back to the Greek seems to me to be beside the point.
as "in" the object, it is still what makes the hammer a hammer.

In the attempt to describe the Being of the hammer, it is necessary to say there are hammers, people who may use hammers, and people using hammers—besides this, there is nothing else to see. The Being of the hammer lies in the fact that it can be used to hammer, and therefore, it fits into such contexts as carpentry. Since the context into which the hammer fits "gives" it its Being, an interesting point which can be explored is this context itself. What can be said about it?

The context,⁵⁹ first of all, may not be seen as a static structure, for hammering may take many forms, and various hammers are suited for various jobs. In fact, hammering might conceivably go "out of style," if all tables and chairs were to be bolted or glued together. Hence, the context must not be seen as an absolutely fixed one; it may be changed rather easily.

An important question is: "what is the implication of saying that the Being of an object is its relation to other objects?" Obviously, the relation is no object among objects—in fact, it is not an object at

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⁵⁹ To use the term "context" is to be unfaithful to Heidegger's actual words. Yet it clarifies what is meant. There is no thing besides objects, but objects are related in certain ways.
all. It is nothing at all, since it is impossible to isolate it by itself. For this reason Heidegger says that "'behind' the phenomena of phenomenology there is essentially nothing else." Hence, although there can be no examination which goes beyond Being to something that stands behind it, Heidegger's argument shows that he is interested in the context that "lies behind" things. Yet, even if that context is itself neither a thing nor an object, on the other hand it is "something," since it can be discerned, i.e., there is agreement that the object is a hammer which is used to drive nails.

The ultimate outcome is the equation of Being and Nothing, for even if Being makes an object to be the object it is, that which makes the object a hammer is not a thing. Since the object is not a hammer simply because it is made of metal and wood, the question about Being is the question about that which is not a thing. Such an equation poses problems, and a method which is different from that of the natural sciences is required.

_Wahrheit und Methode_ confirms this distinction, 62

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60 _SuZ_, p. 36. I take this to be a key argument of the famous essay about das Nichts. Cf. _Was ist Metaphysik_.


62 Cf. p. 419 ff.
for there Gadamer distinguishes Welt and Umwelt. Although Umwelt ordinarily means the social surroundings, Gadamer redefines it to indicate the physical surroundings, presumably changing the definition to save the term, Welt, for a definition similar to the Heideggerian term, Welt. In the section noted, Gadamer makes the distinction, however, and then uses Welt for both physical surroundings and social context. Often a sharp distinction between the concepts is made. Umwelt is comprised of rocks, stones, and other similar objects, and Welt primarily indicates agreement about morals and customs. Gadamer does not discuss the status of tools and similar entities which tend to blur his distinction.

The world is structured upon the surroundings, since in addition to rocks and stones, there is agreement that certain rocks and stones are valuable or beautiful. In a loose way there is a relationship between Welt and Umwelt, and Gadamer is more interested in Welt, which is characterized by the fact that certain relationships are taken toward the physical surroundings. There may be a number of such relationships just as one object may be a hammer, a weapon, or a door-stop.63

63 The hammer-example is not quite to the point. Gadamer will not be greatly concerned with uses of things, since the agreements in aesthetics, ethics, and law will be the primary subject matter.
From the analysis of the object as a hammer which has been suggested, two directions may be followed. First, one may analyze the hammer to show how it fits into the total context. This might require an analysis of the weight and shape of the hammer to show that the tool is suited for some specific job. Different tools serve to drive tacks, nails, and spikes; on the other hand, it might be a hammer used for a door-stop. Also, the analysis might need to include other components of the context. The use of the object created might be important; e.g., the hammer was used to build a house in order to protect a person from the rain, or it was used to build a boat in order that a river might be crossed. This description would be an analysis of the actual Being of the hammer. It would examine how in fact some particular hammer was used, perhaps including this use within another larger context such as carpentry in general. 64

A second possibility is Heidegger's main concern in his early works, and this does not imply that the first procedure is incorrect or invalid. In the second possibility the question about the context may be asked. Instead of asking how the hammer was used in a particular situation,

64 Peter Fürstenau, Heidegger: Das Gefüge seines Denkens (Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 1958), p. 8 f.
Heidegger is interested in examining the problem: how is it possible for the hammer to be used? This question is different from the first one, for to answer this question it is inadequate to mention a particular context into which the object fits; the problem is to examine what is meant by "context" and "fitting into." The question is not directed toward aspects of the objects such as "heaviness" or "ability to grasp." Although these are of course important, Heidegger is more interested in a clarification of the problem in so far as it clarifies the problem of Being. Hence, the analysis will center around the relationships which exist and the ability to operate within a context.

Such an analysis may use the first method to clarify the problem, for it may operate under a determinate idea of existence--this hammer is a five-pound sledge which is used to drive spikes. However, the fact that a particular use of a hammer is discussed does not imply that it must apply only to this use. The phenomenological method which is envisioned here will not operate under a particular ideal of existence. Although a particular ideal of existence may be examined, this will be incidental to the primary aim of the analysis.

Hence, the method that Gadamer and Heidegger use is two-fold. First, there are phenomenological analyses
which, so to speak, clarify the facts. These analyses are attempts to describe what is the case. In the example of the hammer, the analysis has uncovered the fact that looking at the hammer as merely an object is only one way of seeing it, since the object may be seen as a hammer when it is seen as "in a context," that is, when it is seen along with other objects. The analyses here attempt to clarify precisely what the primary datum is, exhibiting it so that it can be seen clearly.

The second part of the method starts from the data uncovered by the phenomenological analyses. The question is asked: How are these data possible? The required answer must clarify what is necessary for such data to exist as data. The question about the possibility of the data is called a transcendental question, since it argues that if this datum exists, a certain state of affairs must hold. This part of the method is perhaps the more difficult part, for here a reduction must be made. Although one must be careful to work in close connection with phenomenological analyses which lay out the whole subject matter, the examination proceeds on different grounds, for here an attempt is made to refer the facts

which are discovered back to their foundation.  

The actual method which Heidegger uses in the first parts of *Sein und Zeit* is a combination of these two. Roughly, phenomenology provides a primary set of data, and then the question to be examined is: "How are such data possible?" The transcendental question, however, does not imply that all specifically phenomenological analyses are finished, for the methods may supplement each other. But even if there is an interplay between examinations of the data and the origins of the data, the procedure is from the data to the state of affairs necessary for such data, although this may lead to new data which can be treated in the same manner.

Yet, it is important to turn more specifically to Gadamer's own discussion of phenomenology. According to Gadamer's use of the terms, Heidegger's early work may be called "transcendental phenomenological," and Gadamer's work is methodologically very similar to *Sein und Zeit*. This means that the method is the combination of phenomenological description and transcendental reduction, both

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67 Fürstenau points out that Section Two of *Sein und Zeit* introduces a third method: a particular ideal of existence is introduced to help clarify the problems.

68 Fürstenau, *op. cit.*, p. 12, 15-16.

coming from Husserl. Helmut Kuhn, in the introduction to *Die Gegenwart der Griechen im Neueren Denken: Festschrift für Hans-Georg Gadamer zum 60. Geburtstag*, 70 says that basically Gadamer had learned from Husserl to see what is there (*was da ist*). Kuhn is primarily referring to Husserl's ability to see what is there, apart from theories that had been proposed. The phenomenological reduction was the attempt to get to what was given; as such it has nothing to do with reductionism. 71

The transcendental reduction is not always posed in the same way by Gadamer and Husserl. Gadamer primarily means by it that the question is asked: "How is this datum possible?" Husserl suggests this in the *Cartesian Meditations*, 72 for the transcendental reduction does indicate a reduction which breaks up the phenomena. 73 However, the reduction which Gadamer plans is not an attempt to "reduce" the phenomena to some component parts which are independent of each other, since the whole point

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of the concern for these problems has been to show that they cannot be separated entirely. Heidegger constantly emphasizes that Being-in-the-world must always be understood as a unified phenomenon, even if distinctions between world and Dasein can be made. However, for Husserl, "transcendental" also implies that the observer does not participate directly in the state of affairs which is observed. There is only observation and no commitment to the existence or non-existence of the datum. The two definitions are not entirely different, and Gadamer may intend to indicate both. The very question, How is the datum possible?, also implies a distance to the datum. The question, How is hammering possible?, implies that the primary concern is not with hammering as such, for the question implies that the immediate context of hammering is not "participated in." The questioner is "looking at" hammering. All philosophical research must be reflective in this way.

The transcendental phenomenology of Heidegger and Gadamer implies that the matter at hand is being viewed from the outside. The one who observes is not immediately involved in the hammering as such; since he is primarily looking at some one hammering or is remembering himself

74 Ibid., cf., p. 72 f.
hammering. According to Gadamer, Heidegger attempts to leave the transcendental-phenomenological method in his later works. This apparently corresponds to the turn in Heidegger from an analysis of Dasein in the early works to the concern for Being in some later works.

Gadamer calls his own method, "phenomenological immanence." It is a method which might well be called a restricted form of Heidegger's transcendental phenomenology. This method provides a way of cutting across the differences between the early and late Heidegger. Heidegger had attempted to ground Being on Time in the early works, Sein und Zeit and Kant und das Problem der Metaphysik, and the project failed. In a rough way it may be said that the work on Kant tries to work the transcendental reduction to its completion. Gadamer's lack of sympathy with such an approach might be reflected

75 Gadamer always insists on this point, and it is never clear to me what the method of the later Heidegger becomes, unless it is similar to Gadamer's "phenomenological immanence."

76 "Die Phänomenologische Bewegung," pp. 9, 36 ff. Although the difference between the early and late Heidegger is beyond the scope of this work, Gadamer's description of the difference will be given when the distinction needs to be mentioned.

77 WuM, p. XXII.

in the fact that Gadamer never seems to quote from the Kant work, although *Sein und Zeit* is often quoted or mentioned. The failure of the attempt required an evaluation of procedure that led to another method which was also phenomenological. Since the concept of a final grounding (*Letztbegründung*) had failed, it became necessary to re-evaluate the idea of transcendental phenomenology. Although this did not mean that phenomenology was disavowed, it did mean that now there must be a constant reference back to phenomenological demonstration, and no attempt could be made to project backwards to any final grounding. That is, a restriction is placed on the reduction step. This becomes a reiteration of the Kantian claim that all finite knowledge must be capable of being referred to possible experience.\(^{79}\)

The method of phenomenological immanence does not mean that the early Heidegger was completely wrong. On the contrary, large sections of the early works are of the utmost importance, and the critique of the earlier method actually opens the way for a continuation of the treatment of problems raised in the early works. It removes the necessity of trying to ground all analyses

in Time. A method of phenomenological immanence, for example, opens the way for analyses of understanding which do not have to discover any final ground. For this reason, Gadamer says that Heidegger's use of the concept, "fundamental-ontology," was unfortunate.  

Gadamer's treatment of Heidegger indicates the great respect he has for Heidegger's work. The appreciation is seen in the very problems that are treated, since the problems which are examined are those which Gadamer feels are opened up again by a method of phenomenological immanence. By allowing them to be attacked again, the new method allows the difficulties to become problems in themselves; that is, they are treated for their own sake and not for the sake of a fundamental ontology.

Among the problems which are reopened by the new evaluation of philosophic method are those centering around understanding and language. If the re-evaluation of method is necessary, language and understanding are again pushed forward as significant philosophical problems, and the treatment of various instances of understanding becomes significant. Gadamer, in the light of this shift in method, attempts to examine these problems and provide solutions by applying the Heideggerian results which can be salvaged. Those analyses and results are the subject of the next chapter.

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80 Ibid., p. 39.
CHAPTER IV

GADAMER'S SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEMS OF A
CRITIQUE OF HISTORICAL REASON

The preceding chapter has provided a sketch of the foundation for Gadamer's arguments, although it was indicated that neither Gadamer nor Heidegger completely examine the features necessary for their conclusions. This chapter treats the solutions which Gadamer gives to the problems of a critique of historical reason. However, since some of the logical requirements for the conclusions are not mentioned by him, this section will necessarily be incomplete, leaving the examination of some of the presuppositions of Gadamer's work for the next chapter. Again, it is occasionally necessary to refer back to Heidegger, since Gadamer often draws on Heidegger's work without mentioning it. In fact, the first remarks about the concept of horizon need to mention a few texts from Heidegger.

A. The Concept of Horizon

In beginning this chapter it is necessary to examine the concept of horizon to show its role within the concepts previously mentioned. The concept may easily be traced back to Heidegger's studies, and Heidegger no doubt borrowed it from Husserl. Gadamer mentions that the term has become important since the time of Nietzsche and Husserl, although he gives no reference to Nietzsche. For
present purposes, Husserl's discussion of the term is not important. Although Gadamer borrows heavily from suggestions made by Heidegger, his work will be only briefly sketched.

A crucial Heideggerian text is found in *Sein und Zeit*, a section entitled "The Temporal Problem of the Transcendence of the World." This text draws together problems which have been examined earlier in the book and connects them to show a particular structure. The understanding of Being has been explicated as the knowledge of the complex interrelationships which exist in a world. Although our writing has thus far assumed that this understanding has a unified structure, it is necessary now to examine such an assumption. Prior to the section on the temporal problem of the transcendence of the world, he did not assume the unity, because he had been concerned with explicating the particular characteristics of past, present, and future. In this section he shows the connections between past, present, and future in terms of temporality. For simplification Heidegger's distinctions between them will be ignored in order to get to the more important problem of their unity, since the unity is the main goal of the discussion.

1 Cf. Paragraph 69 (c), pp. 364 ff.
Heidegger has shown that Dasein is in a world and that he knows how to deal with that world. Since this has already been explicated in terms of "knowing how to get about," the step toward a simplification is natural. The concept, understanding of a world, may, therefore, be simplified by the introduction of another concept, horizon, which indicates the appropriate actions within a particular situation. Horizon points out that Dasein is in a world, which means that in characteristic ways Dasein deals with objects and has a concern for others as well.

The introduction of "horizon" helps to clarify a set of difficult problems. The concept remains closely correlated with "world" by indicating at least three features: 1. the realm in which everything in the world occurs, (2) the limit which helps to unify the totality of objects in the world, and (3) the constantly changing point-of-view which may be taken toward the totality. These three features suggested by Kuhn roughly correspond to a set of four distinctions made by Heidegger in Vom Wesen des Grundes as he attempts to clarify the concept.

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3 2nd ed. (Halle: Max Niemeyer, 1931), p. 85. Page numbers here will refer to the pagination of the Husserl-Festschrift in which the essay first appeared (1929).
world, in its relation to seeing the totality in a certain manner. The first distinction indicates an abstraction which conceptually distinguishes "world" from entities, so that "world" may be examined for itself.\textsuperscript{4} Two following distinctions indicate the totality of objects and that the totality is not the simple juxtaposition of various objects. The final distinction points out that the totality is relative to Dasein; presumably, the way in which the totality of entities may be seen can be changed.

The mention of Heidegger shows that the interest here is directed to "horizon" in its relation to a view of a totality, and that the view of a totality is equivalent to a world; hence, the concept, horizon, may be applied to a world. Even more significantly, it refers to Dasein's understanding, which has been mentioned in its relationship with a world. "Horizon," then, indicates that objects are seen as in a totality, and it is a type of shorthand, emphasizing the interrelations of objects which are in a world together. There is a particular way in which entities are ordered, and the totality of entities is seen together in such a way that "to have an horizon" not only implies that objects are "seen as" hammers or tools, but also that

\textsuperscript{4} Welt meint eher ein W i e d e s S e i n s des Seienden als dieses selbst. (Ibid.)
even what counts as a phenomenon is also determined to some extent. For example, if we are confronted by a witch-doctor, perhaps we admit that he has rather odd experiences, although we still want to say that he did not see demons. His experiences could, in our opinion, be traced to a drug or some psychological state. At the very least, we would first of all look for an explanation in some such terms rather than attribute the experience to demons. Later, we might be persuaded to accept demons.

Gadamer, on the other hand, defines "horizon" in the following ways. First, it signifies the "range which encompasses and surrounds everything that is visible from one point." Since horizon indicates the limit within which everything in one's world is found, it is easy to see how Gadamer may speak of "changing horizons," "widening horizons," or "narrow horizons." A second definition clarifies the organizing features of horizons by pointing out that "having an horizon" indicates "having a perspective on the situation." Having an horizon indicates simply that

5 ...der Gesichtskreis, der all das umfasst und umschliesst, was von einem Punkte aus sichtbar ist. (WuM, p. 286).

6 Although Situation is a semi-technical term for Gadamer, I think it offers no particular problems. Gadamer mentions Karl Jaspers' book, Die geistige Situation der Zeit, as a clarification of the concept. (WuM, p. 285n)
the primary concern is not always for that which is closest; everything within the horizon is ordered in such a way that it is unnecessary for an object or state-of-affairs to be seen in order to be recalled. A rough example might be the phrase, "saving for a rainy day." Everything with which one deals is evaluated in relation to other things, so that certain actions are "more important," "better," or "more far-sighted."

These two definitions might apply to a single Dasein, and Heidegger's arguments in *Sein und Zeit* were generally directed to a single Dasein. However, that approach was taken in order to clarify the data at hand. 7 Now, Gadamer discusses a third aspect of horizon, and although this aspect is closely related to the first two, the point is to show that "horizon" does not apply to only a single Dasein. He does not claim that the experiences of each Dasein must be exactly like that of the next; the claim is, rather, that there is a large, and very important area within which it is possible to say that the horizons of several persons completely agree. This of course, is the realm in which, for example, newspapers are read or buses are taken; every person is essentially just like all the rest. "Horizon" indicates the agreements of a group. 8

8 *WuM*, pp. 286 ff.
The concept, "historical horizon," moreover, indicates this agreement about how things are to be treated; it indicates that in general each person within the historical horizon will tend to see things in a particular way, since objects and states-of-affairs will be structured in roughly the same manner for each of them.

The introduction of "horizon" is crucial to the arguments about hermeneutic, and part of the significance of the concept may be seen in its close connection with Being. Being has been explicated as the structure of a world; now horizon has been introduced to indicate a similar idea. Since horizon indicates that objects and states-or-affairs are ordered in certain ways, for Gadamer "having an horizon" is equivalent to understanding as "knowing one's way about," and understanding has already been explicated in its relationship to Being. "Horizons," offers a shorter way of saying that Dasein is in a world with objects and other persons, that objects and persons are treated in fairly defined ways, and that these ways of acting may change. In this manner, it allows a simplification of the language needed for explication, and it perhaps allows additional insights to be gained.

The concept, horizon, helps to simplify these ideas by using a metaphor to indicate a set of very complex notions.
Heidegger is obviously aware of the suggestiveness of the metaphor and knows that it encompasses a great deal. In *Sein und Zeit* it is closely connected with a reference to the relationships which it represents and in general is used only sparingly. On the other hand, evidently intending by it something very similar to the Heideggerian usage, Gadamer fastens onto the term and uses it often, although he virtually always uses it as a simplification. Whereas Heidegger had introduced it in a rather tentative way, Gadamer introduces it positively. For example, Heidegger says, "The existential-temporal condition for the possibility of the world lies in the fact that temporality, as an ecstastical unity, has something like a horizon."\(^9\) Difficulties that arise from this will be noted later.

B. The Analysis of Experience

A large part of Gadamer's work which deals with the problem of a critique of historical reason finally centers around the concept of experience. Much of that discussion is directly based on an equivocation in that term. Since the primary purpose of this chapter is an explication and analysis of some of Gadamer's writings,

\[^9\] Suz, p. 365. The emphasis is mine; the entire sentence, however, is in spaced type.
the equivocation will be examined briefly, although the implications of it are treated in a later chapter. Gadamer recognizes that two definitions are given, since he calls attention to them himself. For the present, it seems sufficient to say that he believes the equivocation is necessary, if historical reality is to be studied in all of its complexity.

1. Equivocation about Experience

The first definition of experience may be called a static definition, since in this case, Gadamer describes experiences which correspond to the contexts which are already known. This type of experience corresponds to "how things are usually done," and since nothing out of the ordinary happens, experience, in this sense, neither provokes surprises nor calls for any special thought. Things are done just as they have been done in the past; no important changes take place. This definition of experience will later be found to correspond to static definitions of truth and Being, because here, experience indicates the relationships in a world which is presently shared by a group. As long as one does what everybody

10 Cf. WuM, p. 335. Gadamer's discussion uses a number of phrases constructed around the idiom, Erfahrung machen. This will generally be translated as "to have an experience," although at times it will be equated with "to have a dreadful experience," or some other similar phrase.
else does, or as long as one does what is usually done, there is nothing surprising, startling, or upsetting.

The second type of experience, experience which tends to disrupt the usual context, is a more interesting case in Gadamer's opinion, and Gadamer calls this "die eigentliche Erfahrung" to indicate its priority in his discussions.\textsuperscript{11} It corresponds to "how things might be done." In this case, the experiences are surprising, since they are essentially unexpected; they are not the ordinary things that occur in a particular situation. The distinction between "how things are done" and "how they might be done" tends to break down when purely physical events are examined. For example, the law of gravitation has to be "put up with." This would confirm Gadamer's claim that \textit{Welt} is structured upon the Umwelt.

When these disrupting events occur, there is a period in which one no longer "knows his way about." The usual actions become either inappropriate or not applicable, since something new has arisen. Because of its tendency to cause puzzlement, an experience of this type is called a "negative" experience by Gadamer. In particular, experience of this type may indicate that although things

\textsuperscript{11} Cf. \textit{WuM}, p. 335.

\textsuperscript{12} \textit{WuM}, p. 336.
were not seen adequately at first, they are now. That is, although the significance of certain actions or events had not been correctly evaluated, now the connection between these events and others can be correctly sketched. Even though the original relationships are disrupted, they are reconstructed to fit the new experience. The net result is the integration of the new experience into the old structures in such a way that now the resulting context includes the new experience. Also, the element of surprise is lost when the experience is integrated into the person's understanding, since the events will be expected; now, one knows how to get along.

Although these two definitions of experience provide the point of departure for his analysis of experience, the primary concern is with the experience which disrupts the shared-world. There are at least two reasons for this. First, Gadamer primarily examines the dynamic definition of experience because it is the more interesting for him. It is more interesting because he finds it more complicated, and since it is more complicated, he thinks it serves as a model for experience in general. If ordinary experience which conforms to the structure of the world becomes a special case of this more difficult type, clarifying the nature of the disrupting experience also provides the apparatus for clarifying the
non-disrupting experience. Second, Gadamer's mentions of this type of experience point to the concepts of Being and truth as events. This definition of experience corresponds to the recognition of "how things might be." Although Gadamer has taken great pains to explore Being as the structure of the shared-world, the primary interest is still centered around the concept of "possible world," or "how things might be."

2. Experience and Hermeneutic Experience

Experience as a Change of Horizon

Since Gadamer's interest is primarily in the experiences which tend to disrupt contexts, this type of experience must now be explicated, and the explication can now be made by using the concept, horizon. Because Gadamer's analysis draws on both Hegel and Heidegger, clarifying it will require references to both writers. Although both Hegel and Heidegger are quoted, Gadamer's analysis attempts to pass beyond them in analyzing the specific features of hermeneutic experience. Up to this point, much of the exposition holds for both Gadamer and Heidegger, but now

13 "Einleitung" to Phänomenologie des Geistes, pp. 63-75.

14 "Hegels Begriff der Erfahrung" in Holzwege. This essay is a commentary on the introduction to Hegel's Phänomenologie des Geistes.
Gadamer's own originality may be seen. Primarily, his work is the attempt to use and apply features of Heidegger's work to a new set of problems. Although he has clarified parts of Heidegger's work, Gadamer's primary contribution is his analysis of experience in terms of the structures pointed out by Heidegger.

Experience is to be clarified in terms of horizons as they were previously developed by Gadamer. To clarify experience as that which is surprising and sudden, it is first of all necessary to recall the understanding of Being as the understanding of the relationships in the shared-world. A person knows what to expect in the ordinary situation; since the usual things and states-of-affairs are known, the person "sees" what is the proper action in that situation. In general he can make the proper responses to the situation with little or no thought, although in many cases he may not be able to say precisely why X and not Y is the proper action.

In terms of horizons, the ordinary way of acting in a situation may be described by a horizon which represents the possible actions in the situation. The earlier discussion of horizon has shown that the horizon not only represents the unification of what lies within it, but also serves as a limit which prescribes what may fall within its scope. In accordance with this, the witch-doctor was
said to have taken hallucinatory drugs or to be in some odd psychological state, since one (das Man) just does not admit the existence of demons.

Although in general, most situations require no particular consideration, in occasional cases there are problems. Faced with unusual situations, one may not know how to proceed; the usual actions in a situation become either inappropriate or inapplicable, because something which has not been expected appears. Certain states-of-affairs do not fit into the horizons. Occasionally, a person is forced to admit this, just as in very unusual cases the existence of demons might have to be admitted. When faced with such a state-of-affairs, one that does not fit within the usual horizon, and yet one which demands recognition, what occurs? There must be a change in the original horizon in order to incorporate the new fact, since in some cases it cannot be ignored. In the case of natural sciences this might only mean that a new element has been discovered (a new fact), or it might involve a complete re-casting of hypotheses in the light of some discoveries (e.g., the discovery of quantum mechanics). In the realm of customs, however, the fact that an important person does things in a different way than we would might call forth a re-evaluation of our own understanding of customs. Perhaps the customs have been
misunderstood and need to be examined again.

The incorporation of the new event or way of doing things into the structure of understanding may change the structure of that understanding,¹⁵ since it can no longer be the same as it had been. Although Gadamer is perhaps making too sharp a distinction here, his point is valid; the unexpected can be incorporated into the structures of understanding in such a way that what was unexpected at one time is no longer surprising. This, of course, precludes "having the same experience" twice, since the integration of the event into the understanding prevents the event from being new the second time.¹⁶ An experience may be forgotten, but then we usually say, "Yes, now I remember that." The incorporation of the experience is described as "gaining a new horizon," for the new horizon incorporates the old horizon in addition to the changes made necessary by the new experience.

Analysis of experience in terms of "original horizon" and "new horizon" conveniently recalls features in Heidegger's work, for the original horizon indicates the way things were done and corresponds to the prior understanding which Dasein had; the new horizon indicates

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¹⁶ *WuM*, p. 336.
how things are understood after the experience. In the usual instance of experience, that in which nothing extraordinary occurs, the original horizon and the new horizon are equivalent, and things are seen in the same was as before. However, since the instance which primarily interests Gadamer is that in which the horizons are changed, his goal is to explicate that type of experience.

Horizons and Hermeneutic Experience

Gadamer's interest in experience as a change in the horizons has been noted, and his interest in this special instance has been described as an interest in a difficult type of experience from which, he thinks, simpler types may be derived. Now, within the experience which involves a change of horizon, this particularly difficult type of experience may be described. Gadamer calls this "hermeneutic experience." Hermeneutic experience refers to the experience that occurs in connection with texts from different historical situations, taking place when texts are read or plays are performed.

Since some features of the hermeneutic experience, however, are similar to those of any experience in which horizons are altered, it is necessary to clarify the hermeneutic experience in terms of the features which have already been examined. Of these elements, the fore-structures of the understanding are among the most
important in Gadamer's analysis, and the concept, "horizon," indicates that the fore-structures will provide the basis for treating what is contained within the world. Because all understanding must begin from a world which is shared with others, the claim is that Dasein is always in a world, and that understanding must proceed upon the basis of the relationships in that world. Since the understanding which Dasein has must always be connected with the features of a world, the statements or words of the person must reflect these features. Gadamer thinks this applies to all human writings, that each reflects features of the world in which it was written. But in addition to reflecting its own world, a text also assumes that a great deal is known about that world, for the text does not spell out in detail everything about the relationships it reflects. In most instances, it would be extremely difficult to attempt to analyze what are appropriate actions in a situation, and in general, the text merely assumes this.

Gadamer's point becomes clearer when the distinction between Being and beings is recalled. If the relationships in a world correspond to how objects are to be treated, what can be said about the understanding of Being which was current at one time but is no longer so? Except for the references to it in texts and what might be discerned from monuments and other remains, that understanding of
Being no longer exists, since the texts and other remnants of the past can, at best, only provide sketches of how beings were treated. The question is: can the understanding of Being which once existed be adequately described so that a person can understand as Caesar did? I think Gadamer's analysis has partly been made in order to show that this question should be answered negatively. The structures of that world are lost and cannot be completely recovered, although some of its structures may have either endured into the present or been preserved in texts. Nevertheless, whatever structures may have been preserved are no longer seen in their original connection to other structures. Although Gadamer realizes that changes are usually gradual, assuming a completely different understanding of Being helps clarify the problem. In a way, the description is not wholly inaccurate, since the horizons are different.

Also, to clarify the problem of understanding as Caesar did, Gadamer might ask: what is the criterion for knowing that we understand as Caesar did? Is there any possible criterion short of being either Caesar or a man of his period? And even if the texts provide the "data" upon which our understanding must be based, is it legitimate to assume that the texts may only be understood in one way? Gadamer is skeptical of Dilthey's solution to this
problem, since he thinks that it is impossible so to immerse oneself in a situation that understanding can occur as it did for the original participants in that situation. Part of the reason for this is that some of the features of the situation have simply disappeared; they no longer exist because the world which they reflect has disappeared.\footnote{Gadamer argues this in connection with a discussion of aesthetics. \textit{WuM}, p. 128 ff.}

If Gadamer is correct, the problem of hermeneutic experience is particularly difficult, since there is no criterion with which the understanding may be compared. In a conversation the partner can say, "No! You haven't understood the problem yet." On the other hand, from reading a text, one only has to be careful not to disrupt the features which the text sketches; the connection between relationships sketched in the text and the other features of a world may be made in a number of ways, according to Gadamer.

Also, a religious or legal text makes some demands of us by pointing out that things \textit{should} be done in a particular way. Legal texts and works of art are especially forceful means of pointing out different ways in which things may be done. A text sketches some features of
another world, and these features have as much right to be called appropriate as the features of our own world. The demand that things should be done in other ways, however, is equivalent to a demand that horizons be changed, since horizon indicates how things are done in a particular situation.

Hermeneutic experience, then, is an example of a particularly complex type of experience, experience in which the demand of the text for a change in horizons is accepted. However, the horizon of the text is not the same as the horizon of our own world, and there is no criterion with which our resulting understanding may be compared to the original horizon of the text. The hermeneutic problem treats the clarification of this experience, which will then be representative of other types of experience. It will be representative, since other types of experience will be simplifications of this.

C. Gadamer's Analysis of Hermeneutic Experience
1. Final Statement of the Problem

Gadamer's work on the specifically hermeneutic experience begins from Heidegger's analysis of understanding, and since Heidegger's results have already been sketched, there is no need to repeat them in detail. Heidegger's analysis of the problem of understanding in Sein und Zeit
was primarily an examination of understanding taking place within an historical structure, a part of the problem of a Kritik der historischen Vernunft. Understanding within a historical structure had been analyzed in terms of structures of understanding, and the temporal character of finite human understanding had been noted. Now, Gadamer is interested in treating the problem of understanding the past—the traditional problem of hermeneutic—in terms of these structures sketched by Heidegger. The central section of Wahrheit und Methode entitled "Basic Features of a Theory of Hermeneutic Experience," 18 is Gadamer's attempt to solve the problem.

Throughout the text of this section, Gadamer mentions various aspects of the hermeneutic problem. Although some notes have been made on previous pages about the problem, it is now helpful to collect some of these statements in order to see exactly what the problem is. The most important points are listed below.

1. The problem is one of understanding, and understanding has been clarified as "knowing one's way

18 Grundzüge einer Theorie der hermeneutischen Erfahrung. This is a section of a longer part which is entitled, "Extension of the question of truth to understanding in the Geisteswissenschaften." (Ausweitung der Wahrheitsfrage auf das Verstehen in den Geisteswissenschaften) Cf. pp. 162-360.
about" in a world. When understanding is clarified in this way, it is incorrect to say that a person understands and yet cannot sketch connections to other objects or states-of-affairs in a world. The arguments about understanding show that it does not occur from simply reading a text and not knowing where to go next. For example, if one has an understanding of radios, he can fix them; he knows how to deal with radios.

2. The problem must be clarified in terms of agreements. Since understanding is defined in terms of the shared-world, it is necessary to recall that the analysis of the shared-world has pointed out that it is made up of agreements about objects and states-of-affairs. A solution must ultimately involve reaching agreement about a possible world, for Gadamer says, "it is the problem of hermeneutic to clarify this miracle of understanding. It is not a secret communication of souls, but a participation in a common meaning." For example, if

19 "Vom Zirkel des Verstehens", Festschrift, Martin Heidegger zum siebzigsten Geburtstag (Pfullingen: Neske, 1959), p. 25. Except for the first three pages, this article is incorporated into WUM without significant changes.

20 Es ist die Aufgabe der Hermeneutik, dies Wunder des Verstehens aufzuklären, das nicht ein geheimnisvolle Kommunikation der Seelen, sondern eine Teilhabe am gemeinsamen Sinn ist. Ibid.
two persons both understand radios, they both can fix them; each knows to do the same sort of things as the other. It is not necessary that one teaches the other; each only needs to understand radios in order to agree with the other about how to fix a radio. Similarly, the hermeneutic problem is the problem of reaching agreement about the structures of a possible world. Since it is the problem of reaching agreement, any attempt to transfer oneself into the position of another person (Dilthey's Sichhineinversetzung) misses the point. Therefore, in many ways Gadamer's problem is a fairly restricted one.

A favorite illustration used by Gadamer is the conversation (Gespräch), for in a conversation the goal is not always to convince the other of the correctness of a position. In many instances the goal of the conversation is to reach an agreement about how things are to be done, with each person giving a little to the other in order that an agreement may be reached. The same point holds in the hermeneutic experience, for neither text nor reader is assumed to have any particular priority. Since the problem is to reach agreement about certain things and structures, the goal is not to understand as the author understood. It is to see how things may be done, and this means an application of the text to the present.
Speaking metaphorically, Gadamer says that the goal of the hermeneutic is "to allow itself to be determined by the object." Similarly, the goal of understanding radios is to understand how they work. The specific goal of the hermeneutic, however, is the understanding of Being. The text sketches features of how things were done or how they were seen, and the problem of hermeneutic understanding is that of constructing understanding upon these features. It is assumed that the experience occurs, that one sees how things might be done. Although Gadamer thinks that there are different ways that texts may be incorporated into an understanding of a world, the resulting understanding must be built upon the structures outlined in or suggested by the text.

A difficulty perhaps arises for Gadamer at this point. Following Heidegger, Gadamer distinguished between "fancies and popular conceptions" and "the things themselves." The problem is to separate the "fancies and popular conceptions" from the structures of Being, for the fables and superstitions are presumably not important.


22 Cf. SuZ, p. 153. Although Heidegger is discussing the pre-structures of understanding a similar argument holds in the case of a text.
for understanding the text. It seems to me that Heidegger's mention of the difference is anything but clear, for if he means that fables and other stories are misleading formulations of Being, it can be objected that these are the features of Being; this is how those features are seen. On the other hand, I think the distinction, as far as Gadamer makes use of it, is the following: Certain features are sketched in the text, although not all of them need to be taken up in any understanding. If, for example, we ask whether it is necessary to accept the Platonic myths in order to understand Plato, the answer is No. In fact, the question misses the point of Gadamer's enterprise, since the goal of understanding is to know the way about in a world, not to understand Plato's world. The distinction between fancies and structures of Being becomes a practical one. That is, some features of the text tend to lead to an understanding of a world, and these structures are the important ones for us. Gadamer draws this conclusion in a section entitled "The Hermeneutic Significance of the Distance in Time." 23 The understanding does not have to be built upon all of the features found in the text, because the

primary goal for Gadamer is not to understand the text, but to understand what the text is about. If the radio example is used again, the problem in understanding radios is not to understand a book about radios, for the book may be wrong. The problem is to read the book and see if there are any suggestions about how radios work. The radio-example quickly breaks down, since Gadamer's goal is to see how things might be done. Presumably in fixing radios, although the method of different workers might be slightly different, any burned-out tube would have to be replaced.

Therefore, Gadamer's emphasis is not so much on the text; the problem is to understand what the text is about.²⁴ In a brief historical note Gadamer claims that Schleiermacher introduced something new, i.e., the idea of understanding Plato. On the other hand, for Augustine the problem had been that of restoring agreement about a world. Gadamer thinks that Schleiermacher made a mistake and that now hermeneutic can get back to its legitimate problem.

3. It is necessary to recall the historical nature of understanding. The first part of Gadamer's analysis of the hermeneutic experience, entitled "Elevation of the

Historical Nature of Understanding to a Hermeneutic Principle,\(^{25}\) is directly based on Heidegger's discussion of the fore-structures of understanding in Sein und Zeit. Large sections contain criticism of the tradition, as Gadamer attempts to give the term prejudice (Vorurteil) a positive significance by equating prejudices with fore-structures. The problem of the fore-structures can be clarified in terms of horizons, however, and the results of such a clarification are easier to use. The concept, original horizon, has been used to indicate the knowledge of the situation before an experience; this corresponds to the fore-structures of the understanding. There is an equivalence here, because both the original horizon and the fore-structures of understanding indicate that there is a knowledge of how to get along in an historical situation. Also, analysis in terms of horizons suggests that understanding occurs as knowing the appropriate action in a situation. Although Gadamer tries to rehabilitate "prejudice" to indicate this, there is still the hint of "judging without sufficient information."

The analysis in terms of horizons makes some of Gadamer's statements clearer. Thus, when he says, "Whoever

wants to understand a text always completes a projection,"

a number of things are intended. First, understanding
requires an horizon, an ordering of things in the world,
in order to even exist, for the analysis of understanding
has shown that understanding means having an horizon, such
that the entities within the world are structured. Second,
since it sketches or suggests a few features around which
an horizon may be constructed, the text provides the
occasion for the understanding, although the horizon which
is formed around the text need not ultimately incorporate
all the features in the text. Third, since the projection
cannot be made solely from the features discerned in the
text, it must ultimately be based upon the fore-structures
of understanding which the reader has. Basically, the
resulting understanding will be formed around the reader's
original horizon and some features of the text, although
any projection of a meaning of the whole text will be based
on the fore-structures.

All of these features point to the historical
nature of understanding. Understanding is historical,
because the horizon that may be constructed around the
text need not always be the same, and since understanding
has been seen to be related to the structures of a shared-world,

26 Wer einen Text verstehen will, vollzieht immer ein
there is no once-for-all objective standard with which it can be compared.

4. The hermeneutic problem which is specifically treated is very limited. Although it has been noted that the arguments which Gadamer makes are to be applicable to all experience,27 the arguments as they stand are intended to apply only to a very special type of experience. The problem to be examined is limited, because in general, there is no attempt to reconstruct the features which the text sketches. Gadamer points out that to see the text in such a way that only the features it sketches are under consideration is missing the point of the hermeneutic problem. Such an examination of the text fails to take into account the truth-claim of the text;28 in fact, the truth claim is not even the important problem in such a case. The hermeneutic problem arises when the text is believed to say something worthwhile—when it points out that things might be arranged in a particular way. Gadamer grants that this does not occur in every case of reading


a text, and it may actually be a fairly rare occurrence. For example, if we read the Republic to see what Plato thought, in so far as it can be determined from the text, the reading is not done in the special way Gadamer describes. Reading the Republic to see how our world might be structured is much closer to the problem Gadamer examines.

5. If this is a particular instance of understanding, it is necessary to sketch or call attention to what Gadamer has in mind. First, it has already been mentioned that the hermeneutic problem concerns the problem of reading a text which is from a different historical situation and second, it is assumed that the text is of more than "mere historical interest". Hence, the types of texts in which Gadamer is interested are of a rather particular nature. Among texts which sketch features of a possible world are religious and legal texts, although works on ethics and art-works also fit into this category. These types of texts are consulted when there are questions about what we should do, how we should see things, and what we should be allowed to do. When we consult a legal text as a legal text and not as historical testimony, the question is asked: what should be done in this situation? If an answer is provided or suggested by the text, we know how to proceed, even if we did not know previously.
Gadamer calls this "the hermeneutic problem of use." 29 The use, or application, calls attention to Gadamer's interest in legal and religious texts; in particular he is interested in texts which require an application to the present. The discussion of the application of the text to the present occurs within a larger section entitled "Recovery of the Basic, Hermeneutic Problem." 30 Since he sees this as a basic aspect of the hermeneutic problem, it is clear that in his treatment of understanding Gadamer is examining a particular instance.

Gadamer's interest in use and application indicates a turn toward concreteness. The analysis of application and use restricts the concept, "possible world," for Gadamer is not interested in intellectual exercises which might describe features of some imagined world. The problem of use indicates that the subject of discussion is experience which has "cash value." That is, after the experience there must be an horizon which is not the same as the original one.

6. The goal here, however, is not to merely try to "do what the text says." 31 A naive acceptance of anything

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31 In light of the distinctions which have been made, some of Gadamer's language may be misleading. Although
the text may say--here I think Gadamer has in mind any fundamentalistic application of texts--has little to do with the problem. On the contrary, the point is to read the text with a view, first of all, to discerning the differences between how things are described in the text and how they are now done. If the differences are recognized, an application of the text, if one occurs, can be a conscious one. Hence, Gadamer's account of the hermeneutic problem must include the application to the present, and the application should carefully note the difference between the past and present.

2. An Alternate Account of the Problem

Before turning to Gadamer's analysis of hermeneutic experience, it may be useful to briefly analyze a contemporary account of how the hermeneutic problem is posed. Thus far, only Gadamer's account of the problem has been sketched, although later the solution will be analyzed. One of Gadamer's critics, Wolfhart Pannenberg, while showing his admiration for Gadamer's work, has attempted understanding has been clarified as the ability to operate within an horizon, Gadamer often speaks of "understanding a text." This may be misleading since the text, according to him, does not provide enough information to complete an horizon. Gadamer means that the text provides the occasion for an understanding. Since the expression is such a common one, I will also use it occasionally.

32 WuM, p. 290.
to point out some inconsistencies in Gadamer's analyses. Although his work shows a familiarity with Heidegger, many parts of his results are similar to Dilthey's solution. Pannenberg is particularly interested in Gadamer's description of understanding within a horizon, for his arguments, according to Pannenberg, point out correctly that understanding always takes place within an horizon. Understanding does not involve an understanding of this radio or that radio without some understanding of general principles of electronics, since understanding always involves horizons which include and organize a number of things. This point has been briefly mentioned above. Although a text may say a great many things, the contemporaries of the author were able to "see" many connections between what was mentioned in the text and the world they shared with the author. Pannenberg agrees with Gadamer that the text was written by an author with a particular understanding of Being, and that the understanding of Being was reflected in the work. However, in addition to the features that are described in the work, there is a great deal which the author had to leave unsaid.


34 Ibid., p. 115.

35 Variations of the word, Ungesagte, are common with Gadamer, Pannenberg, and others.
That which is left unsaid is equivalent to what is necessary to complete a sketch of the horizon.

The concept, das Ungesagte, is important for both Gadamer and Pannenberg, since for both of them, understanding means that the objects and persons are within a world. What is said in a particular text must always be understood in terms of other features of understanding which complete the horizon. The text, by itself, is incomplete, since the integration of the relationships it describes into a set of relationships is required in order for understanding to occur. Here, Pannenberg agrees with Gadamer that for understanding to occur there must be a completion of an horizon around the structures suggested by the text.

In connection with this point, Pannenberg has noted an important distinction that may be made.\(^\text{36}\) On the one hand, it is possible to talk about the original horizon of the text, meaning by this either the intentions of the writers or the events which may have been the occasion for the writing of the text. On the other hand, it is also possible to speak of the distance between the present time and the time of the text, for the world which the text represents may not be the world in which we live. How then is it possible to understand the text? Obviously

understanding could occur by transferring oneself into the original horizon of the text, but the question is: Is this transferring possible? Dilthey, of course, claimed that it was.

Pannenberg now attempts to use Gadamer's own arguments against him. If understanding implies the completion of the horizon around the features explicated in the text, how can understanding occur without an awareness of the original horizon? If understanding occurs as a result of integrating the features sketched in the text into an horizon, it must be possible to regain the original horizon of the text, if it can be understood at all. According to Pannenberg, if a Plato-text or a Pauline Epistle is understood, the horizon of the text is found, and the original situation from which it arises is discovered.37

From this argument, Pannenberg concludes that Gadamer is ultimately forced into a universal history. Several things suggest this for Pannenberg. First, it seems to follow naturally from Gadamer's well-known interest in Hegel, and Pannenberg gives a list of Gadamer's Hegel quotations to illustrate this.38 Second, it follows

also from the fact that texts are understood. If understanding of a text implies a knowledge of the horizons of the author, then understanding several texts is akin to a universal history, since the present horizons must be expanded to take in the other texts. This is the reductio ad absurdum of Gadamer's enterprise.

The arguments do not apply directly to Gadamer, since he is not primarily interested in texts or works created as a response to an eclipse or a prophet. Obviously, some events surrounding the writing of a text can be known; Gadamer's arguments, however, are directed to the understanding of Being, not to the events themselves. The prior analyses have suggested that this understanding of Being may disappear, leaving only a text which sketches some features of that understanding. In addition, Gadamer's arguments are an attempt to make plausible the possibility of constructing various horizons upon features suggested by the text.

Gadamer claims that understanding takes place, but the understanding need not duplicate the relationships in the original world of the text. Even if there might possibly be such a duplication, there would be no criterion for showing it, and although the concept, original world of the text, may be a well-defined concept pointing to the structures of Being for the author of the text, such a concept
can have only a limiting function. It may be necessary for clarifying the problem of understanding, but it has no other use. If, on the other hand, it can be shown that the contemporary understanding need not correspond to the features of the original understanding of Being, the argument about universal history is invalid. Although in a sense, Gadamer does intend a type of *Phänomenologie des Geistes*, his goal is to provide an account of how horizons change and not to show that horizons only become broader.

3. The Analysis of Hermeneutic Experience

The rather lengthy introductory remarks about the hermeneutic problem have been made in order to indicate as precisely as possible what problem Gadamer is attempting to solve. In his own account, Gadamer unfolds the problem as he discusses aspects of it, and at times it is difficult to separate the solution to the problem from the posing of the problem. Although the account which has been given here has been an attempt to separate the parts, it has been convenient in a number of places to give suggestions for Gadamer's solution. In particular, the analysis of key

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terms and concepts in Gadamer and Heidegger has been made to clarify the background to the solution, and in many cases this has provided hints for Gadamer's final solutions. Since some details of Gadamer's arguments have already been mentioned, it is only necessary to mention them; other parts which have been merely suggested, however, require amplification.

The problem begins with the reading of a text. Gadamer's claim has been that the text has a connection with a world, although this does not mean that the text is primarily an historical document; the point is that the author undoubtedly made allusions to the structures of his own world. For that reason, to see a work as the author saw it, an understanding of the original horizon of the text is required. The clarification of understanding as knowledge of a world has suggested that the knowledge disappears when the world disappears, and all that remains is a text which sketches certain features. Although some features may be discerned by reading the text, a reader who has a different world will miss allusions and metaphors which were significant for the author. Most of all, the complex set of relationships with the remainder of the original world are lost; the best that can be done is to guess what they might have been.
Any reading of a text without an understanding of its historical situation is, according to Gadamer, something like viewing a painting in a museum. The connections between the painting and its original world have been lost, and they cannot be regained. Mere reading unconsciously strips the text of its connections to another world, allowing some features of the text to stand out as possibilities forming the basis of another understanding. 40

An aspect of the hermeneutic problem has been already pointed out as the recognition of the difference between how the text describes things and how they are done now. 41 That is, the reading of the text must be done so that the differences are allowed to stand out as alternative ways to do things. Although it is often easy enough to force the text into our own mold, in hermeneutic understanding the text must be allowed to describe features of its own world. The hermeneutic problem requires this type of reading, since if the text is assumed to say something important, we must be careful to see the differences. Also, as Gadamer often indicates, 42 with the texts in which

40 The distinction which is being made is probably only a conceptual distinction. I think it perhaps helps to see what the process is. Gadamer claims that the reading and the understanding occur simultaneously. Cf. WuM, p. 251.


he is interested, there is an approach through a question. For example, a legal text is approached with the questions "What should I do in this situation?" and "What should be done in this situation?" This again shows the limited nature of Gadamer's analysis.

For understanding to take place, however, it is necessary for an horizon to be formed around the text. The features of the text must be completed with other relationships to form a world, since understanding applies only to a world. The problem is: how are these horizons completed? Since understanding is based on fore-structures, the features of the text are completed on the basis of the fore-structures of the understanding, if they are completed at all. Gadamer argues this point in the sections on aesthetics, although at times, two arguments are made. First, there is the claim that the reading of the text is already an interpretation of sorts. Not only does the reading of the text strip away its original

43 The importance of the questioning which indicates that one does not know an answer suggests Plato, and Gadamer is often interested in a speaking of this aspect in Plato. Among Gadamer's works on Plato, in addition to the sections of Wahrheit und Methode, are two early books, Platos dialek
tische Ethik (Leipzig: Meiner, 1931) and Plato und die Dichter (Frankfort am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 1934), and a recent volume Dialektik und Sophistik im siebenten platonischen Brief in the series: Sitzungsberichte der Heidelberger Akademie der Wissenschaften, Philosophisch-
connections with its world; the reading already is an interpretation. Second, an understanding is built upon the features of the texts which are derived from a reading.

Although no great pains are taken to clarify this difference and occasionally, it is even blurred, I think it is important. In the case of aesthetics, Gadamer draws on the fact that there may be rather great differences in performances of a single play. The variety of performances may represent different understandings of the play, and the performance of the play, for Gadamer, is occasionally equated with the reading of a text. However, the performance of a play is based on an understanding of the text, and this must be gained from reading. The emphasis in the section on aesthetics is upon possible interpretations which indicate that a play need not always be understood in the same way. In a minimal sense, I think Gadamer has a valid point. The reading of a text at least separates certain features from their original horizon, if it does not also begin the process of understanding by emphasizing the significance of some points and neglecting others.\footnote{44 Wum, p. 323.}

The problem which Gadamer has set out is not simply that of reading a text; the goal of the analysis is an explication of the event of understanding. If reading the
text at least has the minimal feature of removing many connections with the original horizon, and if understanding is then to be based on the features which are discerned from the reading, a way has been opened for recalling Hegel's introduction to the *Phänomenologie des Geistes*. The goal of Gadamer's analysis has been to examine the instance in which an understanding is reached on the basis of reading the text. Since experience in this case has been primarily experience in which horizons are changed, and since the possibility of regaining the original horizon of the text has been dismissed, the result is obvious. The understanding which is based upon reading the text is a different understanding, related in part to the fore-structures of understanding and in part to suggestions gained from the text. Gadamer calls this a fusion of horizons (*Horizontverschmelzung*)\(^{45}\) to indicate that the result is neither equivalent to the original horizon of the reader nor that of the text.

Hegel's importance for the problem may be shown by clarifying how Gadamer sees the problem of hermeneutic experience. First, there is the reading of the text, and the reading is already an application of the text in Gadamer's opinion,\(^{46}\) although this perhaps should be

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\(^{46}\) *WuM*, p. 322.
understood in the minimal sense of removing the connections with the original world. Second, after reading the text, there are still differences between how things are done and how they might be done. Since in hermeneutic understanding the problem is to "reach agreement with the text" about the structure of a world, the problem is not to be resolved merely by accepting the arguments of the text, or by ignoring them. This is similar to a conversation in which the goal is to reach an agreement about something, rather than to convince the other person he is wrong. The agreement is to be reached on the basis of both the fore-structures of understanding and the features discerned in reading the text, and if an understanding event occurs, the resulting knowledge will be equivalent neither to the horizon of the original text nor to the original horizon of the one who reads, for the understanding is not the reproduction of the original thought of the author; "it suffices to say that one understands differently if one understands at all."47

Hegel's insights into this process of experience are important, for Gadamer believes that they clarify the process. Gadamer also intends to give credit to Heidegger for seeing the possibilities of Hegel here, for the

analysis shows that he is well aware of Heidegger's essay on this text; however, although most of Heidegger's results are presumably accepted without mention, Gadamer's analysis is centered around the last paragraphs of the text which Heidegger treats. The last few paragraphs of the introduction are the most helpful for clarifying the concept of experience, and there Gadamer turns to the difficult notion of "mediating the self with one's self," explicitly referring the treatment to Hegel's works.

In the introduction to the *Phänomenologie des Geistes*, Hegel examines experience in terms of object and consciousness. The object of the consciousness has to be described as the in-itself (*an-sich*), since the problem is that of examining experiences in which horizons are changed. The "in-itself" indicates that there is something "outside of" consciousness which is different from that consciousness; this difference indicates a different manner of doing things. However, Hegel is also forced to say that this object, which is "in-itself," can only be known in so far as it is presented to the experiencing consciousness, and this makes it necessary to give the final description of the object of experience as: in-itself *for us*. The cryptic phrase indicates that there are elements which are strange (the object is different) and elements which are familiar (a necessity to be able to experience at all). Yet,
instead of being a distinction between elements "outside of" consciousness and elements "within," Hegel says that the distinction is made within consciousness—the distinction is for us. Briefly, there are these two elements here: consciousness, which presumably knows how things are usually done, and the object, which has been described as in-itself for us. Since this is a distinction which takes place within consciousness, Hegel is able to say:

This dialectical process which consciousness executed on itself—on its knowledge as well as on its object—in the sense that out of it the new and true object arises, is precisely what is termed Experience. 48

Hegel's description of experience 49 easily lends itself to the analysis of hermeneutic experience, even if a few points about the "object" seem a little odd. Gadamer claims that Hegel here is showing that knowledge is not just knowledge of a different object—not a mere addition of another object to a collection of objects. The point is that the object of consciousness, the object which is in-itself for us, gives rise to a change in the consciousness,

48 Phänomenologie des Geistes, p. 73. Baillière tr., p. 142.

49 Referring to Heidegger's work, Gadamer says that Hegel is not interpreting experience dialectically, for these features are found in experience. Cf. Wum, p. 337 and Heidegger, "Hegels Begriff der Erfahrung," Holzwege, p. 169.
so that the state-of-affairs which consciousness now knows contains the truth of both the old state-of-affairs and the object which was in-itself for us. Hence, in experience one becomes aware of other objects, or ways of doing things; as a result, both our knowledge and its object are changed, since now a better perspective on the situation is gained.

The process may be described as a self-mediation, since the distinction lies within consciousness. Hegel says:

This principle of Experience carries with it the unspeakably important condition that, in order to accept and believe any fact, we must be in contact with it; or, in a more exact way, that we must find the fact united and combined with the certainty of our own selves.

Although the object must be an object for consciousness before it can possibly be integrated into the structures of understanding, the use of the concept, experience, indicates that this has taken place. According to Gadamer, Hegel has recognized some important features of experience by pointing out that it is the recognition of one's self in that which is strange, and it is such a recognition of

50 WuM, p. 337.

one's self because the object is the "in-itself for us."

Whether or not Hegel's description of experience can be expanded to cover all types of experience is beside the point here. The application to the specifically hermeneutic experience, however, is obvious now. The object, as in-itself for us, corresponds to the reading of the text which is at least minimally "the text for us"; the problem is to combine the features of the text with our own present understanding; the result is the "truth" about the original structures of understanding and the text as it was for us. Hegel's mention of the "new object" indicates that experience need not be restricted to the mere finding of new objects; it can be a complete overthrow of the former ways of acting.

4. Final Remarks on the Argument about Hermeneutic Experience

A number of Gadamer's insights have been ignored in the attempt to exhibit his arguments about the specifically hermeneutic experience. Though many of these are important clarifications of various points, I think that the preceding exposition has considered the most significant elements. In Wahrheit und Methode, it is rather easy to miss the trees because the brush is so thick. Actually, the main features of the hermeneutic experience cannot be seen clearly unless the various definitions of Being, truth, and experience are kept in mind along with the analysis of the
fore-structures of understanding and the Being-beings distinction. Gadamer has failed to give these definitions.

The net result of the preceding arguments is a clarification of the concept, historical situation. Although some of Gadamer's arguments are vague—for example, the problem of to what extent reading is already an interpretation is a case in point,—the claims are made clearly. If there is to be understanding which is based upon the structures discerned from reading a text, that understanding must be different from the understanding which would have taken place within the original horizon of the text. A key distinction is the Being-beings distinction, for it suggests the possibility that an understanding of Being can simply disappear, making it necessary to complete the understanding without an objective standard for reference. However, the goal is not to understand as Caesar did, but to understand a world, in particular, our world. Learning how to do things in the same manner that others do, or in this instance, using a text to discover an orderly way in which things may be done, is the objective standard with which any result must be compared. This means that the goal of the experience which has been explicated is to reach agreement about how the shared-world is to be organized. Since this is the goal in this experience, there is no particular reason for attempting
to see things as Caesar did. Thus, it is clear, I think, that the final result of the arguments is that understanding must be different, if there is to be understanding at all.

D. The Problem of Language

Thus far, the examination of Gadamer's work has concentrated on the solution to the problem of understanding which was raised by Dilthey. The other difficulty connected with a critique of historical reason is that of the objectification of mind. Gadamer thinks that language is the objectification of mind which provides a solution to Dilthey's problem. The purpose of this section is to briefly sketch Gadamer's arguments, exhibiting enough of them to be able later to direct a criticism at the solution.

The problem of language had been raised by Heidegger at least as early as 1927, and the last part of Gadamer's book recognizes it as a problem, taking as its motto a sentence from the early fragments on hermeneutic of Schleiermacher. "Everything which is to be presupposed in the hermeneutic is language."52 Although the arguments of the last part depend on Heidegger, Gadamer scarcely mentions him, and it is surprising that the famous sentence,

52 Alles Vorauszusetzende in der Hermeneutik ist nur Sprache. Quoted in WuM, p. 361.
"Language is the house of Being," 53 is not quoted. It is important to see that the section on language complements the discussion of the hermeneutic experience by suggesting a solution to the second part of Dilthey's problem. Although Gadamer does not specifically draw the conclusion, language does take the place of an objectification of mind which can be examined, the work of art being replaced by language in Gadamer's solution to the problems of a Critique of Historical Reason. Gadamer believes that the study of language reveals the relationships which exist in the world, since these relationships are expressed through the language.

A transition to the final part of Wahrheit und Methode is provided by a previous discussion of conversation (Gespräch). Metaphorically, the experience of a text is called a conversation 54 in order to suggest features found in hermeneutic experience, and Gadamer carries this metaphor into the section on language, drawing the conclusion that language is the medium of all hermeneutic experience. No arguments are given to support this claim, and perhaps none can be given. It is only offered as the observation that reaching agreement about a state-of-affairs is completed in a linguistic process. Although Gadamer would agree that


54 WuM, p. 360 ff.
certain minor agreements may perhaps be completed without language, any significant problems such as ethics, aesthetics, or law require language for their solution. Because understanding can only be completed through language, Gadamer says that language is the solution to the problem of finding a concrete object to study. Language is the reification of the understanding, since the understanding is expressed through it.55

The goal of the arguments about language is to show that all understanding is completed only by means of language,56 although a minimal kind of agreement may occur if one merely points to two objects to show that they are different or to be compared. However, in addition to this observation which is fairly common, another claim is urged. Gadamer wants to call attention to the close connection between thinking and language, and a series of historical studies are devoted to this point. Although the examinations of the texts of Plato, Aristotle and the Christian writers are interesting, they do not actually support the claims which are being made, for the studies only show that Heidegger is perhaps not alone in pointing out a close relationship between language and thought.57

55 WuM, p. 367.
56 WuM, p. 376.
Some important points are suggested, however. For example, Plato's argument against the comparison of word and object is accepted as is the claim that language is not pure convention.

One other observation made by Gadamer is important. A contrast is drawn between a doctrine of emanation found in neo-Platonism and a doctrine similar to Hegel's objective mind in Nicholas of Cusa. The point is that for Nicholas of Cusa there is no emanation theory— and hence, a possibility of subordinationism—since language reflects the human spirit. Although the details of the reference to Nicholas of Cusa are unclear, the general intention is plain enough. Gadamer is interested in language, since it is a reflection of the individual understanding of Being, and the interest in the objectification of spirit is also attributed to Heidegger's work.58

Language embodies the relationships that men take toward objects. These relationships are determined according to interests and needs, and they are reasonably easy to alter in various ways. However, Gadamer says that the world is not simply objectified in language,59 and though

59 *WuM*, p. 432.
this seems a curious thing to say, I think that Gadamer means by it that language is not a reflection of the structure of "the" world. The relationship between language and world is closer than this. Gadamer's claim is that language is the world and not an objectification of a world which is present everywhere. Besides, there is no one world which is to be seen in various ways; there are only sets of relationships loosely structured around the Umwelt. Gadamer claims that languages represent the possibilities of a world, since they trace out the relationships that exist in these worlds. There is no question of objectification of the relationships in the sense that there might be objectifications of one world, although there is a concrete form of these relationships. The concrete form, which is language, according to Gadamer, is not derived from the relationships in such a way that it only incompletely expresses them. The fact that one has a world at all is based upon having a language, since without a language the agreements which are necessary for a world could not exist.\footnote{60 WuM, p. 419.}

This point leads immediately to a new evaluation of the theory of symbols. The problem of symbolism and allegory has interested Gadamer for some time. For example, Gadamer does not accept any doctrine of symbolism which
claims that the symbol is inexhaustible in its meaningfulness. Although it is true that the symbol may mean different things at different periods, he thinks it is a mistake to say that there is an absolute difference between symbol and allegory. The symbol must mean something, if it is a symbol at all, and whatever it may mean must be capable of being expressed. Obviously, there are things that one does not understand, but if someone claims to understand a symbol, and yet is not able to explain what it means, we tend to say that he doesn't know what he is talking about. It could be argued analogously that if someone claims to understand radios and cannot say how to fix them, there is reason to believe he does not really understand at all. Although the symbol may stand for something very complex, the subject-matter must be explicable, if the symbol can be actually understood. In this manner, the symbol represents something else, just as in allegory. If time is taken, the whole thing can be laid out.


62 Allegory has little, if anything, to do with allegorical interpretation as in the Philo and some early Christian and Jewish writers. The Romance of the Rose is an example of a use of allegory.
course, a symbol may be used for what we do not understand, but in such a case, the arguments have to "work around" the symbol. The symbol then represents what is not understood by "holding a place" for it.

According to Gadamer's claims, thinking is closely connected with language in such a way that being able to speak a language is equivalent to sharing a world with other persons and knowing how to deal with objects. Although at times Gadamer suggests the possibility of an interpretation of language in the nature of moods, in general the claim is a larger one—namely, that a language is a view of the world. Gadamer identifies this insight as Humboldt's. However, if Humboldt made the point, it dates from approximately 1820, or later. An earlier formulation, even if it is only very roughly sketched, is in Fichte's famous Reden an die deutsche Nation. Also,

63 Wum, p. 425. The point is not emphasized by Gadamer.

64 Wum, pp. 216, 219.


66 Cf. the fourth address delivered in the winter of 1807-8 at Berlin. Cf. Fichte, Gesamtausgabe ed. I. H. Fichte (1834-46), VII, 113 ff. I owe this suggestion to Professor Charles Garside, Jr.
Gadamer attributes a similar claim to Herder in the late 18th century.\textsuperscript{67} If there is a reason for overlooking Fichte and Herder at this point, it would probably be found in the use of these writers by National Socialism. Also, Humboldt's writings are probably more congenial to a philosophy of language. Whatever the case, Gadamer still appears to hold to a view that language determines nationhood, although it is not entirely clear what he means.

If "language is a view of the world" is his claim, then language has to be clarified in accordance with this. That is, language corresponds to the relationships in the world, since only through language may these relationships be discovered. The agreements which make up these relationships are agreements in language, for language is the medium through which the agreements may be formulated or made. I have noted that Gadamer has spent a great deal of effort on the attempt to exhibit this point in the history of philosophy; however, although the arguments do not really make the point, a helpful suggestion is found in an example. When customs change, a change in language

can be observed, for certain terms go "out of fashion" or become tinged with ironic overtones. The point is that the changes in the relationships can be seen by the changes in language—the addition of new words, or phrases, and the disappearance of others. 68

Although it seems likely that no good argument can be given to show the relationship between language and a world, the example calls attention to the fact that there is a close relationship between language and the historical situation. Gadamer is correct in pointing this out. Yet, the claim that language is a view of the world needs to be examined more fully. The next chapter, which discusses the important concepts, Being and Truth, provides a foundation for an evaluation of this claim.

It was mentioned earlier that the arguments Gadamer gives are essentially incomplete, since the foundations for them has remained unclear. In a sense, the problem which Gadamer needs to examine is a problem of ontology, for he needs to point out what the "facts" are, if his project is to be completed. In particular, some of the concepts closely related to the concept, historical situation, need to be examined more carefully than has been done thus far. Until that has been done, there is no way to evaluate Gadamer's solutions.

68 WuM, pp. 425-426.
CHAPTER V

PROBLEMATIC CONCEPTS

The concept, Wahrheit, is crucial to Gadamer's arguments. In this section it will be related to several important Heideggerian concepts to provide a basis for discussing the hermeneutic experience. To clarify Wahrheit, the distinction between Being and beings must be explored further, for this "ontological difference builds a foundation for interpreting Wahrheit. The primary goals of this section are to explicate the concept of truth, to show the close relationships between Being and Truth, and to exhibit the simplifying aspects of the concept, horizon. Much of this section will depend directly on suggestions from Heidegger, although it should be noted that clarifications of some difficult points are found in Gadamer. Except for the final discussion of horizons, Gadamer often offers supplementary suggestions to those of Heidegger.

A. The Distinction between Being and Beings

Since previous sections have already provided some suggestions about the relationship between Wahrheit and Sein, it is necessary to draw out the implications of these suggestions. Because much of Gadamer's work is an attempt to examine the implications of the Heideggerian framework, preliminary discussions of "Being-in-the-world" provide the point of departure for the analysis.
The problem of Being indicates the need for an entirely new approach to philosophical studies, for in it the interest is not directed exclusively to entities. The difference between Welt and Umwelt helps clarify the problem which is raised, even if the mere distinction may be misleading. Primarily, the Welt-Umwelt distinction is a simplification which allows some important differences to be seen, although it tends to make a black and white distinction where, in fact, a spectrum of smaller differences should be pointed out.\(^1\) Since the concept, Welt, has been discussed earlier, only the basic features required to orient the discussion will be mentioned here.

First of all, World indicates the realm in which conventions are followed, papers are read, and people agree in general.\(^2\) Although in the early Heidegger this concept appeared to be more or less peripheral, Gadamer now takes it up and makes it the subject of an intensive inquiry.\(^3\) Umwelt ("environment" for Gadamer) indicates

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1 Heidegger's "Der Ursprung des Kunstwerkes" in Holzwege is a more careful account of the distinctions that may be made. A great deal of work remains to be done in order to clarify precisely how these distinctions should be made.

2 Cf. Sein und Zeit, 126 ff.

3 Since Gadamer claims that Heidegger had this in mind all the time, the present analysis assumes that Gadamer is correct about this. He is not alone in making this claim. Cf. Otto Püggeler, "Sein als Ereignis" Zeitschrift für philosophische Forschung XIII (1959), pp. 610-612. There Püggeler quotes some relatively unfamiliar statements of Heidegger which corroborate the point.
the physical facts that are present; these are typified by the surroundings that confront animals. Animals (and persons to some degree) are dependent on certain aspects of the environment, such as water, food, and reasonable temperatures. The argument that animals are dependent upon the environment is equivalent to saying that environmental conditions must be suitable for the animal to live.

Although men, too, are dependent on these factors, they also have a certain freedom from the environment; they are able to survive in the most varied conditions, because they have the ability to construct shelters and harvest crops. Such freedom from their environment includes the possibility of no longer being strictly limited by the physical environment. Man is able, for example, to live in areas where there is no natural food if he is willing to import it. The essential factor in such freedom from physical surroundings is that it is possible only on the basis of a very complex behavior. Because of a complex set of agreements that are shared with other men, one is able to be free from the environment.

Although agreement is important, a more important factor is what the agreement is about. Agreement that "this rock is round" is not the primary concern; in fact, the primary concern is not even the agreement that "this object may be used to drive nails." In most of his work Gadamer
is mainly interested in the agreement about that which is neither a thing nor an object. This situation occurs in the realms of ethics, customs, and aesthetics, since these agreements are not agreements about particular objects, but rather dispositions to act or react in certain ways. Even if the agreements correspond in a rough way to a state-of-affairs (of objects), the agreement about the state-of-affairs is a way in which one may "look at" the collection of physical objects. Besides the physical objects there are agreements about how they will be treated, and this distinction points to the "ontological difference between Being and beings." 4

This interpretation of the difference between Being and beings is not the only one, for parts of Sein und Zeit appear to suggest the possibility of another interpretation. For example, the stress on the question about the meaning of Being raises questions about the concept, Being. The analysis of questioning suggests the possibility of something which one looks at in a particular manner, for questioning is broken up into the three elements, das Gefragte, das Befragte, and das Erfragte. The implication of this three-fold separation was pointed out as the

distinction between Being and meaning of Being, and this
distinction was still present in the discussion of the
fore-structures of the understanding.5

At this point it will be useful to recall briefly
how the distinction was made in chapter two. Being was
explicated as the relationships in the shared-world. A
problem immediately arose, however, for there was no
concrete objectification of these relationships; hence,
for the moment, Heidegger was forced to talk of the
meaning of Being which, in fact, was a "view of Being."
Because a concrete objectification could only be found
in a single Dasein, there was no direct way to approach
the problem of Being. The three-fold distinction in
questioning was necessary, for although the problem was
still Being, the question had to be addressed to a parti-
cular Dasein (das Befragte) in order to discover his
understanding of Being. This understanding was equivalent
to the meaning of Being, or Being for a particular Dasein.
This takes into account the statement: "The question of
the meaning of Being is the most universal and the emptiest
of all questions, but at the same time it is possible to
individualize it very precisely for any particular Dasein."6

6 SuZ, p. 39.
Some of Heidegger's commentators, however, have taken up the distinction between Being and the meaning of Being and in this writer's opinion have used it incorrectly. Alphonse De Waehlens, for example, argues from another concept of Being, and turns it against Gadamer's work. In his book on Heidegger, although a distinction between Being and beings is accepted, it is not Heidegger's distinction. Primarily, De Waehlens objects to the Being-beings distinction because he believes there is too great a difference between the "luminous domain of Being" and the "chaotic realm of entities." Heidegger's distinction, as far as De Waehlens is concerned, tends to relate Being to a totality of entities which will be seen in a particular way. De Waehlens sees correctly that following Heidegger here will lead in the direction of an idealism. Because he is aware of the directions and implications of Heidegger's thought, De Waehlens refuses to accept this way of making the distinction and offers an alternate account.

*Being*, for De Waehlens, is to be distinguished

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7 De Waehlens has written on Heidegger and has translated several Heidegger texts. Cf. *La Philosophie de Martin Heidegger* (Louvain: Éditions de l'Institut supérieur de Philosophie, 3rd ed., 1948).


sharply in principle from beings, even if in practice the distinction may be very obscure. De Waehlens points out that in fact we never really point to a brute existence (an entity) which is separated from the realm of Being, for to talk of something or to point to it is already to begin relating it to other objects. Thus, there can be no sharp distinction between "brute existences," and the "context into which they fit."\textsuperscript{10} De Waehlens argues that philosophy is only able to examine entities in so far as they are intelligible, and for him the intelligibility is there and not "donated" by Dasein.\textsuperscript{11} It is not entirely clear to me what De Waehlens means. At times he appears to saddle Heidegger with a Platonic-type Being-beings distinctions. Then he urges the Aristotelian objection that all beings partake of Being (they all are formed matter). Pöggeler may have De Waehlens in mind\textsuperscript{12} when he says that to construe Vorhandenheit as independence from consciousness is to miss Heidegger's point.

De Waehlens does not follow the Being-beings distinction. For him the distinction is simply not clear enough, and it must be granted that the distinction is

\textsuperscript{10} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 315.
\textsuperscript{11} \textit{La Philosophie de Martin Heidegger}, p. 315.
\textsuperscript{12} \textit{Op. cit.}, p. 613.
primarily conceptual—there is no Being without beings, although Dasein in particular is required for Being. The primary point which De Waehlens does not accept is the relationship between Being and beings. He admits that Being is related to intelligibility, since in some way it represents the order of entities. Gadamer, for example, makes the distinction by claiming that it is the ordering of entities by Dasein; hence, Being is closely related to understanding. De Waehlens makes the distinction in a different way, however. Although Being corresponds to the order of entities, the order is not imposed or constructed by man. In fact when a man faces the entities he is faced with a chaos that he cannot completely order. Since entities are intractable, no complete ordering may be discovered or imposed.


15 De Waehlens, "Herméneutique," p. 580. For a counter-argument which is similar to Gadamer’s position in a number of ways, see C.I. Lewis, Mind and the World Order. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1929). Especially, see chapter five.
Gadamer's as well as Heidegger's, since he apparently assumes an ordering of entities which can not be explicitly known. The ordering is not known because there is a certain contingency; one does not quite know his way about. The ordering cannot be discerned by man, although De Waehlens suggests at times that an order is there and that, theoretically, it might be discovered.\textsuperscript{16}

The implied contrast might be characterized roughly as a realist-idealist distinction. Gadamer believes that the structures of Being are related to the understanding; De Waehlens thinks that they must be abstracted from the entities. Gadamer is willing to say that there are a number of different ways in which entities may be structured; De Waehlens, on the other hand, attempts to unfold the one structure which Being has. It could perhaps be suggested that the difference is also a difference in temper between optimists and pessimists.\textsuperscript{17} Gadamer believes that Being is essentially intelligible, and De Waehlens finds that the uncertainty on which he insists implies unintelligibility. There is a difference of emphasis, however, since Gadamer always wants to examine the problems which are related to agreement about a shared world, while De Waehlens, on the other hand, is concerned about the single cases which, in

\textsuperscript{16} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 591.

\textsuperscript{17} De Waehlens mentions this. \textit{Ibid.}, p. 591.
his opinion, do not fall under any set of rules. The real crux of the problem, however, seems to me to lie deeper than any mere differences of emphasis. The difference is the fundamental disagreement about ontology which has been briefly sketched. The results of the ontologies lead directly to the relationship between understanding and Being. For Gadamer and Heidegger, Being must be essentially intelligible because understanding, as knowing one's way about, corresponds to Being, the structure of the shared world which is dependent on agreements among men. For De Waehlens, Being is essentially unintelligible for us, since one has to deal with brute facts which can not be ordered. Man is neither able to order nor see the order of the brute facts which confront him.

Perhaps a brief note about Gadamer's interpretation of Hegel will be helpful. Gadamer does not look at Hegel as an absolute idealist, for he follows Dilthey in seeing Hegel as an empiricist, a philosopher with profound insights into the structure of history and society. Although Gadamer objects against Hegel's absolute knowledge as much as does De Waehlens, there is a sense in which one does have complete knowledge. To say, "he knows his way about in the situation," indicates that a person will not be surprised by any of the

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18 Ibid., p. 574-5.
usual developments. There is a complete knowledge of the things that ordinarily occur in the situation. Though this does not legislate against the possibility of suddenly being faced with something unusual, the usual situation may be recognized in its totality. Gadamer's "absolute knowledge" may be roughly sketched as two-fold. (1) Knowledge of the situation may be complete (or absolute) because one knows what to do in the situation. However, (2) the knowledge is not absolute if it implies that the situation can never be altered. Even if one knows his way about in a shared-world, the possibility that the world will change is always present. Gadamer argues against De Waehlens that Hegel is important, for in Hegel there is a description of knowledge which "understands the situation."

B. Truth and Being in Gadamer

If the "ontological difference between Being and Beings" is accepted, it is necessary to clarify the use of the term, Wahrheit. Since Being has been described as "structures of a shared-world," and understanding has been analyzed as "knowing one's way about in a shared-world," the close relationship between Being and understanding is immediately apparent. Understanding is not simply understanding of radios. Now, understanding is Being since there is no "order of the universe" to apprehend.19 There is no

19 It has been pointed out that Gadamer attributes this tendency to Heidegger even in Sein und Zeit.
Being which is seen by a community as the meaning of Being, there are only features of a shared-world to deal with, and among these features Gadamer is interested in the agreements about morals, ethics, and customs. These only very generally deal with "objects." They concern what everybody (das Man) does in certain situations. Although Gadamer does not mention the distinction between Being and meaning of Being, the meaning of Being again corresponds to an individual's understanding; hence, questioning of an individual may not accurately reflect the structures of the world.

Gadamer's work is devoted to the attempt to clarify this realm of agreements as a type of knowledge which is not the same as the knowledge in the natural sciences. If the only phenomena which are presented are agreements, what may be said of the concept of truth in such instances? Since the question about truth in this case must be about the agreements, it cannot simply point to an object as in the statement, "That object is a rock." It must point to what everybody does or says in some situation. In the case of science one is faced with an ideal of verification;\textsuperscript{20} experiments may be repeated to show that the same results

are obtained each time. The situation Gadamer attempts to explain is slightly different. In practical experience one is not faced with exactly the same problem, for here there is no way to give a "proof" such as: "If you don't believe that is a rock, just go over and look more closely."

Although an attempt may be made to get another to see that things are done in a particular way, no "proof" can be given in matters of customs and morals. One can only hope that the other will "see" the truth of the situation. 21 The problem is to get another to see "how everybody does these things." 22

Gadamer's work has examined the problems that arise in speaking of a shared-world; these features of the shared-world have been found to correspond to "what is done in the situation." Now, he wants to expand the use of Wahrheit to cover not only the realm of the natural sciences but also that of the Geisteswissenschaften as well. Perhaps this is to preserve a symmetry between Wahrheit and Erkenntnis. Erkenntnis corresponds to knowledge if we

21 Ibid., p. 231. A key phrase for this is, "gaining insights."

22 The problem of the transition from "how things are done" to "how one should do things" is the subject of a paper by John R. Searle. Cf. "How to Derive 'Ought' from 'Is'" Philosophical Review, 1964, pp. 43-58.
take into account expressions such as "knowing his way about." Now, Gadamer wants to expand Wahrheit to this case also, and in the first section of Wahrheit und Methode he argues that Wahrheit has been narrowed from a broader use. Perhaps suggestions to carry Gadamer's meaning for Wahrheit would be "actuality" or "correctness," indicating that "this is the state-of affairs" or "this is how things are done if they are done correctly." Wahrheit is a reference to the structures of the shared-world and structurally, at least, roughly corresponds to a definition of truth which emphasizes the correspondence of a statement to the thing. Mention of a custom will be true if it does in fact mention a custom that exists.

The significant difference between Gadamer and the Enlightenment, by Gadamer's own definitions, is that the Enlightenment has failed to see the significance of the shared-world. Usually, Gadamer tries to show this by

23 Wahrheit should be translated as "truth" to be in accordance with Gadamer's attempt to expand the concept. However, for clarity it may help to at least suggest other possibilities.

24 Gadamer uses the term, Aufklärung, for almost every writer up to Heidegger. This also includes Plato since Gadamer speaks of a modern Enlightenment. (WuM, p. 254) He characterizes it as "the prejudice against pre-judices." (WuM, p. 255) I will use the term to try to clarify what Gadamer has in mind.
explicating concepts which point to the shared-world. The fundamental point, however, is that, although some concepts indicate agreement among persons, the agreement does not necessarily have to relate to things as much. In the light of the distinction between Welt and Umwelt, Gadamer argues that there is no one thing to point to in order to show what a custom is. A book of etiquette, for example, is a codification of what the custom already is. To talk about rocks a person can examine rocks, but to talk about customs the behavior of persons must be observed. Not just any observation counts, however, since there are persons who know the customs and others who do not. The important point is knowledge as "knowing one's way about"; this knowledge cannot be picked up by looking at objects qua objects.

To use this concept of knowledge it is necessary to


discuss a definition of truth, even if it is not necessary to accept Gadamer's evaluation of the tradition. Truth must be seen in its relationship to the shared-world. Since it is seen in its correspondence to Being, Wahrheit refers to an ordering of entities. That is, it corresponds to a world in which entities and actions are ordered in particular ways.

C. Equivocation about Truth

Thus far, an important part of the discussion of truth has been suppressed. This has been done for two reasons. First, there are two definitions of truth, for there is a fundamental equivocation about truth that is essential to the argument. Second, it is necessary to examine the first definition before the second one may be clarified. In fact, the two definitions are very closely related, and both are necessary for explicating experience and knowledge. The equivocation extends beyond an equivocation about truth. It is also found in the discussion of

"knowledge," "Being," and "experience."

The first might be called a "static" definition of truth. Explication of this definition has pointed out that truth corresponds to the structures of the shared-world. It is related to "how in fact things are done." As such it refers to the actual customs and traditions which are present at a particular time. Yet, the claim has all along been that customs do not always remain the same, for this is the only conclusion that may be drawn from the fact that a hermeneutic is necessary. Since understanding does not always occur in reading texts and seeing plays, the understanding of Being does not always remain constant. The claim is made that some texts resist efforts to understand them because the author's world was different from ours.

The second definition of truth might be called a dynamic definition, for it refers to the eventful nature of truth. This must now be explicated in terms of a shared-world. In a long analysis of art at the beginning


29 Such a claim was a part of Bultmann's work on de-mythologizing. Ibid., p. 492. A similar point is urged in "Was ist Wahrheit," Zeitwende (1957) 28, p. 233.
of **Wahrheit und Methode**, Gadamer works back and forth between the two definitions, although he primarily attempts to explicate the first one. A part of the reason for neglecting to explicate truth as event may be the assumption that Heidegger has already sufficiently treated this aspect. I think this is the case since Gadamer nearly always supposes a rather complete knowledge of Heidegger's works. Heidegger references are disconcertingly brief. Page citations are often missing, and entire arguments or interpretations may be condensed to a sentence or two.\(^30\) But the second definition is the more important; it must be clarified also.

Heidegger's definition of truth goes back to a discussion of the Greek term, **aletheia**. This is translated by Heidegger in a number of ways, although the usual translation is **Wahrheit**.\(^31\) Since Heidegger thinks that the common translation of aletheia as "truth" misses an important aspect, he attempts to clarify what he sees there. As far as Gadamer is concerned the arguments on the word, **aletheia**, are beside the point. The important thing is Heidegger's insight and not his "productive misuse of the

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texts." In his opinion, it is more fruitful to attempt to see what Heidegger sees as a characteristic of Wahrheit, rather than to try to either confirm or disprove the specific arguments about particular words.

Gadamer is interested in the clarification of truth as event, since it is implicit in an experience when one says, "Yes, now I understand," or "Now I've got it." Besides the situation of knowing one's way about in the world, there is also a possibility of "knowing how it might be," or even of "gaining insights into how things are." Heidegger's explication of aletheia is a very complex discussion of the relationship between concealment and unconcealment (Verborgenheit and Unverborgenheit). 33 Heidegger makes a series of distinction that are not as clear as they could be, but if I read them correctly a part of the import is as follows. Heidegger is considering man's comportment when he is not concerned with some one

32 Cf. WuM, Erkursus IV, p. 473. Gadamer is not directly concerned with etymologies here, but the same point holds against them. Gadamer wants to object that Heideggerian interpretations are not even faithful to the implications of the theory of understanding which Heidegger developed.

33 Cf. Marx, op. cit., pp. 149 ff. Esp. 150-151. Marx's note on this point is important, but a key Heidegger text perhaps throws light on the complex process of concealing and revealing. The text is Vom Wesen der Wahrheit, sec. 5. (Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 2nd ed., 1949). The text was first printed in 1943 and is based on lectures held as early as 1930).
entity or even several entities. Much of his behavior deals with the totality of entities. Yet this totality of entities (Seiende im Ganzen) is to be taken in two ways. First, Heidegger says that the manifest nature (Offenbarkeit) of the totality of entities does not correspond to the mere collection of known objects. This is the claim that the understanding of Being implies the structuring of the entities. Second, by placing im Ganzen in quotation marks Heidegger does mean the mere sum of entities. In this case "entities" indicates "that which is intractable."
The distinctions imply that the structured totality of entities is seen in the truth-event. Seeing the totality (and this now means that one knows how to get along) implies that the intractable nature of entities is concealed. When a way to deal with the entities is discovered, there is no longer such a strong recognition of their intractable nature. Perhaps an example would be: a series of lines is seen as a picture. It is difficult to see it as so many lines. Seeing it as a picture obscures the fact that one is "just faced with a series of lines."

Gadamer assumes these results, for both he and Heidegger often see truth as a truth-event. Since they are particularly interested in the "creative character" of the event,^{34} it is necessary to examine the concept of

truth to see with what right it is possible to speak of a truth-event.

When truth is seen as event, it can no longer be seen as merely related to the relationships in the shared-world, although truth as event is related to the distinction which has been made between Welt and Umwelt. It has been mentioned that Welt is only loosely structured upon Umwelt. Since the Umwelt provides only the barest sketch of the features of Dasein's world, various worlds may be structured upon the Umwelt. The structures do not prescribe any one world, since the world is partially characterized by agreements about the physical surroundings, and no one of the worlds which may be constructed on the Umwelt has any priority over the others in the sense that a particular one is the right one, for there is no "correct order" with which they may be compared. If the features of the world, seen as agreement about customs and morals, are only loosely related to physical objects or laws, then perhaps it is easier to see that there may be changes in those customs and morals.

On the basis of these features, there is no reason

35 To speak of "the" Umwelt is perhaps a simplification. I think it is justified, however. Gadamer does not want to argue that there is no correspondence between Welt and Umwelt. Perhaps a difference in the Umwelt would lead to a difference in the structure of Welt.
to differentiate any one world from the others as the correct one. In fact, it is an error to attempt to set up one's own world as the correct one from which others may be judged as "right" or "wrong." Obviously, one can say "that's not the way we do things," but that only points up the difference. Essentially, there is a tendency to remove any objective standard by which the features of a world may be compared. Problems arise with this approach, for no standard is left by which to judge the structures. Appeal must be made to very vague concepts such as "viable society" or "most pleasure for the most people." 36

The problem, however, is: What may be said of the concept of truth in this situation? Truth has been applied to the features of a shared-world, and now in the light of the arguments there is no basis for restricting the concept of truth to any particular set or sets of such features. What, then, may be said of a situation in which one reads a text and "sees" a way in which things might be done? According to the previous arguments this must be called a truth-event, since one has now become aware of a way things might be done and previously this was unknown. In speaking of this, Gadamer uses the terms

"enlightening" and "surprising" (Einleuchtende and Überraschende), terms which indicate that an event has occurred.  

The examination of the eventful nature of truth can ultimately be reduced to the fact that insights may be gained into how things might be. If the distinctions between Welt and Umwelt are accepted along with the definition of truth, then it is not too difficult to see why one can speak of truth-events, for possibilities arise and they too have a claim to truth.

D. Equivocation about Being

The equivocation about truth is not surprising, if the relation to an equivocation about Being is seen. The first definition of Being has already been examined as the structure of the shared-world. Now, it is necessary to characterize the definition of Being as event. Although, as in the definitions of truth, his dependence on Heidegger is obvious, here Gadamer's work is primarily the explication of the concepts of Being with which Heidegger has been concerned. Even if Heidegger explicates both concepts, Being as event is primary for him. Otto Pöggeler calls this the goal of Heidegger's work, identifying the

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37 WuM., pp. 459-460

38 Ibid., p. 621-622.
Kehre as the turn from a concern for "Dasein as Being-in-the-world" to the problem of "Being in its meaning and its truth and hence Being as that which makes 'world' possible." Püggeler's statement refers to the close connection between "Being" and "world"; but while Heidegger had explicated a static concept of Being in his early work, the later works are more concerned with Being as event. The treatment of "world" corresponds to the static concept of Being in which Being is seen as the relationships in the shared-world.

Heidegger's shift, which is apparent in the essay on art, indicates that the concern is now for the event. Although he is talking about an event, it is important to remember that the relation to the shared-world is still significant, for the event cannot be described merely in terms of how I can get along; there must be the inclusion of references to a world, for the event must be in terms of how a world may be structured.

The event of Being corresponds to the truth-event,

39 Das Sein in seinem Sinn und seiner Wahrheit und damit Sein als Ermöglichung von "Welt"... (Ibid., p. 621.)

40 These concerns are mentioned by Püggeler. Cf. Ibid., pp. 610, 622.

41 Püggeler makes it a point to stress this about Heidegger. I think that this is always implicit in Gadamer's claim. Cf. WUM, XVII.
since the event, in both cases, is related to the structure of a possible world. Suddenly, there is a realization that the way I am doing things is not the only way; they may be done in other ways. This may mean that there has been an incorrect understanding of how things are done, or it may signify a recognition that things may be done in another way which is different from our method. In the first instance one might say, "Now, I see how to do it, but I didn't understand before." Then he could show that he now understands by answering questions, performing tasks, and so forth. The second instance is similar, and it is closer to the hermeneutic problem which Gadamer discusses later. It involves the recognition that "This is how things might be done," although in fact they are not done this way now.

Both cases reflect the occurrence of an event in which there is a recognition of how things may be done.

The equivocation in Gadamer's case is ultimately an equivocation between Being as the structure of a shared-world and Being as the structure of a possible shared-world. The mention of the event in the second instance is important, since there is a recognition of how things might be done. The claim is made that there is more than one way for a world to be constructed, and that one may become aware not only of the structures of one's own world but also of possible structures of a world. The concept, "possible
structures," is necessary for Gadamer because there is always an implicit historicist-type claim. He argues that this is a Heidegger interpretation, but perhaps it should also be referred back to Dilthey's Weltanschauungslehre.

E. Necessity for the Equivocation

There is an equivocation about Sein and Wahrheit, and in fact the equivocation does not stop there. It applies equally to the concepts "understanding" and "experience." Experience, it was argued, can indicate "that which conforms to what I already know," or it may indicate a "dreadful experience" which represents a turning-point. The problem is to see if such equivocations are necessary, and if they are, to indicate briefly what difficulties they might raise.

First of all, the equivocation which occurs is at least partially conscious, and as long as it is recognized, it need not be a problem. Although the second definition, Being as the structure of a possible shared-world, may tend to lead to positing a correlative "Being-in-itself," the last sections have been dedicated to showing the error of this interpretation and to recognizing the equivocation in such a way that "Being-in-itself" is not assumed. It is admitted that Sein und Zeit appears to confirm such an

42 WuM, pp. 94-5, 116.
interpretation at times, but in the light of Heidegger's other early writings and of *Sein und Zeit* itself, this interpretation must be avoided. If the equivocation is noted, it is possible to separate the elements and perhaps see why the equivocation is there.

Primarily, the equivocations are of the *pros en* type. That is, the two definitions of each concept refer finally to something that is the same in each one. For *Wahrheit*, it is a reference to agreement (either actual or possible), and for *Sein*, it is a reference to the features of shared-worlds (either actual or possible). The pairs of definitions cannot be construed as entirely distinct because of their similarity. In fact the definitions are complementary, for both are required to express the "historical reality." There is a world which is reasonably characterized as static; in this world judgments agree. But this does not imply that there can never be any changes. The second definition of Being and of truth takes into account that the structures may be in a constant state of flux. At any given time they are reasonably fixed and distinct, but they do not necessarily endure from time to time.

It is necessary to see both aspects of *Wahrheit*

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and Sein, because both aspects are found in "historical reality." Besides agreements about conventions, there are subtle, and at times not so subtle, changes in the conventions. Even though the equivocation is necessary in order to treat both aspects, the fundamental similarity requires that the connection between them be recognized.

F. Further Examination of the Concept, Horizon

Much of the thrust of the arguments which Gadamer has given has been directed toward a re-introduction of Hegel into contemporary philosophy. Perhaps the movement goes back to Dilthey. Although obviously many things in Hegel are still in disfavor, Gadamer claims in a number of places that Hegel is becoming important again. Not Hegel as absolute idealist, however, for now the interest is in Hegel's insights into historical phenomena, the phenomena of society and mind. Gadamer finds Hegel important because he provided a number of ingenious insights which were based on an acute power of observation.

With the introduction of horizon, an obvious way for using Hegel had become clear, even if the possibility had long been implicit in Gadamer's argument. Wahrheit

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44 Heidegger's contribution to this may be seen in two articles: "Hegels Begriff der Erfahrung" in Holzwege, and "Hegel und die Griechen"—interestingly enough, in the Gadamer-Festschrift.
corresponds to how things may be done. Since Hegel was the philosopher who, more than any other, described the "absolute mediation of history and truth," his description showed that truth for a particular state of affairs was related to what was recognized as existing in that state. Truth at a particular stage in the Phenomenology was not just a glimpse of the Absolute; it also made sense to speak of truth as "how things appeared for the ones in that state." Gadamer thinks that Hegel is important because he saw that things could be looked at in various ways and that these ways were relatively consistent in themselves. Each had a claim to truth because in fact the things recognized at a particular stage could be structured in such ways.

Yet, there are obvious difficulties with Gadamer's arguments, and to a great extent they may be traced back to how the introduction of "horizon" simplifies the previous discussion. Gadamer used "horizon" as a simplification in more than one way. Horizon simplifies the problem of the language required to describe the facts, and it also simplifies the phenomena because Gadamer tends strongly to speak

45 WuM, p. 324.

46 Hegel can speak of "the truth for understanding." Cf. Phänomenologie des Geistes, p. 115 (Baillie tr., p. 195).
of the horizon. He is willing to talk not only of the horizon of a person but also of the historical horizon of a group. Simplification as a kind of shorthand is all right, but the second type of simplification is not so harmless. Although the problem need not arise in connection with the discussion specifically oriented toward experience, the arguments about language are based on this simplification in such a way that their legitimacy rests upon the possibility of that simplification.

Gadamer has followed a number of Heidegger's suggestions which point to understanding as "understanding of beings in their totality." Although it is no claim to "know everything," the arguments indicate that Dasein does know how to deal with all of the objects or states-of-affairs that are commonly met. The concept of horizon had been introduced to indicate this type of understanding; now, Gadamer carries it too far by assuming that there is one horizon within which everything is ordered. Actually, there are a number of ways in which things may be observed. For a crude example, the statements, "The sun sets," and, "The earth revolves around the sun," could be compared. Here, two different ways of looking at the same phenomena are exhibited; each is correct in its place, since the validity of the statement depends upon whether a person is an artist

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47 WuM, p. 286 ff.
or an astronomer. Perhaps the contrast becomes clearer if the difference is noted between treating a person as a friend and treating him as a statistic for calculating insurance rates. Again, there are different ways of looking at things.

A Heideggerian text may be used to point out the simplification, for Heidegger is well aware that, although the totality of entities may be seen as a whole, there is no justification for saying that there is one horizon.48 In a section entitled "Being-there as a State-of-mind,"49 Heidegger points out the different types of Being-in-the-world which are typified by moods and states-of-mind. Dasein may be apprehensive or fearful in the face of the totality; on the other hand, he may be optimistic. Moods "arise out of Being-in-the-world, as a way of such Being."50 Although no concrete examples are given, Heidegger says that the mood discloses Being-in-the-world, as a whole.

A rough example of the point may be helpful. A deck

48 This argument is similar in some ways to Wittgenstein's arguments about "language-games." Gadamer makes a completely non-committal note about the Wittgensteinian concept in the Foreword to the second edition of Wahrheit und Methode (p. XXII, n. 1) and, so far as I know, makes no other mention of language-games, although Wittgenstein is also briefly treated in "Die phänomenologische Bewegung."

49 SuZ, pp. 134 ff.

50 SuZ, p. 136.
of cards and a set of rules are essentials of a card game. Since the same cards may be used for various games, it is indifferent whether poker, gin, or hearts is played. The rules prescribe what counts as a legitimate move in the game and also what the significance of each card is. The different possible games would roughly correspond to different possible moods. The concept, horizon, might be applied to the legitimate moves in any one game, although it would be difficult, and probably impossible, to apply it to the set of games that may be played. Although to ask for an horizon of the set of games might be comparable to finding a common denominator of the card games, this would mistake Heidegger's insight into Being, since Being is not the common denominator; it is the ordering that is found. Being, in Heidegger, is not that which is common to everything that exists in so far as it exists. In the present example, the cards may be related in various ways in order to play different games, but what would be the use or validity of the concept, "possible moves in the games that may be played with a deck of cards?"

It seems to me that Gadamer should have introduced something like moods as possible ways to be related to the totality. This would indicate possible ways to act in a particular situation, while at the same time marking off boundaries between entirely different ways of acting.
Although much can be said for using it as a simplification, the introduction of "the horizon" suggests an illegitimate simplification. It may be possible to speak of the horizon of a particular situation, but to speak of the horizon of an historical situation is to coin a concept which can only have minimal utility. In accordance with Heidegger's definitions of it, Being can apply only to the possibilities of situations; if the same set of objects may be arranged in various ways, the use of "horizon" for these possibilities becomes extremely vague. "Horizon" should be limited to concrete situations in which objects are seen as related in characteristic ways; although in a rough way, it may be applied to "historical situations," great care must be taken since a number of moods may be possible at a given time.

G. Evaluation of Gadamer's Solutions

Before concluding this chapter, it is necessary to briefly examine Gadamer's treatment of the problems of a Critique of Historical Reason in terms of horizons. In the light of the simplifying aspects of the introduction of horizon, is it possible to treat experience in terms of horizons, or does analysis in terms of horizons prevent accurate analysis of experience? This question now needs to be examined.

The concept of horizon has been pointed out as a
simplification in two ways. First, it provides a simplified language, and second, it tends to simplify the phenomena by speaking of the horizon. The first type of simplification was not considered to be serious, but the second type could lead to difficulties. However, in this case I do not think that it does. On the contrary, it has the merit of conveniently calling attention to some of Heidegger's analyses.

The concept of horizon is not simplifying to the point of falsifying, because the arguments do not depend on talking about the horizon. It makes no difference to the arguments whether they are in terms of moods or whether they are in terms of the horizon. Since at a given time there is something like a horizon, it is possible to describe experience in terms of changes of these horizons. Dasein is always in a world, according to both Heidegger and Gadamer; this means that Dasein must deal with objects and persons in a prescribed ways. The introduction of the concept, horizon, has only called attention to this fact by simplifying the language and by showing that "having a world" implies a set of ways of acting in certain situations. Since within a situation certain ways of acting are appropriate and others are not, it is possible to describe the limits of the situation as an horizon.

The second important difficulty is that language is supposed to deal with a world, a totality of entities. Although Gadamer means
that the totality of entities is simply the totality of what is usually considered, even if he does, there are difficulties. If it is even granted that some fields, such as physics, only deal with a small group of entities (perhaps it makes more sense, however, to say that physics deals with whatever it treats in some particular way), problems are still present for Gadamer's arguments. The question to raise is the following: Is it necessary that a person speaking a language always deals with the totality of entities in some particular way? Gadamer tries to answer this question with "yes," thereby making the distinction between Geisteswissenschaften and Naturwissenschaften a question of whether one deals with the totality of entities or not. Apparently, he wants to claim that in dealing with the totality of entities, there is only one way to do it for each language. This claim could be very easily carried over into a political philosophy with a strong nationalistic tendency, although Gadamer doesn't attempt to draw these conclusions in Wahrheit und Methode. The conclusions had been drawn in the speech on Herder. 51

Aside from any implications such a claim might have for a political philosophy, there are good reasons for not

51 Volk und Geschichte im Denken Herders, pp. 22-24.
allowing the claim to stand. The main reason for rejecting the claim is that it simplifies the phenomena by suggesting a single way of relating to the totality when there are a number of ways in which this may be done. As in the example, there may be several card games which are entirely different from each other, although each game uses the same collection of entities (a deck of cards). This point has been suggested by noting the simplifying aspects of the use of "horizon." Gadamer's arguments neglect Heidegger's early insight in *Sein und Zeit*—namely, that language is to be taken as the sharing of a co-state-of-mind (*Mitbfindlichkeit*). 52 Heidegger's point is forgotten in favor of Humboldt's claim about the relationship existing between language and culture. The simplification which follows as a result of this is, I think, the real problem with Gadamer's treatment of language, although the approach to other parts tends to be by way of historical sketches rather than concrete arguments. The simplification is introduced during the discussion of horizon and runs throughout the analyses of language, even if occasionally Gadamer makes a note about it.

The analyses of language need to be revised in the light of this insight of Heidegger's. Although some major

52 Suz, p. 162
changes may be necessitated by this, much of the last part of *Wahrheit und Methode* might remain intact, for the historical studies would not be affected. Gadamer does have insights into language which could be developed with only minor changes. The real problem is the tendency to say that German is a view of the world, French another view, and English still another. Such a claim would be much too vague to be of any real use. A discussion of language is needed which will consider some of the points Gadamer makes while recognizing that there are different ways that a relationship with the totality of entities may occur. They may all be treated as physical objects in one case, while in other cases, distinctions may be made between persons and everything else or between animal life and everything else. Within a single language, a number of different types of relationships may occur; hence, saying that "language is a view of the world" does not help to clarify the problem. Within a particular situation, the language appropriate to that state-of-affairs may be a view of the situation, but that is different.
CHAPTER VI

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The preceding discussion of the works of Dilthey, Heidegger, and Gadamer has shown that Gadamer's work may be seen as going beyond these earlier attempts at a Critique of Historical Reason. The study has shown the similarity between the problems raised by Dilthey and the analyses given by Gadamer, and Gadamer's dependence on Heidegger has often been noted.

Although the relationship between Gadamer's work and Dilthey's is occasionally difficult to discern, the following points may be drawn clearly. First, Gadamer intends a Critique of Historical Reason in somewhat the same sense that Dilthey did. In short, Gadamer is interested in a solution to some of the problems raised by Dilthey. The goal is an explication of a type of experience, just as Kant had analyzed the experiences which were found in the natural sciences. Although this reading of Kant may be unsympathetic, it is probably justified. Both Gadamer and Dilthey thought that Kant's analysis of experience in the *Kritik der reinen Vernunft* was limited to a particular type of experience, although Gadamer would be willing to say that parts of the *Kritik der Urteilskraft* helps to clarify another type of experience.

Second, Gadamer believes that Dilthey, nevertheless, took the natural sciences as a model for his analysis of
understanding. In spite of his attempt to distinguish Geisteswissenschaften from Naturwissenschaften, the description of understanding was constructed upon the ideal of understanding found in the natural sciences, and this is a basic contradiction in the results. Hence, Dilthey answered the problem of understanding in the wrong way because he was guided by the ideal of the natural sciences. The ideal of the Sichbineinsetzen is one drawn from the natural sciences, according to Gadamer, and cannot be used for the type of experiences he wishes to explicate. Gadamer believes that Dilthey must ultimately claim that understanding may take place in only one way.

Finally, the problem of an objectification of mind which could be studied had been answered incorrectly by Dilthey. Dilthey had attempted to employ Hegel's category, objective mind, indicating by it an objective reality which could give evidence about the structure of mind. However, he had only been able to say that works of art were objectifications of mind which did not deceive. Although Dilthey no doubt had in mind the claim that the artist was essentially unrelated to a world because he created for no practical ends, Gadamer has pointed out that the artist's world is not something that may be left behind. Gadamer has argued that there is no understanding (or creation) which is apart from a world. Hence, Dilthey's solution to the difficulties of the objectification of mind is inadequate also.
In a rough way, Gadamer examines problems which were raised by Dilthey, although the solutions he gives are different from Dilthey's. That is, the problems of a Critique of Historical Reason are, in his opinion, significant philosophical problems. Hence, Dilthey pointed out important questions, but the answers he gave to these questions were incorrect.

As a student of Heidegger, it is not surprising that Gadamer often uses the methods and results of Heidegger's analyses extensively, and although it is true that many of Gadamer's statements are drawn directly from Heidegger, it is, nevertheless, necessary to note that often Gadamer attempts to systematize Heidegger's results and to draw conclusions which had not been drawn by Heidegger himself. In particular, Gadamer attempts to draw together the suggestions about the fore-structures of the understanding so that a clear presentation of the "circle of understanding" may be made. The discussion of the fore-structures of understanding provides the "jumping-off place" for the discussion of hermeneutic.

Gadamer attempts to cut through the puns and word-plays in Heidegger's writings in order to get to some important conclusions that are drawn. Actually, a few brief mentions of Heidegger's "etymologies" are the only significant direct criticisms of Heidegger. Rather than debate with Heidegger's works directly, Gadamer often chooses either to examine
interpretations of these writings or to draw his own interpretations from the texts. For example, although the das Man section of Sein und Zeit appears to be a fairly minor section, Gadamer indirectly uses it as the key to the solution of the problem of understanding. Although this re-evaluation of the texts may well be in accord with Heidegger's intentions as evidenced by the Kehre, it seems clear that Heidegger did not place such an emphasis on these sections originally. Hence, Gadamer's interpretations of Heidegger are often very subtle and creative in their own right.

The significant advance beyond Heidegger is in the realm of hermeneutic, for Heidegger has not attempted to clarify this problem. The very examination of this problem rests upon the re-evaluation of several Heidegger texts, in particular the re-assessment of the significance of the das Man section of Sein und Zeit. In examining this problem, Gadamer re-examines the problems of the older hermeneutic theory of Dilthey and Schleiermacher, analyzing it from the vantage point of the clarification of the concept, historical situation. Thus, Gadamer's main advance over Heidegger has been the application of results drawn primarily from early texts of Heidegger to the problem of understanding a text from a different historical situation. This problem of understanding a text which is from a different historical situation is the traditional hermeneutic problem. The application of these
results to the problem of understanding a text made it clear that Dilthey's solution in terms of a \textit{Sichhineinversetzen} was incorrect. Heidegger had also suggested the possibilities of language as the objectification of mind to Gadamer. The difficulty Gadamer faced was that of organizing a set of suggestions so that an account of the hermeneutic problem could be given.

Therefore, against Heidegger, Gadamer maintains the following points. First, although the concept Being-in-the-world is crucial to the formulation of the concept, historical situation, the most important element of the historical situation is the agreement about a world. Heidegger, although he recognized this feature in \textit{Sein und Zeit}, failed to make it the center of the study. Gadamer believes that this agreement must ultimately form the central point of any discussion of Being-in-the-world. It was noted above that this derived from a re-evaluation of several texts from Heidegger's early writings.

Second, using a number of suggestions he had gotten from Heidegger, Gadamer attempts a systematic presentation of language as the medium of experience. Of course, this study of language and its relationship to experience is guided by the explication of the concept, shared-world. Through the discussion of language, Gadamer attempts to show why "language is the house of Being" by pointing out that any significant agreements are completed by means of language.
Finally, Gadamer argues that Heidegger's puns are not even in agreement with the theory of understanding which may be derived from his writings. Hence the word-plays, insightful though they may be, are not to be taken as compelling or factual. It is necessary to see the difference between the theory of understanding and the misuse of texts in such a way that the value of the theory of understanding is kept in mind. When this is done, the puns might be seen as insightful, but the rest of Heidegger's arguments will not be made to depend upon the validity of some playing with words and sounds.

The results that are established by Gadamer's writings on the hermeneutic problem are the following. First, all understanding is based on fore-structures which must be seen in their relationship to a world shared with other persons. Gadamer attempts to show the importance of the shared-world by analyzing a series of concepts, such as taste, common sense, and others. The whole point is that of showing the significance of "doing things just as everybody else does." Although mention of such agreement had been found in Heidegger's studies, Gadamer makes this the basis for the explication of the hermeneutic experience.

Second, in the instance of understanding which takes place in connection with a text from a different historical situation, it is impossible to understand as the author did. This result is drawn from the arguments about the fore-structures
of understanding. If all understanding proceeds upon the basis of fore-structures, then there can be no one way to understand a text. The resulting understanding will be based on elements of the text and elements of the understanding of the reader. Hence, there can be no guarantee that a text will always be understood in the same manner.

Finally, Gadamer answers the question about the objectification of mind by claiming that language is such an objectification that can be studied. Where Heidegger had suggested the importance of language in understanding, Gadamer looks at language as the reification of the understanding. Gadamer sees language in connection with the concept, objective mind, and although the same point is attributed to Heidegger, Gadamer draws the conclusion explicitly, whereas at best it was only implicit in Heidegger. Gadamer believes that all understanding is essentially linguistic, and it must be so if it can be communicated.

Gadamer's solution to the hermeneutic problem centers around the two problems pointed out in the treatment of Dilthey, and Gadamer's interest in both problems can be shown in his early works.¹ The structure of Wahrheit

¹ The interest in the historical categories may be seen in Plato und die Dichter. Gadamer himself testifies to the interest in language as the solution to the other aspect of the problem of a Critique of Historical Reason in
und Methode itself points out that two problems are considered. Though the first half of the volume is taken up by a discussion of aesthetics and an historical survey of the problems related to the hermeneutic, the final half of the book divides neatly into two parts of almost equal length. One part examines the problem of hermeneutic understanding; the other is a discussion of language. Both parts are guided by the interest in, and association with, Heidegger.

Of the two sections devoted to the problem of a Kritik der historischen Vernunft, the analyses of the hermeneutic experience come more to the point than the discussions of language, and here, Gadamer's chief contribution lies. His work is not original in the sense of discovering an entirely new approach, since his goal has been, at least in part, the application of suggestions in Heidegger's work to a particular problem. Because the section on the hermeneutic experience has arguments about the problem at hand rather than historical sketches of traditional philosophical texts, it is fair to say that the analysis of the hermeneutic experience goes beyond the work that previous writers had done, whereas the discussions of language tend

to be a little fragmentary and lacking in sustained arguments, although there are a number of insights into the problem. The fact that Gadamer tends to return to the problem of language may be some evidence of dissatisfaction with the solution or the formulation of the solution.

Hence, as Wahrheit und Methode now stands, the analysis of the features of the hermeneutic experience has a more complete solution of a problem than the analysis of language. Since Gadamer is still writing actively on the problem of language, a more complete solution may yet be forthcoming.

Although Gadamer's work presents a wealth of material which centers around the major points of his analysis, my claim has been that the ideas which have been worked out have been analyzed primarily on the basis of suggestions found in Heidegger's early work. Heidegger's studies point back to certain ideas which were suggested by Dilthey under the title, Kritik der historischen Vernunft, and Gadamer's work can be seen as a solution to the knot of problems which Dilthey raised, even if the solution was not Dilthey's solution. Nevertheless, the analysis of the structure of the hermeneutic experience does meet some requirements of a Kritik der historischen Vernunft.²

The arguments are a *Kritik der historischen Vernunft* in Dilthey's sense, because Gadamer is asking essentially the same question which Dilthey asked: "How is understanding possible?" Involved in the question are the parts which Gadamer has noted. (1) How is understanding possible within one situation? (This problem was essentially answered by Heidegger). And (2) How is understanding possible when there are different situations? The second part of Gadamer's book has been a clarification of the outlines of the latter type of understanding, and the third part, the discussion of language, clarifies the linguistic nature of understanding.

The goal of the work has not been to say that the experiences *should* be of a particular kind. Rather it is an attempt (1) to exhibit the existence of experiences which can not be adequately treated by the natural sciences, and (2) to then analyze these experiences to show their basic structure. Dilthey saw that there was a difference in the experiences and proposed the *Kritik der historischen Vernunft*. The plan of Gadamer's work has been guided by an attempt to clarify the type of knowledge found in the *Geisteswissenschaften*, and particularly it is oriented toward the structure and analysis of *experience*, treating the problems Dilthey raised in the *Entwürfe zur Kritik der historischen Vernunft*. 
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