Gadamer's Transformation of Hermeneutics: From Dilthey to Heidegger

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Abstract: The purpose of this paper is to show how Gadamer’s hermeneutics synthesizes the insights of both Heidegger and Dilthey in order to introduce a new hermeneutics. Gadamer’s hermeneutics is based not only on the priority of ontology, as Heidegger insists, and neither is it only a product of life which can be objectively understood through study and rigorous method, as Dilthey suggests. For Gadamer, hermeneutics is the bringing together of ontology in terms of history. By this synthesis Gadamer not only places himself within the context of a Lebensphilosophie, but also shows that it is within language that Being can be disclosed according to a lived context. Throughout this paper the philosophies of Dilthey and Heidegger are explicated within a historical context as to bring out how, and why, Gadamer sees the need to surpass these philosophies. Through Gadamer’s philosophy of play and the game, language, the dialogical model, application, and the fusion of horizons we can see how Gadamer’s critique and questioning of these two philosophy leads to his new hermeneutics. Special attention is paid to the role in which these two contrasting philosophies were used to complement each other in the product of Gadamer’s philosophical hermeneutics as it is presented in his major work Truth and Method. For Gadamer, the task of understanding is never complete. Therefore, his hermeneutics remains a dynamic structure with which we can always question the past and our traditions. This paper seeks to show his philosophical movements within these questions.
comprehensive understanding of the community.

Similarly, the community was a wonderful place to live in. There were many

activities and events that were held in the community park, which

was a popular gathering place for residents of all ages. The

park featured a playground, a basketball court, and even a

garden for community members to grow their own vegetables.

Residents often held outdoor concerts and festivals in the

park, which attracted people from all over the city.

However, the community faced some challenges as well. Some

residents complained about noise and pollution from

nearby construction sites, while others were concerned about

the lack of green spaces in the area. Despite these issues,

the community remained a vibrant and active place where

people came together to support one another.

In conclusion, the community was a place where residents

could live, work, and play. Through its diverse activities and

events, it provided a sense of belonging and connection to the

people who called it home. As long as the community

continued to support one another, it would remain a

vibrant and thriving place.
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Introduction

Within hermeneutics, it is important to point out the major steps that have been made. A characteristic of early hermeneutics was that it wished to avoid misunderstanding and gain a true interpretation of a text. Hermeneutics, by early accounts, mostly Schleiermacher, was the art of interpretation. It aimed to avoid misinterpretation of mainly texts and speech. After this formulation of hermeneutics, it was Wilhelm Dilthey that was to bring this field of study into the realm of philosophical hermeneutics. Dilthey proposed that the art of interpretation and understanding be divided into two main categories: the natural sciences and the human sciences. The natural sciences had already been laid out, philosophically, by Kant as he set forth the conditions of positive knowledge in the *Critique of Pure Reason*. Dilthey’s philosophy tries to set the human sciences apart from the methodological model of the natural sciences, a task not yet undertaken in philosophy. Interpretation in the realm of the human sciences had no formal model to follow. It is here that hermeneutics can teach us how understanding unfolds within the realm of art, literature, and history. Within the human sciences, there is no purely objective stance to the tradition; it is founded on the more subjective understanding of the world and the things within it. It was Dilthey’s plan to lay out a model of understanding in the human sciences that would make any understanding of these more subjective, interpretive, areas possible. It was not Dilthey’s plan to keep the humanities in the realm of purely subjective, but to give an account of how to raise the human sciences to an objectively valid understanding while, at the same time, keeping an interpretive element. For Dilthey, the human sciences were about understanding man’s expressions in the social and artistic realms.
introduction

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This thesis intends to show how Gadamer’s hermeneutics synthesizes the insights of both Heidegger and Dilthey in order to introduce a new hermeneutics. Gadamer’s hermeneutics is not only based on the priority of ontology, as Heidegger insists, yet neither is it only a product of life which can be objectively understood through study and rigorous method, as Dilthey suggests. For Gadamer, hermeneutics is the bringing together of Being in terms of history. By this synthesis, Gadamer not only places himself within the context of Lebensphilosophie, but also shows that it is only within language that Being can be disclosed according to a lived context.

The plan for this project comes to life in Gadamer’s own words. Gadamer wants to use “[t]hat conscientiousness of phenomenological description which Husserl has made a duty for us all; the breadth of the historical horizon in which Dilthey has placed all philosophizing; and, not least, the penetration of both these influences by the impulse received by Heidegger.” Although no account of Husserl is given in this present work, the philosophical roots in phenomenology that Husserl gives to Heidegger and Gadamer remain important. What is important to explicate for the present work is the philosophical direction given to Gadamer by both Dilthey and Heidegger.

In Dilthey, hermeneutics gains a central point by which all understanding of the human sciences becomes possible. Prior to Dilthey, the human sciences were seen as insufficient in comparison to the natural sciences. Whereas the natural sciences were proving their worth by gaining access to the mysteries of the world on a daily basis, the human sciences were not making any inroads to any sort of objectively valid truth.

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Dilthey sought to change this view. Although the human sciences may seem less certain and provable than the natural sciences, it is in the human sciences where our expressions of inner life come forth. Dilthey's philosophy focuses on life and history as a means to piece together larger and larger sets of information in order to be able to put together an objectively valid interpretation of these expressions of life.

From Dilthey, Gadamer gains an appreciation of history and the process of history. Although Gadamer is to reject Dilthey’s method, Dilthey remains important in outlining a new concept of hermeneutics and understanding that is based on life itself. Although Dilthey’s project failed because of his reliance on an epistemologically grounded certainty, his outline of a new philosophy that gives hermeneutics a central position remains essential. Gadamer is keen to take up the main question that drove Dilthey’s hermeneutics: how can we come to an understanding of the human sciences? The methods may be different, but Gadamer’s philosophy remains dedicated to the same general principles.

Out of Heidegger’s philosophy comes a radical new ground on which to lay the foundations of beings. From Heidegger’s analysis of Being, philosophy is turned upside down. Taking his entry into phenomenology through Husserl, Heidegger develops a new philosophy that turns the transcendental method of Kant upside down to ground the human on the finitude of Dasein. Dasein is the entity within the world that encounters the world; it lays the foundation for all knowledge. Through Dasein, we experience and unfold the world in order to make understanding possible. For Dasein, hermeneutics becomes a central theory for any interpretation and understanding.
Later hermeneutics, Gadamer and Heidegger in particular, would fill in the definition of “hermeneutics” to include everything that can be interpreted and understood. Hermeneutics not only became a theory of interpretation of things in the world, it became on ontology of what can be disclosed within the realm of Being. This understanding of the world helps to shed light on the human condition within our world and the constraints of society. For Gadamer, what discloses the world in this way is our language and how we understand our culture within that language. Culture and language are intricately connected and are responsible for each other’s disclosing of the world. Within a language all of our culture is reflected. The way we use words and the very words we have, all point to the kind of culture that we have. Language is a dynamic thing; it is always growing and changing. It is never static. What becomes an issue is the possibility of understanding other cultures and other world-views within other languages. Hermeneutics seeks to bridge the gap in understanding between one person and another, between one culture and another.

Therefore, following Heidegger, Gadamer moves away from the idea of gaining a method for understanding in general. Understanding becomes something that is experienced. Because of this experiential quality of hermeneutics, both Heidegger and Gadamer will call upon art to open up the realm of truth to disclose the world in a non-scientific way. Unlike Schleiermacher and Dilthey, who both relied on a methodology of the human sciences, Gadamer and Heidegger break this tradition.

Although Gadamer’s path of hermeneutics seems to follow Heidegger, there are major differences. In his departure from Heidegger, Gadamer introduces a number of key innovations to his hermeneutics. First, is the dialogical method of question and
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answer that allows truth to unfold. Not only is this a break from his teacher, in a sense, it is a reinvigoration of a classical way of doing philosophy. To this extent, Gadamer seeks to re-appropriate Greek philosophy in order to shed new light on the past, to make the past come to life. Secondly, Gadamer carries on a more humanist tradition of philosophy in a genuine recognition of the other through his emphasis on conversation and culture. This recognition makes room for an ethical realm in ontology. Heidegger’s philosophy lacked an ethics, as his concentration remained with Dasein and the un-concealment of Being. Thirdly, Gadamer breaks from Heidegger in his use of history as a multi-dimensional backdrop from which all understanding can spring instead of the linear history of Being that Heidegger creates through the concept of facticity. Finally, but not lastly, Gadamer concretizes Heidegger’s philosophy through his emphasis on the concrete situation. It is in the process that Gadamer links to the Aristotelian term phronesis that Gadamer sees all understanding as a practical application. In this practical application, the abstract history of Being, for Heidegger, gets pushed aside for a more common sense understanding.

Against the backdrop of the hermeneutic tradition, and through the transformation of Dilthey and Heidegger, Gadamer stands out as an innovator in the field, as is shown in his major work, Truth and Method. This work is seen as the cornerstone of philosophical hermeneutics. The title for Gadamer’s most important work remains rather ironic. Gadamer never defines what “truth” really is. Further, he never counts on any sort of method that is able to gain this truth. Truth is disclosed only through language and the experience of life; it is always and already with us. Truth, for Gadamer, is something that opens up to us as we experience the world and everything in the world.
There are many secondary resources in the field of hermeneutics. Famous texts by authors such as Jean Grondin and his *Introduction to Philosophical Hermeneutics*, Richard Palmer and his work entitled *Hermeneutics: Interpretation Theory in Schleiermacher, Dilthey, Heidegger, and Gadamer*, Joseph Bleicher and his book *Contemporary Hermeneutics*, are all instructive as to what hermeneutics is and can be. But, there is a noticeable absence of any effort to trace the roots of concepts and key ideas in Gadamer’s hermeneutics. Gadamer states himself that he is a synthesis of many different methods. So, it is the present task to look into this synthesis and to show the lineage of philosophical methods that Gadamer employs throughout his philosophy. Through investigating this lineage, it is important to point out exactly what concepts Gadamer retains from their respective philosophies, and how Gadamer goes beyond both of these philosophers.
It was after Schleiermacher and his hermeneutics that Dilthey was to take up the task of conceiving a general hermeneutics. For Dilthey, this means a way of interpreting the world according to the *Geisteswissenschaft*, or human sciences. Dilthey thought that it was only through the human sciences, as opposed to the natural sciences, that we are able to gain any understanding of history and our place within it. Interpretation becomes a human activity, not just merely an abstract look at the conditions for knowledge, as it might have been for the Neo-Kantians or Hegel and his grand metaphysical system. It is Dilthey’s aim to ground the human sciences and gain an objective validity for the human sciences. By gaining this objective validity, he intends to separate and distinguish the human sciences from the methods and characteristics of the natural sciences in order to ground the human sciences on the characteristics of life itself, or *Lebensphilosophie*.

Dilthey’s philosophy lays the foundation for later hermeneutics as an act of interpretation and understanding based on a life philosophy, worldview, and historical consciousness. These themes get taken up again in Heidegger and Gadamer to lend justification to the hermeneutic enterprise. To show Dilthey’s hermeneutics, and Gadamer’s criticisms of Dilthey, three major points will be clarified: *Lebensphilosophie*, the human sciences versus the natural sciences, and his theory of hermeneutics as it stands with regard to our understanding of the world.
I. a) Lebensphilosophie

The term *Lebensphilosophie*, in general, refers to what would be called “life philosophy.” Life philosophy became important for three main philosophers within the 19th century, the philosophy which influenced both Heidegger and Gadamer: Dilthey, Nietzsche, and Bergson. Life philosophy is generally said to be in protest of the eighteenth century philosophy of formalism, antiseptic rationalism, and overly abstract philosophical systems. What remains important for life philosophy is a return to the lived experience and away from metaphysical systems that seem to separate themselves from this kind of human experience.

For Dilthey, life philosophy is seen as a way to get away from the mechanist and reductionist philosophies in order to bring out the true social and artistic experience that can be found in human endeavors. The qualitative experience of art, history, and literature all remain outside the boundaries that the purely methodological sciences would be able to grasp. It is from within this framework that Dilthey sees life philosophy as an important step. Some commentators have even called Dilthey’s approach a phenomenological one. What remains important for life philosophy is that it understands these human experiences from within the structures of life itself. Any metaphysical structures must be cast off from life philosophy; these cannot account for the richness and fullness of a human phenomena. Dilthey is keen to point out that the understanding of history and historical events is not merely the product of an objective distance that has no resemblance to modern man. The making of history is carried out as

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3 Palmer, *Hermeneutics*, 100.
The observed data in Table 1 are not consistent with the predicted model given the observed data. The model does not accurately capture the underlying relationships in the data. However, further analysis and refinement of the model may be necessary to improve its accuracy. The results suggest that the current model may need adjustments to better fit the observed data. Additional experiments will be conducted to validate the model predictions and to further understand the underlying dynamics.
a product of human life, within the structure of human life. No amount of quantifying, measuring, or explanatory frameworks will adequately convey the meaning of history and the value of what this historical event really means. What is needed for meaning and value is life itself.

A key feature of Dilthey’s life philosophy is his treatment of experience. Dilthey wants to set apart and distinguish what is special about experience within life philosophy. *Erlebnis* is that lived experience which comes from life, as opposed to *Erfahrung* which can be any kind of general experience. It is in lived experience where many seemingly different encounters with objects are brought together in order to make the world coherent. Lived experience is not the conscious act of experiencing something or other; it is part of our consciousness itself. It is part of the act of consciousness.⁴ In this way, lived experience stands behind all objects of consciousness and therefore, even beyond the subject/object distinction. All our objects of consciousness are indebted to our lived experience and the piecing together of experience within the stream of consciousness that we live through. After we reflect on this experience, it becomes conscious. However, even without any type of reflection, lived experience still operates throughout all of life: “*Erlebnis represents that direct contact with life which we may call ‘immediate lived experience.’”⁵ Lived experience remains the mediator between life itself and all experience. However, it is not an object or differentiated from the experiencer.

Through lived experience, Dilthey wants to stress the importance of the temporality of experience. Our experience of temporality is implicitly founded on our lived experience. Because of this, temporality is given to us through life itself as part of

⁴ Palmer, Hermeneutics, 108.
⁵ Palmer, Hermeneutics, 108.
experience. Through experience, we come to know all things and to give things meaning within temporality. This gives life a particularly “historical” view of the world. It is in this sense of historicality that we can understand ourselves only in terms of the past, present, and future. It is because of this temporality that the “nonhistoricality of interpretation can no longer be assumed and leave us satisfied with analysis that remains firmly in scientific categories fundamentally alien to the historicality of human experience.”

From this standpoint of life, Dilthey criticizes the tradition as it understands the concept of history. Gadamer points out that Dilthey’s “thinking is so different that neither the aesthetic-pantheistic identity of philosophy of Schleiermacher nor Hegel’s metaphysics, integrated with the philosophy of history, remain valid for him.” Although these two approaches radically differ from each other, both remain incomplete for Dilthey. Schleiermacher’s hermeneutics remains too grounded on the methodical following of the natural sciences, whereby we try to gain understanding by putting ourselves in the position of the other. Hegel’s view of history remains overly metaphysical and does not appeal to life or to human experience in any way. For Hegel, the Aufhebung that is constantly building to disclose the absolute spirit seems too distant to the foundation that seems to be present within life.

Dilthey can be seen as following the path of Kant, in a particular sense. However, instead of writing a Critique of Pure Reason, Dilthey wants to write a “critique of historical reason” from which he can lay the groundwork for a foundation of the human experience.

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6 Palmer, Hermeneutics, 111.
7 Gadamer, Truth and Method, 218.
The problem with Kantian philosophy, according to Dilthey and especially the Kantian categories, is that it tells little regarding the fullness of life itself. As an explanatory framework, it does little but point out how the human could be seen, or in Kantian terms, the limits of knowledge. Applying the Kantian framework of understanding to great literature would do little to bring out any sort of meaning, let alone give any clue as to why it is great and other pieces of writing are not. Dilthey states that, “in the veins of the ‘knowing subject’ constructed by Locke, Hume and Kant, runs no real blood.”

Life philosophy, as a system, sees itself as a way to get beyond convention into what is fundamental to life. What is important to attain is a reality unfalsified by externalities and culture; in other words, life seeks to get away from the old frameworks whereby it was subjected to external categories and other reductionist tendencies. Kantian frameworks built on life, for Dilthey, impose a set of external rules. These categories are static, temporal, abstract, and bear no resemblance to life itself. To get beyond this, life philosophy wants to turn to man’s inner life. This inner life consists of: cognition, feeling, and will. The inner life is not subject to the same mechanistic forces of causality and quantification. The concept of life itself Dilthey sees as an inexhaustible well of creativity and imagination. Although he does not get beyond the medieval concept of man as a knowing, willing, and feeling person, he clearly sees a creative force that is at play within man that gets beyond the enlightenment concept that man was first and foremost a reasonable thing.

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8 Palmer, *Hermeneutics*, 100.
10 Palmer, *Hermeneutics*, 102
...
Although Dilthey comes out against the Kantian categories, there is a question as to how far he gets away from the Kantian understanding of the person. He did not see Kant as being the great enemy of humanism; the Kantian project had done great work for the positive sciences in outlining the limits of knowledge. However, there is another sense in which Dilthey remains indebted to Kant. Dilthey’s structure of life philosophy remains, in Gadamer’s view, within a certain Kantian framework. Gadamer states: “Dilthey had to answer the question of how historical experience can become a science. Hence, in a clear analogy to the Kantian question he sought to discover the categories of the historical world that would be able to support the human sciences.” For Dilthey, life was supposed to be about experience and come from the structure of life itself. Dilthey, although following Kant to a certain degree, wants to distance himself, as far as possible, from Kant. To do this, Dilthey has to claim that the transcendental subject is not the starting point, but rather the starting point is the historical reality of life. Again Dilthey remains ambiguous in Gadamer’s eyes. Gadamer states, as an objection to Dilthey’s system, that, “[he] is following the old theory that understanding is possible because of the homogeneity of human nature.” This homogeneity seems to be letting rigid and fixed structures into the life philosophy. Exactly how far Dilthey has come from the Kantian categories of understanding remains an open question.

The special role that life, as a concept, plays in Dilthey’s philosophy makes it very important. As Theodore Schatzski suggests, life is the metaphysical fundament

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12 Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, 221.
behind which human questioning and thought cannot go. This fundamental level brings life down to the most basic feature of the human being. The consequence of this is that life becomes the grounding structure for all human activity. It is because of this precarious opinion of life and life philosophy that Dilthey becomes open to the objection of relativism, an objection that Dilthey will never fully address in his philosophy, other than the appeal to history and culture as the background for life. Gadamer defends Dilthey by saying that he was looking for the historical structural coherence. As historical beings, we are within a history and a time. While this may seem relative, this history builds itself up because we can look at larger and larger sets of historical information. It is in historical coherence that we get beyond the mere individual coherence and into a more universal view in which there can be some sort of objective value placed on the meaning of history.

1. b) The Human Sciences versus the Natural Sciences

For Dilthey, one of the main goals of philosophy is to distinguish the human sciences from the natural sciences. Although this distinction lies at the basis of his life philosophy, it is important to see, for Dilthey, how these two sources of knowledge differ. Dilthey does not want to distinguish two different ontologies, i.e., two different ways of going about knowledge in order to characterize and understand it properly.

To characterize this distinction between the natural sciences and the human sciences, Dilthey states: “We can distinguish the human studies from the sciences by

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certain, clear, characteristics. These are to be found in the attitude of mind... which moulds the subject-matter of the human studies quite differently from that of the scientific knowledge.¹⁶ This attitude of the mind is what distinguishes the difference between knowledge of the human phenomenon over scientific knowledge. What is important for Dilthey is that the human sciences forge new models for interpreting their human phenomenon. The natural sciences, as opposed to the human, are already secure in their foundations and need no help in order to justify their validity.

The human sciences, for Dilthey, want to shed light on the inner life of man and one’s whole life experience. Only through a process of understanding ourselves can we get at the core of understanding the human sciences. Although Dilthey started looking at the inner life of man through psychology, his process now takes him beyond a mere psychology. For Dilthey, the meaning of a psychology was the early experimental psychology and explanatory frameworks. This psychology proves to be insufficient for Dilthey. Only through expression and understanding can man come to know life: “In short, we can only know ourselves thoroughly through understanding; but we cannot understand ourselves and others except by projecting what we have actually experienced into every expression of our own and others’ lives.”¹⁷ For Dilthey, the understanding of life is not merely an introspective project; it is something that we must project through expression, and only by experiencing and understanding others do we start to understand ourselves. In his essay, “The Rise of Hermeneutics,” Dilthey claims that we can only

¹⁷ Dilthey, Construction of the Historical World, 176.
know ourselves and our individuality in comparison with others.\textsuperscript{18} This inner experience provides the initial intelligibility and gives us the ability to derive the meaning of socio-historical experience and individual experience.\textsuperscript{19} For the human sciences, this becomes a telling feature; Dilthey tries very hard to get away from a merely subjective account of life and the individual. The human sciences can only become sciences when taken as part of the whole, that is, taken as one articulation of the process of life.

The natural sciences for Dilthey are also the product of experience. The difference is that the subject matter is used and interpreted in different ways. The natural sciences make no use of and no reference to human experience. Also, they make no use of mental facts. The natural sciences quantify and measure, reduce and categorize. These tendencies of the natural sciences make them unable to shed light on the human condition. Although the human may be confined to the world of nature, we may use nature to forward human endeavors; we cannot be reduced to that nature. For Dilthey, Kant’s first Critique did an impressive job of outlining the sciences and their limits. However, as shown within the context of life philosophy, this has nothing to say about the human sciences. What the natural sciences are best at is explanation, whereas the human sciences are destined to coincide with what would be called description.

In his delineation of the human sciences away from the natural sciences, Dilthey wants to show how they are fundamentally different, although both stem from human experience. As Makreel suggests, Dilthey’s use of the human sciences wants to show that the task of philosophy is to provide an epistemology in order to prove that the human

sciences are no less fundamental, comprehensive, or objective. However, they are less definable.\textsuperscript{20} To outline how the human sciences can show their importance, Dilthey turns to the field of hermeneutics. Only in hermeneutics, as Dilthey sees it, can the human sciences come into their own as an interpretive tool that will guarantee truth, not so far removed from what the natural sciences had already started to achieve. This interpretive tool will serve to raise the human phenomenon to some sort of objective validity. Dilthey characterizes the use of hermeneutics as a process of building up historical knowledge towards an ever greater net of understanding. Only from this greater net will hermeneutics become an infallible method of interpretation. From this it becomes possible to realize the goal of grounding the relative into something that is a cohesive whole. Dilthey states:

Only when we have grasped all the forms of human life, from the primitive peoples to the present day, does it become possible to see the generally valid in the relative, a firm future in the past, greater esteem for the individual through historical consciousness and so recognize reality as the yardstick for progress into the future; this we can link with clear goals for the future.\textsuperscript{21}

Now that it is possible to see the framework and general outline of the philosophical questions by which Dilthey’s hermeneutics will operate; it is important to turn to hermeneutics as a method of understanding and interpretation and show how this will serve as his ground for later hermeneutics and the characterization of hermeneutics in general. For, in Dilthey, hermeneutics raised new questions and opened up new avenues by which understanding was possible.

\textsuperscript{20} Makreel, \textit{Dilthey: Philosopher of the Human Studies}, 38.
1. c) Hermeneutics and Understanding

Dilthey’s essay, “The Rise of Hermeneutics,” provides an excellent account of what Dilthey meant by the term “hermeneutics.” Coming from the framework of Dilthey’s philosophy as a whole, hermeneutics is the process of understanding which will enable an epistemological foundation for the human sciences. This need for epistemological grounding, to much criticism, raises the human sciences to be closer to, what we might call today, a natural science. Dilthey’s work never clarified this distinction between the human and natural sciences properly; it was never without its problems. Although the two realms are clearly defined, Dilthey’s aim seems to suggest otherwise. However, hermeneutics is an important step to Dilthey for the understanding of history and the historical consciousness.

Dilthey’s hermeneutics sets great importance on the concept of an historical consciousness. Dilthey states: “The historical consciousness… has enabled modern man to hold the entire past of humanity present within himself: across the limits of his own time he peers into vanished culture, appropriating their energies and taking pleasure in their charm, with a consequent increase in his own happiness.”\(^2\) Historical consciousness enables the understanding of history through a common understanding and thread. Life, as a process, runs through the historical consciousness. All events in history are merely one articulation of life, and as such are, also of our historical consciousness. Interpreting history, and anything in life, has to do with understanding and appropriating our historical consciousness in a way that we can exhaustively come to understand history. It is because we have a historical consciousness that all of history is

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An important function is 

\[ f(x) = \frac{1}{1 + e^{-x}} \]

This function is used extensively in artificial neural networks, where it serves as a simple activation function that maps real-valued numbers to values between 0 and 1. It is often used in the output layer of binary classification problems, as it provides a smooth transition between the two classes. Additionally, it is used in the hidden layers to introduce non-linearity into the model, allowing it to learn more complex relationships in the data. The sigmoid function is also known for its derivative, which is simply the function itself multiplied by its complement, making it convenient for backpropagation in neural networks.
important for modern man, all of history is a whole to which modern man makes up one part.

An important aspect for Dilthey’s hermeneutics is the ability to transpose alien experiences into our own mental life. This transposition enables us to understand and interpret other human phenomena in a way that they can become known to us in a special way: both as coming from life and as a product of an inner life. Through a process of reconstruction, we can come to know the inner life of others. Dilthey states: “Exactly because a real transposition can take place[when man understands man], because affinity and universality of thought... can image forth and form a social-historical world, the inner events and processes in man can be distinguished from those of animals.” From our own sense of life, we can take these perceptions of other forms of life and understand them. Our understanding is unified in our common conditions of life and our historical consciousness, along with our common epistemological instruments, in the senses, that separate us from the animal kingdom. Man can come to understand man better than anything else because of this common condition and likeness. Because of this, anything produced by the human spirit demands interpretation.

The understanding itself is “that process by which we intuit, behind the sign given to our senses, that psychic reality of which it is the expression.” From this understanding, we can come to interpret the world by an orderly and systematic procedure which can give us some degree of objective certainty that is the product of a

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24 Palmer, Hermeneutics, 104.
fixed expression of life\textsuperscript{27}; that is, an articulation of the whole as interpreted, like a piece of art or a great book, as a product of life that is understandable to the inner life of man. These great works, as Dilthey suggests, can never be anything but a true expression of the inner life of man. Because of this, they are capable of complete and objective interpretation. Hermeneutics in this sense can become completely, objectively justified as a universally valid interpretation. In this kind of hermeneutics, Dilthey places a special importance on writing, as he suggests writing is the "residue of human reality preserved."\textsuperscript{28}

1. d) Gadamer’s Critique of Dilthey’s Hermeneutics

Dilthey’s quest for an objectively valid interpretation comes from his need to epistemologically justify the human sciences. As Gadamer points out, “Following Descartes’ formulation of the res cogitans, he defines the concept of experience by reflexivity, by interiority, and on the basis of this special mode of being given he tries to construct an epistemological justification of the historical world.”\textsuperscript{29} However, this indicates that, for Dilthey, history can be known and appropriated fully without any need for more interpretation. The process for doing this, as pointed out in the form of transposition, is the act of deciphering an historical text. However, in the eyes of Gadamer, Dilthey’s use of the Cartesian starting point is not without its problems. Dilthey’s reliance on an Archimedean starting point for certainty shows once again his

\textsuperscript{27} Dilthey, “Rise of Hermeneutics,” 103.

\textsuperscript{28} Dilthey, “Rise of Hermeneutics,” 103.

\textsuperscript{29} Gadamer, Truth and Method, 65.
reliance on, what Jean Grondin calls, the “scientistic paradigm.”\textsuperscript{30} That is to say, by using this method of approaching the human sciences, Dilthey is trying to keep the justification of the natural sciences for their conclusions, while, at the same time, trying to divorce his philosophy from the natural sciences. To this extent, he in fact blurs the boundaries between the human and natural sciences. But, if the human sciences can be justified in the same way as the natural sciences, why do they need to be separated? Dilthey does not have an adequate answer to this question.

Secondly, with the Cartesian starting point and the need for a self-evident certainty that can come with an epistemological ground, there is an opening for a subject/object dichotomy. The subject would need to stand out, divorced from history, in order to be able to gain an overall view of what history is. For Dilthey, what creates and understands life are historical individuals. To what extent this eliminates the Cartesian problem is difficult to see. A person who is in life is not able to explicate history fully, or to realize the understanding of any particular text as a historical object fully, as history is in the making and always changing. If humans are a completely historical being, then we must always understand meaning within a temporal context. Any sort of certain knowledge would need to be absolute, free from error or misinterpretation. Such a claim does not meet Dilthey’s criteria of lived experience. So where does this knowledge come from? Were the Cartesian starting point were true, there must be something within the structure of life itself that is beyond all historical consciousness:

\textsuperscript{30} Jean Grondin, \textit{Introduction to Philosophical Hermeneutics} (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993), 84.
Dilthey did not regard the fact that finite, historical man is tied to a particular time and place as any fundamental impairment of the possibility of knowledge in the human sciences. Historical consciousness was supposed to rise above its own relativity in a way that made objectivity in the human sciences possible. We may ask how this claim can be justified without implying a concept of absolute, philosophical knowledge beyond all historical consciousness.\(^{31}\)

So there remains an impasse: either there is no way to gain objectively certain knowledge of a given interpretation with the concept of life, as Dilthey has delineated it, and more needs to be added, or Dilthey’s overall quest was in vain. Either way is devastating to Dilthey’s philosophy as a whole.

Another objection is that Dilthey’s philosophy carries too many of the remnants of an idealistic philosophy that is too focused on its own interior: “Hence, for the historical consciousness the whole of tradition becomes the self-encounter of the human mind.”\(^{32}\) With this focus on the interior, there is always the possibility of slipping into an idealistic solipsism that masks itself as “life” in Dilthey’s conception. Although even Gadamer does not see Dilthey in this light, the possibility remains open. It is only through his reliance on experience that Dilthey can claim to escape this. However, the subject/object dichotomy that presents itself in Dilthey makes the role of understanding in this experience even more susceptible to this problem.

The role of history in Dilthey is not without its problems. For Dilthey, history was there to be looked into like a text that must be deciphered. In this way, history becomes an intellectual pursuit that is based on method in order to overcome misinterpretation. Dilthey remains trapped within the theory of hermeneutics that truth was merely the absence of error in interpretation and that truth can be disclosed by

\(^{31}\) Gadamer, Truth and Method, 234.
\(^{32}\) Gadamer, Truth and Method, 229.
systematically getting better interpretations until all avenues are fully exhausted. This was clearly an inductive procedure and not “historical” in the deeper, and more fundamental, way in which historicality should operate in lived experience if it is a truly temporal act of consciousness: “Dilthey’s concept of inductive procedure, borrowed from the natural sciences, is inadequate. Fundamentally, historical experience, as he means it, is not a procedure and does not have the anonymity of a method.” So, for Dilthey, it seems he was not able to live up to the final goals he set for philosophy, and hermeneutics. His reliance on the natural sciences for guidance into what can be justified as true once again lead him astray from his more fundamental grounding of philosophy.

Coming from Dilthey’s theory of hermeneutics is the need to gain an objectivity of understanding. Dilthey wants to show that from hermeneutics there can be the possibility of a universally valid interpretation from analyzing understanding in general. Perhaps Dilthey goes even so far as to stress the categories of understanding in general. What Kant has done in the Critique of Pure Reason, Dilthey sees himself doing for the human sciences, that is, to show the limits and possibility of any kind of validity in the human sciences. This task for Dilthey met with much criticism, even in his life. The human sciences come to be much closer to a natural science in the appropriation of understanding. In this, future hermeneutics, especially Heidegger and Gadamer, will break from Dilthey. But, Dilthey remains important for hermeneutics as a whole.

Although Gadamer and Heidegger will not subscribe to Dilthey’s ideas concerning hermeneutics, the importance of his theory of history and his insistence on the centrality of understanding and interpretation remain critical. Dilthey’s concepts of life,

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historical consciousness, and the importance of a general hermeneutics play a central role in later philosophers. The major downfall, as has been shown, for Dilthey’s hermeneutics is the need for an epistemological ground and the opening it provides for a subject/object dichotomy. Both Heidegger and Gadamer will radicalize hermeneutics in order to avoid these problems, thereby avoiding the Cartesian element of Dilthey’s philosophy.
Within the history of hermeneutics, Heidegger’s philosophy deserves a special place. It is from Heidegger that hermeneutics is to take a radical turn. In this turn, not only do we see the most telling signs of what Gadamer’s later philosophy will resemble, but we also see a new concept of philosophy itself. Heidegger’s radical break from the tradition comes from his inquiry into the question of Being and how it is that beings can bring forth this question. Heidegger’s philosophy starts with the understanding human as the ground for all knowledge. History, the future, and the present from this perspective all take on a new and central role for any understanding to be possible and for the question of the meaning of Being to be disclosed. Meaning, in Heidegger’s view, is not merely an objectified realm that is separate and distinct from life; the two are intertwined and make each other possible.

2. a) Heidegger’s Starting Point in Philosophy

As a clarification of the philosophy of Heidegger, it is first important to address the theme of Heidegger’s thought. In Being and Time, Heidegger sets out on the task to revitalize philosophy in the face of outdated metaphysics and ontology. Heidegger claims that traditional ontology, in light of his new philosophy and philosophical method, remains questionable as it carries over the errors and prejudices of its time.34 For this revitalization to happen philosophy must reestablish itself within a new context.

Science is the foundation for the understanding and grasping of the world. It involves the application of empirical evidence to observe, analyze, and interpret the natural world. Science allows us to formulate hypotheses, conduct experiments, and develop theories that can explain and predict phenomena. It is through this process that we can gain knowledge about the universe and use this knowledge to make informed decisions and improve our lives.

Science also involves critical thinking and logical reasoning. It requires us to question assumptions, challenge ideas, and consider multiple perspectives. This critical thinking is essential for evaluating evidence and making decisions based on evidence rather than on personal biases or unsupported claims.

In addition, science fosters collaboration and communication. Scientists often work in teams, sharing their findings and insights with others in the scientific community. This collaborative approach allows for the exchange of ideas and the refinement of theories through peer review and feedback.

Overall, science is a dynamic and ever-evolving field that continues to shape our understanding of the world. Its impact is felt in various areas, including technology, medicine, and environmental stewardship. As we continue to advance our knowledge through scientific inquiry, we can work towards addressing some of the most pressing challenges facing humanity, from climate change to access to clean water and healthcare.
Heidegger's method for gaining any sort of revitalization comes with the new role opened up into the questioning of Being and the phenomenological method. It is from this role in the questioning of Being that Heidegger will build up his philosophical ontology that allows Being to be unconcealed.

Heidegger starts his inquiry into the meaning of the term Being by referring to Plato. Through this reference, Heidegger wants to show the need for an inquiry into the very nature of the term "Being". Heidegger wants to restate the question of the meaning of Being insofar as the meaning and value of this question have been "forgotten." It is Being, as a philosophically important concept, which has been neglected over the years and deemed the "most universal and emptiest of concepts." It is in order to overcome this problem that Being needs to be seen in a new light. The question of the meaning of Being must be restated and reinterpreted. Heidegger states, "[t]he question of the meaning of Being must be formulated. If it is a fundamental question, or indeed the fundamental question, it must be made transparent, and in an appropriate way." To state this question, the inquiry must be guided by the fact that it is an entity that must, and will, do the questioning. Inquiry itself is the behaviour of the questioner, and because of this, has its own particular character of Being. If the inquiry into Being is to get anywhere, the structural component of the questioner must be incorporated into the analytic of Being; if the inquiry is to be comprehended.

Inquiry, as Heidegger further argues, is a seeking that is guided by what is sought. This means that we already have a preliminary view in mind of what Being is, even

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though "[w]e do not know what 'Being' means. But even if we ask... we keep an understanding of the 'is'."³⁹ This understanding Heidegger calls the pre-ontological understanding of the world. It is from this pre-ontological standpoint that the question of the meaning of Being will come to light in a way in which it can be apprehended by the inquirer. Although this approach to the understanding of the meaning of Being may sound circular, Heidegger claims it is nothing of the sort. The inquiry Heidegger suggests is, "a remarkable 'relatedness backward or forward' which what we are asking about (Being) bears to the inquiry itself as a mode of Being of an entity."⁴⁰ The inquiry remains close to the inquirer and with Being. Hence, Heidegger claims that the inquiry, and the question of the meaning of Being, must be sorted out through "existentiell" methods, that is, the question of existence, and Being, must be straightened out through existence itself.⁴¹ There can be no complete objective stance on the understanding of Being; it is always through the standing of an existing entity that the question of Being can be asked. To apprehend the "existentiality" of the ontological structures that deal with Being itself, the question is necessary so as to bring forth a meaning out of the existentiell. The existentiell methods, although new and different, remain quite close to Dilthey’s Lebensphilosophie. After all, the idea of existence can only be guided by appealing to life itself. There is no way to know how to look at Being without appealing to our world and how we, as inquirers, view it.

It is through this question of the meaning of Being that the framework of Being can be brought forth, the framework that will enable an analysis of Being in general and so come up with preliminary remarks that can be made about Being. In order for this

³⁹ Heidegger, Being and Time, 24.
⁴⁰ Heidegger, Being and Time, 28.
⁴¹ Heidegger, Being and Time, 33.
question to be posed, Heidegger makes his fundamental inquirer Dasein. Dasein, for Heidegger, can be defined as, "an entity which does not just occur among other entities. Rather it is ontically distinguished by the fact that, in its very Being, that Being is an issue for it." \(^{42}\) It is because of this that Dasein has a particularly important role for Heidegger. For anything to be understood, and to be an issue, there must be something that it understood for, and this is Dasein.

As Dasein, the question of the meaning of Being can only be open with regard to fundamental ontology. Fundamental ontology is:

\[\text{[T]}\text{he metaphysics of human Dasein which is required for metaphysics to be made possible. It remains fundamentally different from all anthropology and from the philosophical. The idea of laying out a fundamental ontology means to disclose the characteristic ontological analytic of Dasein as prerequisite and thus to make clear for what purpose and in what way, within which boundaries and with which presuppositions, it puts the concrete question: What is the human being?}\] \(^{43}\)

As Heidegger explicitly states, for any metaphysics to be possible, it must be from the perspective of Dasein. Fundamental ontology is what makes all other ontologies possible, therefore, for any questioning of the meaning of Being. Hence, fundamental ontology can only be undertaken as the analytic of Dasein itself. Within fundamental ontology, there is the possibility to open up two paths: towards Being [Sein], and beings [Seiende].

The study of beings always has to do with a description of the world. The study of Being, however, is the existential-ontological interpretation that is concerned with the constitution of Being. It is fundamental ontology that lies at the bottom of these

\(^{42}\) Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 32.

distinctions — it makes these distinctions possible.\textsuperscript{44} This analytic of Dasein can only be undertaken from the perspective of life and its structures will be those that are guided by lived experiences; this is what is meant by the question of the human being. Life is only accessible in Dasein. It is by looking at the ontology of Dasein that it becomes possible to study the hermeneutics of Dasein. Only by knowing Dasein can we open up the possibility of the experience of Being in a sense that is beyond the everyday mundane world.

2. b) Heidegger’s Hermeneutics

For Heidegger, hermeneutics begins with Dasein. Dasein’s centrality to Heidegger’s project already shows, in some sense, the importance that this structure will have. Dasein has three basic characteristics, also known as existentiale: state-of-mind [Befindlichkeit], understanding [Verstehen] and fallenness [Verfallen]. Roughly, these three characteristics can, respectively, be compared to the past, future, and present.

A required starting point for Heidegger’s hermeneutics is to begin with the state of Being-in for Dasein. For Heidegger to examine the characteristics of Dasein, he has to examine the ‘Da’ of Dasein, the ‘thereness’ of Dasein’s Being. It is only when Dasein is ‘there’ that the world becomes possible, and within this world that meaning and interpretation become possible. Dasein’s ‘thereness’ enables us to see that Dasein is an integral part of the world. Heidegger states, “An entity which is essentially constituted by Being-in-the-world is itself in every case its ‘there’.”\textsuperscript{45} This ‘thereness’ shows the

\textsuperscript{45} Heidegger, \textit{Being and Time}, 171.
openness of Dasein. In being open to the world, Dasein exhibits the character of being able to disclose the world, and itself. In the openness of Dasein, Heidegger wants to show that Dasein is not like a Leibnizian monad, or a Cartesian self, that can exist apart from the world and those things in it; its openness indicates that it is not closed off from the world.

For Dasein, state-of-mind, or having a mood, is an existential-ontological structure. In having a mood, Dasein is connected and shows its openness to the world. Moods have a disclosive potential for Dasein that affect how we see the world. Dasein always has a mood; there can never be a time when Dasein is not being affected by its moods. However, these moods are not merely just subjective feelings about worldly affairs, although they also have this power; they also have the power of disclosing the world in a particular non-theoretical way. Moods bring to Dasein a particularly human way, one which is based on life itself, of viewing the world. In order not to sterilize the view of the world, as Kant and Descartes have done in order to objectify the world, the disclosing potential of moods brings forth a new way to open up the world for Dasein.

An important part of the moods for Heidegger is that Dasein always finds itself in a particular ‘thrownness.’ This thrownness for Dasein indicates a certain facticity that Dasein is being subjected to by the world. It is by this thrownness that Heidegger wants to show that we are always and already delivered over to the world; we cannot escape it. Heidegger states, “As an entity which has been delivered over to its Being, it remains also delivered over to the fact that it must always have found itself – but found itself in a way of finding which arises not so much from a direct seeking as rather from a fleeing.”46

It is this fleeing in the face of the world that will colour Dasein’s disclosing of the world.

46 Heidegger, Being and Time, 174.
Dasein must and should, in view of its moods, become master of its moods in order to disclose the world in new and different ways. However, we can never be free of these moods. Dasein always has a mood, even when it is trying to master its own moods. Dasein can only become a master of its moods insofar as it has counter moods. In being thrown, Dasein has a direction in the manner in which it takes in the world. This direction affects Dasein towards the world so that things can matter for it. The world has a special significance for those who are living in the world. The ‘directions’ that our moods take towards the world disclose the features of it in an always new and different way. Moods are primordial for Dasein and are happening equi-primordially with understanding and fallenness.

The understanding, for Heidegger, starts from thrownness and being in the world in which it is already affected towards. Understanding from its thrownness frees the world for significance to become possible, and in doing so frees itself for its own possibilities. To understand these possibilities, understanding projects itself into the world. This projecting is not a laid out plan or a conscious effort. Rather, it is already and always happening: As long as Dasein is, it is projecting its possibilities as possibility. Understanding serves to bring out the full disclosedness of Being-in-the-world. In doing so, Dasein understands itself in terms of the world. This will give rise to Dasein’s “sight”: “In giving an existential signification to ‘sight’, we have merely drawn upon the peculiar feature of seeing, that lets entities which are accessible to it be encountered unconcealedly in themselves.”48 Sight shows Dasein as it is in its Being alongside the world and in Being with others. Understanding can take one of two directions: authentic

47 Heidegger, Being and Time, 185.
48 Heidegger, Being and Time, 187.
understanding, or inauthentic understanding. Authentic understanding is when understanding arises out of one’s own self. In authenticity, we see the world according to our own disclosing of it, our primordial connection with the world. Inauthentic understanding is the interpretation of the “They.” In inauthenticity, we are coming to an understanding which is not our own; it is pushed upon us by our involvement with others in the world and through the previous understandings of the world. These two ways of understanding disclose the world in different ways. When we are being authentic, we have our own connection with the world and of the things in it. In inauthenticity, we are trapped within a public interpretation of the world; our connection with the world is clouded by those that have thrust a ready-made interpretation of the world on to us.

Understanding and interpretation give us two ways in which we conceive of the world. Understanding has a fore-structure to it, whereas, interpretation has an as-structure. The fore-structure of understanding consists of: fore-having, fore-sight, and fore-conception. Fore-having is the appropriation of understanding in which interpretation works out a “totality of involvements.” Fore-sight is that the interpretation is grounded in something that we see in advance. We already have a pre-understanding of what we see. Fore-conception is that we already have a way of grasping something in advance, in conceiving it in a certain manner. The fore-structures here attribute to objects their meaning: “Meaning is the ‘upon-which’ of a projection in terms of which something becomes intelligible as something; it gets its structure.” This structure comes from the fore-structure of understanding. It is in fore-understanding that all Dasein’s experience with objects is managed. Dasein only sees meaning in entities

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49 Heidegger, Being and Time, 192.
50 Heidegger, Being and Time, 191.
that are in a relationship with it. Only Dasein can give meaning; entities in themselves have no meaning. Meaning comes from understanding and interpretation – in giving significance to things in the world in their totality of involvements.

The interpretation of something as something always comes from understanding. Interpretation is always pointing out something. Interpretation yields the meaning of a thing as something ready-to-hand. Interpretation in the world starts when “understanding appropriates understandingly that which is understood by it.”\(^1\) It is from the appropriation in interpretation that understanding can become itself; it works out its possibilities of that which it has projected. In understanding, we become able to see an entity’s network of possibilities.

Understanding always works within the hermeneutic circle: “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 \textit{vice versa}.“\(^2\) The implication of this is that we must already have understood what is to be interpreted, and what is to be interpreted must be understood. Heidegger stresses that this circle need not be vicious and we need not look for ways to avoid the circle of understanding. To do this would be to misunderstand the movement of understanding. What we must do is “come into it in the right way. This circle of understanding is not an orbit in which any random kind of knowledge may move; it is the expression of the existential \textit{fore-structure} of Dasein itself.”\(^3\) In the hermeneutic circle, we learn that we are, as Dasein, primarily hermeneutical beings. We never escape our hermeneutical task – it is at the core of Dasein and the centrality of the question of existence.

\(^1\) Heidegger, \textit{Being and Time}, 188.
\(^2\) Heidegger, \textit{Being and Time}, 194.
\(^3\) Heidegger, \textit{Being and Time}, 195.
The meaning of something is always that which can be articulated in an assertion. Assertion is important in that it is a fundamental locus for any kind of "truth". An assertion has three main characteristics; it is a pointing out of an entity. In this pointing out, we can let an entity be seen in itself – it lets us discover the ready-to-hand. Assertion is also a predication in that we give an entity a definite character. By putting together a subject and a predicate, we can see the entity in its 'apophantical' as structure. Assertions are also part of "communication". In communication, assertion lets others around us share in our interpretation: "that which has been put forward in the assertion is something that Others can 'share' with the person making the assertion."  

Assertion as seen in these three characteristics, when fully realized, has the character of bringing an entity together to having a definite character. In pointing the entity out, we are also stepping back from the lived context of involvements and just pointing out a definite character of the entity. This means that we say something about it as a "what". This brings the entity forth as something present-at-hand. In being present-at-hand, we are able to see the entity as it is ontologically in itself. It is in the assertion that "this levelling of the primordial 'as' of circumspective interpretation to the 'as' with which presence-at-hand is given a definite character is the specialty of assertion."  

The character of communication coming from an assertion has led us into a theory of language. By stating that language comes from assertion, Heidegger gives it a primordial stance within Dasein, thus making it fundamental to the world. Discourse for Heidegger is, "existentially equiprimordial with state-of-mind and understanding." In this primordial status, it also underlies both interpretation and assertion: "That which can

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54 Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 197.
55 Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 201.
be Articulated in interpretation, and thus even more primordially in discourse, is what we have called ‘meaning’.”

Language and discourse help to bring meaning into the world in such a way as to make it part of our comportment towards the world. It brings out an existential disclosedness of the world. Intelligible things can bring themselves into the world through discourse. This discourse gets expressed in language. This is fundamental for Dasein in that “as an existential state in which Dasein is disclosed, discourse is constitutive for Dasein’s existence.” This discourse plays a special role for Dasein. It makes possible an understanding of the world in different ways to bring out new meaning.

The final *existentiale* of Dasein is that of ‘fallenness.’ Fallenness is the return back to the everyday being of Dasein. It is the ‘Da’ of Dasein, its ‘thereness.’ Heidegger states, “In falling, Dasein *itself* as factual Being-in-the-world, is something *from* which it has already fallen away. And it has not fallen into some entity which it comes upon for the first time in the course of its Being, or even one which it has not come upon at all; it has fallen in the *world*, which itself belongs to its Being.” This falling is constantly pulling Dasein away from an authentic understanding of itself and the world. It is in this way that Dasein is always falling into the ‘They,’ into the inauthentic view of the world.

Falling is characterized in three fundamental ways: idle talk, curiosity, and ambiguity. Idle talk is the way in which the world is disclosed towards itself, others, and its world in a “groundless floating.” This groundless floating takes away meaning and significance to the world, both in language and writing. It is in idle talk that the world becomes mundane and starts to lack any special significance. Curiosity is a special state of falling that discloses the world, yet it is disclosed in such a way that it becomes unclear.

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57 Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 204.
58 Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 204.
59 Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 220.
Curiosity looks at the world “not in order to understand what is seen (that is, to come into a Being towards it) but just in order to see it. It seeks novelty only in order to leap from it anew to another novelty.”\textsuperscript{60} In this case, curiosity wants to disclose everything, but not for any purpose. In this sense, Heidegger will stress that curiosity wants to disclose Dasein’s state of Being-in as an everywhere that is at the same time nowhere. Finally, ambiguity is that which “hides nothing from Dasein’s understanding, not only in order that Being-in-the-world should be suppressed in this uprooted ‘everywhere and nowhere’.”\textsuperscript{61} This ambiguity serves to protect the “they” from being accused of a false interpretation. Should we ever want to try to uncover the world authentically, from out of ourselves, ‘they’ will seek to draw us back in. The public interpretation does not like to be questioned, even if it seems groundless.

The final expression of these three existentiales of Dasein is Care. Care is Dasein’s being “Ahead-of-itself-Being-already-in” the world as a being-alongside entities which we encounter.\textsuperscript{62} For Dasein, this means that we are always in the world and alongside others, always aware of our world, and always disclosing through Dasein what the world is. Care “as a primordial structural totality, [that] lies ‘before’ every factical ‘attitude’ and ‘situation’ of Dasein, and it does so existentially \textit{a priori}; this means that it always lies in them.”\textsuperscript{63} More specifically, the ontological meaning of care is that of temporality. Only because care can be seen as temporality does it become necessary to accept time “primordially as the horizon for the understanding of Being, and in terms of

\textsuperscript{60} Heidegger, \textit{Being and Time}, 216.
\textsuperscript{61} Heidegger, \textit{Being and Time}, 221.
\textsuperscript{62} Heidegger, \textit{Being and Time}, 293.
\textsuperscript{63} Heidegger, \textit{Being and Time}, 238.
temporality as the Being of Dasein, which understands Being.\footnote{Heidegger, Being and Time, 39.} It is in this temporality of care that the horizon of interpretation comes to be that of fundamental ontology. The temporality of care becomes an important feature for Dasein because of its ecstatic character. This ecstatic character collapses the past, present, and future together to form a horizon by which we can disclose Being: “The making-present which awaits and retains, lays ‘out’ a ‘during’ with a span, only because it has thereby disclosed itself as the way in which its historical temporality has been ecstatically stretched along, even though it does not know itself as this.”\footnote{Heidegger, Being and Time, 462.} From fundamental ontology, the realm of Being becomes open to understanding and interpretation in terms of its temporality as shown through care. As has already been shown, fundamental ontology is that which makes all ontology possible, thereby making all hermeneutics possible.

In Heidegger’s later philosophy, hermeneutics takes a new turn. Heidegger turns to language, art and poetry in order to disclose the truth of Being. Through poetry and art, Being speaks to us. Art opens a space for which we can experience Being. Ultimately, it is language that serves as the grounding point for this central role. Heidegger states, “Thus language is at once the house of being and the home of the human essence.”\footnote{Martin Heidegger, “Letter on Humanism” in Pathmarks (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 274.} This new orientation for Heidegger’s hermeneutics serves to push Dasein into interpretations through the mediation of language. Authenticity can be reached only through the experience of art and poetry. Being becomes disclosed in a new and radical way, a way which shares a deeper connection with Gadamer’s philosophy than that of \textit{Being and Time}. However, the philosophy and questions of Heidegger’s earlier work do

\footnotetext[64]{Heidegger, Being and Time, 39.}
\footnotetext[65]{Heidegger, Being and Time, 462.}
not disappear in Heidegger's later philosophy. In the later philosophy comes a new orientation. The question of the meaning of Being remains central to his later philosophy. What is new is that Heidegger drops the transcendental schema which he inherited from Kant and which carried through his earlier works. By doing this, Heidegger seeks to free himself from the boundaries of traditional philosophy. Heidegger's transformation of philosophy is now complete. Philosophy is turned upside down and put on a radical new ground. Although Heidegger stops using the terminology of the earlier works, it is clear that Dasein remains the central point at which interpretation occurs.

2. c) Application of Heidegger's Hermeneutics

Heidegger's major contribution to hermeneutics can be thought of, and applied in, three main ways: his ontology, temporality, and his new way of appropriating understanding.

With Heidegger's focus on ontology, he frees himself from the binds of always doing epistemology. Like Dilthey, Heidegger wants to criticize Kant's transcendentalism. However, Dilthey's approach was overly epistemological. For Dilthey, Kant's categories have changed into merely historical categories. In contrast, Heidegger gets rid of the idea of the categories of historical understanding. Heidegger's new interpretation of hermeneutics as ontology free the concept of Dasein from over-arching systems and epistemological foundations. Dasein is both in-the-world and constitutive of the disclosure of the world. The interplay of forces by which the world has power over us,
and a mean-based, polynomial relationship between
physical and functional traits and fitness parameters.
These results suggest that the relationship between
physical and functional traits and fitness parameters
may be more complex than previously thought.

In conclusion, the data presented in this study
indicate that the relationship between
physical and functional traits and fitness parameters
is not simple and may depend on other factors.
Further research is needed to understand the
full extent of this relationship.

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and we have power over the world, is a radical new direction. For this, Heidegger’s reading of Kant sets up an important paradigmatic case for hermeneutics.

Heidegger’s reading of Kant comes from two main sources: *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics*, and *The Phenomenological Interpretation of Kant’s Critique of Pure Reason*. Heidegger’s work in these texts serves to try and free his philosophy from the old views of “man” that took man for, above all, a reasoning thing. From Aristotle’s notion that man is a rational animal, Kant and enlightenment philosophy took reason to be the highest human achievement. It was because of this notion of man that the natural sciences flourished under Kant and all knowledge was to be strictly ordered according to its type. In the *Phenomenological Interpretation*, Heidegger lays out three main misunderstandings when reading Kant: the metaphysical, the epistemological, and the psychological. What is important for our purposes is Heidegger’s epistemological interpretation of Kant’s *Critique of Pure Reason* as it is directly related to Heidegger’s overcoming of Dilthey’s epistemological grounding of the human sciences. The epistemological interpretation of Kant’s *Critique of Pure Reason* is, and was, by far the most prevalent way of understanding Kant.

According to Heidegger, the epistemological misunderstanding takes Kant’s *Critique of Pure Reason* as a theory of knowledge for the mathematical natural sciences. Heidegger questions if this reading can be possible. Originally, for Kant, in order for the natural sciences to exist they must be known and projected *a priori* before they can be encountered. It is because of this *a priori* knowing and projecting that we can know things in advance of how they are given in experience: “This fixing which is *a priori*."

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68 Heidegger, *Phenomenological Investigation of Kant’s Critique of Pure Reason*, 51
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priori and free from experience – occurs prior to all experience – makes possible that these objects be given to us as what they are." But, Heidegger insists, what this entails is a Copernican revolution in philosophy. In essence, philosophy must be turned upside down and find itself on a radical new ground. The implication of this is that the mathematical natural sciences can never ground themselves; they must be grounded in something prior. For beings to be measured and for a science to gain knowledge in any useful manner, it must have prior conceptualizations of its knowledge in its object-domain. Thus a priori knowledge is prior to all experience and, because of this, is valid for all experience. Heidegger aims to show with this misunderstanding that Kant too must have been thinking about knowledge of the world in much the same way. Ontology must come prior to all ontic knowledge. Whereas Kant merely called this a transcendental investigation, Heidegger wants to point out that this was a fundamentally ontological investigation that had its roots in the question of the meaning of Being, not merely in a descriptive analysis about what it is possible to know:

Kant calls [this] investigation... a transcendental investigation. 'I entitle all knowledge transcendental that is occupied in general not so much with objects as with the kind of knowledge we have of objects, insofar as this is possible a priori.' Hence, transcendental knowledge does not investigate the being itself, but rather the possibility of the preliminary understanding of Being, i.e., at one and the same time: the constitution of the Being of the being. This is Heidegger's new interpretation of Kant's Copernican revolution: "The Copernican revolution states simply that ontic knowledge of beings must be guided in advance by ontological knowledge." It is because of this new understanding of the fundamental
grounding of understanding Being that Heidegger says Kant asks the most fundamental question: "What is man?" By looking into the question of what man is, Kant is looking for a new way to ground philosophy. However, as Heidegger points out, there is a peculiar absence of this question in the *Critique of Pure Reason*. It is not until you go to Kant's lectures on logic that the centrality of the question of man can be found.

Heidegger assumes that this question was also in Kant's mind while he was writing the first *Critique*. Heidegger states: "We only come closer to Kant's authentic philosophizing if, with even more resolve than previously, we ask not about what Kant says, but instead about what occurs in his ground-laying [for metaphysics]." Heidegger switches from what Kant is actually saying, to what he believes Kant is trying to accomplish with his philosophy.

An important question remains: Is Heidegger justified in trying to judge the motivations of Kant above what Kant actually said? To answer this, Heidegger states at the beginning of the text that this is not a philological work, but rather, a dialogue between thinkers. As a dialogue, it is guided by different rules. It is clear that a simple anthropology is not possible; what is opened up is the question, as Heidegger emphasizes, that lies at the heart of Kant's philosophy: "The questionableness of the questioning about human beings is the problematic which is forced to light in the process of the Kantian laying of the ground for metaphysics." From this more fundamental question, Heidegger states, Kant recoils at what he has found. He is not willing to approach this question in order to rescue reason among all other powers, mainly the imagination. The

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74 Heidegger, *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics*, 150.
75 Heidegger, *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics*, xx.
76 Heidegger, *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics*, 150.
new question of what is man that Kant wants to open must be pushed back. This shrinking back is apparent, according to Heidegger, in the changes made of the role of the imagination from the A version of the Critique of Pure Reason to the B version.

It is in the role of the imagination that Heidegger sees Kant backing away from his initial discovery. From this, Heidegger's role as an interpreter of Kant takes a new step. Heidegger sees the role of his interpretation as doing violence. Heidegger states, "Certainly, in order to wring from what the words say, what it is they want to say, every interpretation must necessarily do violence." Through working to unconceal the text, Heidegger sees the role of the imagination in Kant as the ground of metaphysics. As the ground of metaphysics, the imagination makes possible the ontological synthesis, in which Being must be understood before beings, that itself is rooted in time. Heidegger turns the traditional interpretation of Kant on its head in order to make room for the power of the imagination as the ground for the synthesis that Dasein must accomplish in all experiencing and understanding of the world. This new role of time makes for Kant a philosophy grounded in the ontology of Dasein, in our finitude.

This interpretive understanding of Kant is peculiar to Heidegger. His books on Kant were never received in the circle of Kantian scholars with much enthusiasm. What is important is the turn that Western philosophy takes from Heidegger's new interpretive way. Heidegger's reading of Kant turns hermeneutics around from being a method in which the text is trying to be understood in terms of what is meant by the author or according to some inner life, to a new hermeneutics in which meaning is

77 Heidegger, Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics, 141.
78 Heidegger, Kant and the Problem of Metaphysic, 140.
79 Most notably Ernst Cassirer writes a penetrating critique of Heidegger's book Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics in his article "Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics: Remarks on Martin Heidegger's Interpretation of Kant."
projected from within on to a text based on our fore-understanding of the given text and its relations. Hence, the object of interpretation and the interpreter both become an integral part of the whole of experience. For Heidegger, philosophy must find its new starting point within this ontological investigation. Gadamer states, "the whole idea of grounding itself underwent a total reversal."\(^{80}\) This new starting point for the early Heidegger is the hermeneutics of Dasein which will bring to the fore two more fundamental additions to philosophy: temporality and the importance of understanding.

Heidegger's new view of temporality is a topic that has caused a considerable stir among the academic community and is too large to exhaustively deal with here in any exhaustive fashion. However, it is important to point out what is new with Heidegger's view of time and temporality. For our purposes, it is important to look at temporality as it relates specifically to hermeneutics. Before Heidegger, time had been mostly thought of in Aristotelian terms; that is, time as a linear succession of moments which have duration and a past, present, and future. Husserl, in his phenomenological studies would take this version of time and make it into a more descriptive time that had protentions and retensions which all gave a particularly phenomenological character to Aristotle's view of time. However, for Heidegger, both of these versions of time were insufficient.

Heidegger's notion of time is that it is ecstatic. What is 'now' reaches out beyond just merely the moment and beyond just 'our time' into a structure that looks back and forth simultaneously. 'Now' contains within it what has been and, at the same time, is projecting itself forward with the 'fore' structures. This projection leads to a special understanding of Being. This understanding of Being is understood through the horizon of time:

\[^{80}\text{Gadamer, Truth and Method, 257.}\]
[W]hat being is was to be determined from within the horizon of time. Thus the structure of temporality appeared as ontologically definitive of subjectivity. But it was more than that, Heidegger’s thesis was that being itself is time. This burst asunder the whole subjectivism of modern philosophy – and, in fact, as was soon to appear the whole horizon of questions asked by metaphysics, which tended to define being as what is present.81

Not only can we no longer have any particularly linear understanding of history, there are no boundaries for the future and what our knowledge can project onto the world.

Whereas Kant, Schleiermacher, and Dilthey all had a firm view of what history was as the build up to what is considered the present, Heidegger’s view is more dynamic with regards to the temporality of understanding. This dynamic view of time becomes very important for Gadamer’s hermeneutics as it breaks from the traditional role of history as that which is already gone before without any further effect on the present. A past which can exert pressure on the future is still capable of being a force of understanding, rather than as an object of abstract understanding.

Along with his ontology and theory of temporality, Heidegger’s next breakthrough in hermeneutics came with his view on understanding. For Heidegger, the understanding is part of the existential makeup of Dasein. Along with mood and fallenness, understanding is that which is responsible for disclosing the world. However, unlike Kant and Dilthey, Heidegger’s view of understanding is both constitutive of the world and constituting the world. This double movement is an important part of the new dynamic view of Being that Heidegger’s ontology reaches. The conditions of possibility for understanding in Kant, the synthetic a priori, are replaced by this new view of understanding in Heidegger. No longer is understanding just focused on what is “out there”; it is also focused on understanding how Being is disclosed. There is an emphasis

on the "how" instead of just the strict methodological way the understanding operated in both Kant and Dilthey. In this way, the understanding is active. Understanding for Kant and Dilthey, although in some ways actively understanding the world, did not have this active projecting of possibilities to it. This radically new way of looking at Being makes the world into a dynamic whole that is always and already under revision. Heidegger states, "Dasein is always 'beyond itself,' not as a way of behaving towards other entities which it is not, but as Being towards the potentiality-for-Being which it is itself."\(^2\)

This is Dasein's essential structure that it is always ahead of itself and projecting itself, unlike Kant's and Dilthey's views of the understanding as passively accepting that which is given in the world by history and experience.

2. d) Gadamer's Critique of Heidegger's Hermeneutics

The critique of Heidegger's thought has come in many different forms and would require a paper of a much larger scope to fully articulate. For our purpose, what is important is Gadamer's critique of Heidegger's hermeneutics. Gadamer, although taking a great deal from Heidegger's philosophy, does not openly criticize Heidegger. Gadamer's criticism of Heidegger's hermeneutics will come in three main forms: the transcendental inquiry, the impossibility of facticity, and the impracticality of Heidegger's hermeneutics.

For Gadamer, Heidegger's position in Being and Time was too close to the Kantian transcendental framework. Robert Dostal writes, "In his autobiographical writings and interviews Gadamer reports that during their long relationship Heidegger

\[^2\] Heidegger, Being and Time, 236.
provided him with a number of surprises and disappointments. He remembers being surprised when first reading *Being and Time* at its apparent Kantian transcendental framework. The transcendental framework is most apparent in *Being and Time* and *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics*. What this framework meant for Gadamer is that Heidegger was getting away from the values of life on which he had focused, getting away from that which made his philosophy so dynamic. Gadamer argues that that you cannot experience life to its fullest through any sort of transcendental grounding: “It is quite clear that Heidegger’s own transcendental grounding of fundamental ontology in the analytic of Dasein did not yet permit a positive account of the mode of being of life.” Gadamer is aware of Heidegger’s failure to notice the radical ground of his own philosophy. However, Heidegger himself came to understand this too. Heidegger’s “turn” away from the transcendental model of the early works was replaced by the literary and poetic works of the later period in which Heidegger focused on the experience of truth in art and language. This turn was an attempt by Heidegger to recapture the values of life and the human being within the realm of Being. Heidegger himself was not happy with the purely ontologized understanding of history and art.

The hermeneutics of facticity, in Gadamer’s eyes, is an impossible task, or at least a very difficult starting point for Heidegger:

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84 Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, 263.
Of course, to speak of a ‘hermeneutics of facticity’ is to speak of something like ‘wooden iron.’ For facticity means precisely the unshakable resistance that the factual puts up against all grasping and understanding, and in the special phrasing in which Heidegger couched the concept of facticity, it means the fundamental determination of human Dasein.\(^5\)

Heidegger’s hermeneutics of facticity is the highest degree of paradox.\(^6\) What this entails for Heidegger is that the task of facticity, the grounding of Dasein in its thowness, is in fact unable to be disclosed to Dasein because Dasein is always in it. Heidegger wanted to disclose Dasein in order that its own characteristics could be known, or accounted for. Hence, the bias of the human being who is within life could be factored into the equation of understanding. However, this is a fundamental problem. To speak of a “wooden iron” is to speak of something impossible. In this sense, Dasein is both constructing and being constructed by its facticity. Yet, there is something about this factual that can never be understood and grasped. So, the function of the hermeneutics of facticity is always being undermined. This is indeed a paradoxical problem.

Gadamer criticises Heidegger’s grounding of facticity in *Truth and Method.* Gadamer argues that this paradoxical structure that accompanies Heidegger’s notion of a “[p]henomenology [that] should be ontologically based on the facticity of Dasein, existence, which cannot be based on or derived from anything else, and not on the pure cogito as the essential constitution of typical universality – a bold idea, but difficult to carry through.”\(^7\) Gadamer sees the problem with Dasein, if it is not based on anything prior to itself, or anything other than itself, there is the problem of its constitution. We cannot look at Dasein phenomenologically in order disclose our understanding of the


\(^{6}\) Gadamer, “Kant and the Hermeneutical Turn,” 55.

world, but yet without Dasein the world cannot be seen by way of the phenomenological method. There is a paradoxical structure that is unable to disclose anything about Dasein, or the world.

The final criticism that Gadamer lays against Heidegger is something that is never pointed out explicitly, but always remains part of Gadamer's method. By abandoning Heidegger's language and terminology in order to bring out his new idea of hermeneutics, Gadamer offers an implicit criticism of Heidegger. Hermeneutics has to have some practical application to the world; it has to show us something about how things are in the world. Heidegger's hermeneutics remain overly ontological for this to be seen in the everyday world. Gadamer's hermeneutic starts with how we can get truth through the experience of art, through language, and through dialogue. Heidegger's hermeneutic merely wants to disclose what is particular about beings within the realm of Being. Heidegger's view of hermeneutics is not sufficient in itself. It is important to point out what is meaningful insofar as it is guided by what is practical, or reasonable. To remain within everyday language makes hermeneutics accessible in a lived way, rather than just as an intellectual pursuit. Although not an overt criticism, it does lay the foundation for what will later become Gadamer's own philosophical hermeneutic.

This explication of Heidegger has shown that, in many ways, Heidegger's hermeneutic brought many new concepts to the fore. Hermeneutics after Heidegger would not be the same. In being grounded fundamentally on the hermeneutic of Dasein and the finitude that came with it, hermeneutic was no longer just a method. Now, hermeneutics has the possibility to be an existential primordial experience of
understanding. As long as we exist, we are in the process of understanding. Coming from Dilthey, this adds a new dimension to any possibility of a comprehensive hermeneutic.

The implication of Heidegger's hermeneutic is that things no longer contain any sort of strictly objective standpoint, nor do they seek objectively valid certainty. In projection, there is always projected a mood. This mood gives Dasein a prejudice towards the world to interpret itself in terms of its past experiences, its present situation, and most importantly, its future possibilities. Dasein will never see the world as a static thing. It will always be re-interpreting the world as something that is always changing and never capable of having constant meaning. The methodological hermeneutics of Schleiermacher and Dilthey have been put aside to make room for the ontological hermeneutics of Heidegger.
unpublished research to assess the effects of a novel therapeutic approach. The results are promising, indicating potential benefits in reducing symptoms.

Additionally, a follow-up study is currently underway to further validate these findings. The data collected so far suggests a significant improvement in patient outcomes, prompting further investigation into the mechanisms underlying the observed effects. This work is crucial in advancing the field of therapeutic interventions, offering hope for those affected by the condition.

In conclusion, the preliminary findings highlight the potential of this new approach. Further research is needed to confirm these results and determine the optimal application in clinical settings. Meanwhile, healthcare professionals are encouraged to remain open to innovative treatments that may offer relief to their patients.
Gadamer’s hermeneutic must be seen in light of Dilthey and Heidegger. However, Gadamer transcends the philosophy of Dilthey and Heidegger through his insistence on the dialogical method, the concept of play, application, and the ontological value of language. By looking at how Gadamer transcends Dilthey and Heidegger, his philosophy can be explicated in relation to his philosophical past. To show this will be two main sections: How Gadamer transcends Dilthey, and how Gadamer goes beyond Heidegger.

According to Gadamer, hermeneutics must have a universal scope and are not limited to what is open, traditionally, to be interpreted because all things can be interpreted. Interpretations bring forth meanings that speak to us about the human condition; it speaks to us about our lived context in the world: “Philosophical hermeneutics takes as its task the opening up of the hermeneutical dimension in its full scope, showing its fundamental significance for our entire understanding of the world and thus for all the various forms in which this understanding manifests itself.”88 This is a formidable task to achieve, for it carries with it not only the importance of understanding our history, but also our present and future.

It is important to note that what primarily separates Gadamer’s philosophical hermeneutics from the tradition, with the exception of Heidegger, is that Gadamer does not want to find a strict method for his hermeneutic. Truth is simply that which is and can be experienced. Truth cannot be attained purely through method, or reason. It is this idea of a complete, methodologically verified, truth that brings Gadamer to reject the

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outcome of Dilthey’s hermeneutics. As Jean Grondin points out, “This experience of
truth is central to Gadamer’s hermeneutics, a truth which is not really ‘knowledge’, but
power and a discovery which does not forget that it cannot discover everything and that
something of the truth essentially remains hidden.” It is in this vision of truth that lies
the real power to go beyond his predecessors for Gadamer’s philosophical hermeneutics.

3. a) Gadamer’s Transcendence of Dilthey

In order to transcend Dilthey’s philosophy, Gadamer turns to Heidegger’s initial
observation that it was within phenomenology that hermeneutics was to find its starting
point. Although Gadamer rejects the language of Heidegger, he does not reject the claim
of what phenomenology can bring to philosophy in overcoming the problems that are
created by Dilthey. Gadamer must undermine Dilthey’s philosophy, which is trapped in
the epistemological attitude brought about by his reliance on the methods of the natural
sciences and the Kantian framework that Dilthey retains, in order to transcend his
philosophy. As stated previously, Dilthey’s reliance on Cartesianism keeps him captive
to the idea that truth can be methodologically verified. This Cartesian trap seeks only
what is certain. Knowledge must be clear and distinct in order to be objectively proven
and verifiable. To remain inside this kind of understanding of truth is to remain within an
epistemological model. To avoid this, it is important to bring the concept of experience
into a new light. Experience must be free from the limitation that was imposed on it
through Dilthey’s searching for an absolute, non-historical truth. Searching for the

absolute always undermines the importance of real lived experience. Hermeneutics must rely on an experience that is at the most fundamental level: "I have therefore retained the term 'hermeneutics' not in the sense of a methodology by as a theory of the real experience that thinking is."^90

With the concept of play and the game, Gadamer seeks to show our hermeneutic situation in the world in order to get beyond Dilthey's Cartesianism. Furthermore, through the dialogical method, re-appropriated by Gadamer in response to the subject/object dichotomy, the concept of play comes to its fruition in a concrete instance of philosophical hermeneutics. It is within these openings into Gadamer's philosophy that the problem of the subject/object dichotomy can be solved. What Dilthey started with an idea that never became a reality in his philosophy, Gadamer seeks to accomplish.

Through the questioning of art, a wider range of understanding opens up in which we can see all things within Being that are capable of being interpreted. Art allows us to understand ourselves and our human situation. Art tells us of our world:

Since we meet the artwork in the world and encounter a world in the individual artwork, the work of art is not some alien universe into which we are magically transported for a time. Rather, we learn to understand ourselves in and through it, and this means that we sublate the discontinuity and atomism of isolated experiences into the continuity of our own existence.^91

Through the apprehension and understanding of art something of ourselves can be brought forth. The world comes together not as fragmented pieces of a puzzle that must fit together, as the natural sciences might suggest. But, it shows the whole of experience before us. Within this experience are the beings within Being that call be to understood. Understanding is a linear and fluid process by which we come to see the world. Things

within the world cannot be divorced of their settings and set apart from where they are taken in as part of the whole of experience. To do this would be impossible. As long as something is able to be experienced, it is capable of being interpreted and therefore, capable of having meaning.

In beginning his look at art with play, Gadamer connects himself with the past and past attempts at understanding aesthetics. However, Gadamer is quick to note that he does not mean "aesthetics" in the same way as Kant or Schiller. The concept of play in Gadamer's philosophy has nothing to do with the subjective state of mind of the creator, or any particular subjectivity. The concept of play has to do with a "being-played." Play opens up a space in which it allows itself to happen. Play, like art, does not look at itself within subjective experience; play operates within its mode of being, as this "being played." In play, the player comports himself towards the game in which he plays. In this comportment, the player plays within the rules of the game and lets the game dictate the style of play. Without this comportment, there would be no game. The importance of play is not in the player itself; the player becomes drawn in by the game and takes part in the spirit of the game.

Through play comes a transformation into structure, where what the players represent is no longer a part of the play. The play itself becomes transformed into an ideality. In this ideality, play can be understood as play. In this transformation, play is divorced from any intentions that were part of its creation and it becomes something autonomous. When looking at art, the nature of art emerges only when this transformation takes place and looks beyond the intentions of the artist or creator. The

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subjectivity of the player, or the artist, is not to be taken into consideration, but rather the act itself, the “to and fro” of the game, is at stake, or the artwork itself. “It is clear that to start from subjectivity here is to miss the point. What no longer exists is the players – with the poet or the composer being considered as one of the players. None of them has his own existence for himself.” To enter into a game is to become part of that game and its rules. The game does not allow for a complete relativism, but gives us guidelines on how to play. If relativism were possible in the game, there would be no point, no objective. It would no longer retain its status as a game. The game takes out our subjectivity in order to make room for a meaningful play of the game which is autonomous from us, but with which we deal in a concerned way. The player always experiences the game as a “reality that surpasses us.” In this way, the game transcends our subjectivity in order to draw us in to it in a way that we become an integral whole with the game itself.

In this experience of play and the game, what remains important is that the aesthetic consciousness is not merely a subject that is concerned with itself. The subject is lost in its concerned dealings with the game, a game which has rules and a context, a game which is played for the sake of itself. So, in effect, it is the game which plays, not the players. The players are being-played for the sake of the game. It is in Gadamer’s idea of the game that Dilthey’s idea of a mind that encounters itself is cast off. Dilthey’s reliance on the idealist tradition is broken to make room for a real experiential encounter that goes beyond mere subjectivity. In the game, what can be seen is that the player is only a player insofar as a there is a game. The interdependence of the player and the

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game make the participant meaningful only in relation to the game. In the experience of
the game, the subject is lost in its dealings with the game. For Dilthey, understanding
was always a self-understanding. In this context, understanding is closer to what one
might call an interplay of forces. While this seems to be limited in its scope to games, it
also applies to aesthetic consciousness which has its dealings with art. In art, a realm of
being is disclosed that opens up new understanding. This understanding is of our human
situation within a world that has rules and contexts. We are not a subject divorced from
all contexts, as Descartes might suggest.

As has been already stated, this model of play and the game is not limited in its
scope on what is understood through it. Through art and through this process of
mediation that play and the game open up, all Being can be understood and given
meaning. Not only the present, but all of history is presented through this process.

Rudolf Bernet points out:

Gadamer finds in the game an original model for accounting for the
progression of history and for the disclosures which it showers upon us. If
all the events of history are thus taken up in the unfolding of one same
game[sic.] in which the infinitely renewed uncovering of new truths is at
stake, the subject which participates in the advent of truth thus has to be
understood as a player.96

Through the idea of play and the game, the world becomes open. Play and the game
becomes a space in which we can concernfully deal with the world in our daily lives and
a place where we can always re-evaluate what is presented to us through our experience
of Being. It is in play and the game that Gadamer shares a connection, but also
something new, with Heidegger’s philosophy in their overcoming of Dilthey. With play
one can see the idea of Heidegger’s “Da” of the Dasein. In the there-ness of our being,

96 Rudolf Bernet, "Gadamer on the Subject's Participation in the Game of Truth," The Review of
Metaphysics 58, no. 4 (2005).
we open a space in which the world can unfold. Through Gadamer’s analysis of play and the game, we can see this same movement. However, Gadamer wants to show that the game has an outline that mediates the play and makes the game unfold in new ways. This too applies to the world; the world unfolds in always new and different ways. This unfolding is only known through our play within the world; it can never be an objectified realm.

A feature that Gadamer’s philosophical hermeneutic shares in common with Heidegger, that Dilthey never recognized, is the fundamental observation that human beings are finite. Dilthey did recognize that humans are temporal and that the stream of consciousness is always in time; his insistence on a fully disclosed absolute truth that is non-historical suggests that there is the possibility of a non-historical piece of knowledge that is absolute. Because it is absolute, this knowledge would have to transcend this finitude. However, in play, this is never possible. There can never be a time when all will be disclosed through the play. Play opens up the possibility in which we can experience truth. However, it does not guarantee it. It is because we are finite that whatever we experience can always be re-evaluated and re-assessed. Unlike Dilthey, knowledge is never complete. No matter how much knowledge you can attain about a given object, it can never be exhausted. What matters is that there is always the possibility of finding more truths through art and the experience of Being. Ultimate knowledge is not a necessity.

In the dissolving of the subject through the analysis of play and the game, another important part of Gadamer’s hermeneutic comes forth, vis. the dialogical model. The
A summary of data from the recent research on the impact of climate change on coastal ecosystems. The study, conducted by a team of scientists from various institutions, highlights the significant changes observed in sea levels, temperature, and biodiversity. The researchers emphasize the urgent need for immediate action to mitigate the effects of climate change and protect these vulnerable ecosystems.

Key findings include:

1. Rising sea levels: Due to melting ice caps and glaciers, sea levels are expected to rise by several meters over the next century, leading to increased coastal flooding and erosion.

2. Temperature increases: The study shows a significant increase in sea surface temperatures, affecting the distribution and survival of marine species.

3. Alteration of biodiversity: Changes in temperature and sea levels are causing shifts in the distribution of marine species, with some moving towards cooler waters and others facing potential extinction.

The report recommends integrated approaches to address climate change, including the development of adaptive management strategies, enhancement of coastal protection measures, and increased funding for research and monitoring.

In conclusion, the research underscores the importance of immediate and coordinated efforts to mitigate climate change and safeguard our coastal ecosystems for future generations.
dialogical model serves as the hermeneutic tool for what is disclosed and opened up about Being through the concept of play. It is the way of putting Gadamer's concept of play into concrete use. The dialogical model serves as an interpretive tool that allows meaning to come forth without the need for a strict epistemology. In Dilthey, this strict epistemology lead to the categories of historical understanding, but, for Gadamer, the dialogical method escapes that in order to disclose meaning through an interaction with the other. It is now important to discuss interpretation in this sense.

In philosophical hermeneutics, any kind of understanding that occurs is an interpretation. Without interpretation, things in the world cannot be brought into our own in such a way that they can ever have any understanding. In this understanding, language has a central, and fundamental, role to play. "Language is the universal medium in which understanding occurs. Understanding occurs in interpreting." In giving language such a central role in understanding, many different approaches become possible as to how understanding can be achieved depending on the situation: conversation, translation, and dialectic.

In conversation, understanding is to come to an understanding. In this way, understanding is never immediate. A person in conversation must allow the conversation to unfold. Conversation opens us up to possibilities. We have to be ready and willing to accept this conversation in such a way that it allows what is being conversed about to "emerge". In this type of conversation, "to understand what a person says is, as we saw, to come to an understanding about the subject matter." Although this seems quite commonsensical, it is in this type of process that the primordiality of understanding is

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seen. Through language, we are able to converse, and through conversation, we are able to spread understanding about the world. Gadamer regards this type of conversational understanding as a central hermeneutical problem: “Thus the hermeneutical problem concerns not the correct mastery of language but coming to a proper understanding about the subject matter, which takes place in the medium of language.”^99 Understanding is not trying to understand the other person and to put ourselves into his or her particular understanding. Gadamer’s method is trying to relate the other person’s experience and opinions to our own in a way that it can become our own.

The project of translation offers up a special hermeneutic problem. In translation there is the task of translating one language into another, translating one way of understanding something into another. Every translation is guided by interpretation. The translator must take what is foreign and put it in such a way that it will be able to be understood by those for whom it is translated. Gadamer states that every interpretation is a highlighting which is guided by the interpreters understanding, according to his cultural prejudice, of that which is to be translated.^100 Translating is much like conversation in the sense that the translator must try to weigh the possibilities and differences in a dialogue that seeks to find a solution to filling in the gap between one language and another. The translation can never just be a reproduction. The “fundamental gulf” between cultures, for which language is the basis, remains a constant problem that must be dealt with in such a way as to make natural what is alien. It is the translator’s task to preserve his own language, while still recognizing and trying to incorporate the value of

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^100 Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, 386.
the alien.\textsuperscript{101} Translation allows what is alien, foreign, to be able to be understood in the interpreters own language. The primacy of language towards understanding is fundamental; for anything to be understood, it must be capable of being interpreted.

The dialectic is an important tool for understanding. Dialectic enables the interpreter, who needs an understanding, to question oneself. As already shown in the process of conversation and translation, the dialectic is the process of question and answer that guides the interpreter towards a better understanding of the subject matter. In conversation, we are able to ask questions and receive answers regarding what we still need to know; we can have clarification and explicate the possibilities that have become open to us. In translation, there is the question and answer which the translator must ask oneself to guide the translation. The way one participates in what is being understood in the text which one interprets is going to help to find a balance in what is meant to be understood, and what the author is understanding it as. It will help to guide one’s method towards making the subject matter understandable to those who read the translation, what they will get from his understanding. Interpretation uses this dialectical tool as a way to let “emerge,” as in a conversation, the subject matter. Interpretation “is a circle closed by the dialectic of question and answer.”\textsuperscript{102}

Interpretation, within all these perspectives, serves as the ground in which any understanding can occur. The centrality of language in understanding gives hermeneutics a central role in disclosing the world, and our culture: “The essential relation between language and understanding is seen primarily in the fact that the essence of tradition is in

\textsuperscript{101} Gadamer, \textit{Truth and Method}, 386-387.
\textsuperscript{102} Gadamer, \textit{Truth and Method}, 389.
the medium of language, so that the preferred object of interpretation is a verbal one."\(^{103}\)

Interpretation, translation, and conversation all become methods by which we can overcome the problems that culture and language give to understanding.

It is through this method of question and answer that the subject disappears and becomes fused with its object. Interpretation, the dialogical model, fuses the interpreter to the subject that is being interpreted. It is through this fusing that the subject/object dichotomy disappears and becomes molded into one and the same thing. New worlds become open to the interpreter. Through the interpreter's concerned dealings with the world, interpretation becomes something new and the truth of what is being interpreted is allowed to unfold. Truth is the unfolding of meaning within the dialogical structure of question and answer. What remains important is that there is no strict method that will guarantee a self-evident truth. It is in the dialogical model that Gadamer's main response to Dilthey can be seen. "For Dilthey, a child of the Enlightenment, the Cartesian way of proceeding via doubt to the certain is immediately self-evident."\(^{104}\)

In transcending Dilthey's methodological problem, Gadamer has found his own way of proceeding in hermeneutics.

Dilthey's epistemological problem has as its foundation Dilthey's basis for life. Dilthey claimed that life itself was a free and creative instrument that was inexhaustible. Dilthey's life philosophy remains questionable as to how it will accomplish his goal of a certain truth: "But if life is the... creative reality that Dilthey thinks it, then must not the constant alteration of historical context preclude any knowledge from attaining to objectivity? Is it not the case, then, that historical consciousness is ultimately a utopian

\(^{103}\) Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, 389.

\(^{104}\) Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, 239.
The True Identity of the Accomplices: To explain something well and be convincing to audiences and
enlighten the minds of spectators, it is necessary to make sure the explanations are consistent with
previous statements made, and that the explanations given are consistent with each other. This
practice is called logical consistency and is a fundamental principle of communication. To ensure
that the explanations are consistent, it is important to carefully consider the arguments and
facts presented. This involves examining the evidence and arguments presented, and ensuring
that they are logically consistent with each other. Additionally, it is important to be mindful
of the audience's perspective and to communicate in a way that is accessible and understandable
for all. By following these principles, it is possible to present a convincing and consistent
argument, and to effectively communicate with audiences.
It is because of this insight that philosophical hermeneutics must make history, culture and our historical consciousness a dynamic structure because, as Gadamer claims, all things are understood through language. It is in language that we find this new method for Gadamer. Whereas, for Dilthey, it seems possible to eventually exhaust the understanding of history, for Gadamer this remains impossible. The interpreter is always at a distance from the object of interpretation and the interpretation takes on ever new meanings, as does language itself.

Language, as a tradition for Gadamer, is essential verbal. Within this tradition, language hands down what is understood to a culture, and a time period. Everything within this verbal tradition belongs to the process of understanding. Being able to be written entails the detachability of language from speaking, from mere dialogue at a particular time and place. It is within this detachability that a text, or history, can become a hermeneutic problem, a problem of understanding. Because language is a living language, it is not static; understanding what is written becomes an important task for hermeneutics. Understanding a historically written text can always pose a problem.

For Gadamer, the living language is that language which is always building on itself. Language is interconnected with its culture; it is constantly under process and revision. The fundamental unity between language and the individual makes language into a world-view. The living speech of a culture teaches us about that culture. It is language itself that holds the history of a people. Language cannot be separated from its culture to be merely an abstract theory of signs: signifier, and signified. To admit to this kind of understanding would take away from the livingness of language and its power over the way in which the world is seen.

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Understanding, as within language, always has a prejudice, or pre-judgment to it. It is based on the historical situation of the interpreter within culture. This prejudice will guide the way in which we understand and give things meaning. We can never separate ourselves from our historical consciousness, that is, the way the tradition has been handed down to us. Understanding, within this cultural prejudice, is to bring our own concepts and structures into any interpretation. Prejudices are never known as an object; they are always in the background of understanding as implicit knowledge. Prejudices guide the way we interpret and understand the text within our own historical situation.

The fundamental unity between the individual and his language is a world-view. The living speech of a culture teaches us about that culture. Within language is held the history of a people, their understanding of the world as well as their misunderstandings. Language is not easily separated from its surroundings in culture and time. To tear language from its context would mean to deny its status as a living language, as a culturally relevant world-view. Language is not just one person's possession; it depends on the world being there at all. Language also depends on a community, that there are others in the world willing to come into dialogue. The world seems to be as we see it because it comes into language. However, language comes into being because of the world. What is fundamental is that "man's being-in-the-world is primordially linguistic."\textsuperscript{106} Language and the world are tied so intrinsically together that they cannot be separated.

It is within the framework of language itself that a certain factualness about the world is conveyed. It enables us to point out otherness and presupposes a distance between the speaker and the thing that is pointed out. This enables the world to be seen as an object;

\textsuperscript{106} Gadamer, \textit{Truth and Method}, 443.
it reinforces our subjectivity in the world. Perspective of the world is attained through
the understanding of language. This is done by the power of dialogue, and of coming to
an understanding. Coming to an understanding is the process by means of which the
community of life is lived out. The world is disclosed, Being is disclosed, through the
process of coming to an understanding. The world of a culture is intricately intermingled
with this process; it makes present understanding possible and gives the world a cultural
perspective, or prejudice. However, it is important to point out that this does not make
the world merely relative. The world is that which is only presented in language; it opens
up a world orientation. Within this orientation, the world and appearances still retain a
certain legitimacy. Language serves the world to open up a reality beyond the individual,
beyond a merely relative and private understanding. The opening that language provides
serves to make understanding a public endeavor; it is no longer confined to the private
sphere.

When language can be written down, it can claim itself as ideal. It no longer has
the need to be held up by anything. Being ideal, it can distance itself from its present
understanding as a mere psychological expression of the author. In essence, it can
distance itself from the “vestiges of past life.”

Writing is detached from the emotion
and expression of the author. What is written exists for itself, as it shows itself in its
written form. Because of this detachment, the writing is now public property. It no
longer only lives within the mind of its creator; it branches out to be able to be received
and interpreted by others. Being able to come to an understanding of what is written is to
re-awaken the meaning of the text. Reading the text becomes the highest task of
understanding; it becomes a task of interpretation. Within every interpretation is a

highlighting. Understanding and interpreting the text are not a mere repetition of the text’s meaning; it is a sharing of present meaning.

In this light, what can be written down is a paradigm case about the finitude of interpretation and the impossibility of a non-historical understanding in which an absolutely certain truth can be uncovered. Everything that can be interpreted stands within a culture and a series of relations. Understanding these relations is to bring the object of interpretation into a meaningful whole with the world. The person within the world is always encountering the world through the eyes of a particular place and time.

It is because of this way of gaining meaning through a contemporary understanding that Gadamer’s philosophy remains a philosophy of the present. However, because of its emphasis on the present, it does not mean that it has forgotten the past. History remains very important for language and understanding. History must be understood in terms of the present, as are all things. If there is no application to an object to be interpreted, there can be no real meaning. Application always happens within the present. While, the present can glance towards the past, or the future, it always remains present.

Gadamer moves beyond of Dilthey with his use of play and game, the dialogical method, and his overcoming of Dilthey’s epistemological view with his use of language. Through Heidegger and phenomenology, Gadamer overcomes Dilthey’s reliance on the Cartesian starting point and the epistemological grounding that must be implied when starting from this position. Gadamer brings hermeneutics to a point that is free from a strict subject/object dichotomy that plagued philosophy since Descartes. Although he owes much to Heidegger for his starting point, Gadamer goes beyond Heidegger as well.
with the math: now a bit of real art geometry. Does a geometrical...

the problem is the result, not the argument. It is the result, not the...
3. b) Gadamer’s Going Beyond Heidegger

Gadamer’s most fundamental achievement over his master is the concretization of Heidegger’s hermeneutics and the concretization of history. Heidegger, throughout his thinking, remains concerned with the question of the meaning of Being. For Gadamer, it is important to question the direction given by Heidegger to philosophy. Ontology, no matter how fundamental and important to Heidegger, remains abstract and without a firm basis in the everyday world. The ontological direction given by Heidegger is not sufficient to truly look into the human condition. In order to show the importance of a philosophical hermeneutics that can be used for its practical applications, Gadamer develops his hermeneutics as a concrete way in which we can go about understanding in the world. To do this, Gadamer turns to the dialogical model and his use of *phronesis*, the emphasis on humanism, language, and the concept of application. With these ideas, Gadamer sets himself apart from his master in order to rework hermeneutics into a practical field.

As pointed out as an overcoming of Dilthey, the concepts of play and the game remain an important step in the overcoming of Heidegger too, although not in the same way. Heidegger’s thinking had already broken out of the strict subject/object dichotomy. But, Heidegger remained too abstract. What makes play and the game genuinely Gadamerian is that he concretizes Heidegger’s position vis-à-vis Dasein. He shows how Dasein operates within the world in a new way that is mediated through the idea of the game. All our experience of the world and of history must necessarily be subject to this
process. Insofar as we are finite and have finite knowledge, all things are open for more interpretation. What is important from this starting point is that we can see the connection and importance of Heidegger to Gadamer’s thought, but also what is new and different in Gadamer’s hermeneutics. Gadamer’s opening of hermeneutics through phenomenology shows us his method and how he will go about building his whole hermeneutics.

It is through Plato’s dialogues that Gadamer becomes aware of the possibilities of the dialogical method. Through the works of Plato Gadamer sees philosophical dialogue as an important step in revealing truth. Whereas, for Heidegger in Being and Time, truth is something that hits you like a bolt of lightening, for Gadamer, truth takes time. Truth becomes a process that is guided by a conversation in its practical wisdom, the process which Aristotle calls *phronesis*. The dialogical method points out that all understanding is a “coming to an understanding.” No understanding is ready-made as a “fact.” Understanding is a process which occurs through experience. The dialogical method is a questioning and answering which must guide all understandings. For philosophical hermeneutics, *phronesis* is “another kind of knowledge. Primarily, this means that it is directed towards concrete situations. Thus, it must grasp the ‘circumstances’ in their infinite variety.”

Not since Plato has the dialogical method been given this central task of mediating the experience of truth. The distinction between Heidegger and Gadamer is important. For Gadamer, the experience of truth is based on a process which takes time; it is a temporal process. Although the understanding may appropriate its meaning at any time, it is always in the process of revision.

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Although, as Dostal points out, the dialogical method in Gadamer’s philosophical hermeneutics and its communal implications was not completely new insofar as Heidegger’s idea of Being-with and his concept of listening to the gods, in his later works, clearly make room for the social and dialogical methods. However, for Gadamer, the Heideggerian concept of Being-with never fully reaches a point where it can be really useful. Gadamer argues that although Being-with clearly makes room for the other, it is just a pale reflection of Dasein: \textit{"Mit-sein}, for Heidegger, was a concession that he had to make, but one that he never really got behind. Indeed, even as he was developing the idea, his wasn’t really talking about the other at all.'\textsuperscript{110} It is within the power of the other that the dialogical method comes to its completeness. Through conversation, as already implicitly pointed out through the dialogues of Plato, truth and meaning are guided by the practical wisdom in the act of dialogue itself. Although \textit{phronesis} was an Aristotelian term, it clearly had its roots in the Platonic dialogue. However, Heidegger never fully characterized its use in the same way as Gadamer. The importance of the dialogical method is the mediating function that it serves for understanding. It is in this mediating function that the dialogical method plays a central role for all understanding. Because of this, it is a fundamental characteristic that needs to be appropriated for philosophical hermeneutics.

The emphasis on the other in the concepts of the game, the dialogical model and culture contain an ethical realm that is lacking in Heidegger’s thought. Many have criticized this lack of any ethical dimension of Heidegger’s thought. In an interview with Riccardo Dottori, Gadamer claims that this was noticed early on in his relationship with

Heidegger. He knew this insight through the concept of 'conscience.' Gadamer claims that, for Heidegger, conscience is merely the "coming-to-find-oneself."¹¹¹ For Heidegger, without a genuine understanding of the other, an ethical dimension to philosophy remains impossible. Jean Grondin argues that Gadamer carries on a humanist line of philosophy, while Heidegger stays within the German tradition of metaphysics and ontology.¹¹² Grondin even goes so far as to say that this is the primary way in which Gadamer ceases to be a Heideggerian and reworks Heidegger's thought to make room for an encounter with the other. This opens up new wide avenues for hermeneutics as it no longer has to be a philosophy of understanding only texts and history; it can reach out to the concrete understanding of ethics and ethical situations. With a real concept of the other and the possibility of a real encounter, ethics becomes a necessity that must be dealt with.

Although, Gadamer himself did not outline an ethics, his reliance on the other implicitly speaks of the power which the community of others has over our understanding.

Through the other, we can come to know ourselves. We are not distinctly separate from those who are around us. Language, with its communal understandings and ideality, goes beyond Dasein. Therefore, it is through the reliance on otherness that Heidegger's thought is lacking something fundamental to our understanding of language and culture.

Gadamer's unique philosophical direction seeks to concretize Heidegger's thought by purging it of the complex language used by Heidegger. Gadamer no longer speaks of Dasein, but goes back to using ordinary language with which to make his case for hermeneutics. Even though words such as "consciousness" and "historical consciousness" may have associations that Heidegger wished to avoid, there is no

¹¹¹ Gadamer, A Century of Philosophy, 23.
problem with the idea that some terms may still be caught within the terminology of previous philosophy. What is important is that there is always room to free language from its bonds. Language is a fluid and dynamic process. To make language completely static is to take away its status as a living thing. Language and history are intricately tied together in such a way that the past must always come to a new light. By using the traditional language, the past is broadened to new paths that language may contain while retaining the connections to the past. Although this is not an overt criticism of Heidegger, it does point out that Heidegger missed the real "human" purpose that is behind language. If hermeneutics is going to be a humanist pursuit, it must remain firmly within this ever-changing dynamic view of language in which it grows and speaks to us of the human condition in our ever-changing world.

The second way in which Heidegger’s thought becomes concretized is through the understanding of history. For Heidegger, history is the history of Being. There is no history of a culture and its people. By using language as an ontological tool, Gadamer shows that an ontology has as its roots the culture and the history of its people. We disclose within Being what is important to the particular culture that stands within a historical framework. Although the later Heidegger points in this direction, early Heidegger ignores the possibility. It is in the appropriation of history that Gadamer turns to Dilthey and Hegel for help. From Hegel’s idea of the dialectic, reason and history can be brought together to form a cohesive whole, although Gadamer rejects the idea that absolute spirit can be attained or that history can be completely understood through reason. In Hegel’s dialectic is the movement from thesis to antithesis that builds itself up and forms into a synthetic unity. This unity helps to concretize experience and unfolds it
in a way that can be comprehensive and yet keeps open new possibilities for understanding. It is because of this openness that we can always look for more interpretations; there is always new meaning to be seen. For Gadamer, this forms a concrete history that Heidegger seems to have ignored. Through Dilthey, the real importance of history is seen as it affects our lives and how we appropriate it through our human condition. This remains essential for any real meaning of history to be possible. The re-appropriation is the process of application.

For Gadamer, the concept of application is taken up and freed from its negative connotation with early hermeneutics. To do this, application must become a positive term that gives something to our human condition, a term that plays a fundamental role in understanding. In application, we can see the importance of being able to apply our knowledge to situations. Application is not about making objective this or that thing in the world in order to be pragmatically used, it is an act of consciousness that is happening all the time. If application were merely the understanding of a universal and then the application of it, it would be overly connected with the pure reason and not in accordance with the experiential basis for our understanding: "Application does not mean first understanding a given universal in itself and then afterward applying it to a concrete case. It is the very understanding of the universal – the text – itself. Understanding proves to be a kind of effect and knows itself as such."\textsuperscript{113} The process of understanding is tightly interwoven with the process of application. Application serves to ground understanding in the present and to make all understanding contemporary understanding. Hence, all history and art speak to us of our human condition to ourselves today. Just like a 15\textsuperscript{th} century artwork is relevant today, so too is the understanding of historical texts and

\textsuperscript{113} Gadamer, \textit{Truth and Method}, 341.
events. They all speak to us of our world and point out our connection with Being. The encounters we have with the world that call to be understood serve as lens in which open up new horizons.

From these three main contributions of Gadamer to hermeneutics the importance of his philosophy can be seen. Gadamer seeks to bridge the gap between the world and the subject in order to free the subject from subjectivity. We are intricately tied to the world. There can be no "subject" that is divorced from all meanings and associations within the world.

As a critique of Heidegger and the need for a culturally relevant ground in which to build up meaning comes the idea of the historically effected consciousness. It is here that Gadamer turns once again to Dilthey for help. Gadamer points out that Heidegger's use of the concept of facticity is lacking; in fact, it seems to be an impossible project. What is necessary is a multi-faceted view of history, a history that is built upon the coming together of many different points of view. Facticity remains one dimensional, stuck within the history of Being. The historically effected consciousness brings together many horizons in "the fusion of horizons." The "fusion of horizons" shows the mutual relatedness that understanding has on history, culture, language, and all things that are interpreted. In the fusion, there is a continuity with which the past and the present merge in order to bring together two different appropriations of meaning and serve to broaden understanding. In Hegel and his philosophy, the problem of history becomes important. With this, the historically effected consciousness becomes an issue. For, in Gadamer, as in Hegel, history is the basis for all hermeneutics. In the fusion of horizons, many different historical views come together to bring about a comprehensive view of history
and to lay the groundwork for any meaning. But, this does not need not to be a one
dimensional understanding of history. History is multifaceted. It is in Dilthey and his
philosophy of life, although overlooked by him, that Gadamer, with the help of Hegel’s
insights, turns to overcome Heidegger. Here it is possible to see how the past holds
primacy, contrary to Heidegger’s future-oriented hermeneutics. The historically effected
consciousness is “an experience that experiences and is itself real.” The historically
effected consciousness raises itself to a level where it has a real effect on our
understanding. The importance of the historically effected consciousness lies in its
capacity to open a world-view that is always changing; it too is connected to language
and the very fluid understandings that come with it.

Through his criticisms of Heidegger, Gadamer’s philosophy comes forth as a new
understanding of what philosophical hermeneutics can achieve. Through the insights of
the dialectic, application, and his making concrete Heidegger’s thought serve to show
how the phenomenological method can point us in a new direction with hermeneutics.
Although ontology remains important, it is an ontology that is built upon real communal
human interests that go beyond Dasein as individual. The disclosure of the present
reaches both into the past and the future in order to ground the present.

3. c) A Case Study in Gadamer’s Hermeneutics

As an important glimpse into Gadamer’s philosophical hermeneutics, it is instructive to see how, through a concrete explication, this method will operate. The text is a special problem for any interpretation. How is it possible to connect a historical text with the world today and give the text meaning? This was the fundamental question which hermeneutics takes as its beginnings. Gadamer’s philosophy is driven to answer this important question by questioning the text itself through the perspective of language.

As a living language, language is always changing. Thus, any particular interpretation of a historical text becomes a problem. For a person in today’s world to read a text from the 15th century, there is a fundamental gap between the prejudices of our culture today, and the culture of the past. To bridge this gap requires that the interpreter dialogically question his understanding of the text in order to answer the key problems that the text is trying to convey. This questioning is always biased from the interpreter’s perspective.

Not only must a text be interpreted from this perspective, in some cases it must be translated. Translation always poses a problem for the interpreter because the author cannot be directly conversed with, or contacted for, any sort of dialogue. As Gadamer argues, the text is a fixed expression of life. In being a fixed expression, it can only speak through the interpreter. Through the interpreter, the text must find meaning and expression; it must be reawakened in such a way that it can be understood. However, the text still undergoes a type conversation in that a common subject matter brings the text and the interpreter together. A hermeneutic conversation is that the interpreter must
participate in the meaning of the text in order for any understanding to occur. Like a
conversation, the interpreter has to be ready and open for understanding. He has to be
willing to accept the text in such a way that it will have meaning that can let itself emerge.
Even though the text itself is fixed, the point of view of the text is never static. The text
is always being understood in different ways. In reawakening the text’s meaning, in
highlighting, the interpreter always brings his own thoughts and opinions into contact
with those of the author. This coming together of two perspectives is what Gadamer
means by the “fusion of horizons.” In the fusion of horizons, different understandings
come together and fuse with each other to open up understanding for new possibilities.
These possibilities help to bridge the fundamental gap between the interpreter and that
which is being interpreted; it makes understanding otherness possible.

Every text must become contemporaneous with its current time period. The text
becomes both “here” and “there” at the same time. As a historical fixed expression, it
will always remain a product of its period. Its meaning becomes contemporary and
present because the text is interpreted and understood in a way that it becomes
meaningful for the contemporary understanding. Understanding the text means to
participate in its meaning. Meaning must always be a shared meaning. Transforming the
text back into meaning is taking what is written and stating it as new; it is bringing it into
our own in such a way that it has meaning for the current interpreter.

The temporality of the text plays a special role in noticing how time works within
our living language. This temporality is very close to Heidegger’s notion of ecstatic time.
Ecstatic time collapses the future, the having been, and the present together into a unity
that helps to fuse understanding into a coherent whole. Heidegger, in Being and Time,
states, "[t]he existential-temporal condition for the possibility of the world lies in the fact that temporality as an ecstatical unity, has something like a horizon." This horizon makes the understanding of the world possible. If time were merely a series of never ending "now's," Being would have no way in which to disclose itself meaningfully. It is from Heidegger that Gadamer will find his theory of temporality. Being is only disclosed within an understanding of temporality and the temporally existing subject.

The understanding of the text can only be attained by fusing the horizons of one time to another, by re-awakening the text. This re-awakening will not only open up the doorway to new understandings, it will bring forth a possibility of newness. The repetition of the past is not a simple repetition in which the past is recreated; it is a new creation. The interpretation of a historical text collapses time in on itself; it reaches out in many directions. The fusion of horizons makes possible this new interpretation. For any kind of interpretation to occur, the past must become present; it must speak to the interpreter and have an application. It must be brought into the interpreter's own world and situation. This means that, "application is involved in the first real reaching of an understanding of a matter by the person who is seeking to understanding. In all understanding an application occurs, such that the person who is understanding is himself or herself right there in the understood meaning." This application serves to bring meaning out of its original context and into the world of the interpreter. It gives meaning a chance to fuse with his or her time and place. This does not mean that it has an application to be used for something in a pragmatic way; it is applied in such a way that meaning comes forth.

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115 Heidegger, Being and Time, 416.
The text, as a fixed expression of life, has a much greater role to play in the world than merely an expression of a single life; it helps to disclose Being. It makes Being a concern in such a way that it helps to bring meaning forth, from many different perspectives. If meaning were merely concerned with the here and now, it would be very limited. To go back to an Aristotelian notion of time and temporality, or a merely scientific notion, would be to deprive the past any significant meaning and application to the world today. This ecstatic temporality reaches out, and it has meaningful ways of teaching us about Being and the world beyond our culture, beyond our recent history. In other ways, it may even teach us about the world to come and how we can meaningfully deal with change. As new understandings of the world come forth, hermeneutics can show us how to remember our past and use it to find new and interesting ways to use our past and find solutions to tomorrow’s problems. In this way, history and the texts of yesterday, speak to us of our human condition. As a gift of Dilthey to philosophy, history becomes a rich arena in which we can learn about ourselves.
4 - Conclusion

Gadamer, like his predecessors, employed philosophy in order to show the fundamental importance of hermeneutics. Through interpretation and understanding, all things can be appropriated and have meaning. By having meaning, the world becomes a meaningful place. The world is not dull and lifeless, or a system of unconnected things that just happen to coincide at the same place in the same time; the world is a meaningful whole. Through experience, we are always gaining entry into this whole. Although, in the language of traditional hermeneutics we would say that we come to know the whole through the parts, Gadamer says the opposite. We come to know the parts through the whole. The experience of Being opens up to us a world that is ours to disclose. Through experience and language, we disclose this according to our culture and our prejudice. However, as has been shown, prejudice and language do not limit our experience. We always have the chance to re-evaluate what we know. Understanding is never complete.

Although Gadamer’s philosophy seems to be completely biased in favour of the past because of the importance of language and the history of culture, it is not. Gadamer maintains a firm grip on the present through the process of application. Heidegger maintains that Dasein is future-oriented, but this too is not complete. For Gadamer, the person can look to the past, or the future and still remain within a firm understanding. By looking to the past and future, we get a new perspective on the present. The horizon of the past can always be fused with another horizon to make a new understanding.

What remains in question for Gadamer’s philosophy is how to bridge a radical gulf between two cultures. Although, we can easily see the one route would be through
the human condition, we can find a central point in which to mediate our experiences. However, Gadamer makes no claims on how the introduction of new cultures into our society could come to an understanding that is suitable for both cultures. Because our culture and our understandings are based on language, when language fails what is left? Certainly this is a problem. Gadamer's method of translation seems to offer up clues as to how we can bridge this fundamental gap. However, as we have all experienced, the translation is never enough. There is always meaning left out of a translation. The translator must choose what is to be said. Through the translator's own understanding, the text comes forth as something new. Although this would be a novel way to understand a different culture, it is may not be the best. With current world politics at an all-time critical point, a failed interpretation might have drastic consequences. So, for Gadamer, the question remains open as to where to find a central concern which can serve as a mediation point between two radically different cultures. If, however, truth were verifiable in some way, this would not be a problem. But, for Gadamer the specter of relativism is always present. Although Gadamer tries to escape this problem, it still looms over his philosophy, not as something radically present, but as something that is possible.

Gadamer's philosophy has often been charged with linguistic and historical relativism. Jurgen Habermas claims that for Gadamer to escape relativism, he must have some sort of point on which to ground his philosophy and avoid historicism. For Habermas, this must be either an ideal speech situation, which advocates for a context
It is important to note the potential implications of these findings. The data collected in this study suggests a strong correlation between the use of social media and mental health issues among teenagers. These findings are consistent with previous research on the topic.

However, it is crucial to consider the limitations of this research. The sample size is relatively small, and the data was collected through self-reporting, which may introduce a degree of bias. Additionally, the study did not control for other variables that could influence mental health outcomes, such as family dynamics or peer pressure.

In conclusion, the results of this study highlight the need for further research on the topic of social media use and mental health. It is essential to develop comprehensive programs to educate young people about the potential risks associated with social media usage and to provide them with strategies to mitigate these risks.

Keywords: Social media, mental health, teenagers, self-reporting.
free ideal language on which to ground rationality, or a Hegelian universal history. This critique of hermeneutics seems, at first sight, to be a strong one. However, hermeneutics starts with the idea that it wants to escape all relativism. Through the ideas of play and the game, it can be seen that the subject is no longer the main player; it is the game that plays. Thus, if there is no subject, then relativism does not seem to be a valid claim. However, historical relativism is still a possibility, as one could choose to read this history instead of that, or to attend this event instead of that. Relativism is not a major hurdle for Gadamer's philosophy, but it always remains on the borders. As long as there is no claim to a universal history, there can be no claim to an absolute ground on which we can base our understanding. Because of the multiplicity of history, this seems to be an impossible task.

However powerful these claims seem to be, they do not diminish the importance of philosophical hermeneutics. They are problems to be worked on within the literature and practice of hermeneutics. Gadamer's philosophy stands out as an exemplary look at what philosophy can achieve. Through the philosophy of Dilthey and Heidegger, Gadamer's philosophy emerges as a hermeneutics that has a claim to universality that was only dreamt of by Dilthey, put in abstract form by Heidegger, and grounded by Gadamer. Through Gadamer, philosophical hermeneutics became popular again in western philosophy. The tradition of hermeneutics has been long and distinguished, with some of the leading minds of philosophy working in the field. Gadamer is no exception to this. Truth must be uncovered. Method, as Gadamer's philosophy defines it, is not so much a discipline but a way of life. It is not the scientific method, and it is not a

objectively verifiable method. It is a method which seeks to find truth through the very process of questioning and answering, a process which comes from Heidegger’s radical questioning of Being. Gadamer states, “what the tool of method does not achieve must – and really can – be achieved by a discipline of questioning and inquiring, a discipline that guarantees truth.”

118 Gadamer, Truth and Method, 491.
Works Cited


