

8. *Reflections on the Relation of Religion and Science* () 9. *Friendship and Self-Knowledge: Reflections on the Role of Friendship in Greek Ethics. Aristotle and Imperative Ethics [Kant]*. The translation is deft and faithful and will be valuable to those seeking to see the relationship of Gadamer's hermeneutics to religion, science, and ethics.

This book may not be reproduced, in whole or in part, including illustrations, in any form beyond that copying permitted by Sections and of the U. Copyright Law and except by reviewers for the public press, without written permission from the publishers. Set in Caslon type by Tseng Information Systems. Printed in the United States of America. The paper in this book meets the guidelines for permanence and durability of the Committee on Production Guidelines for Book Longevity of the Council on Library Resources. The essays here selected from the *Gesammelte Werke* and translated into English for the first time show Gadamer probing more deeply into the hermeneutic significance of these subjects. This generality should not be taken to imply, however, that Gadamer dismisses religious hermeneutics as just another case of hermeneutics in general or that he succumbs to the humanist tendency to reduce the divine to the human. The interpretation of religious texts, he shows, is irreducible, because it has something to teach us not just about theological hermeneutics, but about secular interpretation as well. For instance, the claim of divine meaning to be the same yesterday, today, and forever seems at first to be a special and, from a historical point of view, dubious attribute of the sacred text alone. Gadamer shows, however, that every kind of interpretation, and not just that informed by faith, must ineluctably posit the inviolability and self-sameness of meaning. Without such a dialectical counterbalance to the self-difference of meaning evident in secular interpretation, even nonreligious interpretation necessarily falls into what Gadamer calls "hermeneutic nihilism" — the premise that every new reading is a new creation — which amounts to the denial that interpretation and understanding are possible at all. The real problem of hermeneutics, then, is to think difference and sameness, the secular and the religious, together. If reason, as viewed by the Enlightenment, represents the unboundedness of human aspiration and the unlimited possibilities open to thought and endeavor, religion according to Gadamer foregrounds "the boundary situations of guilt and death, where human Dasein finds through its own experience its powerlessness before the power of fate" p. We who live in the postatomic, even posttechnological age, have become disillusioned "concerning the power of human beings over nature, and perhaps, even more, concerning the control of human suffering" p. Whether in the realm of mechanical engineering or social engineering, each failure of control, each confrontation with the limits of human possibility, points toward a domain that exceeds it. In the face of tragedy and the power of fate, we experience the fundamental appeal of religion and the ultimate hollowness of an idealistic philosophy that enshrines human will and consciousness. The divine is an enduringly powerful way of thinking about what exceeds consciousness. From the acknowledgment that we are not in control of ourselves or the world in which we live, the acknowledgment of the divine is only one step away. This is represented by the supreme being, to be sure; but it is also exemplified by other modes of being that no less than the divine lie outside the circumference of human consciousness and control: Often Gadamer terms all this not "objective mind" but rather "life," "world," or just "being," since being in this sense as in the case of the supreme being is always supraindividual. By the polis, for example, Gadamer understands a mode of being, not consensus of individual views or a collectivity of individuals formed by a social contract. These latter are modern subjectivist notions. For the Greeks, by contrast, the polis means "what is common to us all. Less the product of consciousness than its condition, the polis exemplifies a "dimension of things that we share" and to which we belong p. Quite the contrary, it is precisely the being that we are "situated within" that, however near, is also most beyond us. Yet this supposition is complicated by the fact that he views this world as itself beyond, and correlatively the divine comes to be conceived as much nearer than we are wont to think it. For the Greeks, as Gadamer shows in explicating passages from Xenophanes and Parmenides, the divine is present for those who are acquainted with it [innesein, also "to be aware of"]. In understanding this, all appeals to an idealistic tradition are misplaced. That is the meaning of noein: Our being within God, rather than distant from an otherworldly

divine, receives expression in a memorable passage of Acts: God that made the world and all things therein. God is at once most near and far, at the same time best known and least, because "the divine," in the language of faith, names the whole of which we are part. Since Gadamer does not dichotomize reason and religion in the manner of the Enlightenment, his essays move from mythos to logos and back in a way that bespeaks their indissoluble unity. In this respect, he follows a paradigm set by Greek thought. This same mixture obtains in the realm of ethics as well. Briefly put, rational reflection about the good cannot and need not be prescinded from life. Ethical knowledge is knowing from within, because in this, as in every instance, knowing is indissolubly tied to being. The indivisibility of reflective ethics from unreflective ethos renders both of them so full of tension as to be almost paradoxical. On one hand, Gadamer wants to do full justice to ethics as a form of knowing. He wants to preserve the cognitive character of ethics understood as a species of philosophy and so belonging to "the logos of justification. On the other hand, Gadamer must do equal justice to the fact that ethics is indivisible from ethos; and ethos "specifically "the state of being arising from training" like all being, is "beyond us. Ethics is a kind of reflection, then, but it is tied to ethos, and ethos is a kind of being, hence nonreflective. Just this paradox gives hermeneutics its task, that of "mediating ethos and philosophical ethics" p. Moral decisions are always "situated within" an ethos that is unjustified and in need of no justification, but rather given, evident, and so patent as to obviate dispute. This obviousness explains the obligatory character of moral principles, their claim to obedience. If the rootedness of moral principles in ethos explains their binding character, however, it also seems to call the very possibility of a philosophical ethics into question. Do we really have, say, an obligation to pay our debts? The unreflectiveness of ethos explains why it is equally impossible to doubt it and to prove it. In the abstract, ethical judgments are intuitively certain, like sensory judgments. Yet ethical disputes exist, and they are rarely disputes about the obvious. In such cases, where the "logos of justification" is required, arguments can be made, and the decisions taken can be assessed as more, or less, reasonable. In these cases, too, the reasons adduced are themselves grounded in ethos, and such grounding is possible because ethos is not merely unreflective. It is rather a prereflective awareness "capable of becoming the object of self-conscious reflection, but not originating in that way or necessarily aspiring to it. When ethical reflection or self-conscious reflection on the good does occur, Gadamer argues, this "can be nothing but the mere self-clarification of the determinations of concrete ethos" P. Notice that he does not say, "ethics clarifies ethos. Ethics itself is an element immanent within ethos and does not advene from without. As Gadamer writes, "practical philosophy can do nothing but pursue the drive toward knowledge and self-understanding that is always manifesting itself in human actions and decisions" pp. If ethical reflection never breaks free of ethos and is nonetheless genuinely ethical for all that, it is because all "human reason is determined by actual ethos" p. Only an Enlightenment antithesis between logos and ethos would imply that reason, because it is always situated within an ethos, cannot therefore be reasonable. That follows only if there is, or at least could be, some state of reason that is situated nowhere, entirely unaffected by ethos. For Gadamer, however, the very absence of unsituated reason explains why "for thinking beings the use of reason is always in need of critique" pp. What obscures and impedes the ongoing work of critique, in fact, is the very supposition that there is, or at least could be, some state of reason that is impartial and complete, not situated within. In sum, the dichotomies of the Enlightenment themselves contribute to an artificial narrowness, insofar as they interfere with the impulse to critique, to openness, and hence to reasonableness that hermeneutics discovers in ethos itself. Does philosophy, then, inquire about God at all? Does the proposition that God exists involve for philosophers only the form of a question? This "atheistic" selfconception of philosophy obviously stands in an intrinsic polemical relation to the Christian understanding of existence "where Dasein is understood not as autonomous but as a being indivisible from sin and grace, subject to the call of God, and experiencing in itself his grace. This distinction is exclusive. It excludes even the conflict itself, for it is concerned not just with various understandings of Dasein "from the divine viewpoint or the human "but rather with the various meanings of that understanding itself. Because it is itself a presupposition, faith "whether or not it retains the character of a wager "can never reach the presuppositionlessness that philosophy wagers and presupposes. What it asserts is this: But it can also be expressed as the basis of a modern critique of religion, and then it corresponds to the selfconsciousness

of enlightened humanity. In truth, however, only a very specific kind of theological and philosophical self-conception carries matters to the extreme of irreconcilable dichotomy. Christian theology in particular is not at all so generally certain about it. It understands the problem as that of natural, as opposed to rational, theology and knowledge of God. Of course, such natural knowledge of God does not plumb the full depths of the Christian mystery. Christianity is revealed religion, to be sure, and it belongs to the nature of revelation "that is, of a revealed divine being and his deeds" that its truth and content cannot be understood in another, natural or rational way as well. Yet there is a whole series of Christian though not exclusively Christian truths concerning the existence and nature of the divine that can be reached without revelation and thus pertain, for example, to other religious viewpoints as well. Such "rational" theology became in the Christian age an essential "the most important" element of philosophical metaphysics, until philosophy and the philosophical concept of knowledge were subsumed under the norm of knowledge cultivated by the new empirical natural sciences. This amounted to sounding the critical death knell for all speculative theology. Kant brought it to completion. His critique of traditional metaphysics was epoch-making. Ever since, one subject that still occupied progressive minds in the eighteenth century has been banned from philosophy: No one today expects philosophy to offer proofs of God, or would accept them "despite the attempts of the great Idealist thinkers that have emerged since Kant. In this respect, Kant has remained victorious. Whatever consequences other than Page 3 critique of religion the general consciousness has drawn from the modern Enlightenment, it still considers the competence of philosophy so limited that no one assigns it the burden of proving the existence of God. Now the proof of God is and remains the presupposition of all rational knowledge of God "at least, after atheistic doubt is awakened. Thus it indeed appears as if modern consciousness "outside faith in the reality of revelation" and philosophy, in which that modern consciousness achieves its full self-realization, have wholly lost the question of God. It is no more sure of itself than a theology in the unshakable fixity of its faith. It is hard for theology to sidestep the demand that faith be harmonized with reason. It retains responsibility for answering the question about natural, rational knowledge of God. Still harder is it for philosophy "at the limits, the boundary situations of guilt and death, where human Dasein finds through its own experience its powerlessness before the power of fate" not to pose the question God. Plato once made the profound remark in the Laws c, through the voice of a hoary Athenian, himself an old man that he had not yet met anyone who had formed the opinion that there are no gods and retained this view into old age. Young people, conscious of unlimited freedom, may be blinded "as they will later be blinded again by the power of time" as if they were afflicted by an infectious disease, the c GIF What characterizes a spirit with a sound constitution is that it comes back to a recognition of the truth "at least to recognize the existence of the gods, though not always rightly evaluating the significance of their existence for human life. That is, many, according to Plato, stick to their opinion that the gods do not care about us or that they are easily bribed with gifts. Page 4 These considerations prepare us for rethinking the distinction established by Kant and basically still valid today: So, as we have indicated, the question of God remains a philosophical subject. Given this situation, it will also become necessary to concern ourselves with the old question regarding the proofs of God. Admittedly, its significance for philosophy today is substantially different from what it was for medieval philosophy, which first worked out these proofs.

Chapter 2 : Friedrich Daniel Ernst Schleiermacher (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy)

Hermeneutics, Religion, and Ethics has 12 ratings and 0 reviews. In the years shortly before and after the publication of his classic *Truth and Method* (1.

Introduction There has been a highly developed practice of interpretation in Greek antiquity, aiming at diverse interpretanda like oracles, dreams, myths, philosophical and poetical works, but also laws and contracts. The beginning of ancient hermeneutics as a more systematic activity goes back to the exegesis of the Homeric epics. This was a method of nonliteral interpretation of the authoritative texts which contained claims and statements that seemed theologically and morally inappropriate or false. Allegorisis was practiced widely from the sixth century BCE to the Stoic and Neoplatonistic schools and even later Scholasticism. In the Middle Ages the most remarkable characteristic of the interpretative praxis was the so-called *accessus ad auctores*; this was a standardized introduction that preceded the editions and commentaries of classical authors. There were many versions of the *accessus*, but one of the more widely used was the following typology of seven questions. Detel Johann Conrad Dannhauer was the first to present a systematic textbook on general hermeneutics. Jaeger, the *Idea boni interpretis et malitiosi calumniatoris* introducing the Latin neologism *hermeneutica* as the title of a general *modus sciendi*. The intention of this work was to supplement the Aristotelian *Organon* and its subject matter to distinguish between the true and false meaning of any text: *verum sensum a falso discernere*. It is explicitly general in scope, relevant for all scientific domains: *una generalis omnibus scientiis communis* and applicable to the oral discourse and texts of all authors: *in omnibus auctorum scriptis et orationibus*. Most remarkable is the work of Johann Clauberg, who introduced sophisticated distinctions between the rules of interpretation with respect to their generality and clarified the capturing of the intention of the author as a valuable aim of interpretative praxis. The scope of the more recent discussions on interpretation has become broader, often starting with the question whether human actions are to be viewed as physical phenomena or not and how they should be treated. Issues of interpretation hardly emerge if one adopts such a view. Unstructured bodily movements, i. The disagreement concerns the issue as to whether it is constitutive for a human action to have meaning or not. Mantzavinos If one adopts the interpretivist view, then issues of interpretation necessarily arise in the space of the mental. Human actions are meaningful, and the outcomes of these actions constitute meaningful material which calls for interpretation. It is important to distinguish carefully between two levels of analysis, the ontological and the epistemological. The meaning of Being should be disclosed as a result of analyzing the unique features of *Dasein*, and *Auslegung* interpretation is proposed as a concrete way of being in the world. Although epistemological studies on hermeneutics can, they need not share these or any other commitments with respect to ontology. Epistemological approaches, either descriptive or normative, can start with problems of interpretation and propose solutions to the problems independently of the ontological constitution and structure that underlies each problem area. Even when the distinction between the ontological and epistemological level is largely acknowledged, it has been a matter of dispute whether it is indeed fruitful to completely neglect the constitution and structure of the material that one deals with, when one is engaged in the activity of interpretation. Methodological dualists like Dilthey famously pleaded for the autonomy of the social sciences and humanities which must follow the method of *Verstehen*. The neo-Kantian philosophers Wilhelm Windelband and Heinrich Rickert focused on the methods of concept formation and judgment in the different groups of sciences, the *Kulturwissenschaften* and the natural sciences. For Rickert the *Kulturwissenschaften* are characterized by an individualizing form of concept formation which solved the problem of how the general concepts essential to any scientific representation could capture an individual object, without simply subsuming it under a general law in the fashion of natural scientific concept formation. By contrast to this dualistic approach, methodological monists like Mill reject the dichotomy and plead for a single method applicable to all sciences, convinced as he is that discovering and establishing lawlike hypotheses is also possible in the social sciences and humanities. At the heart of this controversy Ricoeur; L. If the object of the scientific analysis demonstrates a certain ontological constitution and structure, then we must use a method that is suitable for dealing with that constitution and structure. In

any case, the ontological and epistemological levels are not consistently segregated in the discussion. This is notably the case with respect to the hermeneutic circle which serves as the dominant argument for all those who raise a claim to the autonomy of the humanities, and to which we turn now. The Hermeneutic Circle The hermeneutic circle is a prominent and recurring theme in the discussion ever since the philologist Friedrich Ast Friedrich Schleiermacher in a lecture of adopts as a principle the notion that the same way that the whole is, of course, understood in reference to the individual, so too, the individual can only be understood in reference to the whole. What we are trying to establish is a certain reading of text or expressions, and what we appeal to as our grounds for this reading can only be other readings. The circle can also be put in terms of part-whole relations: An entity for which, as Being-in-the-world, its Being is itself an issue, has, ontologically, a circular structure. This conceptualization has been severely criticized as a fruitless attempt to immunize his conception from criticism by deliberately sheltering it under a mantle of apriorism Albert Others view the hermeneutic circle as a logical or methodological problem. To begin with, it is clear that the hermeneutic circle is not a logical problem in a strict sense: He maintains that, in its most important variations, the circle is by no means a narrow epistemological problem of the humanities, but a problem to be confronted in all disciplines. This is the case, for example, in what is known as the dilemma regarding the appropriate distinction between background knowledge and facts. It can only be solved if, through critical discussion the members of the relevant community of inquirers agree on what should count as fact and what as background knowledge in respect to the specific hypothesis tested. They discuss a series of methodological issues that arise during the processes of understanding, and claim that they all appear in the context of the justification of an interpretation. They distinguish four variations: Instead of viewing the hermeneutic circle as a methodological problem that emerges when testing an interpretative hypothesis, one can take it that the problem of the relationship between the meaningful whole and its elements emerges in the process of formulating a hypothesis. In this case, the hermeneutic circle is an empirical phenomenon that arises when one does not manage to understand a linguistic expression or other signs immediately, i. It is then necessary to create interpretative hypotheses, and it is during this activity that one gets confronted with the problem of the meaningful whole and its elements. Language processing is a complex skill which has become routinized once one has gained experience in all levels which are important when understanding expressions: If a difficulty arises in the language comprehension process, and if one cannot understand one or more linguistic expressions immediately, then cognitive resources in the form of attention are activated, and an interpretative hypothesis is generated. In psycholinguistics this conscious process is often modeled as an interactive process of all relevant levels of information processing: There is enough evidence that supports the claim that the discourse on the hermeneutic circle can be appropriately viewed as the search process that is activated if the interpreter of a linguistic expression does not understand something immediately J. The process of parsing during which the words in a linguistic expression are transformed into a mental representation with the combined meaning of the words, as studied by cognitive scientists, is especially relevant: Text Interpretation It is prima facie plausible to postulate that there is nothing beyond understanding a text, than understanding the sentences which compose it; and that there is nothing beyond understanding a sentence than understanding the words which compose it. This widespread view is based on the belief in the validity of the principle of compositionality Szabo Gottlob Frege has famously declared in section 60 of his *Grundlagen der Arithmetik* that only within complete sentences do words have meaning. This different, but related principle to the principle of compositionality is usually referred to as the context principle. It is enough if the sentence as whole has meaning; thereby also its parts obtain their meanings. There is a consensus in many contemporary theories that the semantic value of a sentence is a function of the semantic value of its constituents, insofar the principle of compositionality is applicable. However, the temptation to assume an analogous principle for texts should be resisted: Whereas a sentence may express a thought which is a plausible mental correlate, a text expresses a sequence of thoughts which cannot be grasped directly: Acknowledging the complexity of text comprehension as a process is the first step towards looking for models that can successfully come to grips with that complexity. Such models have been proposed and discussed in cognitive psychology. A prominent example of such a model has been put forward by Kintsch and van Deijk and focuses on the information

processing taking place once syntactic and semantic analysis have been undertaken. In other words, the focus of the model is directly on the comprehension of the whole text, after the initial set of propositions have been identified and after parsing processes have been applied to them. A crucial factor is the capacity limit of the cognitive system, namely the number of propositions that can be kept active in working memory. The consequence of this is that sets of propositions are cognitively processed in cycles, i. Thus, it becomes necessary to use criteria of relevance according to which propositions are kept active, so that the meaning of the entire text can be conveyed. The suggested criteria are temporal proximity and the importance of the information conveyed. This is done under the presupposition that there is a hierarchical relationship between the propositions in the text. During this complex process, the interpreter actively construes the meaning of the whole text and grasps its meaning Kintsch Such models of text comprehension are empirically tested and amount to a significant step forward towards the formulation of an account of text interpretation based on solid empirical evidence. However, a standard philosophical critique questions the possibility of providing testable models of text comprehension without appropriately acknowledging the normative presuppositions underlying all interpretative praxis. There are two lines of argument that have been influential in this context. In an imaginary situation, an interpreter is confronted with the verbal behavior of a human being, in an entirely alien culture, without any kind of knowledge about his or her beliefs, desires or the meanings of what he or she expresses. The problem consists of getting to know the beliefs, desires and meanings of this person starting from scratch, i. In the context of this largely artificial problem, it is contended that one is inclined to or bound to adopt a general interpretative principle of a normative nature, which is supposed to be imperative for correct translation and interpretation. According to Quine Charity in interpreting the words and thoughts of others is unavoidable in another direction as well: In fact, none of the principles proposed in this discussion is new. Hermeneutic equity *aequitas hermeneutica* is the tendency of the interpreter to hold that meaning for hermeneutically true that best comports with the flawlessness of the originator of the sign, until the opposite is shown. It is important to stress that the principle of hermeneutic equity is explicitly formulated as a presumption: In the Anglo-Saxon discussion on radical interpretation referred to above, the general thrust of the argument is that these rules are constitutive for the practice of interpretation; they occupy a specific status that must accordingly be recognized as an important presupposition of all interpretation. However, their apparent indispensability can simply be traced to the fact that they have been particularly well corroborated, as they have often been employed with success. Accordingly, it is only their greater corroboration that leads to a presumption that they are indispensable to every interpretation Mantzavinos The second line of argument regarding the normative presuppositions of interpretative praxis, centers around the indispensability of a rationality assumption in all interpretation Livingston According to this argument, it is possible to apprehend linguistic expressions only if it is assumed that speakers or authors manifest complex features that are appropriately conceptualized as rational. Most importantly, deductive rationality plays an important role: So, according to this view, rationality is constitutive of the beliefs of the author which give rise to his or her linguistic expressions and, thus, rationality is a or the normative presupposition which must underlie all interpretative praxis. However, the rationality assumption is surely not an uncontested principle Mantzavinos Thus, the process of text interpretation which lies in the center of hermeneutics as the methodological discipline dealing with interpretation can and has been analyzed empirically with the help of testable models. The question whether there are certain normative presuppositions of the interpretative praxisâ€”like specific principles of interpretation that are constitutive of this praxis and indispensable rationality principlesâ€”is a focal issue of obvious philosophical importance Detel Regardless of the position that is assumed with respect to this issue, it is hardly possible to deny that the interpretative praxis can take on multiple forms and can take place according to diverse aims, an issue to which we turn next. Aims of Text Interpretation We have seen that text interpretation goes beyond the interpretation of simple or complex sentences since it crucially includes a number of inferences that are necessary in order to glean the meaning of a text. Text interpretation as a goal-directed activity can assume different forms, but must be distinguished from highlighting the significance of a text. In fact, a series of serious misunderstandings and confusions can be easily avoided, if a clear distinction is made between interpretation as an activity directed at the appropriation of the meaning of a text

and textual criticism as an activity that is concerned with the significance of a text with respect to different values. Instead of seeming beautiful, profound, or brilliant, the work seemed misguided, trivial, and false, and its meaning was no longer one that the author wished to convey. However, these examples do not show that the meaning of the work had changed, but precisely the opposite. No doubt the significance of the work to the author had changed a great deal, but its meaning had not changed at all. Significance, on the other hand, names a relationship between that meaning and a person, or a conception, or a situation, or indeed anything imaginable. Failure to consider this simple and essential distinction has been the source of enormous confusion in hermeneutic theory. Even if one acknowledges the difference between meaning and significance, and decides to honor the distinction between text interpretation and textual criticism, it is undisputable that interpretation can be directed at many different goals.

Chapter 3 : Hermeneutics as Original Ethics - Fordham Scholarship

*In the years shortly before and after the publication of his classic *Truth and Method* (), the eminent German philosopher Hans-Georg Gadamer returned often to questions surrounding religion and ethics.*

Biography[edit] Early life and development[edit] Born in Breslau in the Prussian Silesia as the grandson of Daniel Schleiermacher, a pastor at one time associated with the Zionites , [12] [13] and the son of Gottlieb Schleiermacher, a Reformed Church chaplain in the Prussian army, Schleiermacher started his formal education in a Moravian school at Niesky in Upper Lusatia , and at Barby near Magdeburg. However, pietistic Moravian theology failed to satisfy his increasing doubts, and his father reluctantly gave him permission to enter the University of Halle , which had already abandoned pietism and adopted the rationalist spirit of Christian Wolff and Johann Salomo Semler. As a theology student Schleiermacher pursued an independent course of reading and neglected the study of the Old Testament and of Oriental languages. However, he did attend the lectures of Semler, where he became acquainted with the techniques of historical criticism of the New Testament , and of Johann Augustus Eberhard , from whom he acquired a love of the philosophy of Plato and Aristotle. Schleiermacher developed a deep-rooted skepticism as a student, and soon he rejected orthodox Christianity. In a letter to his father, Schleiermacher drops the mild hint that his teachers fail to deal with those widespread doubts that trouble so many young people of the present day. His father misses the hint. He has himself read some of the skeptical literature, he says, and can assure Schleiermacher that it is not worth wasting time on. For six whole months there is no further word from his son. Then comes the bombshell. In a moving letter of 21 January , Schleiermacher admits that the doubts alluded to are his own. I cannot believe that he who called himself the Son of Man was the true, eternal God; I cannot believe that his death was a vicarious atonement. At the completion of his course at Halle, Schleiermacher became the private tutor to the family of Friedrich Alexander Burggraf und Graf zu Dohna-Schlobitten â€” , developing in a cultivated and aristocratic household his deep love of family and social life. Here Schleiermacher became acquainted with art, literature, science and general culture. Though his ultimate principles remained unchanged, he placed more emphasis on human emotion and the imagination. Meanwhile, he studied Spinoza and Plato , both of whom were important influences. He became more indebted to Kant , though they differed on fundamental points. In the first book Schleiermacher gave religion an unchanging place among the divine mysteries of human nature, distinguished it from what he regarded as current caricatures of religion, and described the perennial forms of its manifestation. This established the programme of his subsequent theological system. In the *Monologen* he revealed his ethical manifesto, in which he proclaimed his ideas on the freedom and independence of the spirit, and on the relationship of the mind to the sensual world, and sketched his ideal of the future of the individual and of society. Pastorship[edit] From to , Schleiermacher served as a pastor in the Pomeranian town of Stolp. He relieved Friedrich Schlegel entirely of his nominal responsibility for the translation of Plato, which they had together undertaken vols. It contends that the tests of the soundness of a moral system are the completeness of its view of the laws and ends of human life as a whole and the harmonious arrangement of its subject-matter under one fundamental principle. Professorship[edit] In , Schleiermacher moved as university preacher and professor of theology to the University of Halle , where he remained until , quickly obtaining a reputation as professor and preacher; he exercised a powerful influence in spite of contradictory charges which accused him of atheism, Spinozism and pietism. In this period, he began his lectures on hermeneutics â€” and he also wrote his dialogue the *Weihnachtsfeier* Christmas Eve: Dialogue on the Incarnation, , which represents a midway point between his *Speeches* and his great dogmatic work, *Der christliche Glaube* The Christian Faith ; the speeches represent phases of his growing appreciation of Christianity as well as the conflicting elements of the theology of the period. At the foundation of the University of Berlin , in which he took a prominent part, Schleiermacher obtained a theological chair, and soon became secretary to the Prussian Academy of Sciences. He took a prominent part in the reorganization of the Prussian church, and became the most powerful advocate of the union of the Lutheran and Reformed divisions of German Protestantism, paving the way for the Prussian Union of Churches The twenty-four years

of his professional career in Berlin began with his short outline of theological study *Kurze Darstellung des theologischen Studiums*, in which he sought to do for theology what he had done for religion in his *Speeches*. While he preached every Sunday, Schleiermacher also gradually took up in his lectures in the university almost every branch of theology and philosophy—New Testament exegesis, introduction to and interpretation of the New Testament, ethics both philosophic and Christian, dogmatic and practical theology, church history, history of philosophy, psychology, dialectics logic and metaphysics, politics, pedagogy, translation and aesthetics. In politics Schleiermacher supported liberty and progress, and in the period of reaction which followed the overthrow of Napoleon he was charged by the Prussian government with "demagogic agitation" in conjunction with the patriot Ernst Moritz Arndt. The fundamental principle is that religious feeling, the sense of absolute dependence on God as communicated by Jesus through the church, and not the creeds or the letter of Scripture or the rationalistic understanding, is the source and basis of dogmatic theology. The work is therefore simply a description of the facts of religious feeling, or of the inner life of the soul in its relations to God, and these inward facts are looked at in the various stages of their development and presented in their systematic connection. The aim of the work was to reform Protestant theology, to put an end to the unreason and superficiality of both supernaturalism and rationalism, and to deliver religion and theology from dependence on perpetually changing systems of philosophy. He felt isolated, although his church and his lecture-room continued to be crowded. The same year Schleiermacher lost his only son—Nathaniel—a blow which, he said, "drove the nails into his own coffin. A statue of Schleiermacher at Palais Universitaire in Strasbourg Schleiermacher died at age 65 of pneumonia on February 12, The ego is itself both body and soul—the conjunction of both constitutes it. Our "organization" or sense nature has its intellectual element, and our "intellect" its organic element, and there is no such thing as "pure mind" or "pure body. The former fall into the two classes of feelings subjective and perceptions objective; the latter, according as the receptive or the spontaneous element predominates, into cognition and volition. In cognition, thought is ontologically oriented to the object; and in volition it is the teleological purpose of thought. In the first case we receive in our fashion the object of thought into ourselves. In the latter we plant it out into the world. Both cognition and volition are functions of thought as well as forms of moral action. It is in those two functions that the real life of the ego is manifested, but behind them is self-consciousness permanently present, which is always both subjective and objective—consciousness of ourselves and of the non-ego. This self-consciousness is the third special form or function of thought—which is also called feeling and immediate knowledge. In it we cognize our own inner life as affected by the non-ego. As the non-ego helps or hinders, enlarges or limits, our inner life, we feel pleasure or pain. Aesthetic, moral and religious feelings are respectively produced by the reception into consciousness of large ideas—nature, mankind and the world; those feelings are the sense of being one with these vast objects. Religious feeling therefore is the highest form of thought and of life; in it we are conscious of our unity with the world and God; it is thus the sense of absolute dependence. The idea of knowledge or scientific thought as distinguished from the passive form of thought—of aesthetics and religion—is thought which is produced by all thinkers in the same form and which corresponds to being. All knowledge takes the form of the concept *Begriff* or the judgment *Urteil*, the former conceiving the variety of being as a definite unity and plurality, and the latter simply connecting the concept with certain individual objects. In the concept therefore the intellectual and in the judgment the organic or sense element predominates. The universal uniformity of the production of judgments presupposes the uniformity of our relations to the outward world, and the uniformity of concepts rests similarly on the likeness of our inward nature. This uniformity is not based on the sameness of either the intellectual or the organic functions alone, but on the correspondence of the forms of thought and sensation with the forms of being. The essential nature of the concept is that it combines the general and the special, and the same combination recurs in being; in being the system of substantial or permanent forms answers to the system of concepts and the relation of cause and effect to the system of judgments, the higher concept answering to "force" and the lower to the phenomena of force, and the judgment to the contingent interaction of things. The sum of being consists of the two systems of substantial forms and interactional relations, and it reappears in the form of concept and judgment, the concept representing being and the judgment being in action. Knowledge has under both forms

the same object, the relative difference of the two being that when the conceptual form predominates we have speculative science and when the form of judgment prevails we have empirical or historical science. Throughout the domain of knowledge the two forms are found in constant mutual relations, another proof of the fundamental unity of thought and being or of the objectivity of knowledge. Plato, Spinoza and Kant had contributed characteristic elements of their thought to this system, and directly or indirectly it was largely indebted to Schelling for fundamental conceptions. In fact, Schleiermacher is often referred to as "the father of modern hermeneutics as a general study. His published and unpublished writings on hermeneutics were collected together after his death, albeit with some disagreement over ordering and placement of individual texts and lecture notes. Though he was certainly interested in interpreting Scripture, he thought one could only do so properly once one had established a system of interpretation that was applicable to all texts. This process was not a systematic or strictly philological approach, but what he called "the art of understanding. This is where the meaning of a text ultimately resides for Schleiermacher. This artistic approach to interpreting texts contained within it an ebb-and-flow between what Schleiermacher called the "grammatical interpretation" and the "psychological or technical interpretation. Schleiermacher divides misunderstanding into two forms: Qualitative misunderstanding is not understanding the content, or "the confusion of the meaning of a word for another. Understanding is made possible by the fact that author and reader, since both are human, share the reasoning ability. Therefore, the process of understanding is not only a historical process, learning about the context in which the author wrote, but also a psychological process, drawing upon the connection between interpreter and the author. Thus, hermeneutics is a cyclical task, but for Schleiermacher it is not viciously circular because of the role of intuition. The claim of Schleiermacher as the father of hermeneutics seems to be justified by the fact that his work marks the beginning of hermeneutics as a general field of inquiry, separate from the specific disciplines e. Ethics[edit] His grave in Berlin Next to religion and theology, Schleiermacher devoted himself to the moral world, of which the phenomena of religion and theology were, in his systems, only constituent elements. In his earlier essays he endeavoured to point out the defects of ancient and modern ethical thinkers, particularly of Kant and Fichte , with only Plato and Spinoza finding favour in his eyes. He failed to discover in previous moral systems any necessary basis in thought, any completeness as regards the phenomena of moral action, any systematic arrangement of its parts and any clear and distinct treatment of specific moral acts and relations. It connects the moral world by a deductive process with the fundamental idea of knowledge and being; it offers a view of the entire world of human action which at all events aims at being exhaustive; it presents an arrangement of the matter of the science which tabulates its constituents after the model of the physical sciences; and it supplies a sharply defined treatment of specific moral phenomena in their relation to the fundamental idea of human life as a whole. Schleiermacher defines ethics as the theory of the nature of the reason, or as the scientific treatment of the effects produced by human reason in the world of nature and man. As a theoretical or speculative science it is purely descriptive and not practical, being correlated on the one hand to physical science and on the other to history. Its method is the same as that of physical science, being distinguished from the latter only by its matter. The ontological basis of ethics is the unity of the real and the ideal, and the psychological and actual basis of the ethical process is the tendency of reason and nature to unite in the form of the complete organization of the latter by the former. The end of the ethical process is that nature i. Conscience, as the subjective expression of the presupposed identity of reason and nature in their bases, guarantees the practicability of our moral vocation. Nature is preordained or constituted to become the symbol and organ of mind, just as mind is endowed with the impulse to realize this end. But the moral law must not be conceived under the form of an "imperative" or a "Sollen"; it differs from a law of nature only as being descriptive of the fact that it ranks the mind as conscious will, or Zweckdenken, above nature. Strictly speaking, the antitheses of good and bad and of free and necessary have no place in an ethical system, but simply in history, which is obliged to compare the actual with the ideal, but as far as the terms "good" and "bad" are used in morals they express the rule or the contrary of reason, or the harmony or the contrary of the particular and the general. The idea of free as opposed to necessary expresses simply the fact that the mind can propose to itself ends, though a man cannot alter his own nature. In contrast to Kant and Fichte and modern moral philosophers, Schleiermacher reintroduced and assigned pre-eminent importance to

the doctrine of the *summum bonum*, or highest good. It represents in his system the ideal and aim of the entire life of man, supplying the ethical view of the conduct of individuals in relation to society and the universe, and therewith constituting a philosophy of history at the same time. Every moral good or product has a fourfold character: The first two characteristics provide for the functions and rights of the individual as well as those of the community or race. Though a moral action may have these four characteristics at various degrees of strength, it ceases to be moral if one of them is quite absent. All moral products may be classified according to the predominance of one or the other of these characteristics. Universal organizing action produces the forms of intercourse, and universal symbolizing action produces the various forms of science; individual organizing action yields the forms of property and individual symbolizing action the various representations of feeling, all these constituting the relations, the productive spheres, or the social conditions of moral action. Moral functions cannot be performed by the individual in isolation but only in his relation to the family, the state, the school, the church, and society – all forms of human life which ethical science finds to its hand and leaves to the science of natural history to account for. The moral process is accomplished by the various sections of humanity in their individual spheres, and the doctrine of virtue deals with the reason as the moral power in each individual by which the totality of moral products is obtained. Schleiermacher classifies the virtues under the two forms of *Gesinnung* "disposition, attitude" and *Fertigkeit* "dexterity, proficiency", the first consisting of the pure ideal element in action and the second the form it assumes in relation to circumstances, each of the two classes falling respectively into the two divisions of wisdom and love and of intelligence and application. In his system the doctrine of duty is the description of the method of the attainment of ethical ends, the conception of duty as an imperative, or obligation, being excluded, as we have seen. No action fulfills the conditions of duty except as it combines the three following antitheses: Duties are divided with reference to the principle that every man make his own the entire moral problem and act at the same time in an existing moral society.

The real problem of hermeneutics, then, is to think difference and sameness, the secular and the religious, together. Not just the interpretation of sacred texts is Gadamer's concern in the essays that follow; the more general claim of religion has implications for hermeneutic inquiry as well.

Life and Works Friedrich Daniel Ernst Schleiermacher " was born in Breslau as the son of a clergyman of the reformed church. His earlier education took place in institutions of the Moravian Brethren Herrnhuter , a strict pietist sect. However, while there he also pursued broader humanistic interests. Largely as a result of skepticism about certain Christian doctrines taught there, he moved to the more liberal University of Halle in . However, he continued in theology with philosophy and classical philology as minor fields. He passed his theological examinations in Berlin in . This was followed by a period as a private tutor, which ended in , partly, it seems, due to friction caused by his sympathy with the French Revolution, to which his employer was opposed. In 1784 he wrote two essays about Spinoza: Spinozism and Brief Presentation of the Spinozistic System. Moses Mendelssohn , which was highly critical of Spinozism. Some Conversations , which championed a modified form of Spinozism. Speeches to Its Cultured Despisers During the period 1786 Schleiermacher served as a pastor in Landsberg. In he moved to Berlin, where he became chaplain to a hospital. In Berlin he met Friedrich and August Wilhelm Schlegel, as well as other romantics, became deeply engaged in the formation of the romantic movement, and collaborated with the Schlegel brothers on the short-lived but important literary journal Athenaeum " During the period 1799, he shared a house with Friedrich Schlegel. Encouraged by the romantic circle to write a statement of his religious views, in he published his most important and radical work in the philosophy of religion, On Religion: The book won Schleiermacher a national reputation. In this work he rejected an expedient that had been proposed for ameliorating the situation of the Jews in Prussia of achieving their civil assimilation through baptism which would, he argues, harm both Judaism and Christianity and instead advocated full civil rights for Jews on certain rather reasonable conditions. The review in particular took Kant to task for his dualistic philosophy of mind and his superficial, disparaging attitude toward women and other peoples. During the following several years Schleiermacher complemented On Religion with two substantial publications that were more ethical in orientation: As time went on, however, Schlegel left this work to Schleiermacher, which contributed to increasingly difficult relations between the two men after . While in Berlin Schleiermacher developed romantic attachments to two married women, Henriette Herz and Eleonore Grunow "the latter of which attachments led to scandal and unhappiness, eventually causing Schleiermacher to leave the city. He spent the years 1804 in Stolpe. By he was teaching at Halle University. During the period 1805 he began lecturing on ethics as he would do again repeatedly until . In he also began delivering his famous and important lectures on hermeneutics which he repeated regularly until . In 1807 he left Halle as a result of the French occupation, and moved back to Berlin. From this time on he began actively promoting German resistance to the French occupation and the cause of German unity. In Schleiermacher married a young widow, Henriette von Willich, with whom he had several children. In 1809 he became preacher at the Dreifaltigkeitskirche, in professor of theology at the University of Berlin, and by also a member of the Berlin Academy of Sciences. In he lectured on dialectics for the first time as he would do again regularly until his death, at which time he was in the early stages of preparing a version for publication. In he began lecturing on the history of philosophy as he would again repeatedly in subsequent years. In he delivered as an address, and then published as an essay, On the Different Methods of Translation "a very important work in translation theory deeply informed by his own experience as a translator. In 1814 he lectured on pedagogy, or the philosophy of education, for the first time as he would do on two subsequent occasions: In he lectured on psychology for the first time as he would again repeatedly until 1814. In he lectured on aesthetics for the first time as he subsequently did on two further occasions, the last of them in 1813. In the same year he also began lecturing on the life of Jesus as he did again on four further occasions over the following twelve years "thereby inaugurating an important genre of literature on this subject in the nineteenth century. In 1812 he published his major work of systematic

theology, *The Christian Faith* revised edition 1. Schleiermacher died in 1834. As can be seen even from this brief sketch of his life and works, a large proportion of his career was taken up with the philosophy of religion and theology. However, from the secular standpoint of modern philosophy it is probably his work in such areas as hermeneutics. Accordingly, this article will begin with these more interesting areas of his thought, only turning to his philosophy of religion briefly at the end. Schleiermacher nowhere presents his philosophy of language separately; instead, it is found scattered through such works as his lectures on psychology, dialectics, and hermeneutics. The following eight positions—all but the last of which are heavily indebted to Herder—are especially worth noting: The origin of language is not to be explained in terms of a divine source. Nor is it to be explained in terms of the primitive expression of feelings. Rather, the use of inner language is simply fundamental to human nature. It is the foundation of, and indeed identical with, thought. It is also the foundation of other distinctively human mental characteristics, in particular self-consciousness and a clear distinguishing of perception from feeling and desire. Language and hence thought is fundamentally social in nature. More precisely, while inner language is not dependent on a social stimulus so that even in the absence of this children would develop their own languages, it does already involve a tendency or an implicit directedness toward social communication. Language and thought are not merely additions over and above other mental processes that human beings share with the animals. Rather, they are infused throughout, and lend a distinctive character to, all human mental processes. Schleiermacher already in early work postulated an identity of thought with linguistic expression. He often equates thought more specifically with inner language. His main motive behind such a refinement can be seen from the lectures on psychology, where he discusses cases in which thought occurs without arriving at any outward linguistic expression. It has been claimed by some of the secondary literature that he eventually gave up this whole position. In his psychology lectures, Schleiermacher argues that although thought and conceptualization are not reducible to the occurrence of sensuous images since that would conflict with the position that the former require, or are indeed identical with, language, the latter are an essential foundation for the former. This prompts the question whether there do not also exist strictly a priori concepts, as Kant had held. In his psychology lectures Schleiermacher vacillates in his answer to this question: The latter is his normal answer in the dialectics lectures as well. Human beings exhibit, not only significant linguistic and conceptual-intellectual similarities, but also striking linguistic and conceptual-intellectual differences, especially between different historical periods and cultures, but even to some extent between individuals within a single period and culture. In this connection, Schleiermacher argues, plausibly, that the phenomenon of the linguistic and conceptual-intellectual development of cultures over time is only explicable in terms of linguistic and conceptual-intellectual innovations performed by individuals, which get taken over by the broader culture, becoming part of its common stock. At least three aspects of his semantic holism can be distinguished: This doctrine in effect says that the various specific senses that a single word typically bears, and which will normally be distinguished by any good dictionary entry. However, other types of conceptual relationships would no doubt be included here as well. Shortly afterwards, it was taken over and used to similar effect by another of the founders of modern linguistics, Wilhelm von Humboldt. But such a strong version of the doctrine is philosophically problematic—vulnerable to counterexamples in which thought occurs without any corresponding inner language use, and vice versa. This is likely to seem problematic at first sight because of its inclusion of sensory images in meaning. But that is arguably not so: Finally, whereas for Herder doctrine 7 was merely an empirically established rule of thumb and admitted of exceptions, Schleiermacher in his lectures on ethics and dialectics attempts to give a sort of a priori proof of linguistic and conceptual-intellectual diversity even at the level of individuals as a universal fact—a proof that is dubious in its very a priori status, in its specific details, and in its extremely counterintuitive implication often explicitly asserted by Schleiermacher that, strictly speaking, no one can ever understand another person. It is too extensive to present in detail here. Schleiermacher argues for a strong dependence of the soul or mind on the body, and indeed for their identity. Schleiermacher also argues strongly for the unity of the soul or mind within itself: Schleiermacher argues that human minds, while they certainly share similarities, are also deeply different from each other—not only across social groups such as peoples and genders, but also at the level of individuals who belong to the same

groups. He argues that the distinctiveness of individual minds cannot be explained by any process of calculation in particular, that it is a mistake to suppose that all human minds begin the same and only come to differ due to the impact of different causal influences on their development, which might in principle be calculated. Schleiermacher says relatively little about unconscious mental processes, and when he does mention them often seems skeptical about them. Friedrich Schlegel was an immediate influence on his thought here. Their ideas on these subjects began to take shape in the late 1790s, when they lived together in the same house in Berlin for a time. Many of their ideas are shared, and it is often unclear which of the two men was the more original source of a given idea. Schleiermacher lectured on hermeneutics frequently between 1800 and 1805. The following are his main principles: How, then, is interpretation to be accomplished? Assuming that a text or discourse must be true will often lead to serious misinterpretation. The suggestion found in some of the secondary literature that Schleiermacher thinks that historical context is irrelevant to interpretation is absurd. Linguistic interpretation is mainly concerned with what is common or shared in a language; psychological interpretation mainly with what is distinctive to a particular author. First, he sees such a need as arising from the deep linguistic and conceptual-intellectual distinctiveness of individuals. Schleiermacher himself places most emphasis on the first of these three considerations. However, if, as Schleiermacher does, one wants to argue that interpretation needs to invoke psychology generally, and if, as I hinted earlier, linguistic and conceptual-intellectual distinctiveness is not in fact the pervasive phenomenon that Schleiermacher usually takes it to be, then it is arguably the latter two considerations that should be considered the more fundamental ones. Such holism introduces a pervasive circularity into interpretation, for, ultimately, interpreting these broader items in its turn depends on interpreting such pieces of text. Schleiermacher does not see this circle as vicious, however. His solution is not that all of these tasks should be accomplished simultaneously—for that would far exceed human capacities. Rather, it essentially lies in the very plausible thought that understanding is not an all-or-nothing matter but instead something that comes in degrees, so that it is possible to make progress toward full understanding in a piecemeal way. For example, concerning the relation between a piece of text and the whole text to which it belongs, Schleiermacher recommends that we first read through and interpret as best we can each of the parts of the text in turn in order thereby to arrive at an approximate overall interpretation of the text, and that we then apply this approximate overall interpretation in order to refine our initial interpretations of each of the particular parts, which in turn gives us an improved overall interpretation, which can then be re-applied toward still further refinement of the interpretations of the parts, and so on indefinitely. Some of the common ground here is admittedly due to the fact that they were both influenced by the same predecessors, especially J. To begin with two deviations that are not problematic, but rather advantageous: First, as was previously mentioned, Schleiermacher exacerbates the challenge to interpretation that principle 7 already poses by introducing principle 8, semantic holism. There were, however, some clearer precedents for it—for example, in van der Hardt, Chladenius, Pfeiffer, Grosch, and Meier.

Chapter 5 : Hermeneutics - Wikipedia

Hermeneutics, religion, and ethics. [Hans-Georg Gadamer] -- "In the years shortly before and after the publication of his classic Truth and Method (), the eminent German philosopher Hans-Georg Gadamer returned often to questions surrounding religion and.

In a triumph of early modern hermeneutics, the Italian humanist Lorenzo Valla proved in that the Donation of Constantine was a forgery. This was done through intrinsic evidence of the text itself. Thus hermeneutics expanded from its medieval role of explaining the true meaning of the Bible. However, biblical hermeneutics did not die off. For example, the Protestant Reformation brought about a renewed interest in the interpretation of the Bible, which took a step away from the interpretive tradition developed during the Middle Ages back to the texts themselves. Martin Luther and John Calvin emphasized *scriptura sui ipsius interpres* scripture interprets itself. Calvin used *brevitas et facilitas* as an aspect of theological hermeneutics. They interpreted Scripture as responses to historical or social forces so that, for example, apparent contradictions and difficult passages in the New Testament might be clarified by comparing their possible meanings with contemporary Christian practices. Friedrich Schleiermacher explored the nature of understanding in relation not just to the problem of deciphering sacred texts but to all human texts and modes of communication. The interpretation of a text must proceed by framing its content in terms of the overall organization of the work. Schleiermacher distinguished between grammatical interpretation and psychological interpretation. The former studies how a work is composed from general ideas; the latter studies the peculiar combinations that characterize the work as a whole. He said that every problem of interpretation is a problem of understanding and even defined hermeneutics as the art of avoiding misunderstanding. Misunderstanding was to be avoided by means of knowledge of grammatical and psychological laws. Howard termed this approach analytic hermeneutics. Understanding moves from the outer manifestations of human action and productivity to the exploration of their inner meaning. In his last important essay, "The Understanding of Other Persons and Their Manifestations of Life" , Dilthey made clear that this move from outer to inner, from expression to what is expressed, is not based on empathy. Empathy involves a direct identification with the Other. Interpretation involves an indirect or mediated understanding that can only be attained by placing human expressions in their historical context. Thus, understanding is not a process of reconstructing the state of mind of the author, but one of articulating what is expressed in his work. Dilthey divided sciences of the mind human sciences into three structural levels: Experience means to feel a situation or thing personally. Dilthey suggested that we can always grasp the meaning of unknown thought when we try to experience it. His understanding of experience is very similar to that of phenomenologist Edmund Husserl. Expression converts experience into meaning because the discourse has an appeal to someone outside of oneself. Every saying is an expression. Dilthey suggested that one can always return to an expression, especially to its written form, and this practice has the same objective value as an experiment in science. The possibility of returning makes scientific analysis possible, and therefore the humanities may be labeled as science. Moreover, he assumed that an expression may be "saying" more than the speaker intends because the expression brings forward meanings which the individual consciousness may not fully understand. The last structural level of the science of the mind, according to Dilthey, is comprehension, which is a level that contains both comprehension and incomprehension. Incomprehension means, more or less, wrong understanding. He assumed that comprehension produces coexistence: Heidegger himself did not complete this inquiry. Moreover, they claim that such texts are conventionalized expressions of the experience of the author. Thus, the interpretation of such texts will reveal something about the social context in which they were formed, and, more significantly, will provide the reader with a means of sharing the experiences of the author. The reciprocity between text and context is part of what Heidegger called the hermeneutic circle. Among the key thinkers who elaborated this idea was the sociologist Max Weber. Gadamer et al. Gadamer asserted that methodical contemplation is opposite to experience and reflection. We can reach the truth only by understanding or mastering our experience. According to Gadamer, our understanding is not fixed but rather is changing and always indicating

new perspectives. The most important thing is to unfold the nature of individual understanding. Gadamer pointed out that prejudice is an element of our understanding and is not per se without value. Indeed, prejudices, in the sense of pre-judgements of the thing we want to understand, are unavoidable. Being alien to a particular tradition is a condition of our understanding. He said that we can never step outside of our tradition – all we can do is try to understand it. This further elaborates the idea of the hermeneutic circle. His work differs in many ways from that of Gadamer. He applied his model to discourse ethics with political motivations akin to those of critical theory. He also criticized Marxism and previous members of the Frankfurt School for missing the hermeneutical dimension of critical theory. Habermas incorporated the notion of the lifeworld and emphasized the importance for social theory of interaction, communication, labor, and production. He viewed hermeneutics as a dimension of critical social theory. His main statement regarding symbolic understanding of the world is that meaning is a symbolic healing of injury. Two other important hermeneutic scholars are Jean Grondin b. Mauricio Beuchot coined the term and discipline of analogic hermeneutics, which is a type of hermeneutics that is based upon interpretation and takes into account the plurality of aspects of meaning. He drew categories both from analytic and continental philosophy, as well as from the history of thought. New hermeneutic[edit] New hermeneutic is the theory and methodology of interpretation to understand Biblical texts through existentialism. The essence of new hermeneutic emphasizes not only the existence of language but also the fact that language is eventualized in the history of individual life. Robinson are the scholars who represent the new hermeneutics. Marxist hermeneutics[edit] The method of Marxist hermeneutics has been developed by the work of, primarily, Walter Benjamin and Fredric Jameson. Benjamin outlines his theory of the allegory in his study *Ursprung des deutschen Trauerspiel* [31] "Trauerspiel" literally means "mourning play" but is often translated as "tragic drama". Its goal is to provide all scholars who use the methodology of objective hermeneutics with a means of exchanging information. Our approach has grown out of the empirical study of family interactions as well as reflection upon the procedures of interpretation employed in our research. For the time being we shall refer to it as objective hermeneutics in order to distinguish it clearly from traditional hermeneutic techniques and orientations. The general significance for sociological analysis of objective hermeneutics issues from the fact that, in the social sciences, interpretive methods constitute the fundamental procedures of measurement and of the generation of research data relevant to theory. From our perspective, the standard, nonhermeneutic methods of quantitative social research can only be justified because they permit a shortcut in generating data and research "economy" comes about under specific conditions. Whereas the conventional methodological attitude in the social sciences justifies qualitative approaches as exploratory or preparatory activities, to be succeeded by standardized approaches and techniques as the actual scientific procedures assuring precision, validity, and objectivity, we regard hermeneutic procedures as the basic method for gaining precise and valid knowledge in the social sciences. However, we do not simply reject alternative approaches dogmatically. They are in fact useful wherever the loss in precision and objectivity necessitated by the requirement of research economy can be condoned and tolerated in the light of prior hermeneutically elucidated research experiences.

Chapter 6 : Hermeneutics, Religion, and Ethics (Yale Studies in Hermeneutics) - PDF Free Download

In such outstanding essays as "Kant and the Question of God," "Thinking as Redemption: Plotinus between Plato and Augustine," and "Friendship and Self-Knowledge: Reflections on the Role of Friendship in Greek Ethics," Gadamer discusses the nature of moral behavior, ethics as a form of knowing, and the hermeneutic task of mediating ethos and philosophical ethics with one another.

Islamic Hermeneutics Now we can turn to the question of whether we should expect an Islamic hermeneutics to be governed by any distinctive principles of its own. Most writing on religious hermeneutics is about how to interpret religious texts or other phenomena. Thus, we have, for example, the work on hermeneutics and theology of Rudolf Bultmann, which attempts to "demythologize" our interpretation of religious texts and events. The demythologizing program proposed by Bultmann is designed to show how a plausible reading of scripture can be given that strips away from it what a modern sensibility would find incredible. Hermeneutics is seen as a way of questioning the object of inquiry, whether a text, a work of art, or historical events. To operate with a religious hermeneutics is to allow oneself to be guided by religious ideas when one poses questions, \hat{a} €!. The point, then, is not to eliminate the preunderstanding but to risk it, to raise it to the level of consciousness, and to test it critically in understanding the text. In short, in questioning the text one must allow oneself to be questioned by the text and to give heed to its claim. Bultmann argues that any understanding of texts or historical phenomena will rely on our presuppositions, but this is no threat to objectivity, since the result of the inquiry is not presupposed but left open. Bultmann describes his conception of a religious hermeneutics as follows: Unless our existence were moved consciously or unconsciously by the question about God. There is an existential knowledge of God present and alive in human existence in the question about "happiness" or "salvation" or about the meaning of the world and of history, insofar as this is the question about the authenticity of our own existence. According to Plantinga, objectifying inquiry, as described by Bultmann and van Fraassen, operates within the confines of methodological naturalism. Methodological naturalism is not ontological or philosophical naturalism. The latter holds that nature, the object of inquiry in the natural sciences, is all there is. Methodological naturalism, on the other hand, is neutral about the question of supernatural existence, but maintains that in the practice of science, one should proceed as though there were no supernatural entities. This means that a scientific account of some phenomenon cannot appeal to such things as the will of God, divine attributes, or angels. There are a variety of ways that methodological naturalism can be elaborated. Some, for example, hold that it requires the banishment of final causes or teleology from scientific discourse. What the Christian community really needs is a science that takes into account what we know as Christians. Indeed, this seems the rational thing in any event; surely the rational thing is to use all that you know in trying to understand a given phenomenon. But then in coming to a scientific understanding of hostility, or aggression, for example, should not Christian psychologists make use of the notion of sin? In trying to achieve scientific understanding of love in its many and protean manifestations, for example, or play, or music, or humor, or our sense of adventure, should not we also use what we know about human beings being created in the image of God, who is himself the very source of love, beauty and the like? And the same for morality? They might also play other roles: These statements are consistent with some of the claims reviewed earlier about the Islamization of the sciences, and suggest steps for the development of a religious hermeneutics. Religious hermeneutics may make various religious assumptions explicit, on the basis of which it will offer its interpretations. Secondly, religious hermeneutics may make use of religious background information in order to evaluate hypotheses and theories. A third approach to religious hermeneutics is that proposed in the writings of Seyyed Hossein Nasr. The position taken by Nasr is more extreme than that of Plantinga. Plantinga does not reject secular hermeneutics tout court as Nasr does. He merely reserves the right of the religious researcher to bring religious beliefs and attitudes to bear on the interpretation of texts and other phenomena. Nasr, on the other hand, sees modern science as infected by atheistic presuppositions. Modern science is to be replaced by a sacred science that is integrated with a Traditionalist view of metaphysics and epistemology, so that it will offer a unified view of humanity,

the world, and divinity, integrated with such metaphysical principles as the correspondence between microcosm and macrocosm, ontological hierarchy what Arthur Lovejoy called "The Great Chain of Being" 9 , teleological principles, and much else that would be thoroughly rejected as unscientific by those who consider science bound to methodological naturalism. This is not the place to adjudicate the conflicts between the views of Bultmann, van Fraassen, Plantinga, and Nasr. By considering how they treat issues pertaining to interpretation, however, we may suggest three grades of religious hermeneutics. Religious hermeneutics that is exclusively at this level does not allow one to make pronouncements about objective facts, the description and explanation of which are to be left to objectifying inquiry. Religious hermeneutics operates on several levels in which there may be occasion to suspend the methodological naturalism that normally governs objectifying inquiry: Specific religious principles, concepts, and other elements may be used as an organizing basis for the development of a "sacred science", which will become a part of a coherent and integrated religious worldview. In the above sketch of three grades of religious involvement in hermeneutics, there is no intention of suggesting that the first grade is a watered down version of religious hermeneutics to be superseded by the subsequent ones. The grades are distinguished by the extent to which they potentially oppose the findings of objectifying inquiry or the dominant modern science. The question of which grade of religious involvement is appropriate may well differ from one area of interpretive activity to another. It may also turn out that the sort of religious involvement that will have the furthest reaching impact on the direction the sciences will take will be that proposed by Bultmann; but this issue cannot be pursued any further here. Specifically denominational hermeneutics will be species of the generic religious hermeneutics sketched above, although the most revealing classifications of such hermeneutics may not be along denominational lines. For example, a hermeneutics based on a Christian view that presupposes Biblical literalism may be more akin to a Salafi hermeneutics, than to other varieties of Christian hermeneutics. Further refinements of Islamic hermeneutics can be found through the examination of the works of a number of scholars who have sought to understand Islamic intellectual traditions and authors, and to apply them to contemporary debates about science, ethics, politics, society, and other areas. Here I will only very briefly mention two examples, each of which has its own particular importance: Leo Strauss and William Chittick, both of whom make points that must be taken into consideration in order to avoid misunderstandings. In a number of books and articles, William Chittick has advocated the recovery and development of an Islamic understanding of God, world, and man. By way of example, he provides a list of principles gleaned from the Islamic intellectual tradition upon which interpretation and understanding can be based. While prevented by limitations of length from considering these points in detail, several of the claims Chittick makes deserve emphasis. First, an Islamic hermeneutics will only develop through the recovery of Islamic intellectual sciences. The exclusive focus of Muslims on the transmitted sciences and on a politics of Islamic identity has inhibited the ability of Muslims to think for themselves and apply their intellects to finding the haqq of things in the world and in themselves. It is important to distinguish scientism from modern science. We might have criticisms of how modern science is conducted, of the institutions that support and direct scientific research, or of the way that research is evaluated, but the accusation that modern science claims that no knowledge is legitimate except that which meets the standards of modern science misses the mark. Modern science makes no claims about the legitimacy of metaphysical principles or of beliefs based on knowledge by presence or on the *sensus divinitatis*. Such claims about the legitimacy of various sorts of philosophical propositions require argumentation that goes beyond the theories and research findings of the sciences themselves. To his credit, Dr. Nasr has been careful to make this distinction: You know that I have always criticized Western scientism, but I have never said that we have the choice of not mastering the modern sciences. I have said that we have to absorb Western science within our own worldview and try to criticize it and also integrate and digest it within our own culture and intellectual tradition. In his hermeneutics, Strauss attempted to defend a classical philosophical understanding of society and politics against what he took to be the misunderstandings of various modern thinkers. Strauss and Gadamer were on friendly terms, although they disagreed on a number of points, as well. Strauss took the presence of contradictions in a text to indicate that the author had a hidden message that conflicts with the outward one the reader would be expected to obtain from a superficial reading of the text. Gadamer objects

that the presence of contradictions may indicate other things, such as, that the subject discussed cannot be expressed within the confines of logic. Be this as it may, it is certainly to the credit of Strauss to point out the importance of layers of meaning that may confront the reader of texts in the Islamic tradition, since this implies that an Islamic hermeneutics must be ready to offer multiple interpretations of the objects of its study, whether texts or social phenomena. See Bultman , passim. See van Fraassen , Bultmann , For more detailed development of the varieties of methodological naturalism, see Plantinga , and Plantinga Plantinga , This survey makes it clear that the sorts of principles that Nasr would use as a basis for sacred science are themselves subject to diverse interpretations. For example, Chittick and Chittick Chittick , Nasr , The writer of the introduction to this volume, Terry Moore, is not so subtle, as he writes of "the totalitarian claims of modern science. See the appendix to the second addition of *Wahrheit und Methode*, Gadamer , ; Gadamer , ; also Gadamer , and Strauss and Gadamer

Chapter 7 : Hermeneutics, Religion, and Ethics : Hans-Georg Gadamer :

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Professional Ethics and Ethics Education: Vision of the Core Materials Project Professional Education and Professional Ethics On the Beginning of Ethics: The Sense of Ethics in Human Existence Guillaume de Stexhe and Johan Verstraeten 5. The Foundations of Professional Ethics: Introduction and Matter of Breath: Foundations for Professional Ethics General Theory Transcendence of the Unconditioned and Responsibility of Judgement Ethics, Tradition and Hermeneutics Happiness and Rightness - Moral Opposites? Ethics - Ethics is practical philosophy in a double sense: It is about human practice, and it is for the sake of human practice and its improvement. But this orientation towards practice does not mean that ethics is merely an instrument for something else. As a philosophical discipline it is always also oriented towards insight: The instrumentalization and fragmentation in professional ethics that we have seen recently are the consequences of a particular conception of what ethics is and what is considered to be its meaning for professional practice. I am referring to a conception of ethics that disengages ethics from its philosophical or theological roots, and takes it to be a kind of problem-solving technique. This type of ethics reduces itself into an instrument for the solution of problems. And because problems are to a large extent determined by particular circumstances and conditions of the domain in which they emerge, this type of ethics will have to become highly specialized and even further fragmented into these different domains from which the problems to be solved are taken. Things are no different in the world of morality - tradition points to confessionalism which appears to contradict personal responsibility - Meaning and tradition - in other words, when the ethicist abstracts from the level on which the problem in question sinks its roots into the human world of 7. The task of the ethicist meaning - he or she thereby makes an abstraction of concrete problems. The ethicist must endeavour to reveal the meaning of a problem, what we can glean from the fact that it confronts us and occurs to us as a problem, what meaning lies beneath the problem and constitutes it as such. With respect to the problems surrounding organ donation, for example, the ethicist would be obliged, among many other things, to thematize the meaning of corporeality. What does it mean that we have a body or that we are a body? What is the meaning of a dead body? What does all this mean in a relationship between partners or between children and their parents? The one who endeavours to solve concrete problems without reference to this level of meaning will inevitably create an abstraction because he or she will abstract from that which makes the problem a human problem. Although such a philosophical process appears to withdraw from the concrete problem - or at least from the solution thereof - it does in fact create the initial possibility for an adequate discussion of the problem. How could a person make responsible decisions with respect to the issue of organ donation, for example, if he or she knows nothing with respect to the meaning of human corporeality? In a certain sense, we are looking for something which is not there. Meaning cannot be found lying around waiting to be discovered. It is not a thing to be discovered, nor does it belong to the order of empirical data which we can encounter. Meaning cannot be established in isolation from those who are involved as subjects as if in a sort of neutral, external examination. Without relation to an - at least potential - observer, meaning can be likened to the musical P. We must distinguish, therefore, between exhibiting signs, on the one hand, and understanding and articulating meanings on the other. SSSS latter a sort of universality is achieved. Why should that be the case? The Dutch poet, more than they cite social scientists. Given the b, p. The great interpreters of the past are those who determine our interpretations, both because we follow them and because we move away from them. It would be meaningless, therefore, to imagine that such an ethics need only first familiarize itself with the various positions on the fray. Tradition on the basis of the given positions or a comparison thereof. Which answer would ever be able to silence the dialogue partners? It only exists in a tradition. Remarkably enough both anti-traditionalists as well as traditionalists have been seduced into making such an identification. In so doing, however, both deny the historicity of meaning. Anti-traditionalist, Enlightenment thinkers point to the

importance of present day rational insight and, in particular, to the insight? Traditionalists in contrast from praxis. By devoting itself to its philosophical task, ethics will suggest that history is only a fatal distortion and obfuscation of a fact which assists those, whose position or lot in life places them in a problem - truth which was given from the very beginning. The latter forget that meaning - however much it is given ab initio - can only exist for us as such in and through our interpretations. In the end, both 7. Questions deny a history to the life of meaning. Similarly related to the anti-traditionalist and the traditionalist. Several questions are to be asked at this point. I can hardly do more than my conception of tradition, and similarly incorrect, is to consider the than outline them, and suggest them as topics for further discussion. To insert oneself into the tradition is to participate in a discussion which is already underway. The person who fancies he or 7. Did not professional ethics of a history of interpretations. The person who wishes to emerge from the increasing number of moral problems that were intelligible deliberation needs to join in with the discussion which is experienced in the professional fields? And should that not mean already underway. This does not mean, however, that he or she that ethics 1 should further develop in those diverse directions and should only repeat what has already been said. At the same time, any discussion and 2 that it should become more prepared to answer those questions in which the dialogue partners simply repeat one another and to help in solving those problems that professionals face? In the same way, a tradition which becomes rigid as a result of staying with the idea of a hermeneutical ethics, I would provide conformist repetition will soon die. Such rigidity might perhaps be professionally answer this first set of questions as follows. It would be the reason behind the anti-traditionalist sentiment in our culture. Such example I used earlier already pointed to such a regional hermeneutic participation demands that we appropriate what is handed on to US-A? In addition, professionals rather, to participate in the confrontation of interpretations out of have not only their own experiences to be interpreted but also - at which it consists. Present day culture, more than 7. Philosophical and theological ethics ever before, is a conglomeration of diverse traditions. What is the horizon of this conversation that, even in that position, one is still part of the discussion or conversation between traditions? Indeed, moral values and norms are meanings which consequently that this meaning remains distinct from the discussion about it P. VAN TONGEREN The objection wrongly suggests, therefore, that it would be possible for a person to speak and propose an interpretation outside the discussion or outside the conflict of interpretations. There is no norm which can be understood outside of every context, no meaning which can be immediately known except via interpretations. The recognition of this situation implies the vulnerability of the human person. One might lose oneself by relativistically permitting every interpretation to disappear as merely one among the many throughout the course of history or the diversity of cultures. Finally, one might allow oneself to be blunted and become indifferent by becoming dispersed over now-moments, whose succession repetition one is no longer aware of. It seems to be the paradoxical task of the human person: I take this formulation of the problem from Nietzsche.

Chapter 8 : Friedrich Schleiermacher - Wikipedia

Hermeneutics and the Voice of the Other: Re-Reading Gadamer's Philosophical Hermeneutics. James Risser - - State University of New York Press. *Gadamer and Practical Philosophy the Hermeneutics of Moral Confidence.*

Chapter 9 : Hermeneutics, religion, and ethics - University of Manitoba Libraries

Hermeneutics Ethics In the years shortly before and after the publication of his classic *Truth and Method* (), the eminent German philosopher Hans-Georg Gadamer returned often to questions surrounding religion and ethics.