



### WHEN PHILOSOPHERS DISCUSS HISTORY: THE THOUGHTS OF HERMENEUTIC PHILOSOPHERS IN EXAMINING HISTORY

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**ABSTRACT**

This study uses the literature review method to explore the role of hermeneutics in the science of history. Hermeneutics, as the art and theory of interpretation, offers a comprehensive approach to understanding and explaining the past through the analysis of textual sources. The study examines the contributions of hermeneutic philosophers such as Wilhelm Dilthey, Hans-Georg Gadamer, and R.G. Collingwood, who have provided valuable guidance in understanding human actions and thoughts in the past. By reviewing relevant literature, this research explains how hermeneutics can enrich historical methodology, allowing researchers to gain more profound and contextual insights. The conclusion of this study asserts that hermeneutics is an interpretive tool and an essential methodological approach for critically and thoroughly examining history.

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**ABSTRAK**

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengeksplorasi peran hermeneutika dalam ilmu sejarah dengan menggunakan metode penelitian pustaka. Hermeneutika, sebagai seni dan teori interpretasi, menawarkan pendekatan yang komprehensif dalam memahami dan menjelaskan masa lalu melalui analisis sumber-sumber tekstual. Studi ini mengkaji kontribusi para filsuf hermeneutika seperti Wilhelm Dilthey, Hans-Georg Gadamer, dan R.G. Collingwood, yang telah memberikan panduan berharga dalam memahami tindakan dan pemikiran manusia di masa lalu. Dengan meninjau berbagai literatur yang relevan menggunakan metode penelitian pustaka, penelitian ini menunjukkan bagaimana hermeneutika dapat memperkaya metodologi sejarah, memungkinkan peneliti untuk mendapatkan wawasan yang lebih mendalam dan kontekstual. Kesimpulan dari penelitian ini menegaskan bahwa hermeneutika bukan hanya alat interpretatif, tetapi juga pendekatan metodologis yang esensial untuk mengkaji sejarah secara lebih kritis dan menyeluruh.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Zygmunt Bauman defines *hermeneutics* as a way to clarify and comprehend the message and meaning of speech or writing that is unclear, ambiguous, obscure, or contradictory, which can be confusing for the reader or listener. The term "hermeneutics" is used in English, with the letter "s" at the end, and in Indonesian transliteration, it is written as "*hermeneutika*." This term has its roots in the Greek language. It can be understood as a theory or philosophy of interpreting meaning, particularly in understanding texts (Bauman, 2010)

Hermeneutics in historical studies involves a comprehensive interpretative process that includes understanding texts, contexts, and the subjects involved. Historians gather relevant textual sources such as documents, letters, diaries, and literature. They then read and analyze these texts in-depth, looking for explicit and implicit meanings. This process includes linguistic analysis to examine the use of language, specific terms, and writing styles that may influence the understanding of the text.

The next step is to determine these texts' historical, cultural, and social context. This involves understanding the conditions of the time when the text was written, including the prevailing political, economic, and social situations. Historians also consider the cultural background and values that might have influenced the text's author. Understanding this context helps explain why the text was written and how the events or ideas presented were understood.

Identifying the biases and perspectives of the text's authors is crucial. Every historical text is influenced by its author's worldview, objectives, and interests. Historians must be critical of their sources and consider how these biases might influence their understanding of historical events. Historical reconstruction is the next step in the hermeneutic process. Based on text interpretation and context understanding, historians attempt to chronologically and thematically reconstruct past events. This process involves combining various sources of information to create a coherent and logical narrative. Hermeneutics helps historians gather facts and understand the causal relationships between events and the dynamics that influenced historical developments. Eventually, hermeneutics encourages historians to reflect on their interpretations critically. Historians must know that their perspectives and contexts always influence their understanding of texts and historical events. This reflection process allows historians to reevaluate their initial assumptions and understandings and consider alternative interpretations. Thus, hermeneutics is an interpretative and methodological approach that promotes critical and reflective thinking in studying history (Moeflih & Supriyadi, 2012).

Supriyono (2004) delves deeper into the concept, explaining that cultural formation inherently encompasses differences such as race, class, gender, and cultural traditions. Cultural identity is not a fixed, predetermined entity but results from ongoing negotiations and exchanges of artistic expressions. This continual process leads to mutual recognition of cultural differences, emphasizing that cultural identity is not innate but emerges through the continuous encounters and exchanges that shape a society's cultural landscape.

This article aims to elucidate the exchange of ideas among philosophers within the framework of comprehending history through a hermeneutic approach. The ensuing segment will feature diverse accounts concerning philosophy, history, and hermeneutics based on the perspectives of various philosophers.

## **II. RESEARCH METHODS**

The study of hermeneutics has been extensively examined in academic literature. This article explores the viewpoints of philosophers who interpret history using a hermeneutic approach. The research is based on a comprehensive literature review, including scholarly articles and credible research findings. The author systematically collects and examines various sources related to the article's topic, using them as the foundation for the discussion.

The article's methodology involves analyzing written sources to identify essential information relevant to the study's subject. The author employs a rigorous analytical method to evaluate the selected sources' data carefully. This method aims to generate a detailed and well-supported discussion of the topic (Zed, 2004).

The article offers a thorough overview of the hermeneutic approach to history, backed by various credible sources. Its meticulous analysis and attention to detail make it valuable to hermeneutics. In the field of research methods, describe the types and areas of research, methods of analysis, methods of data collection, and sources of data. Use references that discuss philosophical research methods for conducting research in philosophy.

## **III. DISCUSSION**

### **3.1 Hermeneutics Philosophy of History**

The origins of hermeneutics can be traced back to the Greek language in classical history. "Hermeneuein" means interpretation and finds its roots in the mythological figure Hermes. Hermes was a messenger responsible for delivering messages from Jupiter to humans. He is depicted as a figure with winged legs, more commonly known as Mercurius in Latin. Hermes played a crucial role in translating divine messages from Mount Olympus into a language humanity could understand. The significance of Hermes lies in the necessity to avoid misunderstandings of the gods' statements, as such misinterpretations could have dire consequences for society. Hermes, therefore, symbolizes an ambassador burdened with a specific mission, the success of which depends on the effective delivery of the message. The historical narrative of the mythological figure Hermes contributes to the broad definition of hermeneutics as a process that transforms ignorance or a lack of understanding into comprehension. This definition, applicable in classical and modern perspectives, portrays hermeneutics as a method of interpretation or an effort to uncover hidden meanings within a given context (Sumaryono, 1999).

Sayyed Hossein Nasr has compared the archetypal figures of Hermes and the Prophet Idris (peace be upon him). Legend has it that Idris was renowned for his weaving skills, similar to the Greek mythology that highlighted the role of the God Hermes. The verb "to spin" is "there" in Latin, and the resulting product is referred to as "Textus" or text, which is a central theme in hermeneutics studies. The primary challenge for both Prophet Idris and God Hermes was to interpret God's message using the "language of heaven" in a manner that could be understood by humans who spoke the language of "earth." In this context, spinning may hold metaphorical significance, as it aligns or strings together words and meanings from God, harmonizing them and making them more accessible to human comprehension (Hidayat, 1996).

The terms "hermeneutics" and "hermeneutic" originate in Greek. The essence of these modern words revolves around facilitating understanding, particularly regarding language, which is an effective medium for this endeavor. The concept of mediation and the process of making a message comprehensible, associated with Hermes, can be found in the three fundamental meanings of "hermeneutics" and "hermeneia" in their original usage. These three forms are derived from the verb "hermeneutic" and encompass (1) expressing words, as in "to say," (2) explaining, and (3) translating. Although all three meanings can be encapsulated in the English verb "to interpret," each holds an independent and meaningful role in the interpretation process. Tracing the origins of the term in Greek, the essence of modern words like "hermeneutics" and "hermeneutic" revolves around facilitating understanding, mainly as it involves language—a highly effective medium in this endeavor. The concept of mediation and the process of making a message comprehensible, associated with Hermes, can be found in the three fundamental meanings of "hermeneutics" and "hermeneia" in their original usage. These three forms are derived from the verb "hermeneutic" and encompass (1) expressing words, as in "to say," (2) explaining, and (3) translating. While all three meanings can be encapsulated in the English verb "to interpret," each holds an independent and meaningful role in the interpretation process. (Palmer, 2000). Whenever someone reads a text, intentionally or unintentionally, they will invariably interpret it. Conversations about texts are closely tied to language, a constantly evolving aspect of life that plays a vital role in the world's creation. Language is distinct in its existence, and humans actively participate in it.

Hermeneutics is a method of interpreting historical texts and understanding the actions of historical figures. Historians are responsible for analyzing the meanings of events, processes, and activities across society to comprehend their subject of study. By empathizing with them, they seek to understand historical actors' thoughts, emotions, and actions (Gardner, 2011). Historians also use their own life experiences to engage in a "dialogue" with the historical sources they utilize. When dealing with texts as historical sources, two approaches are commonly employed:

- 1. Interpretation of Text and Explanation of Actions:** The text is carefully analyzed to understand the actions taken by historical figures mentioned in it. This analysis aims to find the consistency between the studied past and the historical sources used. Based on this analysis, a particular stance or conclusion can be drawn.
- 2. Understanding the Motivations of Historical Actors:** The author or reader of the text endeavors to address the question of why historical actors behaved in specific ways. Essentially, the hermeneutic process involves deciphering the text's meaning and striving to comprehend the motivations behind an individual's actions.

William H. Dray's philosophy of history emphasizes a fundamental distinction between two meanings of "history." The first meaning denotes a sequence of past events and human actions, commonly called chronology. The second meaning, on the other hand, refers to the academic discipline that involves the study of history (Dray, 1980).

The provided definition is closely related to the field of philosophy. The philosophy of history comprises two fundamental aspects: the speculative

philosophy of history and the philosophy of historical criticism. The speculative philosophy of history aims to uncover patterns, structures, themes, or meanings within the sequence of past events and human actions that go beyond the historical realm. This approach focuses on questions such as "What is the significance or purpose of history?" or "What fundamental laws govern the development and evolution of history?" The ultimate goal of this approach is to enable historians to predict future societal changes (Gardiner, 1985).

The philosophy of historical criticism deals with various aspects related to historical inquiry. It explores the purposes of historical investigation, the methods historians employ to describe and classify their material, and the procedures for developing supporting explanations and hypotheses. Additionally, it examines the underlying assumptions and principles that guide the investigation and the complex relationship between history and other forms of inquiry. This dual framework leads to a comprehensive understanding of the philosophy of history, which involves both speculative exploration and critical analysis (Gardiner, 1985).

Hermeneutics is a methodology of interpretation applied to various texts throughout history, including sacred texts, literature, works of art, and community traditions. It is not a singular entity but comprises diverse models and variants. Three primary forms or models of hermeneutics are recognized:

1. **Objective Hermeneutics:** This model was developed by classical figures, notably Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768-1834), Wilhelm Dilthey (1833-1911), and Emilio Betti (1890-1968).
2. **Subjective Hermeneutics:** Modern figures, particularly Hans-Georg Gadamer (1900) and Jacques Derrida (1930), have contributed to developing personal hermeneutics.
3. **Dialectic Hermeneutics:** This form is represented by K. Otto Appel and Jürgen Habermas, who emphasize a dialectical approach to interpretation.

Each of these models offers distinctive perspectives on the interpretative process, reflecting the evolution of hermeneutics as a dynamic and multifaceted field of study.

Hermeneutic thought consists of three distinct currents, each offering unique perspectives. **Romantic Hermeneutics** seeks to establish methodological principles for social science research and build the epistemological foundations of hermeneutics. On the other hand, **Ontological Hermeneutics** focuses on human consciousness and its relationship with prejudice and tradition. It explores the nature of being and how individuals navigate their understanding of the world, accounting for preconceived notions and cultural traditions. Finally, **Dialectical Hermeneutics** aims to build a communicative society that fosters openness to dialogue and criticism (Prayogi, 2023; Sidik & Sulistyana, 2021). It stresses the importance of interactive communication and exchanging ideas, creating an environment conducive to constructive discourse and critical analysis.

To summarize, the different hermeneutic currents contribute to the broader field by focusing on specific aspects such as methodological principles, ontological considerations, and the establishment of communicative societies. The variations among these currents add richness to the discipline of

hermeneutics, accommodating different perspectives and interpretation approaches.

## **3.2 Hermeneutics by Experts**

### **3.2.1 Wilhelm Dilthey**

A German philosopher and historian, Wilhelm Dilthey, initially attempted to bolster his critique of scientific methodology by exploring the psychological underpinnings of human understanding. However, he soon realized that psychology, lacking a historical dimension, needed to be improved for this purpose. Dilthey believed that comprehending history required a fundamentally different approach than natural science. Specifically, he argued that personal knowledge of the purposes and meanings of human actions must be activated to achieve historical understanding (Sumaryono, 1999: 48 Palmer, 2005, p. 45).

As a philosopher specializing in the methodology of social sciences, the definition of hermeneutics by this expert centers around understanding written expressions about life. This involves focusing on historical events and works depicting past human experiences. To truly comprehend this historical experience, an interpreter must share some common ground with the author, per Schleiermacher's psychological aspect.

Dilthey sought to elevate hermeneutics to the level of a scientific discipline, differentiating it from natural science clearly and concisely. He aimed to establish systematic approaches and guidelines within hermeneutics to ensure objectivity and validity across various scientific domains. Dilthey believed that the development of universal hermeneutics called for epistemological principles that could support the progress of social sciences. Overall, Dilthey endeavored to create a distinct boundary between social and natural sciences while establishing methods and rules governing the objectivity and validity unique to each scientific realm (Mul, 2011).

Dilthey's hermeneutic theory is based on the concept of the triangle, consisting of *Erlebnis* (life experience), *Ausdruck* (manifestation), and *Verstehen* (understanding). *Erlebnis*, which means "experience" in German, is the fundamental element in Dilthey's theory. Dilthey's work popularized the use of the term "*Erlebnis*" in the German language. Dilthey posits that *Ausdruck*, which translates to "expression," encompasses all aspects of human life and goes beyond the mere articulation of feelings. It represents a dynamic manifestation. Dilthey believed that history is a crucial aspect of the science of humanity. One must cultivate empathy to understand the spiritual activities of the human mind and soul and the forms of expression that emerge from them. Dilthey argues that studying human history necessitates an intuitive comprehension process (*Verstehen*) because each historical event is unique and cannot be replicated. Artistic expression and religious thought are significant because they represent the author's or creator's experience within a specific societal and temporal context (Rockmore, 2003).

In his critique of historical reason, Wilhelm Dilthey posits his defense of *Verstehen* as an anti-positivistic measure. Dilthey argues that Auguste Comte and John Stuart Mill's model of the scientific method betrays excessive deference to physical science. While an observational outlook,

quantification of findings, and focus on prediction are rightly stressed in explaining natural phenomena, they are inappropriate guidelines if one wishes to "understand the total nexus of psychic-historical reality" as it is "possessed" in lived experiencing (*Erlebnis*). Those who explain nature can know nothing of this other possibility, for as a matter of principle, all they are allowed to say about lived experience is that it happens inside observable bodies Bidang (Scharff, 2013).

While humans can be observed and predictive theories generated about their behavior, they can also be encountered and understood. In other words, we "are" both natural and psychic-historical beings. Thus, *Verstehen* is not another way to look at reality, but rather, the right way to look at another reality. To explain is to cognize something as part of nature; to understand is to regard something as part of historical life.

### **3.2.2 Hans-Geog Gadamer**

The core principle of ontological hermeneutics is the concept of radical historicity. Martin Heidegger explained this idea in his influential book "Being and Time" (BT). According to Heidegger, how we understand things is shaped by the period in which we live. Our emotional state influences our understanding, which creates unchanging perspectives that cannot be changed through scientific methods or empathy for the past. Hans-Georg Gadamer expanded on this idea in his work "Truth and Method" (TM). He urged scholars conducting historical research to approach their interactions with the past as opportunities to examine and understand their current circumstances Bidang (Shalin, 2010).

According to Gadamer's approach to interpreting history, the interpreter's theological inclination is critical in creating meaning. This approach suggests that history, as a representation of the human past, carries significance that looks forward, projecting sense onto the future through contemporary perspectives and future aspirations. Pursuing historical objectivity becomes more accessible as it is replaced by a future-oriented intention shaped by assumptions and value systems inherited from tradition. Essentially, Gadamer's hermeneutical tradition recognizes that the subjective element of interpretation poses a challenge that takes work to avoid (Bauman, 2010).

Gadamer presents hermeneutics as a field that seeks to connect different historical traditions and reject the idea of eliminating prejudices through scientific means. Instead, it aims to achieve a "fusion of horizons" between epochs. By interpreting texts within a particular tradition, the reader becomes part of its historical essence and draws from its pool of meaning. In doing so, the interpreter perpetuates and updates the cherished prejudices that make up the lifeworld of the historical period. When interpreting the past, individuals actively participate in the life of the tradition, which has a reciprocal impact. The practice influences our existence even as it receives continuous feedback from our interpretive efforts. Gadamer refers to this dynamic process as "effective historical consciousness," which denotes a consciousness that remains within the understanding circle distinctive to its time yet evolves subtly in response to experiences and encounters with unfamiliar traditions (Niekerk, Clark, 2003).

According to Gadamer's hermeneutic theory, understanding a text is like having a dialogue in which three different realms - the world of the text, the world of the author, and the world of the reader - interact and establish a relationship. To fully comprehend a text, it is necessary to consider all three elements simultaneously because each contributes context that collaborates and enhances the overall understanding. Gadamer emphasizes that these worlds are interconnected and that the meaning and significance of a text arise from the dynamic interplay between the text itself, the author's context, and the reader's perspective.

Several theories about Hermeneutics, according to Gadamer, are as follows (Gadamer & Linge, 2008; Shalin, 2010):

- a. Hermeneutic Prejudice:** It is essential to read and analyze a text carefully. Even if we critically examine and analyze a reader, it can influence our thoughts and ideas. However, it can be challenging to obtain accurate information about the source of a text, and we may be inclined to accept experts' opinions without questioning them critically.
- b. The Hermeneutic Circle:** Gadamer's idea of "hermeneutic presuppositions" is a valuable framework for understanding a text critically. However, Gadamer's primary focus is on "understanding" itself. He believes that understanding is a circular process, meaning that to understand something truly, you must start with some initial understanding. When interpreting a text, we need to have some pre-existing understanding of it before trying to comprehend it fully. Interestingly, this pre-understanding becomes a genuine understanding by engaging with the text. Gadamer calls this iterative process "The Hermeneutical Circle," emphasizing the dynamic relationship between pre-existing understanding and the evolving comprehension achieved through interpretation.
- c. "I-You" "become we":** According to Gadamer, a dialogue that involves engaging with a text is considered successful when the traditional subject-object relationship of "I-You" transforms into a collective "we." This means that the strict separation between the interpreting "I" and the interpreted "You" dissolves. Both parties unite to form a collaborative "we." This transformation indicates a more communal and integrated approach to interpretation, where the boundaries between the reader and the text blur, creating a shared sense of meaning-making.
- d. Dialectical Hermeneutics:** Gadamer argues that understanding is a complex process deeply connected to language and history. He suggests that a more comprehensive hermeneutic framework can be developed to understand this process better. For Gadamer, hermeneutics is both the ontology and phenomenology of understanding. Active participation and openness are critical aspects of understanding rather than attempts at control or manipulation. Gadamer also emphasizes that hermeneutics concerns experience, which goes beyond mere knowledge. It is a discipline that is grounded in dialectics rather than in methodology. Gadamer challenges the belief that a method can lead directly to the truth, as he believes truth cannot be accessed solely through methods. Dialectics can help individuals go beyond scientific research's rigid structures and uncover its inherent truth. According to



Gadamer, dialectical hermeneutics guides people to discover the essence of truth and understand the nature of reality in all its aspects.

### **3.2.3 R.G. Collingwood**

Renowned historian Collingwood emphasizes that more than relying solely on written records is needed to grasp the essence of history. The available documents must be scrutinized to understand the ideas, concepts, and meanings that shape our perception of the past. This enables us to move beyond the superficial level of historical records and access the underlying stories and beliefs that shape history. Essentially, history is a function of what we read and critical examination and interpretation.

Collingwood introduced the term "Res gestae" to describe the physical remnants of the past that humans leave behind. These traces offer valuable insight into historical events when analyzed and examined. Additionally, Collingwood proposed the concept of "Re-enactment" as a tool for capturing the thoughts and perspectives of historical figures. Through this approach, historians seek to comprehend the mental states of the actors involved rather than merely focusing on contextual discrepancies or ways of thinking (Carr, 2018).

For Collingwood, the content of history only encompasses some past facts. Instead, history revolves around viewing past facts as expressions of thought. Consequently, the inquiry into how we grasp the past in our current context becomes a matter of comprehending the nature of thought. According to Collingwood, such comprehension is achievable only through personally reconsidering past thoughts: "One can only grasp a thought by thinking it, and apprehend a past thought by re-thinking it." As the quote suggests, Collingwood does not posit any distinct challenges in understanding past thoughts compared to present thoughts (Ahlskog, 2017).

Collingwood believed that understanding historical events is more than knowing the external details of past actions. Instead, it involves immersing oneself in the thoughts and ideas that drove individuals in the past. Collingwood highlights the significance of internal aspects in studying and interpreting history by emphasizing the importance of history's cognitive and intellectual dimensions.

Dilthey suggests that aligning the thoughts of the author and the reader is critical to interpreting a text. On the other hand, Gadamer proposes that readers can independently engage with historical writings. However, Collingwood's hermeneutics take a different approach, suggesting that understanding history involves imagining the events in one's mind and heart (Dilthey & Jameson, 1972).

As presented by Collingwood, the perspective of understanding diverges significantly from that presumed by presence theory. The latter posits that understanding is a process whereby meaning is generated by interpreting one thing within the context of another. This process involves creating copies of the original thoughts of the historical agent that are more or less accurate. However, these copies are conditioned by our own temporal and contextual circumstances and are not identical to the objects of our understanding. Gadamer famously noted, "We understand differently if we understand at all."

In contrast to the notion that understanding is merely a matter of various interpretations, Collingwood posits that genuine understanding does exist and that our rethought thought is not simply a copy but the same thought as the original. However, this does not imply that understanding involves thinking the same thoughts as another person. Like Gadamer, Collingwood acknowledges that our historical positions matter: "To reenact the past in the present is to do so in a context that imbues it with a new quality." The distinction lies in that Collingwood does not reduce the content of thought to a function of its context.

It is crucial to establish the nature of Collingwood's argument. His claim needs to be more methodological, and he needs to provide instructions on establishing the identity of thoughts. Instead, Collingwood begins with the everyday facts of our practices: we can comprehend people's actions both in the past and present. He then proceeds to ask what conditions must be met for this feature of human interaction to be possible. He answers that understanding action is possible because we can re-think the same thoughts that other people's actions express. If we could not re-think the same thoughts that others have had, we would not be able to talk about understanding in the way we do (Kobayashi & Marion, 2011).

Collingwood's argument on the identity of thoughts distinguishes him from the hermeneutic tradition. For the latter, skepticism is an ever-present threat owing to the gap created between the subject and object by the "otherness" of understanding. Hermeneuticists typically approach this issue by affirming a relativist position in which understanding is viewed as a creative dialogue between subject and object. However, such an approach is a symptom of resignation: one attempts to make the supposed otherness of understanding less worrisome by claiming that the dialogue of understanding brings other valuable things besides access to the meaning of actions in the past. Presence theorists, on the other hand, have developed theories about how the gap between the subject and object in history can be bridged to overcome this position of resignation. Their solution is to argue that we must eliminate everything related to hermeneutics, such as understanding, language, thought, knowledge, consciousness, etc. Suppose we are to establish a connection with the past. In that case, they claim that the presence of the past is present only in what we have besides hermeneutics in human life, i.e., our spontaneous feelings, moods, and subconscious behavior patterns (Kent, 2020).

The workings of hermeneutics, according to Collingwood, can be explained in several stages (Collingwood, 2005; Dray, 1995):

1. **Understanding the Context:** The interpreter must understand the historical, social, and intellectual context in which the text was created. This involves researching the author, the era, the culture, and the environment in which the text appeared.
2. **Historical Imagination:** Collingwood emphasizes the importance of historical imagination, which is the ability to enter into the thoughts and situation of the author at the time the text was created. This involves understanding the author's intentions, values, and assumptions underlying the text.
3. **Reconstruction:** The interpreter must then reconstruct the author's thought process and the text's context. This involves using historical

logic to connect available information and uncover the meaning contained within the text.

4. **Critical Reflection:** During the interpretation process, the interpreter must critically reflect on their understanding. They must be aware of their assumptions and consider various text interpretations.
5. **Interpreter's Context:** Collingwood also emphasizes the importance of understanding the interpreter's context, including the influences and experiences that shape the interpreter's perspective on the text.

Through this process, Collingwood argues that interpreting texts can achieve a deeper and more accurate understanding of the text's meaning. Hermeneutics is not simply about mechanically interpreting texts but rather involves a complex understanding of historical context and human thought.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

*Hermeneutics* is a philosophical discipline that interprets and understands texts and cultural phenomena. However, more than a mere literal interpretation is required. For a comprehensive understanding, it is essential to consider the context, values, and symbolic meanings these phenomena convey.

When the philosophy of history is combined with hermeneutics, the relationship between understanding and interpretation is closely tied to historical context. Cultural and historical influences, such as time, place, and culture, cannot be ignored when comprehending a phenomenon. Philosophy of history is instrumental in exploring the meanings that may be contained within a particular historical context.

As hermeneutics and philosophy of history evolved, it became increasingly apparent that understanding and interpretation are complex processes. A deep understanding requires critical reflection on assumptions, values, and preconceived notions that may influence interpretation. Consequently, hermeneutics and philosophy of history complement each other to provide a better understanding of various cultural and historical realities. In summary, hermeneutics is not merely a method of interpretation. It involves a profound philosophical awareness of the intricacies of understanding and interpreting phenomena, particularly in historical contexts.

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