

## The Recent Trend in the Interpretation of Dilthey\*

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Different patterns are revealed in the discipline of intellectual history when its own history is reviewed. It is found, for example, that the results of the initial phases of interpretation and assessment of the work of an outstanding intellectual are frequently undermined or even shattered, due to the discovery of previously unknown early writings. Such source material reveals a range of original impulses, concerns and perspectives which in turn raise clusters of questions about the genesis, development and turning points of the person's thought. The whole priority question of the early versus the mature views emerges and so does the central hermeneutical problem of determining the adequate context for an interpretation. If these sets of issues are to be tackled, more developmental studies of different aspects of the person's work will be called for, and normally they are forthcoming, especially if there are still significant amounts of unpublished sources.

Viewed from this perspective, there is nothing unusual about the fact that this pattern also characterizes the history of Dilthey scholarship. Still, it does constitute something of a paradox that it became the fate of Wilhelm Dilthey (1833-1911). In his own studies of intellectual history he had most forcefully pursued and defended the view that the really crucial insights into the interests and horizon of an intellectual demanded a thorough analysis of the formative period in the life of the person. His most well-known investigations of the type in question are the works on Schleiermacher and Hegel. Against this background it is a paradoxical fact that Dilthey's faithful pupils did not provide an edition of sources that would enable scholars to fulfill his own demands when attempting to understand his life and work. The collected works made available by them included almost every scrap of manuscript that was relevant to the understanding of the systematic work that he pursued during the last two decades of his life. In contrast, only a few manuscripts belonging to the earlier phases of his work were included, although such manuscripts existed in great numbers. Many different factors should be taken into account if this fact is to be explained. In the present context, however, its major significance is to indicate that most of the

\* Helmut Johach, *Handelnder Mensch und objektiver Geist. Zur Theorie der Geistes- und Sozialwissenschaften bei Wilhelm Dilthey*. Meisenheim am Glan: Verlag Anton Hain, 1974. Pp. 203.

Hans Ineichen, *Erkenntnistheorie und geschichtlich-gesellschaftliche Welt. Diltheys Logik der Geisteswissenschaften*. Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 1975. Pp. viii + 249.

Christofer Zöckler, *Dilthey und die Hermeneutik. Diltheys Begründung der Hermeneutik als 'Praxiswissenschaft' und die Geschichte ihrer Rezeption*. Stuttgart: J. B. Metzler, 1975. Pp. vii + 292.

Rudolf A. Makkreel, *Dilthey. Philosopher of the Human Studies*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975. Pp. xiv + 465.

classical interpretations of Dilthey had a biased selection of sources as their basis. Moreover, they were governed by the questions and concerns considered pertinent in the academic world of the early decades of this century.

Only a few distinctive features of the early stage of Dilthey scholarship will be noted here as the relevant background to assessing more recent developments. Since the philosophies of Husserl and Heidegger were commanding increasing attention at the time, the philosophy of Dilthey naturally became interpreted in the context of their work. The pupils of Dilthey defended the view that although his line of thinking was congenial with the developments of phenomenological and existential analysis, it still constituted an independent philosophical stance. From the viewpoint of the schools of Husserl and Heidegger, however, Dilthey was mainly placed in the role of an interesting forerunner. In this general context a commonly accepted thesis emerged asserting that a hermeneutical reorientation (*hermeneutische Wende*) had occurred in Dilthey's thinking around the turn of the century. The thesis implied that there was a clear break between the early psychological and the later hermeneutical attempts at grounding the human sciences (*Geisteswissenschaften*)<sup>1</sup> and this functioned as an important source of legitimation for only studying his later work. The central core of his thought was interpreted as constituting a philosophy of life, often with the emphasis on the mysterious and irrational dimensions of life. In this way his philosophy of life was viewed as being located outside the tradition of scientific and rational thought. Moreover, he became known as one of the foremost philosophers of the historicity of man. When this was combined with his analysis of different incompatible worldviews (*Weltanschauungen*) it earned him the reputation of being a proponent of relativism.

General interest in the work of Dilthey has increased significantly during the last decade and a half due to the flourishing critique of positivism and the search for alternatives. Outside the circle of specialists the most influential interpretations today are probably those of Gadamer and Habermas, presented in *Wahrheit und Methode* (1960) and *Erkenntnis und Interesse* (1968) respectively.<sup>2</sup> The attention of both men was focussed almost exclusively on the late hermeneutic philosophy of Dilthey. On this point they had taken over the traditional interpretative framework established in the twenties and thirties. Gadamer and Habermas also shared the view that the significance of Dilthey lay in his strong insistence on the distinct nature of historical experience and understanding, and both gleaned insights from his critique of positivism in the development of their own overall conceptions of philosophy. They both agreed that Dilthey was not completely successful in overcoming the scientific mode of thought. They detected a latent positivism in the assumptions of his work and partially understood their own work as overcoming his limitations. At this point, however, Gadamer and Habermas moved in different directions.

Gadamer followed the more traditional idea of placing Dilthey in the role of a precursor of Husserl and Heidegger and used his ideas as a stepping-stone in the development of his own general hermeneutics. In contrast, Habermas emphasized the parallel and complementary attempts on the part of Peirce and Dilthey to reintroduce self-reflection into the sciences after the advent of positivism. Another important feature was Habermas's interpretation of the

1 Unfortunately, there is no straightforward and precise English translation of the term *Geisteswissenschaften*. Although open to debate, I will employ the terms the human sciences and the sciences of man.

2 The English translations of these works are published under the titles *Truth and Method* (1975) and *Knowledge and Human Interest* (1971) respectively.

hermeneutics of Dilthey as a sociological theory of the 'life world' (*Lebenswelt*). In Dilthey's analysis of human interaction he identified a distinctive dimension which had been implicit but neglected in the theories of Marx. In fact, Habermas was seeking to establish a framework that would be able to include the reflections of Marx and Dilthey as parts of a higher synthesis.

Within the more specialized field of Dilthey research, however, a series of significant developments have taken place since the appearance of the interpretations of Gadamer and Habermas. The need for a radical revision of the traditional image of Dilthey became the common pursuit of many contributions from the late sixties and early seventies. In 1969 Frithjof Rodi asserted that among the great philosophers of the nineteenth century Dilthey was still the most misunderstood.<sup>3</sup> In the same year the first extensive bibliography of Dilthey's writings was published by Ulrich Herrmann.<sup>4</sup> It listed his publications, manuscripts and lectures in chronological order and for the first time revealed the startling dimensions of Dilthey's work. The following year, 1970, the first volume in the continued publication of the collected works appeared. It was the first of three volumes with the common title *Zur Geistesgeschichte des 19. Jahrhunderts*. All three have now been published and they contain most of Dilthey's minor articles, book reviews, obituaries, and such like.<sup>5</sup>

Apart from a rejection of the traditional image of Dilthey, the series of new contributions have several features in common. They employ some of the as yet unpublished manuscripts, or, at least some parts of Dilthey's *oeuvre* that had previously been bypassed. They are all developmental studies, and take as their starting point Dilthey's work prior to the publication of *Einleitung in die Geisteswissenschaften*<sup>6</sup> in 1883. Generally speaking, they are limited to specific analyses of one or two aspects of his thought, even though they attempt to throw new light on his work as a whole. Although a more methodical and historical approach definitely characterizes these new contributions, none is intellectual history in the real sense. They are mainly interpretations of the immanent development of Dilthey's views, without much attention being given to the specific historical world in which he lived. Before reviewing the four most recent contributions, a few results and theses of their predecessors should be briefly indicated.

It was Peter Krausser who first presented a radical challenge to the traditional understanding of Dilthey. In 1968 he published *Kritik der endlichen Vernunft. Diltheys Revolution der allgemeinen Wissenschafts- und Handlungstheorie*, which treated the work of Dilthey prior to the 1890's,<sup>7</sup> that is to say, the period found uninteresting in the traditional interpretations. As the title indicates, he interpreted Dilthey's critique of historical reason as an analysis of the self-correcting patterns found in the finite and fallible reason of man. In doing so he emphasized the radical difference between Kant's and Dilthey's approach to the problems of a theory of knowledge. A central element in the traditional image of Dilthey had been to understand him as the philosopher of the human sciences.

3 F. Rodi, *Morphologie und Hermeneutik*, 1969, p. 9.

4 U. Herrmann, *Bibliographie Wilhelm Dilthey*, [=Pädagogische Bibliographien Reihe A Bd. 1], 1969. See also his article 'Zum Stand der Ausgabe der Gesammelten Schriften Wilhelm Diltheys', *Zeitschrift für Pädagogik*, 16, 1970, 531-36.

5 The three volumes were edited by Herrmann and have been published as Vols. XV, XVI and XVII of Dilthey's *Gesammelte Schriften* (abbreviated henceforth as GS).

6 Abbreviated henceforth as *Einleitung*.

7 An English summary of Krausser's interpretation is available in his article 'Dilthey's Revolution in the Theory of the Structure of Scientific Inquiry and Rational Behavior', *Review of Metaphysics*, 22, 1968, 262-80.

Here the interpretation of Krausser also presented a challenge, making the distinction between the natural and human sciences a secondary issue and pointing to the importance of his general theory of scientific inquiry. In fact, Krausser's interpretation presented Dilthey's theory of knowledge as a philosophy of science. In this exposition the real significance of Dilthey was found to lie in his analysis of the structures of scientific inquiry, of human behaviour and of social systems. As such it was an interpretation much inspired by cybernetic theory and the work of Popper. Krausser, however, could not have made it plausible without using new source material. In fact, he was the first to make extensive use of the so-called *Breslauer Ausarbeitung* (ca. 1880), a manuscript intended by Dilthey to be the second volume of *Einleitung* (1883).<sup>8</sup>

Manfred Riedel was the next to exploit the possibilities of the *Breslauer Ausarbeitung*, and did so from a perspective that was very different from that of Krausser. His main contribution to contemporary Dilthey scholarship was published in 1970 as an extensive introduction to the new Suhrkamp edition of Dilthey's *Aufbau der geschichtlichen Welt in den Geisteswissenschaften* (1910);<sup>9</sup> it probably remains the best short introduction to Dilthey's work available at present.<sup>10</sup> Apart from indicating some points of divergence between contemporary thought and the views of Dilthey, Riedel focussed his introduction on two central developments in Dilthey's work: the theory of the human sciences and the analysis of the problems of a critique of knowledge. Riedel stressed a deeply practical intent as the central motive force behind Dilthey's work. His analysis of the problems of the human sciences was seen as an attempt to establish a mediation of theory and practice (science and action), responding to the social and cultural crisis of the times. His reflections were placed in the liberal and anti-revolutionary tradition, and were considered to belong within that genre of German theory of history that lacks a real political philosophy. In contrast to Krausser, Riedel placed Dilthey's work on the theory of knowledge within the tradition of transcendental philosophy, but at the same time offered a penetrating analysis of the radical differences in the starting points and terms of reference of Kant and Dilthey. In fact, it was the radical change in the understanding of reason that was seen as forcing Dilthey to seek a new understanding of the relationship of theory and practice.

New light was thrown on the origins and development of Dilthey's hermeneutics by Frithjof Rodi in *Morphologie und Hermeneutik. Zur Methode von Diltheys Ästhetik* (1969). The terms 'morphology' and 'hermeneutics' were employed in this book as ideal types distinguishing two approaches to the analysis of works of literature. The first approach represents a search for genetic and formative laws of development, and is based on the use of biological and organicist analogies as a heuristic. The second represents a search for the

<sup>8</sup> The manuscript is normally called *Breslauer Ausarbeitung* because it was written during Dilthey's stay in Breslau. In this way it can be distinguished from another draft of the second volume of *Einleitung*, namely the so-called *Berliner Entwurf* which was written during his stay in Berlin. At present these two manuscripts are being edited by H. Johach and F. Rodi and are due to be published as Vol XIX of Dilthey's GS.

<sup>9</sup> Abbreviated henceforth as *Aufbau*.

<sup>10</sup> M. Riedel, 'Einleitung', in W. Dilthey, *Aufbau der geschichtlichen Welt in den Geisteswissenschaften*, 1970, pp. 9-80. In a shorter version, Riedel covers much of the same ground in 'Das erkenntniskritische Motiv in Diltheys Theorie der Geisteswissenschaften', in R. Bubner et al. (eds.), *Hermeneutik und Dialektik. Festschrift für H.-G. Gadamer*, Vol. I, 1970, pp. 233-55. See also Riedel's inaugural lecture 'Wilhelm Dilthey und das Problem der Metaphysik', *Philosophisches Jahrbuch*, 76, 1969, 332-48.

clarification of the meaning totality (whole) and individuality of a work, and assumes a radical difference between the organic world and the world of meaning. Rodi demonstrated in this study the extent to which Dilthey was originally inspired by the morphological approach, as represented by Goethe. The latter development of his thought was then seen as involving an inner tension between these two approaches, with a clearly discernible movement toward greater emphasis on the hermeneutic approach. Tracing this line of development had more general significance for the understanding of Dilthey's conception of history. Thus Rodi could also reject an earlier thesis put forward by Hans-Joachim Lieber to the effect that Dilthey had mainly been interested in the analysis of formal structures, had understood individuality as typical combinations and variations of the identical, and had thereby reduced history to a mere repetition of the identical.<sup>11</sup>

Ulrich Herrmann, the editor of the Dilthey bibliography, took up yet another aspect of Dilthey's work for a developmental treatment. His study, *Die Pädagogik Wilhelm Diltheys. Ihr wissenschaftstheoretischer Ansatz in Diltheys Theorie der Geisteswissenschaften*, appeared in 1971.<sup>12</sup> This is another work that was significant for more general Dilthey scholarship, beyond an interpretation of his work within a specialized field. It included, among other things, an outline of the early stages of Dilthey's reflections on the problems of the human sciences, and identified the original interests and ideals that motivated him to pursue this line of work. Although reached independently, there was a significant convergence between the interpretations of Riedel and Herrmann. Both traced Dilthey's starting point to his understanding of the contemporary crisis produced by the erosion of traditional norms and patterns of action, and both understood his work on the human sciences as a sustained effort to explore the potential contribution of these sciences to the solution of such crisis. Dilthey's basic ideal, according to Herrmann, was to interrelate the understanding of man's past with man's responsible participation in the shaping of his future. In a study rather heavily laden with quotations, and drawing fully on a detailed knowledge of little known writings, Herrmann contributed many central insights regarding Dilthey's struggle to mediate theory and practice within the field of pedagogy. Within this field Dilthey had confronted a range of crucial questions concerning the interrelationship of historical analysis, systematic theory, norms and values. Thus an understanding of Dilthey's contribution to pedagogy became of central importance for a more adequate understanding of the practical intent behind his conception of the nature and tasks of the human sciences. With these early interpretations, then, some essential aspects of the background against which more recent Dilthey studies are to be assessed have been briefly indicated.

The first of these recent developments is Helmut Johach's *Handelnder Mensch und objektiver Geist. Zur Theorie der Geistes- und Sozialwissenschaften bei Wilhelm Dilthey* (1974).<sup>13</sup> Johach makes the rather provocative claim that Dilthey ought to be considered as having made a contribution to sociology as significant and fundamental as that of his younger contemporaries Durkheim, Tönnies, Simmel and Weber. The central theme of Dilthey's work is identified as

11 The main contribution of Lieber is 'Geschichte und Gesellschaft im Denken Diltheys', *Kölner Zeitschrift für Soziologie und Sozialpsychologie*, 17, 1965, 703-42. Together with other of his relevant articles, it has recently been republished in *Kulturrhetik und Lebensphilosophie*, 1974.

12 Herrmann's study appeared as Vol. 2 in the series *Studien zum Wandel von Gesellschaft und Bildung in Neunzehnten Jahrhundert*.

13 Johach's study appeared as Vol. 8 in the series *Studien zur Wissenschaftstheorie*.

an attempt to understand various dimensions of the relationships between man and history, individual and society, working with an explicitly dialectical conception in which man is seen as both producer and product of history and society. Dilthey's work within the human and social sciences is interpreted as representing his endeavour to make the sciences more adequate for solving the pertinent problems of his day. Johach gives special attention to Dilthey's dialogue and argument with Hegel. The significant influence of Hegelian thought has traditionally been assumed to occur in the period after Dilthey's work on *Jugendgeschichte Hegels* (1905). In clear contrast, Johach uncovers Dilthey's early and continuous struggle with the issues raised by Hegel's understanding of man's role in society and history. It is this discovery that is used to justify the use of the Hegelian concept *objektiver Geist* in the title, although the term as such only belongs to the vocabulary of Dilthey's later writings.

As the subtitle indicates, Johach does not offer an exposition of Dilthey's thought as a whole but focusses specifically on his theory of the human and social sciences. In part, this study is based on a series of as yet unpublished manuscripts, mainly Dilthey's early and preliminary studies on the human sciences prior to volume one of *Einleitung* and the so-called *Berliner Entwurf* of the second volume from the beginning of the 1890's.<sup>14</sup> Combining a genetic with a systematic approach, it consists of four parts. Each treats a significant period in Dilthey's work, structured in such a way that *Einleitung* (1883) and *Aufbau* (1910) receive the major emphasis. Johach argues for the fundamental unity of Dilthey's work and rejects the idea of a hermeneutical reorientation. He does, however, identify some important changes as having taken place in the fields of Dilthey's interest. Of these the most significant shift in emphasis is the movement away from work on the distinctly practical social sciences (law, economics, etc.) toward those human sciences where a more purely historical and contemplative viewpoint dominates. Generally speaking, Johach's book is the first comprehensive and detailed survey of the development of Dilthey's theory of the sociohistorical world. It also presents a clear refutation of the rather conventional view of Dilthey as 'an advocate of a backward-looking, apolitical and praxis-remote *Geistesgeschichte*' (p. 51). With this refutation Johach's book can be seen as a further development and refinement of the central thesis put forward by Riedel and Herrmann.

Like them Johach understands Dilthey's theory of the human sciences as an attempt to mediate theory and practice within the fields of social and cultural action, and thereby to regenerate those aspects of the idealist tradition which might serve this aim within his own social context. Such a mediation being his primary concern, Dilthey was forced to reject the traditional theories of knowledge in his search for the foundations of the human sciences. As their starting point these sciences were required to take account of the basic fact that man is both an inquiring knower and a creative agent. Consequently, 'Self-reflection (*Selbstbesinnung*) in contrast to cognitional theory' became a key phrase of Dilthey, because 'in the interconnections of the facts of consciousness, self-reflection equally finds the foundations of action as well as of thought.'<sup>15</sup> Using the unpublished manuscripts Johach is able to throw considerable new light on how this viewpoint influenced the early stages of Dilthey's attempt to establish the defining characteristics of the human sciences. He points out that before Dilthey finally opted, not without serious reservations, for the term *Geistes-*

<sup>14</sup> At present, these early and preliminary studies are being edited by Johach and Rodi and will be published as Vol. XVIII of Dilthey's GS. Concerning the *Berliner Entwurf* see note 8 above.

<sup>15</sup> The quotation is from the *Breslauer Ausarbeitung*.

wissenschaften, he had termed the same disciplines the sciences of agent man (*die Wissenschaften des handelnden Menschen*). An important element in his conception remained: if the human sciences were to mediate action, they could not limit themselves to the analysis of factual and recurrent patterns but would have to concern themselves explicitly with the problems of norms, values and possible motive forces of human action. This was also the context of Dilthey's early work on the problems of interpretive understanding (*Verstehen*), which was occasioned by the need to clarify the possibility of understanding the motives and meaning-contents of human action.

With this background, Johach rightly criticizes Habermas's thesis that a latent positivism or objectivism characterized the basic orientation of Dilthey. Such an interpretation is certainly a serious misrepresentation when applied to the views of the younger Dilthey. Johach nevertheless admits to the existence of some escapist and contemplative ideals in the later writings. But he also makes clear that there is evidence for the fact that Dilthey maintained to the end his conception of the human sciences as means of guiding future directed action. Similarly, Lieber's thesis about the deep conservatism and irrationalism of Dilthey's philosophy is ably criticized as representing an extremely one-sided picture.<sup>16</sup> Using especially the *Berliner Entwurf*, Johach can identify the central features of Dilthey's ideas concerning the desirable new social order, as including radical as well as conservative elements in a strange admixture. He also stresses Dilthey's search for a mode of consciousness (*Bewusstseinsstellung*) which could serve as a functional equivalent to the meaning-giving role of religion. Although more research is needed before the precise outlines of Dilthey's cultural, social and political ideals will be clear, *Handelnder Mensch und objektiver Geist* offers the most reliable analysis to date of the values behind Dilthey's theory of the human sciences.

This much having been said, some limitations of Johach's study should be pointed out. This book does not present more than an outline of Dilthey's understanding of the nature and foundations of values and norms. This is rather unfortunate since throughout the study the practical and normative dimensions of Dilthey's theory of the human sciences is presented as one of its most distinctive features. The absence of a more thorough analysis of these issues is all the more difficult to understand since the practical and normative ideal of the sciences of man is one which Johach shares with Dilthey. In particular, the value of this study would have been increased had Johach undertaken a more penetrating analysis of Dilthey's various attempts to derive norms (rules) for what ought to be from the analysis of what is. Here Dilthey was searching for ideas of optimal personal and social development and for a social ethic which could mediate a harmonious life in society. In this entire endeavour the most central source of inspiration was from the ethics of Schleiermacher. Had more attention been given to Dilthey's treatment of Schleiermacher's ethics and politics, there could have emerged a fuller presentation of those personal and communal values which Dilthey was struggling to preserve in the midst of the newly emerging industrial civilization. In my view, this struggle might be summarily stated as an attempt to preserve a secularized version of a Christian ethic, maintaining such ideals as, for example, the virtue of personal self-sacrifice. In comparison to the attention given to the relationship between Hegel and Dilthey, it must be said that the formative influence of Schleiermacher is left unexplored by Johach.

General interest in the ideas and influence of Hegel is a characteristic feature of the present state of scholarship and so it was to be expected that this interest

16 For Lieber's contributions see note 11 above.

would also manifest itself within Dilthey scholarship. Johach has very successfully shown the importance of Dilthey's dialogue and argument with Hegel and his continuous use of the latter as a point of comparison has certainly helped to highlight the significant features and problems in Dilthey's understanding of man's role and place in history. Moreover, it has served the important purpose of showing how Dilthey tried to save and transform the idealist heritage while fully accepting the empirical nature and disciplinary differentiation of the human sciences. In general, Johach demonstrates that Dilthey should not only be known as one of the foremost philosophers of the historicity of man, he should equally be understood as a significant analyst of the sociality of man.

There is one crucial feature, however, which is absent in Johach's exposition of Dilthey's theory of history. I am here thinking of the role played by the history of science in Dilthey's understanding of human history. When the comparison of Hegel and Dilthey stands in focus, it is important to note that it was within the history of science that Dilthey thought it possible to identify a historical process produced by diverse personal motivations and social circumstances, which yet constituted a unified and purposive development. This insight into the history of science served as the cornerstone of Dilthey's belief in the unity of history, the idea of humanity and the actuality of progress and it partly explains why he devoted so much time and energy to the study of the history of the human sciences. Yet, he did not, like other contemporaries, simply make the history of science paradigmatic for the understanding of other areas of human history, but tried instead to determine the differences between the factors operating in the world of science and those found in other institutional sectors of the social world.

These considerations indicate some limitations of the questions pursued by Johach. In *Einleitung* Dilthey had asserted the following view of history: 'the blind Faust in the last bewildering work of his life is equally the symbol of all heroes of history as is the Faust who shapes nature and history with the eye and hand of the ruler.'<sup>17</sup> Such a conception squares of course with Johach's emphasis on Dilthey's dialectical understanding of history and society. But Johach does not pursue the problem to the point of analyzing Dilthey's ideas on the meaningfulness of history as such. While Dilthey rejected the traditional philosophies of history and the world of transcendence, he still asserted that human history constituted a universal, necessary purposive process (*Zweckzusammenhang*) and could speak of the metaphysical mode of thinking as a necessary stage in the intellectual development of Western man. Johach does not face the intricate question of how such conceptions can be made plausible within an interpretation of Dilthey's thought. The question, however, is especially pertinent when comparing the ideas of Hegel and Dilthey. Indeed, it is possible that Dilthey's thought on some points lay even closer to Hegel's than it appears from Johach's study. However, these critical remarks should not detract from the fact that Johach has made a highly informative and clearly structured contribution to a more adequate understanding of Dilthey's work.

As the relationship of Dilthey to Hegel is a dominant theme in Johach's book, so his affinity to Kant is at the centre of attention in Hans Ineichen's *Erkenntnistheorie und geschichtlich-gesellschaftliche Welt. Diltheys Logik der Geisteswissenschaften* (1975).<sup>18</sup> The two books are complementary in other ways. Dilthey's work on the human sciences is the subject of both; and while Johach

<sup>17</sup> Dilthey, GS, Vol. I, p. 127.

<sup>18</sup> Ineichen's study appeared as Vol. 28 in the series *Studien zur Philosophie und Literatur des neunzehnten Jahrhunderts*.

primarily gives an exposition of the development of Dilthey's substantive social theory, Ineichen is mainly interested in the principal aspects of Dilthey's ethics and cognitional theory as the foundation of his work. Ineichen, like Johach, combines a genetic and a systematic approach; but he also pursues a critical analysis in which the questions of the validity and limitations of Dilthey's views are raised and answered.

Ineichen is interested in the broad issue of clarifying the relation of philosophical reflection to the human sciences. In his view, these sciences stand in need of a philosophical grounding or legitimation. He takes his starting point, therefore, in a critical review of two available modes of such legitimation, those of Gadamer and Habermas. Concluding that these are unsatisfactory, he arrives at the question that lies at the root of his analysis. Can a return to the work of Dilthey provide a more fruitful basis for philosophical reflection on the human sciences? In an attempt to answer this question Ineichen locates Dilthey's contribution as falling within the Kantian tradition of transcendental philosophy, a tradition from within which he also assesses the adequacy of Dilthey's philosophy.

He opens his examination of Dilthey's work with a clarification of the original problems with which Dilthey was struggling. Two of Dilthey's early works on ethics are taken up for an analysis that focusses on his use of Schleiermacher and Trendelenburg and his critique of Kant's formal ethics. With the view that the world of ethics and the sociohistorical world coincide, Ineichen makes the claim that Dilthey's early work on ethics contains in embryo all his later ideas on the human sciences. This first part of Ineichen's study also includes an outline of Dilthey's early reflections on the problems of cognitional theory and methodology, using here the unpublished *Basler Logik und System der philosophischen Wissenschaften* (1867/68).<sup>19</sup> By contrasting his conception of the human sciences with that of Mill, Ineichen proceeds to identify the common ground and differences between Dilthey and the empiricist tradition.

Within the fields of ethics and cognitional theory, however, the crucial problems Dilthey was coming up against stemmed from his challenging of fundamental assertions in Kantian philosophy, notably the distinction between form and matter in knowledge and the phenomenalism of inner perception. This being the thesis of Ineichen, the second part of the study is devoted to a treatment of Dilthey's attempt at resolving these problems during the 1880's and '90's. Here the author makes an important contribution to the interpretation of the *Breslauer Ausarbeitung*. In general, his interest is centred on the inner conflict between psychology and transcendental analysis in Dilthey's theory of knowledge and on the tendency toward naturalism in his ethics. Against the background of the work of Husserl and Rickert, the third part of the study presents an outline of Dilthey's final attempt at establishing a foundation for the human sciences. Within the context of the problem of historical knowledge, this part pursues a discussion of the concept of lived experience (*Erlebnis*) in its relations to interpretive understanding (*Verstehen*) and expression (*Ausdruck*).

Hans Ineichen is a pupil of Riedel and his book distinctly bears the imprint of some of the issues raised by his teacher. Riedel, in his analysis of Dilthey's early theory of knowledge, had raised the question of whether Dilthey is operating on a level of reflection prior to that of Kant in his treatment of the problem of knowledge? In answering this question, Riedel sought to make plausible an interpretation of Dilthey's concept of lived experience (*Erlebnis*) as a transcen-

<sup>19</sup> Together with other of Dilthey's lectures on 'logic', this manuscript is due to be published in his collected works at some future date.

dental concept and as a firm starting point for the grounding of knowledge.<sup>20</sup> This question and thesis have been taken up for further treatment by Ineichen. Parallel to Riedel, he gives an extensive analysis of Dilthey's concept of inner awareness as a firm starting point (*Innewerden als fester Punkt*) and as a functional equivalent to the Kantian *I think* (transcendental apperception). But there is an important, although unexplicated, difference between the views of Riedel and Ineichen.

Riedel had clearly distinguished Dilthey's early work on cognitional theory from his later psychology and could, therefore, understand Dilthey's final work as a further development of his early critique of knowledge.<sup>21</sup> In effect Ineichen rejects Riedel's separation of Dilthey's cognitional theory and psychology, for it is a central thesis of his that Dilthey was never able to distinguish adequately between the problems of a theory of knowledge and those of a psychology of knowledge, due to a basic but common misunderstanding of Kant at that time. Consequently, a major part of his book becomes a restatement and development of Husserl's old charge that Dilthey's attempt to secure a foundation for the human sciences continually bordered on psychologism. The significant difference between the interpretations of Riedel and Ineichen, however, is not one that can be overcome merely through further analysis of the writings of Dilthey. It is a conflict, I believe, stemming from a difference in their understanding of what a critique of knowledge demands. Ineichen merely restates the views of Kant, whereas Riedel's analysis is based on a broader conception.

In my judgement, Ineichen's primary contribution to Dilthey scholarship consists in his careful analysis of the different ways in which Dilthey used a series of central concepts. He makes evident that concepts such as self-reflection (*Selbstbesinnung*), inner awareness (*Innewerden*) and lived experience (*Erlebnis*) have a variety of meanings, and confirms thereby a general impression that Dilthey was not one whose talent lay in precise conceptualization or univocal expression. Ineichen, however, does not contribute significantly to clarifying the tradition and horizon within which these concepts should be understood. In my understanding, this is due to a basic problem in the conception of his book as a whole.

In terms of historical sensitivity and insight, his analysis of the genesis of Dilthey's work is meagre when compared, for example, with that of Herrmann. This almost certainly reflects the fact that Ineichen's main interest is centred on the systematic, rather than the historical issues raised by an interpretation of Dilthey. When he interprets Dilthey's theory of knowledge as an attempt to develop the Kantian type of transcendental analysis, he does not sufficiently take account of the way in which Dilthey's understanding of the problems of knowledge was influenced by the views of Schleiermacher and the tradition stemming from him. At this point, therefore, the lack of adequate historical insight has had unfortunate implications for both the terms of reference and the selection of sources employed in Ineichen's more systematic analysis. Earlier, Herman Nohl pointed to the role of Schleiermacher in this regard, and noted specifically that Dilthey's use of inner awareness as an indubitable starting point for a theory of knowledge must be understood in terms of the prevailing views in the Schleiermacher tradition.<sup>22</sup> The extent to which Ineichen leaves this dimension unexplored is indicated by the fact that he never uses Dilthey's extensive analysis of the dialectics of Schleiermacher, even though it certainly throws

20 Riedel, 'Einleitung', loc. cit., pp. 37ff.

21 Ibid., pp. 52ff.

22 H. Nohl, 'Theologie und Philosophie in der Entwicklung Wilhelm Diltheys', *Die Sammlung*, 14, 1959, 19-23.

much light on Dilthey's own understanding of the tasks of philosophy. Had Ineichen taken account of this source material it would have refined his treatment of the genesis and tasks of self-reflection and would have enabled him to clarify Dilthey's own understanding of the distinction between self-reflection and psychological analysis. Furthermore, appropriate reference to the Schleiermacher tradition would have made it apparent to Ineichen that he should not have expected to find a real functional equivalent to Kant's transcendental ego in Dilthey's theory of knowledge.

Ineichen's decision to use a Kantian horizon or pre-understanding as the basis of his interpretation and critique of Dilthey has been somewhat counterproductive. At many points it has functioned in a limiting way, rather than as a source of further relevant questions. Although he gives significantly more attention to the influence of Schleiermacher in his analysis of Dilthey's ethics, there is still a clear tendency to halt further inquiry when the point can be made that Dilthey's understanding of the norms and goals of human action fall short of the requirements demanded by a Kantian stance. For example, he does not explore how Dilthey used Schleiermacher's ethics as the basis of a philosophy of culture and a theory of history.

More importantly, in a book bearing the title *Erkenntnistheorie und geschichtlich-gesellschaftliche Welt* one would expect to find a treatment of the problems which are posed for a theory of knowledge by the historical diversity and development of ideas. It was certainly a set of problems which occasioned Dilthey to do extensive work within the history of science, to understand the variables, patterns and dynamic operators in the actual development of knowledge; to focus on the problem of making historicity and universality compatible; and finally to question the Kantian understanding of the theory of knowledge and the knowing subject. In Ineichen's book, however, these substantive problems and Dilthey's work on them receive no more than a marginal treatment. In my view, this omission is the most unfortunate consequence of Ineichen's initial decision to interpret the work of Dilthey from a strictly Kantian perspective.

Although Ineichen at one point concedes that the Kantian position stands in need of further development, his study of Dilthey never really becomes the problem and insight finding mission that it might have served. So, at the end, the reader is left without any very clear idea as to how philosophy may be able to contribute fruitfully to the search for a foundation for the human sciences. In part this is due to the fact that it is never quite made clear why Ineichen has built his hopes in this regard on the potentials of a classical Kantian stance.

Compared with the works of Johach and Ineichen, *Dilthey und die Hermeneutik. Diltheys Begründung der Hermeneutik als 'Praxiswissenschaft' und die Geschichte ihrer Rezeption* (1975) by Christofer Zöckler is a very different kind of book. While the understanding of Dilthey's corpus is certainly furthered by Johach and Ineichen, their studies clearly belong to the more specialized contributions to Dilthey scholarship, based as they are on detailed research and the use of unpublished manuscripts. Zöckler, in contrast, offers a synthetic interpretation of the development of Dilthey's theory of the human sciences, which is based on a highly selective reading of Dilthey's work. Zöckler, furthermore, is working from a Marxist stance and understands his contribution as a development and endorsement of the interpretation of Dilthey presented by Georg Lukács in *Die Zerstörung der Vernunft* (1954), where Dilthey was understood as an integral part of the development of irrationalism that culminated in fascism.

The structure alone of *Dilthey und die Hermeneutik* distinguishes it from other books within the field. In the first part Zöckler presents a short survey of the stages in the development of Dilthey's understanding of the human sciences

during the period of 1859 to 1910. The second and longest part presents a detailed analysis of some central trends in the history of the interpretations of Dilthey. It is a contribution to what the Germans now call *Rezeptionsgeschichte*, and focusses especially on the way in which Gadamer and Habermas have interpreted and used Dilthey in their own work. The third and final part attempts a historical materialist interpretation of Dilthey. Treating the period until 1870, this part contains a fairly detailed analysis of the political involvement and views of the younger Dilthey. At first sight such a structure might seem rather strange, but it is in fact essential to the aim set by Zöckler. In a real sense he is more interested in the interpreters of Dilthey than in Dilthey's own views. His overall aim, it appears, is to challenge Gadamer's and especially Habermas' understanding of the human sciences and of the sociohistorical world.

The current conflict between Critical Theory, as represented by Habermas, and Marxism is the relevant background against which Zöckler's book is to be understood. In *Erkenntnis und Interesse* Habermas claimed that a latent positivism operated in the theories and assumptions of both Marx and Dilthey. Since the positivists' mode of thought was found even among its opponents, it was not understood as being specifically related to a certain class and its interests; rather, it was presented as a mode of thought that transcends class conflict and is typical of societies in the midst of a scientific-technological revolution. Such an approach certainly presents a challenge to traditional Marxism and it is this challenge which Zöckler has taken up. He does not, however, tackle the general issue of positivism head on, but seeks to challenge the foundations of Habermas' interpretation of Dilthey and, in passing, his interpretation of Marx.

The concept of hermeneutics is employed by Zöckler as a summary term that describes Dilthey's work on establishing a foundation for the human sciences. He locates this work within that part of the German tradition that understood scientific work as a means of furthering social and political action. Zöckler, therefore, interprets Dilthey's hermeneutics as a science of practice (*Praxiswissenschaft*) and as a contribution to the liberal politics of his day. The stages in Dilthey's work are understood as steps in a movement away from the conception of invariant and *a priori* norms of action to the view that norms of human action are to be derived from an analysis of the actual patterns in history. Zöckler explains the ultimate failure of Dilthey's later work as having two major sources. On the one hand, he points to Dilthey's decision to work on minor problems within his system, rather than to pursue his overall aim; and, on the other, his inability to reach a satisfactory understanding of the interrelationships between individuals and the structural/institutional patterns in society.

Zöckler continuously seeks out the similarities between the hermeneutics of Dilthey and the historical materialism of Marx and Engels, especially their common rejection of invariant norms of action and their common interest in using the human sciences and historical research as a means of guiding social and political action. The result of the comparison is summed up in the formula that Dilthey and Marx-Engels were basically working on the same issues and questions, but their answers differed radically. His conclusion is that 'What appears to be common progressive knowledge splits and emerges as bourgeois and proletarian concepts of progress. . . . It was in fact two fundamentally different concepts of practice which historical materialism and Dilthey inaugurated: the antagonistic practice of two opposed social classes' (p. 104). Zöckler claims that these similarities and differences have not been taken up for analysis in the available interpretations of Dilthey and suggests that the reason for this might be a desire to hide the ideological roots of Dilthey's hermeneutics.

Zöckler considers Habermas' thesis concerning the latent positivism of Dilthey as a view taken over from Gadamer who, in turn, had more or less overlooked the practical and political aims of Dilthey's hermeneutics. Neither Habermas nor Gadamer had interpreted Dilthey's work on the background of the actual social and political world in which he lived. Had they given attention to this world as well as to Dilthey's overall aims, they would have located the key problem in his hermeneutics to be its incapacity to deal methodically with the objective structures of history. Zöckler also explains why Gadamer and Habermas focus their critique of Dilthey on the issue of positivism, rather than on the issue of structures of history. It is asserted that both of them understand the sociohistorical world on the basis of a language and communication model, such that an analysis of the real problems in Dilthey's hermeneutics would have challenged their own stance in a basic way.

The essential difference between Habermas and Zöckler can be summarized in the following way. Habermas points to a latent positivism in the reflections of both Marx and Dilthey and attempts to integrate their different theories in a higher synthesis that eliminates their positivistic elements. Zöckler, in contrast, points to their common attempt to establish a dialectical mediation of theory and practice on the basis of a scientific analysis of history, but emphasizes the radically different interests served by their work, such that no synthesis of their theories is possible. In order to substantiate the incompatibility of the interests of Marx and Dilthey, Zöckler devotes the final part of his book to an examination of the political aims and views of the young Dilthey, the part in which he endorses and develops Lukács' thesis regarding Dilthey's irrationalism.

Leaving aside the endorsement of Lukács' thesis, an important point of convergence should be noted between Zöckler's interpretation and those of Riedel, Herrmann and Johach. All four of these studies assign a fundamental importance to Dilthey's concern to mediate practice by theory. Zöckler's exposition, while thus according with the recent trend in the interpretation of Dilthey, lacks the depth and breadth found in these other studies. It also differs in regard to its assessment of Dilthey's achievement. Whereas Riedel, Herrmann and Johach view Dilthey from positions that are congruent with and inspired by the hermeneutic tradition, Zöckler views this tradition as one to which he is opposed. His special contribution to the debate about Dilthey therefore lies primarily in his critique of Dilthey and his interpreters.

Zöckler's book contains the most extensive survey and analysis of the history of the interpretations, uses and abuses of Dilthey available. He not only summarizes the important theses, but also indicates their dependence on the intra- and extra-scientific contexts in which they were presented. Moreover, it is a critical analysis bearing the distinct marks of the heated political and intellectual debate in Germany today. Outside Germany this might easily be taken as detracting from its general usefulness, but it has the advantage of contributing to the clarification of the fundamental issues raised in the debate about Dilthey.

There is a curious omission, however, in Zöckler's analysis of these different interpretations. The absence of any real discussion of Riedel's contribution is unfortunate, since he is one of the few who has had something to say about the similarities and differences between Marx and Dilthey. Riedel, of course, identified their common attempt to turn the concerns of philosophy away from the world of theory to the issues raised by man's historical practice, and their common starting point in the conviction that the consciousness of man is deeply determined by his sociohistorical environment. But what essentially distinguished Dilthey from Marx, in Riedel's interpretation, was the fact that Dilthey kept the important question of a critique of knowledge alive, even though the

concept of reason was undergoing radical change in the nineteenth century.<sup>23</sup> Had Zöckler taken this difference up for discussion, it would have called for an explication of his understanding of the problem of knowledge, which would also have counteracted a structural problem and intrinsic weakness in the argument of the book.

There is no less disagreement today among the interpreters of Marx and Engels than in the field of Dilthey scholarship. While Zöckler discusses and critically evaluates the merits of different interpretations of Dilthey, there is no explication of, or argument for, his own understanding of the tenets of historical materialism. As it stands this tradition appears in the somewhat reified role of a taken-for-granted reality. As critique, therefore, Zöckler's analysis tends to be rather unfruitful, since its basis is neither grounded nor explicated, but merely assumed. This fact certainly undermines the value of the book as a whole, especially in so far as its major aim is a critique of Gadamer's and Habermas' conception of society and the human sciences. Indeed, the polemic against Habermas tends to become shadowboxing. A single example will suffice.

Habermas' thesis about the latent positivism of Marx presents a challenge to mainstream Marxism that certainly calls for debate. This issue gains special importance in the context of a discussion of Dilthey's position since Dilthey's own repudiation of Marx's theory constituted an integral part of his general critique of the positivist movement of the times.<sup>24</sup> Zöckler overlooks Dilthey's views on this matter and fails to take issue with Habermas in any serious fashion, remaining satisfied with outlining the radical differences between the politics of Marx and Engels on the one hand and those of Dilthey on the other. Although there can be little doubt that an examination of their political positions would explain why they focussed their theoretical work on different dimensions of the sociohistorical world, such an analysis in itself does not settle the crucial issue as to whether their respective theories are mutually exclusive or partly complementary. This was, however, the question raised by Habermas and, essentially, it is a question about an adequate conception of man, history and society, and indeed of scientific knowledge. It is also the question which is at the centre of the current debate about Dilthey and, no less so, Marx. As far as this question is concerned, Zöckler cannot be said to have contributed significantly to the ongoing debate. In the main he has restated or rather assumed the outlines of a well known stance.

The most far-reaching thesis presented by Zöckler is that the hermeneutic tradition—represented by Dilthey, Gadamer and Habermas—should be understood as a substitute for the classical liberal, bourgeois philosophy of history and as a hindrance to an adequate conception of history which can serve a practical purpose. The thesis as such is challenging and would have significant implications if it were well founded. But, unfortunately, Zöckler's discussion of the standpoints of his opponents has some serious defects. Given the thesis, one would have expected an analysis of Dilthey's critique of the traditional philosophies of history as presented in *Einleitung* and his attempt there to find the means of reaching a more scientific approach to the issues raised by a philosophy of history. One would also have expected to find an analysis of Dilthey's work on the problems of interdisciplinary collaboration and reorganization of the human sciences, which in part was intended as an outline of a more empirical and scientific approach to the problems of a philosophy of

23 Riedel, 'Einleitung', loc. cit., pp. 37f., 46f.

24 Cf. Dilthey's *System der Ethik*, GS, Vol. X, pp. 15f. It is amazing that Zöckler never uses these lectures since they reveal clearly Dilthey's attitude toward the social and political thinking of his day.

history. In the case of Habermas one would have expected an analysis of his overall programme which was formulated as the establishment of a philosophy of history with a practical intent, as well as of the ways in which he has developed and specified his ideas since the early sixties when the programme was first presented. In neither case has Zöckler analyzed the most central ideas of his opponents on the problems of a philosophy of history. Thus to my mind the thesis and critique of Zöckler does not fulfill the minimum demands of a real challenge. It is probable, therefore, that his argument will have the power of convincing only those readers who already share his stance.

If one were to read Rudolf A. Makkreel's *Dilthey. Philosopher of the Human Studies* (1975) after having read the three recent German studies, one might well get the feeling of having entered another world. One might wonder if it really is the same person who is the common subject of all of those works. Of the four authors Makkreel is in fact the one who has worked the longest in the field of Dilthey research. In 1968 he published 'Toward a Concept of Style: An Interpretation of Wilhelm Dilthey's Psycho-Historical Account of Imagination'<sup>25</sup> and this was followed in 1969 with a study of 'Wilhelm Dilthey and the Neo-Kantians'.<sup>26</sup> His new book, a study of more than 400 pages, presents what is an expansion and development of the viewpoint and thesis presented in the first article.

Makkreel attempts to demonstrate a basic continuity in the development of Dilthey's ideas. In proposing this view, he is explicitly rejecting the traditional thesis that the movement from the early psychology to the later hermeneutics should be understood as a fundamental turning point in Dilthey's development. In contrast, he interprets the emergence of the hermeneutic perspective as representing a maturation of Dilthey's thought, one which established a more comprehensive and adequate basis for the understanding of man and history and which included the earlier insights gained through psychological analysis. The most important thesis put forward by Makkreel is that Dilthey's aesthetics constituted 'a model *Geisteswissenschaft*' (p. 15). Thus his developmental analysis rests on the premiss that 'an examination of the progress of Dilthey's aesthetics will prove to be no less than a study of the growth of his thought in general' (ibid).

Following an introduction that treats the issue of an aesthetic of history, Makkreel briefly sketches the theoretical background of Dilthey's work by outlining his understanding of the human sciences and contrasting it mainly with that of the neo-Kantians. He then presents a detailed analysis of the early development of Dilthey's aesthetics viewed as a model discipline. Here the substantive and methodological issues inherent in the psychological studies of imagination carried out by Dilthey are clarified. In contrast to the Kantian conception of imagination as synthetic, it is shown that Dilthey understood the function of imagination to be more analytic and granted it the task of articulation, that is, the explication of the typical in a whole. As such, poetic imagination becomes a basic tool for the understanding of the human world.

As regards the central argument of this book, the third part is the most crucial. It is here that Makkreel attempts to ground his interpretation of the transition from the psychological to the hermeneutic standpoint as a development that enabled Dilthey to interrelate his psychological and historical modes of analysis. He points to the centrality of Dilthey's concept of reflective experience, arguing that if this concept is interpreted and developed in the light of Kant's analysis of

25 *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, 27, 1968, 171-82.

26 *Journal of the History of Philosophy*, 7, 1969, 423-40.

reflective judgement, there then emerges the possibility of 'a Kantian mediation between Dilthey's psychological theory of imagination and his historical hermeneutics' (p. 205). Makkreel, subsequently, proposes the far-reaching thesis that Dilthey used the poetic imagination as a model for the understanding of history and his critique of historical reason should be understood, in effect, as a critique of historical judgement.

In the remaining part of the book Makkreel describes and explores the many dimensions of Dilthey's hermeneutics. Here his theory of *Erlebnis* and *Verstehen* is analyzed. The development and place of psychology within the new hermeneutic framework is also discussed in the context of his dialogue with Husserl. Likewise, the impact and role of Hegelian ideas in Dilthey's final understanding of the nature of the historical world is treated. Continuing the exploration of the interrelation of aesthetics and history, the last two chapters are devoted to an analysis of Dilthey's use of the categories of life, some points of difference between Heidegger and Dilthey and the problem of critical interpretation.

The title and blurb of Makkreel's study could give the impression that here is a comprehensive survey and interpretation of the work of Dilthey. One might assume that it is, for instance, an up-to-date alternative to H. A. Hodges's *The Philosophy of Wilhelm Dilthey* (1952). This it is certainly not. Makkreel's *Dilthey* is a book with a particular viewpoint and a definite thesis but, in my judgement, they are pursued beyond their limitations with far more diligence than is warranted. Had the book been entitled something along the lines of 'Dilthey's contribution to an aesthetic of history', the reader would be better prepared for what is awaiting him.

What makes it possible, nonetheless, for Makkreel to present his analysis as a comprehensive study is his assumption about the model or paradigmatic character of Dilthey's aesthetics. It is an assumption in the sense that little argument is advanced to ground it. It is not weighed against alternative and available interpretations, and even if such were attempted, I doubt that a defensible case could be made. This is not to suggest that Dilthey did not devote much time and energy to aesthetics, because, in fact, he did; it is to assert, rather, that Makkreel's viewpoint and thesis offer a limited and biased presentation of Dilthey's fundamental concerns.

Of other interpretations available to Makkreel, both Riedel's and Herrmann's have forcefully asserted the evidence that the basic concern behind Dilthey's work was to tackle the cultural and social crisis of his day through a philosophic and scientific mediation of action. Although Herrmann did not do so, it would be much easier to argue for the model character of Dilthey's pedagogy or, alternatively, for his ethics. Here, one would at least have the advantage of being able to strengthen the claim through references to Dilthey's own self-understanding. The basic misrepresentation produced by the thesis and viewpoint of Makkreel is that it completely avoids Dilthey's amply documented interest in the problems of man as a historical agent and transformer of his sociohistorical world. In doing so, this interpretation stands apart from the recent trend in Dilthey research. In fact, it distinguishes itself clearly from the older school only in the rejection of the idea that the hermeneutic shift involved a fundamental reorientation in Dilthey's thought.

Makkreel's attempt to establish a Kantian mediation between the psychology and hermeneutics of Dilthey is in itself very interesting and has its merits. It exemplifies what might be called a constructive interpretation, in which inherent possibilities in the unfinished analyses of Dilthey are developed. In doing so Makkreel certainly understands the author better than he understood himself.

When it is extended, however, to the general thesis that Dilthey's critique of historical reason should really be understood as a critique of historical judgment it becomes problematic. Such an interpretation seriously underestimates both the ambition and the significance of Dilthey's projected critique.

Dilthey did use the phrase a 'critique of historical reason', although not very often. In a sense it was a convenient way of indicating the main thrust of his thinking. Unfortunately, it could also be a source of misunderstanding. Clearly, the phrase would immediately suggest an almost straightforward parallel to the critiques of Kant. Dilthey's distinction between natural and human science and his primary interest in the latter would also suggest a complementation. What the phrase did not communicate precisely was the deep and radical difference between Kant's and Dilthey's understanding of reason, which makes it very difficult to compare and combine single elements in their respective systems without seriously underestimating such radical differences.

As has been already mentioned, Krausser had earlier suggested re-naming Dilthey's project a 'critique of finite reason'. The strength of this suggestion was that it explicated an important dimension of the meaning of 'historical reason'. At the same time, however, it overemphasized the distance between Dilthey and the tradition of transcendental reflection and underestimated the difference between the human and natural sciences. Makkreel has now suggested a change to a 'critique of historical judgement'. In contrast to Krausser, its strength lies in making the point that historical knowing or judgement is distinct from the knowledge of nature. But substituting the term judgement for that of reason presupposes more homogeneity between the conceptions of Kant and Dilthey than is warranted. In general, Makkreel's analysis as a whole underestimates the radical differences between Kant and Dilthey.

If Dilthey's critique of historical reason is understood as the name of the project he pursued first in *Einleitung* (1883) and later in *Aufbau* (1910), then it encompasses four distinct but interrelated tasks. Firstly, its aim was to formulate a critique of knowledge in which the problem and foundation of human knowing was to be analyzed. Its basis was what Dilthey termed a historical and systematic self-reflection (*Selbstbesinnung*), through which the problem and nature of human action was also to be clarified. Secondly, it was a critique of metaphysics in all its historical forms and consequences. As such it was a critique of past and present modes of false consciousness, with the aim of clearing the ground for a more adequate understanding of man and his sociohistorical world. Thirdly, it attempted to establish a new organization of the human sciences and to lay the foundation of interdisciplinary collaboration, on which history as a discipline had to be dependent if it was to achieve an understanding of historical totalities and pursue the goal of universal history in a scientific manner. Fourthly, Dilthey's critique was to overcome the bifurcation of theoretical and practical knowledge and thereby enable philosophy and the sciences of man to clarify and guide individual and collective action. All four tasks involved a discussion and analysis of the question of the values and goals of human action. Even on the basis of such a summary indication of the scope of Dilthey's project, it should be clear that Makkreel's more general claims as to the significance and role of Dilthey's aesthetics overshoot their mark.

German philosophy and social thought in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries remains of crucial interest to contemporary philosophy of the human sciences. It is here that we find the historical roots of many of the central schools in the current debate about the tasks and methods of the sciences of man. This is also one reason why the work of Dilthey can still attract the attention of many

scholars who are seeking to unravel the problems, issues and assumptions of a philosophy of man.

In more senses than one, however, Dilthey's thought presents a puzzle. It cannot easily be fitted into any one of the major traditions of the nineteenth century. Dilthey was, for example, one of the adamant critics of positivism, but shared at the same time the positivists' respect for the empirical nature of the sciences, as well as their aspirations for the role of science in society. Like many contemporaries he uttered the catchphrase about a return to Kant, but in no real sense was he a neo-Kantian. Central tenets of German idealism were defended and developed in his work, although he clearly rejected both the idea of philosophy as an all-inclusive system of knowledge and the speculative method. He was also a proponent of a historicist doctrine in many contexts, yet he sought to counteract its relativist consequences in order to remain faithful to part of the Enlightenment tradition. This many-faceted and almost elusive character of Dilthey's thought explains why commentators and critics can locate him in very different traditions and do so with some supporting evidence.

A further difficulty confronts the interpreter which arises because there is no easy and straightforward approach to the world of Dilthey. To identify a few central texts which, so to speak, contain all the essentials of his ideas is virtually impossible. Furthermore, his major works all remained uncompleted; and this in itself presents an interpreter with almost unsurmountable problems. If the scope and size of his corpus are added to these facts, it is evident that there is plenty of room for significant divergence in the interpretation of his thought. Such divergence is also complicated by another factor. The publication of Dilthey's writings continues today, but several important manuscripts are as yet unpublished. In so far as many of the more recent studies argue some of their central theses on the basis of manuscripts which are not easily available, contemporary interpretation, even to specialists in the field, can often present itself as a somewhat perplexing maze.

From the major trend in recent interpretations there emerges, nonetheless, a distinct set of features that stands in contrast to the traditional image of Dilthey presented in most textbooks. It is now quite clear that the adequate context for understanding the work of Dilthey is not the crisis and reorientation of European thought around the turn of the century, in which the issues of subjectivism, cultural despair and relativism normally stand in the centre of attention. Dilthey, like his contemporaries, did respond to this crisis and, of course, it influenced him in several ways. The central thrust and core of his thought, however, had been formed much earlier. Likewise, the neo-Kantians (Windelband, Rickert) and Husserl did present Dilthey with challenges to which he had to respond, but again their works were able to exert only a modifying influence on an already well-established body of thought. It was in the two decades prior to *Einleitung* (1883) that this body of thought evolved and gained its distinct form and orientation. It is now clear that only with a view to this period can an adequate interpretation of Dilthey's corpus find its firm core and basis.

The new studies also make evident that it was the whole cluster of issues about human action that lay at the centre of Dilthey's concern. Ineichen is therefore right in pointing to the crucial importance of the field of ethics in Dilthey's thought, although, in my judgement, he has far from exhaustively explored the significance of this insight in his recently completed study. It now also seems clear that it is within the context of Dilthey's interest in improving and mediating human action that his work on the problems of the foundation and organization of the human sciences are to be interpreted (a fact that stands out more clearly in the as yet unpublished manuscripts). From this perspective his work as a whole

can be viewed as one of the several nineteenth-century attempts at bridging the gap between theoretical and practical philosophy. Thus a better understanding of Dilthey's reflections on a 'critique of historical reason' can be expected to mediate insights into a set of problems that still remains a fundamental challenge to the contemporary sciences of man.

Although a new, different and more adequate image of Dilthey has been emerging in recent years, there yet remains much work to be done before a full and rounded understanding of his life and work will be available. It might be worthwhile, therefore, to indicate three areas of his work which, as yet, stand in most need of a thorough analysis.

The first and most obvious area concerns the role of Schleiermacher in the formation and development of Dilthey's thought. There is no doubt that Schleiermacher was the person whose work Dilthey studied most thoroughly and energetically throughout his career. Dilthey, in fact, presented himself to the public in *Leben Schleiermachers* (1867/70) as one who wanted to assert and develop Schleiermacher's conception of man and of the moral world. Yet in the growing and extensive literature of Dilthey scholarship, which includes many studies of the relationship between Kant and Dilthey, not one thorough investigation of his dependence on, and critique of, Schleiermacher can be found. While the fact itself sounds perhaps startling, it is not too difficult to account for such a serious gap in the literature. Many of the relevant manuscripts were first published in 1966.<sup>27</sup> An equally important factor, however, is the size of the task itself. Whereas many philosophers of science today know their Kant before they approach the work of Dilthey, it is likely that very few indeed, outside a narrow circle of theologians, have already mastered their Schleiermacher. Nevertheless, it is highly probable that many of the puzzles that continue to crop up in the interpretation of Dilthey will first become less puzzling when his relationship to Schleiermacher has been subjected to a thorough clarification.

The second area calling for further detailed research is closely related to the first, although it concerns a quite distinct problem. This is the issue of Dilthey's work in the field of ethics, which is understood to include his social philosophy. The studies of Herrmann, Johach, Ineichen and Zöckler do include such analyses and some indication of their pivotal significance, but no thorough exploration of the issue. It is Dilthey's work in this field which is likely to reveal the inner cohesion of his many-sided endeavours; and it is probable that it is in this field the goals and values motivating his entire work will be revealed most clearly.

Finally, within the tradition of immanent interpretations of Dilthey's work, his historical research should also be mentioned as a further relatively unexplored area. It has been largely overlooked that almost half of his writings consists of empirical historical investigations. The main interest of his interpreters, drawn from the ranks of philosophers of science, has been directed to the assumptions, concepts, structure and coherence of his systematic, theoretical and methodological writings. Zöckler, however, makes the point that Dilthey's theoretical reflections and concepts were developed in close conjunction with the problems he was facing in his actual historical research. Unfortunately this insight was not followed up by an analysis of his empirical work. It seems highly probable that only in the study of the dialectic between his actual empirical research and his theoretical reflections will the inner logic of his development be fully revealed.

27 Martin Redeker published the many manuscripts pertaining to the projected second volume of Dilthey's Schleiermacher biography in Vol. XIV of GS. In this volume his early prize essay on the hermeneutics of Schleiermacher was also printed for the first time.

Since Dilthey subscribed to an evolutionary theory of knowledge his historical work must be granted an essential significance for the understanding of his systematic theory. In fact, he himself compared the function of the historical part of *Einleitung* with that of *Phänomenologie des Geistes* in the system of Hegel.

Apart from this peculiar significance of Dilthey's historical investigations within his overall project, he was, as a philosopher of science, typical of his period. The work of many such men during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries typically combined extensive empirical research with methodological reflections. Durkheim, Mach and Weber are obvious examples, as are Marx and Freud. Among contemporary philosophers of science, Habermas is one of the few to have exploited the possibility of exploring the relationship between empirical work and methodological reflection. In his treatment of Marx and Freud he has focussed on contrasting the techniques and results of their actual performance as scientists with their explicit methodological reflections. This turned out to be a powerful tool for uncovering the limitations of methodological self-understanding, by judging the extent to which such understanding can reflectively legitimate actual performance and its results. This approach, however, seems to be more the exception than the rule. It probably reflects the increased disciplinary specialization of today's academic world that philosophers of science limit their interpretive work to the analysis of explicit theoretical and methodological statements. They may well be depriving themselves thereby not only of an entire range of significant data within their field of study, which presumably includes what scientists actually do and produce, but also of a fruitful point of contact and communication with those who actually produce work in the name of science.

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