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*Phenomenology of Life and
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THE PHENOMENOLOGICAL MOTIVES
OF HEIDEGGER'S AND GADAMER'S
HERMENEUTICS OF THE LITERARY TEXT

In this essay, I attempt to show that both Heidegger and his follower Gadamer were trying, through their hermeneutics of the literary text, to disclose and transcend the enclosed situation of modernist literary theory and criticism. In doing so, they were initially and originally motivated by phenomenological motives. The first part of this essay attempts to show that the crisis of modernism, which here serves as an introduction for explicating and justifying the Heideggerian/Gadamerian approach, lies in its formalist tendency and its conception of method. In its second and third parts successively, I attempt to show how both Heidegger and Gadamer transcend phenomenologically these twofold roots of the crisis.

I. THE CRISIS OF MODERNISM AS A CRISIS OF FORM
AND METHOD: AN INTRODUCTION TO THE
HEIDEGGERIAN/GADAMERIAN APPROACH

Since the beginnings of the twentieth century there has been an increasing interest in the conception of form in art and literature, which has become dominant in the middle of the century. The moderns, both on the creative and theoretical level in art and literature, have asserted the primacy of form and its adjunct concepts, such as style and perspective, as decisive and essential factors which give the work its name, i.e., make it a work of art. However, it seems that most of the disputes and debates about the role and properties of form in art and literature, which the moderns often undertake against those they describe as traditionalists, is like an involvement in an illusory quarrel, for most of these disputes neglect the fact that form in art and literature is, in the end, nothing but the way an artist or writer sees his life-world. The laws of artistic form or perspective, as Merleau-Ponty taught us,¹ are ways of seeing the world which itself does not insist upon any one of them and is not of the order of laws. In this sense, which holds good for the artist as well as for the writer, artistic form is not an end in itself; it is the means or

the style which the artist or the writer practices and acquires through his endeavours to discover the world in which he lives.

It follows from this that the main and real predicament of modernism in literary theory and criticism, as well as in art in general, lies in its conception of form as an end and absolute reference for the critic or the interpreter of the literary work. Thus, modernism remains caught in the trap of the concept of aesthetic or artistic form as a criterion for evaluating the literary work as well as the work of art in general. This can obviously be seen in the attitudes which have dominated literary theory and criticism in modern times, especially structuralism and semiotics. In respect to such attitudes, the concept of artistic form has come to represent a major part of its interest in the question of structure or abstract form which is governed by a network of relations. We often find this direction of research in studies which deal with the structural analysis of the text or what is called *discourse analysis*, and which understands its task to be a description of the internal relations of the structures of the text on its various levels. Similarly, semiotics understands the text through the study of the general structures of the literary text which is considered as an enclosed system of signs and which does not refer to anything outside itself whether it is social reality or human existence in the broad sense. In this enclosed system, the verbal sign is to be interpreted by other signs; and the main purpose, in the end, is to obtain the general laws that govern the relations of signs to each other. Thus both structuralism and semiotics are concerned with the conception of form and abstract relations as a purpose for their linguistic researches. This situation, in the end, leads to a loss of the essence of language and, henceforth, to a loss of the identity of the literary text itself as it is reduced to a system of symbolic relations in which it loses its individuality and the power expressive of the reality of human life and existence, that is, loses its historical role and ontological dimension. In short, we can say that the attitudes of modernism have led literary theory and art criticism to a situation which we may describe as "*an alienation of the text in abstract form.*"

The character of generalization on which the attitudes of modernism insist, and through which they ascribe to themselves the scientific character of science with the *proviso* that they are concerned with general theoretical laws and abstract formal relations, is a character which brings us to another aspect of the crisis of modernism, that is, *the crisis of method*. By the crisis of method I mean that process through which a

text is "en-framed," a process which, in turn, means subjecting the text to general theoretical laws that govern its potential structures and according to which the text is to be located, inspected and applied. This procedure which treats the text as an "empirical phenomenon" that is subjected to general laws, a procedure which is common in structural and semiotic studies, not only leads to an overcoming of the individuality of the text to be interpreted, but also allows any text to be an object for evaluation even if it were of no value, in so far as the purpose of such studies is no longer the text itself, but the en-framing of it. Thus the attitudes of modernism on the level of theorizing share in the aggravation of the crisis of modernism on the level of creation itself. The crisis of method which en-frames the text is a crisis of a method which is motivated by the illusion of objectivity that conceals the personality of the text by forcing it to enter into ready-made moulds or frames by which it is measured. The illusion of objectivity, in turn, is an illusion of scientism in human studies which attempt to follow the model of the natural sciences, even as the natural sciences themselves have completely abandoned their traditional model aiming at absolute objectivity and certainty.

It may seem from what is said above that we are quite apart from the subject of our essay and that we are concerned not with the hermeneutics of the literary text, but with a criticism of structuralism and semiotics. But, in fact, we are concerned with the crisis of modernism itself, which has culminated in these two attitudes, and which has come to a dead end. Because phenomenological hermeneutics takes its point of departure from a pre-consciousness of this crisis (which is epistemological in its origin), the above introductory discussion has been necessary for perceiving the background against which phenomenological hermeneutics in literary theory and criticism has emerged and has taken as its starting point: For its original starting point was oriented in a quite different and more open direction. However, the voices of a phenomenological hermeneutics of the text, whose underpinnings were laid down by Heidegger, did not resonate in the Anglo-Saxon world until the seventies of our century when Heidegger's gleams began to be seen in the horizon as a shining sign for the surpassing of the age of modernism which was moving toward its closure. That is why Heidegger's thought, especially on human understanding and linguistic interpretation, was a source of inspiration for postmodern and post-structural literary studies which were aware of the crisis of Western

Literature and the New Criticism, a crisis which, to use Spanos' words, is "grounded in a strategy that spatializes the temporal process of existence. It is, in other words, a strategy that is subject to a vicious circularity that closes off the phenomenological/existential understanding of the temporal being of existence, and, analogously, the temporal being – the sequence of words – of the literary text."² It is worth noting here that what we often describe as modernism, Heidegger and Gadamer would consider as a continuation of the tradition of Western metaphysical thought, in so far as the formalist tendency of modern criticism and literary theory originated in the spatial interpretative methodology of metaphysics which was used to look beyond things and thus from above – a methodology from which Heidegger deflected Gadamer. Thus, Heidegger's criticism of what we may call "the formalist interpretative methodology of the text," which serves as part of his criticism and transvaluation of aesthetics and is closely connected to his destruction of traditional Western metaphysics, taking its origin in the phenomenological approach which proceeds from the Husserlian slogan: "Back to the things themselves" (*Zu den Sachen selbst*). It is also worth noting, however, that both Heideggerian and Gadamerian hermeneutics of the literary text aimed to transcend not only modernist literary studies but also the classical hermeneutics of the text.

In its origin, *hermeneutics* is a scholastic theological term which designated the methodological science of interpreting the religious texts whose meanings were obscure and could not be harmonized with, or assimilated into, the tenets of faith unless they had become understandable so that we were no longer alienated from their meanings. It is true that the signification of the term was extended through the classical hermeneutics of Schleiermacher and Dilthey, so that it was no longer restricted to religious texts or linguistic texts in general, but has come to designate a universal science of understanding and a method for interpreting the phenomena of the human sciences. It is also true that this classical hermeneutics has attempted since its beginning to penetrate into the heart of existence and the human soul, and, thus, has not been entangled in the concept of the self-enclosed linguistic form or structure. Nevertheless, classical hermeneutics remained captive to method, and, therefore, could not release itself from the objective tendency in interpreting texts, being committed to the model of method which was dominant in modern natural science. Thus, Schleiermacher considered the text as an objective linguistic medium through which the thought

of the author is transmitted to the reader or the interpreter. According to him, this linguistic medium is objective because it represents the matter held in common which makes possible the process of understanding. Similarly, Dilthey considered linguistic signs as a true expression or an externalization of the internal and spiritual life of the creative author or poet. Thus, Heidegger's and Gadamer's criticism of this objective classical hermeneutics of the phenomena of existence (such as art and language, and, consequently, the literary text itself) is, in fact, a criticism of a way of interpreting and understanding that dominated Western thought and was extended to literary studies.

Heideggerian hermeneutics, which is phenomenologically motivated, is concerned with the interpretation of essences or meanings of the phenomena of existence in their intimacy with Being itself. Among the phenomena with which Heidegger was concerned were art and poetry; and he found that the way to understand their meanings is through the understanding of the essence of language itself. On the other hand, Gadamer's hermeneutics, which is known as *philosophical hermeneutics*, is concerned with the universality of the hermeneutical problem; that is, it has to do, as Gadamer puts it, "with the universe of the reasonable, that is, with anything and everything about which human beings can seek to reach agreement."³ But since this agreement or understanding is only possible through "finding a common language,"⁴ the hermeneutical task begins with language. Although the undertaking of this task in Gadamer's hermeneutics is not a repetition of that in Heidegger's, it is an extension of Heidegger's departures and a widening of his hermeneutical horizon; and in this sense it has a phenomenological origin.

There are two main peculiarities which distinguish Heidegger's hermeneutics of the literary text, and which have reverberated in Gadamer's. The first is that the text unconceals Being when it reveals a truth or an ontological meaning that transcends the frame of its formal structure. The second is that the interpretation of the text, hence the understanding of it, requires surpassing the frame of both subjectivity and objectivity. According to Heidegger, these two peculiarities are at the same time peculiarities of language itself.

It is time now to show how the understanding of these two peculiarities can lead us to the understanding of how both Heideggerian and Gadamerian hermeneutics of the literary text transcend both form and method.

II. HERMENEUTICS OF THE LITERARY TEXT BEYOND FORM

The overcoming of the formalist attitude which has dominated aesthetics since the beginning of the century, was one of the most important purposes of phenomenological aesthetics, a purpose which was motivated by the phenomenological concept of experience itself. For in so far as every experience or consciousness is a consciousness *of something*, and in so far as this something (as an object of our experience) always implies a meaning, phenomenological aesthetics challenges the formalist attitude which deprives our aesthetic consciousness of its content, i.e., of the truth or the meaning which the work of art implies and conveys to us. This holds good for the Heideggerian/Gadamerian hermeneutics of the literary text, which depend on their understanding of language.

Heidegger's concern for language is obvious throughout the period of his early thinking, when he created *Sein und Zeit*, his *magnum opus*. This concern, however, became dominant in his later thinking. Generally speaking, Heidegger's writings on language take us away from the conception of language which is predominant in linguistics, semiotics, structuralism and analytic philosophy, and which depends on the study of the structures of sentences through some system of formal rules and logical relations which control language. As Gerald Bruns noticed,⁵ Heidegger's calling for the emancipation of language from this tradition which belongs to what he called in *Sein und Zeit* "representational-calculative thinking," is very like his appeal in his last major essay on language titled "The Way to Language" (*Der Weg zur Sprache*, 1959). When Heidegger speaks of the way to language, he does not intend the naive approach which designates some way of representing language through formal rules, structural analysis and logical formations; that is, he does not designate another strategy for gaining mastery over, or taking possession of, language. Rather, the way to language means that process which Heidegger designates as "letting language be experienced as a language";⁶ that is, bringing language to its origin, to the predetermined realm in which all language, and in fact any attempt to reflect on language, must live, and in which we may let ourselves to be entrapped instead of laying a trap for it.⁷ Thus, the way to language means understanding language through language, that is, through what belongs to language or, to put it in one word, through its essence.

According to Heidegger, understanding the essence of language is the basis for understanding the literary text, especially poetry; and it is

even the basis for understanding the essence of art itself. When Heidegger says that "the nature of art is poetry,"⁸ he means by this that all art in its essence shares in the essence of poetry which, in turn, "is the founding of truth."⁹ Thus, every art is poetizing, that is practising poetry in the essential meaning of poetry as a projection of the light of truth in some form. If the projection of the light of truth occurs in words, then the artistic form in this case is called "poesy" which is poetry in the strict or narrower sense. The primacy of this artistic form does not lie in the fact that the essence of poetry is manifested in it (since all other artistic forms share with it the same property), rather it lies in the fact that it preserves the essence of poetry and allows us to have acquaintance with it through language. Thus, ". . . poesy takes place in language, because language preserves the original nature of poetry."¹⁰ If all art is poetry in the essential meaning of poetry, and if the essence of poetry, in turn, is revealed through language where the founding of truth and revealing Being takes place, then every art is a kind of language in the revealing sense of language. For the art of any people reveals the "language" of that people in expressing their "world." All this leads us to raise once again the question of the essence of language.

According to Heidegger, the essence of language lies in the fact that it reveals Being when it dis-closes the mode of Being which belongs to the human being and to individual existents (or the things-in-being) as well. But how does this revealing or dis-closure take place in language? Heidegger says:

In the current view, language is held to be a kind of communication. It serves for verbal exchange and agreement, and in general for communicating. But language is not only and not primarily an audible and written expression of what is to be communicated; language brings what is, as something that is, into the Open for the first time. Where there is no language, as in the being of stone, plant and animal, there is also no openness of what is, and consequently no openness either of that which is not and is empty. Language by naming beings for the first time, first brings beings to word and to appearance.¹¹

Heidegger frequently repeats that language utters or speaks Being. He means by this that language denominates things and individual beings and bestows upon them their essences and modes of being. In this sense, the world reveals itself through language; and only wherever a language is, is there a world. The world in Heidegger's thought is the open horizon in which truth happens when something is dis-closed or its mode of being is revealed to the human being. Language, then, is the property of man;

it belongs to his world, and it is the blessed vehicle which he was endowed with, and it is even, as Hölderlin says, the "most dangerous of possessions."¹² Language, then, is not a mere vehicle or instrument which man uses in the same way he uses other instruments, nor is it what man utters, for man is he who utters and speaks through it.

It is obvious that the language which Heidegger means is that in which the essence of language as such is achieved and its createdness is manifested, as is the case with the literary text, especially the poetic text. The logical, symbolic and lexical language, on the other hand, is language which is used in a way which conceals the essence of language; that is, it conceals the "creativity" of language in revealing a world or a mode of being. The creativity of language, however, does not mean a "creation" of language, but rather it means allowing language to express its creativity. Analogously, the interpreter approaching the text would understand the creativity of its language in revealing and bringing forth Being. And even the symbolic function of language should not be reduced to a self-enclosed and a self-sufficient world of signs which might, as it were, constitute in itself another world independent of Being and the world in which we live. This fact has been assimilated by the French philosopher Paul Ricoeur who adheres to the German traditions of phenomenological hermeneutics, and who, therefore, has criticized structural linguistics since it proceeds from an epistemology which encloses language in a universe of signs, in a system which has no outside. Like Heidegger, he considers this epistemological approach to language as an approach which misses the experience of language; thus, in one of his confrontations with this approach he maintains that "The phonological level, the lexical level, the syntactic level . . . these levels constitute the dead part of language."¹³

In fact, Heidegger's approach to language, as Robert Magliola carefully describes it, "strikes the middle ground between the structuralist position and that of the more conventional linguistic schools," that is, between a self-enclosed system of language in which words refer only to each other, and, on the other hand, a referential system of language in which words point to the real world:

Martin Heidegger denies that poetic language is referential in the ordinary sense, that of pointing towards the outside. But (unlike the Parisian Structuralists) he does not exclude referentiality in a broader sense, that of language which refers to Being, but not by pointing at it. Rather, language refers to Being by making it "present" within words. Heidegger takes the "outside" and brings it "inside" the house of language.¹⁴

Language in Heidegger's thought is "the house of Being," or as Father Richardson puts it in his explanation of this expression: "The sense is that since Being makes being accessible, we cannot gain access to being except by passing through the house of language. Being 'dwells' in the words by which beings are named."¹⁵

Thus, the literary text in Heidegger no longer has a self-enclosed structure which reveals nothing more than its verbal combinations, and at the same time it is no longer directed to the outside in such a way that words become signs which lose their identity in what they indicate. Words, then, are not conventional tools or symbols; they indicate by revealing and they reveal by hinting. Revealing by hinting means that there is always something which remains dark, concealed or unsaid. This, in turn, is the meaning of Heidegger's sentence: "Everything spoken stems in a variety of ways from the unspoken, whether this be something not yet spoken, or whether it be what must remain unspoken in the sense that it is beyond the reach of speaking."¹⁶

The unsayable is not something that needs sound, but it is what dwells in concealment and remains as a secret. In this sense, the language of the literary text dis-closes Being and reveals a world from within the concealment which dwells in this language itself.

* * *

These Heideggerian summons motivated Gadamer's hermeneutics of the literary text. Like Heidegger, Gadamer has the insight that understanding and interpreting the literary text relies on the understanding of language itself being considered not only as a written text, but also as spoken words. Understanding the essence of language presupposes that hermeneutics, unlike semantics which describes the range of linguistic facts externally, "focuses upon the internal side of our use of . . . signs, or better said, on the internal process of speaking."¹⁷ According to Gadamer, language is not a manifold of linguistic signs or verbal expressions in which a word or an expression can substitute for another on account of their equivalence, and which is used for the sake of communication. Rather, language is an individualized entity of syntax which is characterized by expressionism, the power of discourse and evocation. This character is obvious when we notice the difference between terminology or technical expressions and living language. This character,

however, is more apparent in the poetic use of language and reaches its culmination in the lyric; for "the fact characterizing the extreme case of the lyric poem – that it is untranslatable to the point that it can no longer be rendered in another language at all without losing its entire poetic expressiveness – plainly demonstrates the failure of the idea of substitution, of replacing one expression with another."¹⁸ Nevertheless, the failure of the idea of substitution even holds good for language generally and independently of the special phenomenon of a highly individualized poetic language, for that idea is ". . . contradicted by the moment of individualization in the speaking of language as such."¹⁹

Just as he rejects the idea of linguistic substitution, Gadamer rejects the related conception of language as a tool or an instrument. According to this conception, language is put to use just like other tools which we use for human purposes, then laid aside when it has done its service. But this is not true, for one does not master his language in the same way one masters his tools, but in such a way whereby one lives in it and makes it present in its medium as is the case with free speaking. Language, according to Gadamer, always implies a concealed meaning; and unlike the semantic research which is concerned with analysing the linguistic form of a text and laying bare its semantic structures, "Hermeneutical inquiry is based on the fact that language always leads behind itself and behind the façade of overt verbal expression that it first presents."²⁰ In explaining this point Gadamer differentiates between two forms in which speaking extends behind itself: first, in that which is unsaid and nevertheless made present by speaking, and second, in that which for all practical purposes is concealed by speaking.

We can understand from Gadamer's point here that the instrumentalistic use of language is one form in which the meaning of speech is not equivalent to linguistic expressions or verbal signs. But more important, in Gadamer's approach to language, is the point that the essence of language is concealed in the strategic instrumentalistic use of language: in such use, language either does not have any revealing meaning and depends on the idea of the substitution of words which presupposes an equivalence of meanings as is the case with linguistic communication for the purpose of exchanging information, or language, spoken or written, conceals the meaning which is unsaid or needing to be said. On the other hand, understanding the essence of language according to Gadamer, and I try to read Gadamer here, lies in *revealing something*: revealing the

meaning which is concealed behind the formal structure of expressions and verbal signs. However, we should notice here that the meaning which is revealed there is not a logical one, but an understanding of the world and things-in-being that is present and manifested in our use of language. This way of understanding the world and gaining an acquaintance with it through language is absent in the instrumentalistic use of language, which thereby neglects its essence. In this respect, Gadamer says:

In all our knowledge of ourselves and in all our knowledge of the world, we are always already encompassed by the language that is our own. We grow up, and we become acquainted with men and in the last analysis with ourselves when we learn to speak. Learning to speak does not mean learning to use a preexistent tool for designating a world already somehow familiar to us; it means acquiring a familiarity and acquaintance with the world itself and how it confronts us.²¹

Now, the characteristics which distinguish our understanding of the essence of language can be applied to our understanding of the literary text. It is true that the literary text opens up another level of the problem of meaning: for "the 'meaning' of such a text is not motivated by an occasion, but, on the contrary, claims to be understandable at any time, that is, to be an answer always, and that means inevitably also to raise the question to which the text is an answer."²² However, the main character which is still valid and which we can draw from what is mentioned above is that the literary text, in which the essence of language is manifested, *always implies a meaning and says something*, and it is a way of our acquaintance with the world, beings and human beings: that is a way of revealing truth and Being.

Gadamer understands the literary text in the broad sense which is not restricted to the literary text as a work of art. It is common for all literary texts, as linguistic texts, that they speak to us in terms of their contents. Thus, Gadamer's understanding of the literary text which is, at the same time, a work of art, is not specifically concerned with the achievement of form that belongs to it as a work of art, but with what it says to us.²³ "It is true that," Gadamer asserts:

there is a difference between the language of poetry and the language of prose, and again between the language of poetic prose and of "scientific" prose. These differences can certainly also be considered from the point of view of literary form. But the essential difference of these various "languages" obviously lies elsewhere: namely, in the distinction between the claims to truth that each makes. All literary works have a profound community in that the linguistic form makes effective the significance of the contents to be expressed.²⁴

Obviously, we should not understand from this that Gadamer drops the differences between literary genera. In fact he devoted separate studies to the hermeneutics of literary genera such as drama, poetry, . . . etc. It is enough to recall here, for example, his essay "On the Contribution of Poetry to the Search for Truth" in which he explains how linguistic form confirms and preserves the poetic content which is said: for if the essence of language as a language, that is, as a genuine process of communication which relies on dialogue and not on transmitting information, lies in the fact that it says something to us through dialogue in which word binds one with another, this character then reaches its highest intensive form in poetry which says to us what is to be said in words which "stands written" and cannot be replaced with any other words.²⁵ Gadamer, then, does not drop the literary genera; for the actual dropping of them and even of the individualization of the literary works themselves rather occurs when they are alienated in the abstract form and when the truth each says to us is forgotten.

The problem of aesthetic form in Gadamer is the problem of the modern aesthetic consciousness which has missed the truth which both art and literature convey to us, to the extent that literature (as well as art in general) has become alienated from our world; that is, it has become no longer understandable by us, and we, in turn, have become unable to enter into a genuine dialogue with it. This holds good for the literature of the past, the historical truth of which has become alienated from us, as well as for the literature of the present when it becomes involved in a subjective experience of the aesthetic form. Like the art, the literature of antiquity revealed their way of expressing their mythical, religious and social world. Is it not true that Herodotus tells us that Homer and Hesiod gave the Greeks their gods? But this historical role that literature and art played in the world of antiquity is no longer understandable for us, exactly because in our own time we are no longer able to assign a historical role for literature and art in general, especially when "emancipation from an objectively interpreted experience of the world appears to be a basic principle of contemporary art."²⁶ But "the poet," says Gadamer, "cannot participate in this process."²⁷ Therefore, when poetry becomes involved in such a process, that is, when it becomes non-objective and alienated in an abstract linguistic form, it will then drop the essence of language which lies in the fact that it says something to us, or at least misses the experience of language, which can

never fully emancipate itself from meaning, for "a genuinely nonobjective poetry would simply be gibberish."²⁸

Consequently, letting the literary text be absorbed in form will necessarily mean eliminating the historicity of the text, as if the text were speaking to an atemporal reader through the literary form. But the literary text is not an abstract form which speaks to an abstract reader. This "fallacy of the absolute text," which is common in the New Criticism and which confers an absolute meaning upon the text, has neglected the fact that the text has a temporal character which speaks to a temporal being, that is, to a temporal reader who lives in a historical background which may be different from that of the text; and that fact allows the possibility of a plurality of interpretation. Thus, the historicity of the text means, as Mario Valdes puts it, that "The text was written by someone, about something, for someone to read. . . . It is impossible to cancel out the historicity of a text without reducing it to a physical phenomenon such as waves in the ocean, for even rocks have a geological history."²⁹

At this crossroads, we find ourselves challenged by many questions. How can we retain phenomenologically the concept of identity within, or alongside with, the concept of difference which may lead us to a historical relativism? Again, if the identity of the literary work of art, or the literary text in general, is determined by its historical being, i.e., takes its shape within its historical context, how then can we understand and interpret the text from the perspective of another context in which the reader or the interpreter may live? Again, is it possible then for this understanding and interpretation to retain the identity or the truth of the text? Must the truth which the work or the text communicates be an objective truth so that it may achieve historical continuation?

It seems that these questions and the like, which are concerned with the process of understanding and interpretation, appear to be drawing us to the idea of method. But in fact the hermeneutical process goes beyond the idea of method; it is a cognitive approach which takes the shape of an experience and occurs in it. But, again, how is it possible for this hermeneutics to be phenomenologically motivated apart from the methodology by which phenomenology was originally motivated? Heidegger's and Gadamer's descriptions of the hermeneutical experience of the literary text give a view integrative enough to answer our previous questions.

III. HERMENEUTICS OF THE LITERARY TEXT BEYOND METHOD

The main starting point of the hermeneutical experience of the text is that famous phenomenological principle which claims an understanding of experience on the basis of transcending the subject/object traditional dichotomy. As Husserl showed us, understanding experience brings to light a very simple idea, that is, that every experience is a consciousness and "every consciousness is a consciousness *of* something." This simple idea was neglected in traditional epistemology which involved itself in internecine skirmishes for the sake of either the subject or the object. This idea means simply that neither the world of things and objects is created by our consciousness or conceptions, nor is our consciousness created by that world: both exist at the same time. Consciousness itself is nothing but a directedness which aims at gaining access to its object, attempting to gain acquaintance with and an understanding of it, instead of attempting to gain possession of it and to submit it to our conceptions. Although this task of understanding is imposed on each of us, it is of the nature of true philosophizing to help us to achieve such understanding.

It seems at first sight that this idea has no intimate relation with the literary text and the process of its interpretation, but we shall gradually see that it brings us to the heart of the question which shall be our concern through two main ideas: the first idea is that of how hermeneutics transcends the objective methodological tendency in interpreting the literary text; the second is that of how hermeneutics explicates the role of the subject in the process of interpretation, creating a dialogue between the subject and the text.

1. *The Illusion of Objectivity . . . The Illusion of Method*

The literary text and even any work of art, like any other object of the external world, is an objective entity which is not created by our conceptions of it. Nevertheless, it does not represent an objective truth whose meaning could be constituted independently of us as if there were one objective meaning which could be measured and calculated leaving us nothing to do but to agree on it and acknowledge it. Both Heidegger and Gadamer have denied such alleged objective and atemporal truth. For truth belongs to a human world in which Being is revealed in a certain historical moment of the temporality of the *Da-Sein*. Art in general

presents a good example of this sense of truth. And because the truth which the work reveals, or the summons of Being which resonates in the work, is not an abstract objective meaning, we cannot understand it by making use of some abstract categories and moulds which the subject tries to impose upon the work. Instead, truth is revealed only when the subject enters into a genuine dialogue with the summons whose echo resonates in the work. In the same manner we can consider the status of the literary text.

Because the literary text has no one atemporal meaning, it could not be interpreted objectively by submitting it to normative rules and methodological procedures. Such a conception, which understands the process of understanding and interpreting the text as a photographic reproduction of the meaning of the text, is one of the illusions of objectivism from which classical hermeneutics could not release itself, to such an extent that Schleiermacher conceived the process of understanding the text as a process of understanding "the other" in the same way that or even "better than the other understands himself."³⁰ This is the same illusion which in some sense has dominated modern criticism, which adopts methods seeking objectivity through description, measurement and analysis. Such approaches have adopted objectivism in the name of scientism, with the aim of following the model of the natural sciences even though this model has been abandoned by the contemporary natural sciences themselves which now rely more on making more room for meaning and interpretation than on describing and analysing facts objectively, i.e., in that manner in which a fact or a given is described through some objective and preconceived principles or rules; for such describing does not in itself produce a science, nor does it reveal a meaning.

This is the conception of method which both Heidegger and Gadamer reject. Consequently, it is of a paramount importance to note here that both of them have no antagonism against method in itself: both of them are aware of their phenomenological origin, and both of them are aware that phenomenology in its origin is methodological. Heidegger writes, "the expression 'phenomenological' signifies primarily a *methodological conception*,"³¹ and Gadamer acknowledges that his own method is phenomenological,³² for, as he says, elsewhere, ". . . what one calls *hermeneutical philosophy* is based to a large extent on a phenomenology."³³ And what is phenomenology? It is, Gadamer replies, ". . . a methodological manner of describing phenomena without biases, one which was a methodological renunciation of all explanation of physio-

logical-psychological origins and of all attempts at derivations from preconceived principles.”³⁴ This emancipatory character, which has its origin in the phenomenological method itself, has influenced Heideggerian/Gadamerian hermeneutics. The conception of method which they reject and from which they call us to release ourselves, is what we may call “the strategic instrumentalistic method” which depends on rules and preconceived principles with the aim of controlling phenomena, and which is conceived as the sole means for gaining access to truth. This illusion of method which has dominated the “*Geisteswissenschaften*” was rejected by Heidegger and Gadamer in their dealing with the text as well as other phenomena.

Accordingly, we can say that the important lesson one can learn from the phenomenological hermeneutics of which Heidegger laid the foundations, is the endeavour to release ourselves from the patterns of the analytical methodological disciplines through which we used to interpret texts. In fact, Heidegger’s hermeneutics of the text does not attempt to present an alternative discipline to challenge or compete with the methods and theories which have dominated literary studies, for Heidegger’s own manner is release from all manner of -isms, or as Gerald Bruns puts it:

... Heidegger undermines the whole idea of literary study as the application or response of techniques of reading to texts conceived as structures or systems, whether purely formal, linguistic, or textual systems, or whether as forms and configurations that are continuous with the social and ideological systems in which human life is framed. Heidegger takes you out of the vocabulary of theory and method, form and configuration, structure and system.³⁵

In fact, this emancipatory character not only distinguishes Heidegger’s hermeneutics of the text, but also his thought as a whole which is a call for an emancipation of thought itself so that it may experience an intimate encounter with things, beings and, in the end, with Being itself. Thus, we can here conclude that just as the hermeneutics of Heidegger is a call for the emancipation of language from rules, form and logic, it is also a call for the emancipation of our understanding and interpreting of the text from the theoretical and calculative methodological thinking which adopts the analytical and objective tendency in the name of science or, better said, for the sake of scientism.

This emancipatory character of the process of understanding and interpretation, is what Gadamer considers to be the necessary negative character of the hermeneutical experience. This means that the understanding which happens in the hermeneutical experience as an openness to the other (or the text) is an understanding which cannot take place unless we become aware that the other cannot be contained within our ideological and methodological conceptions, and that our traditional tools of interpreting are broken down and no longer capable of gaining access to the other. This hermeneutical destruction means shaking the ground on which our conceptions rely in order that we can stay in the openness in which we become caught up, apart from the region of conceptual, representative and calculative thinking.

This hermeneutical experience is the appropriate way for knowing much about the truth which happens in art and texts as well as in history and tradition. This means that the method through which we gain conceptual and objective knowledge is not the sole way for gaining truth. For Gadamer, method in this sense is a kind of strategic thinking which has deepened the alienation of the contemporary human being. For, in spite of the fact that the idea of method, which was developed alongside modern science and was adopted by the human sciences, was an attempt to overcome the alienation which man feels in his confrontation with the world, method has replied to this alienation with another alienation. For, method, as strategic rules and tools which are to be imposed on the object, does not let the subject understand its object as it is given in a direct experience, but compels it to interpret the object according to conceptions and methodological tools.

How are we to understand this theoretical generalization by applying and specifying it to the literary text *per se*?

The approaches of modern literary theory and criticism became involved in the same crisis when they shared in the deepening of alienation rather than understanding in the process of interpretation. Even classical hermeneutics, which raised for the first time the question of understanding as a universal problem, could not, due to its objective tendency, release itself from this crisis of alienation.

According to Gadamer, hermeneutics in terms of interpretation which relies on dialogue or conversation, is completely different from two other main forms of interpretation: one is interpretation which *speaks about* a text, the other is interpretation which *speaks for* a text: in the first case the interpreter attempts to objectify the text by submitting it to

general rules and making general truth-claims about it. In this case interpretation is a *monologue* in which the text is not allowed to speak about itself or for itself. In the second case the interpreter, in his speaking for the text by allowing it to claim its own truth, asserts that he understands the claims of the *other* [the text] and "claims to understand the other even better than the other understands it." Even though interpretation in this case attempts to let the text claim its own truth, it does not allow the give and take of a genuine dialogue. In both cases, though in two different forms, an authority of the interpreter and the *text of interpretation* is maintained over the *text to be interpreted*.³⁶

Thus, we can conclude here that the objective methodological tendency, whatever its form may be, leads us to the illusion of believing in the possibility of taking hold of the text and controlling it as an object for interpretation. But in doing so, we find that the meaning of the text always slips away from us, and we come to a situation of alienation as a result of being detached from the text itself, so that we find ourselves, in the end, confronting the text of interpretation instead of the text to be interpreted. This issue leads us to the further question which is most significant in terms of the hermeneutical process, i.e., understanding the role of the subject in the process of interpretation as partaker in a genuine dialogue or two-sided conversation between a subject and a text.

2. *The Role of the Subject in the Process of Interpretation* (*The Meaning of Interpretation as a Dialogue with the Text*)

What is described in phenomenological hermeneutics as "conversational interpretation" is an interpretation which aims at surpassing the subject/object dichotomy in which one side is maintained at the cost of the other. This conversational interpretation as it is understood by Gadamer is distinguished by, to use Dostal's expression, "faithful productivity" of the original text to be interpreted; for "... a requirement of his hermeneutics is the interpreter's modesty before the text. Humility and trust are the leading notions of what could be called, with some caution, the ethics of Gadamerian hermeneutics."³⁷ This does not mean, however, that the interpreter should be receptive before the text, in so far as interpretation for Gadamer should be productive, not reproductive, even if the productivity of the interpretation of the text should not imply creativity or creation, words which Gadamer avoids, as Dostal observes, "because

they exaggerate the power and authority of the interpreting subject over the interpreted text and the interpretation provided.”³⁸ It is obvious that Gadamer here is influenced by Heidegger who also avoids the word “creation” not only in his hermeneutics of the literary text, but also in his description of artistic experience itself, so that he speaks instead of the “createdness” of the work.³⁹

Interpretation, then, should be modest before the text in the sense that it should attempt neither to create a new text, nor to reproduce the original text, for in both cases interpretation does not set up a dialogue with the text. A dialogue with a text should be understood as a mutual relation between a subject and an object or, better said, as an I-other relation, since for Gadamer, as well as for Heidegger, hermeneutical experience as a dialogue or conversation is a pre-objective experience, that is, an experience which is prior to the subject/object dichotomy.

According to Gadamer, conversational interpretation as an I-other relation, is a relation in which the I stands for the interpreter, and the other stands for the text and not for the author of the text. In this sense, Kathleen Wright observes, “the text is, accordingly, more than just the *subject matter* of the interpretive conversation; it is a *subject matter* within the interpretive conversation. For this reason, Gadamer claims that the text expresses itself like a ‘Thou.’”⁴⁰

It follows clearly from this that the role of the subject in the process of conversation with the text is distinguished by two main characteristics which are closely connected: the first is the mutual relation between the I and the other; the second is that the other is the text itself, not the author. Below we shall try to throw light on these two characteristics successively.

A. *Dialogue as a Mutual Relation between the I and the Other*

It is obvious enough that a dialogue as a dialogue requires a mutual relation between two parties: an I and an other (with the proviso that the other should be understood here as a “Thou,” as an addressor who is able by himself to speak and to share in conversation). For the mutual relation here means that the process of understanding and interpretation cannot occur in one direction that proceeds from the I to the other, that is to say, this process should also proceed from the other to the I. It is the I here who holds the power of undertaking this job properly when the I, i.e., the interpreter, enters into the openness of the other and lets

the other speak to him just as much as he lets himself listen to it, so that it seems, as it were, that they are exchanging positions with each other. That is to say, that the I or the interpreter's subject deals neither with the other as a mere object to be controlled, nor does it consider itself to be, as it were, a neutral subject or a "Cartesian cogito," i.e., a cogitative subject which in its dealing with the other considers itself to be a detached entity in which the echo of the other does not resonate. For all these reasons, the modern methodological tendency to en-frame the text, controlling it and submitting it to objective thinking which relies on rules and analysis, is a tendency in the wrong direction, that is, towards a kind of strategic thinking in which not only openness to the text disappears, but also the true dialogue or conversation like that in which friends are involved and through which, as Gadamer frequently asserts, a true kind of familiarity and living in solidarity is achieved as a result of having something in common that they love and honor.⁴¹

Therefore, we can conclude here that the subject, when adopting an objective methodological approach towards the text, is seeking to take on a neutral form in which it can no longer be a true subject, but a subject that is dressed in masks which are those strategic tools through which it deals with the other, i.e., the other which the subject attempts to transform into an object for use among the tools which it uses in its contemporary technological world or, strictly speaking, the alienated world in which it no longer listens to the summons of the things and beings among which it lives.

In fact, this idea, i.e., the idea of the reciprocity of dialogue which hardly exists in our contemporary world, is not only present in Gadamerian hermeneutics, but we find its deep roots in Heidegger:

In Heidegger's essay on "Hölderlin and the Essence of Poetry," he picks a few lines of Hölderlin, his beloved poet of poets, in which Hölderlin speaks of the dialogue that has become missed in our world. Heidegger takes a stand at those lines to enter into a dialogue with Hölderlin's text; that is, he attempts to interpret it conversationally.

Let us listen first to Hölderlin:

Much has man learnt,
many of the heavenly ones has he named,
since we have been a conversation
and have been able to hear from one another.⁴²

And let us listen then to Heidegger:

"Since we have been a conversation. . . ." We – mankind – are a conversation. The being of men is founded in language. But this only becomes actual in *conversation*. Nevertheless the latter is not merely a matter in which language is put into effect, rather it is only as conversation that language is essential. What we usually mean by language, namely, a stock of words and syntactical rules, is only a threshold of language. But now what is meant by "a conversation"? Plainly, the act of speaking with others about something. Then speaking also brings about the process of coming together. But Hölderlin says: "Since we have been a conversation and have been able to hear from one another." Being able to hear is not a mere consequence of speaking with one another, on the contrary it is rather pre-supposed in the latter process. But even the ability to hear is itself also adapted to the possibility of the word and makes use of it. The ability to speak and the ability to hear are equally fundamental. We are a conversation – and that means we can hear from one another. . . . But Hölderlin does not say simply: we are a conversation – but "Since we have been a conversation. . . ." . . . Since when have we been a conversation?⁴³

It is not our concern here to continue Heidegger's dialogue with Hölderlin on the meaning implied in this part of the stanza in which Hölderlin says "since we were a dialogue" which means, among all that it means, for Heidegger: since we were a historical temporalized existence where man learned much and named much, etc. What concerns us here is to take a stand at this deep characteristic which distinguishes the meaning of dialogue as understood by Heidegger. Dialogue cannot take place except through a reciprocity of speaking and listening: speaking alone does not constitute a genuine dialogue, since the word to be a word requires the capability of being heard. Yet, listening to language or what is said is, in turn, a manner of speaking, for speaking is pre-supposed by it and implied in it, or as Heidegger puts it in his *The Way to Language*: ". . . whenever we are listening to something *we are letting something be said to us*."⁴⁴ At this point we come to understand that what we call "the reciprocity of speaking and listening" does not mean that speaking and listening are two separate acts; nor does it only mean that listening accompanies and surrounds speaking such as takes place in conversation when someone speaks and the other listens. In fact speaking and listening, according to Heidegger, are one act or, better said, one process in which we experience something that is said to us. For speaking *as saying* means "to show, to let appear, to let be seen and heard."⁴⁵ Reciprocally, speaking *as listening*, that is, as presupposed by listening, means to let ourselves hear and enter into Saying.

It seems that listening, Bruns observes, is Heidegger's way of going beyond structuralism. The way of listening is different from the way of seeing, which is objectifying and possessive, for listening means the loss of subjectivity and self-possession because of being overtaken, involved and entangled in something; and whereas the eye keeps itself at a distance from what it sees, the ear gives the other access to us, allows it to enter us, occupy and obsess us.⁴⁶

Applying this to the conversational interpretation of the text means, then, that listening is a prior requirement in that process; for listening herein means to let something be said to us in our dialogue with the text. Yet, it is worth noting here that the alternation or, better said, the mutual implication of speaking and listening, on which saying something is constituted in dialogues, is not a process which is restricted to the subject or the I, but it is also a characteristic of the text when the text is understood as being the other or the "Thou" in the process of dialogue. How can we to apply this characteristic to the text? For, while it is obvious that the text or language is what speaks to us when something is said to us, it is not obvious how the text may listen to us. It is at this point that "The Origin of the Work of Art" is helpful. In fact, and here we are trying to read Heidegger, not to interpret him literarily, the text practices listening when it is silent and seems as if it were waiting for someone to let it articulate something, that is to say its truth. The text, then, sometimes speaks and sometimes stays silent, reveals itself and conceals itself. And it is the task of understanding and interpretation to uncover the concealed and the hidden through the unconcealed and the manifested, that is, to uncover what is unsaid by the text through what the text actually says. It is through this tension between unconcealedness and concealment, between speaking and silence, in terms of the text as well as the interpreter, that the truth which the text utters is revealed. Phenomenologically, this means to reveal the ungiven through what is given.

We can turn now to the second related characteristic which distinguishes the I-other relation in the process of dialogue, that is, that the other in dialogue is the text itself.

B. *Dialogue with the Other as a Dialogue with the Text*

If the concept of true dialogue which relies on the reciprocity of an I-other relation is closely connected, as was said above, to the concept

of dialogue as a dialogue with the text, then how can we understand this connection? Here we should primarily observe the self-evident fact that what is important in any true dialogue is that there is a common subject matter which concerns those who are involved in the dialogue; hence, it unites them. For, as Gadamer puts it, "the only way in which we perceive the possibility of speaking with one another is what we have something to say to each other."⁴⁷ According to Gadamer, this is a way of communicating which is completely different from that of the mere exchange of information (through signs, for example), that is, from the way in which it is enough that there should be a recipient to receive the information, "For over and above that, there must be a readiness to allow something to be said to us. It is only in this way that the word becomes binding, as it were: it binds one human being with another."⁴⁸ Thus, the meaning of dialogue or discourse in the end is, as Heidegger explains, ". . . to make manifest what one is 'talking about,' in one's discourse," for the word as discourse "lets something be seen . . . , namely, what the discourse is about. . . ."⁴⁹ What can we draw from this?

There is a main idea which was previously revealed for us, that is: language, or speaking in dialogue, is not a tool for transmitting or communicating information, for what is important in dialogue, as always a dialogue about something, is what is said. And if we also know already that the text as a language always says something to us, this consequently means that our dialogue with the text, as a dialogue with the other, should not overcome or go beyond what the text says, i.e., should not use the text as a tool for perceiving something which lies outside what it says. Here is one of the main points of difference between Heideggerian/Gadamerian hermeneutics and the classical hermeneutics of Schleiermacher and Dilthey who considered the language of the text as a cipher of something which lies outside the text, such as: the creative personality of the author and his world view, etc.

The traditional model of the direction of communication has it moving from the author to the text and then to the reader and sees the text as an objective medium which transmits the message of the author to the reader. This is a model which does not deal with the text as the other or the "Thou" which is the chief point in the process of dialogue; it rather deals with the text as a medium through which to have dialogue with the author. It is not only Gadamer who rejects this model, but this rejection, as Mario Valdes observes, is a common principle in phenom-

enological hermeneutics: the traditional author-text-reader relationship is now resolved into two separate parts: first, the writer-text relationship, and second, the text-reader relationship. The first relationship is a matter of a creative process in which a human endeavour produces an individual and distinct work or text. But once the (literary) work is created, this relationship is ended; there is no retroactive control over it.⁵⁰ For, once the literary work is completed and given to the reader, textual meaning and author intentions have separated to find their own way apart from each other. That is why Valdes holds to Gadamer's idea that the textual meaning does not coincide with what the author meant.⁵¹ This phenomenologically means that the psychological intentions of the author (as well as of the artist) belong to himself alone, whereas textual intentions should be considered as a part of the reader's or critic's experience.

It is worth noting here, however, that the above analysis, which is phenomenologically constituted, does not conflict with the phenomenological idea that the literary work (or the work of art generally) is itself a process of communication through which the work says something to the percipient about something. What the work communicates, however, is not the empirical ego of the writer or the artist, but the artistic and intentional meaning which has become the work itself and nothing more. That is why it is common among the phenomenologists that they agree on the idea that the experience of the creator and his own conceptions are not a part of the work itself and do not, or should not, enter into the context of the percipient's experience of the work.

It follows from this that what must concern the interpreter in his dialogue with the literary text (or a work of art) is the meaning of the text itself apart from the historicity of its author. We should always distinguish the historicity of the author from the *historicity of the text*: the historicity of the author is the mental, psychological and sociological experiences which belong to himself alone and which determine the conditions of his production; the historicity of the text, on the other hand, is the historical truth which the text says, as long as the text is always directed toward people who live in a certain age with all its cultural, sociological and religious forms. It is through the text-reader relationship that the text may enter into an alien socio-cultural context: the context of a reader who lives in another place and time. It is the task of hermeneutics here to transcend this historical alienation when the text enters into an alien context and cannot be assimilated in it. Transcending this alienation, however, requires a process of *appropria-*

tion (*Aneignung*). This term means to make one's own what was initially alien, and thus it designates that process in which the interpreter has to apply the meaning and the horizon of the text to the context or the horizon of the reader. This phenomenologically means to let the text enter in and belong to what Husserl called "the life-world" (*das Lebenswelt*) and to what Heidegger called "being-in-the-world" (*in-der-welt-Sein*). However, this process of appropriation cannot be accomplished unless it is done through a dialogue which seeks understanding, understanding the historicity of the text and what it says for us.

According to Gadamer, understanding the meaning of the text is to know how to apply it to our situation. However, this application, as Grondin observes, is one event in Gadamerian hermeneutics: for there is not first understanding and only later an application of what is understood to the present. Understanding a text of the past means to let it challenge us today and failing to apply it to our situation means to understand nothing of it.⁵²

Moreover, through the process of that appropriation we not only understand the text or the other, but we also understand and get acquainted with ourselves. For, according to Gadamer, we know ourselves properly in the mirror of the other, that is, through the human traits that have been frequently manifested in the cultural products of tradition. As Ricoeur puts it ". . . what would we know of love and hate, of moral feelings and, in general, of all that we call the *self*, if these had not been brought to language and articulated by literature."⁵³

Is it not true then that the hermeneutics of Heidegger and Gadamer seeks to rectify the rift which has been produced by our modern aesthetic consciousness as a result of its neglect of what literature and art in general say to us, to the extent that what is said to us no longer echoes in us? Is it not also true that in such seeking both Heidegger and Gadamer share in the original project of phenomenology which seeks to transcend the crisis of the human sciences in general? It is true that both of them have concentrated hard on the ontological dimension of the literary text, to the extent that their treatment seems to have a one-sidedness. However, this concentration itself has created a weight parallel to that of literary theory and art criticism, giving these a density which they very much needed.

NOTES

¹ For a detailed explanation of Merleau-Ponty's point here, see his essay on "Indirect Language and the Voice of Silence," in his *Signs*, trans. with an introd. by Richard McCleary (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1964), pp. 49ff.

² William V. Spanos, "Heidegger, Kierkegaard, and the Hermeneutical Circle: Toward a Post-modern Theory of Interpretation as Disclosure," in *Martin Heidegger and the Question of Literature: Toward a Postmodern Literary Hermeneutics*, ed. William V. Spanos (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1976), p. 116.

³ Hans-Georg Gadamer, "On the Origin of Philosophical Hermeneutics," in *Philosophical Apprenticeships*, trans. Robert Sullivan (Cambridge, Massachusetts and London: MIT Press, 1985), p. 180.

⁴ *Ibid.*, loc. cit.

⁵ Gerald Bruns, "Disappeared: Heidegger and the Emancipation of Language," in *Languages of the Unsayable, the Play of Negativity in Literature and Literary Theory*, ed. Sanford Budick and Wolfgang Iser (New York: Columbia University Press, 1989), p. 117.

⁶ Martin Heidegger, *On the Way to Language*, trans. Peter D. Hertz (New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1971), p. 112.

⁷ For a detailed discussion of this point, see: Bruns, *op. cit.*, passim.

⁸ Martin Heidegger, "The Origin of the Work of Art," in *Poetry, Language and Thought*, trans. Albert Hofstadter (New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1975), p. 75.

⁹ *Ibid.*, loc. cit.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 74.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 73.

¹² Quoted in Martin Heidegger, "Hölderlin and the Essence of Poetry," in *Existence and Being*, trans. Werner Brock (Chicago: Regnery, 1949), p. 293. For a Heideggerian reading of the phrase see pp. 299–300.

¹³ From a lecture delivered by Ricoeur in English at Wheaton College, 1969. Quoted in Robert Magliola, *Phenomenology and Literature* (West Lafayette: Indiana, Purdue University Press, 1987), p. 81.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 69.

¹⁵ William J. Richardson, *Heidegger through Phenomenology to Thought* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1976), p. 528.

¹⁶ Heidegger, *On the Way to Language*, *op. cit.*, p. 120.

¹⁷ Hans-Georg Gadamer, "Semantics and Hermeneutics," in *Philosophical Hermeneutics*, trans. and ed. David E. Linge (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976), p. 82.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 87.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, loc. cit.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 88.

²¹ Gadamer, "Man and Language," in *ibid.*, p. 63.

²² Gadamer, "Semantics and Hermeneutics," in *ibid.*, p. 90.

²³ H.-G. Gadamer, *Truth and Method* (New York: Seabury Press, 1975), pp. 144–145.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 145.

²⁵ H.-G. Gadamer, "On the Contribution of Poetry to the Search for Truth," in *The Relevance of the Beautiful and Other Essays*, trans. Nicholas Walker, ed. Robert Bernasconi (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 106ff.).

²⁶ H.-G. Gadamer, "Composition and Interpretation," in *ibid.*, p. 69. It is worth noting here that the concept of "objectively interpreted experience" in this context does not mean "objective interpretation," rather it means an experience which has an object other than our subjective representation of the aesthetic form.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, loc. cit.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, loc. cit.

²⁹ Mario J. Valdes, *Phenomenological Hermeneutics and the Study of Literature* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1987), p. 33.

³⁰ Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, *op. cit.*, p. 322.

³¹ Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, trans. John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson (New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1976), p. 50.

³² Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, *op. cit.*, p. xxiv.

³³ H.-G. Gadamer, *Heidegger's Ways*, trans. John W. Stanley (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1994), p. 51.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, loc. cit.

³⁵ Gerald Bruns, *Heidegger's Estrangements: Language, Truth and Poetry in Later Writings* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), *op. cit.*, p. 6.

³⁶ Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, *op. cit.*, pp. 322ff; see also Kathleen Wright, "Literature and Philosophy at the Crossroads," in *Festivals of Interpretation: Essays on Hans-Georg Gadamer's Work*, ed. Kathleen Wright (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1990), pp. 237–238.

³⁷ Robert J. Dostal, "Philosophical Discourse and the Ethics of Hermeneutics," in Wright (ed.), *Festivals of Interpretation . . .*, *op. cit.*, p. 65.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, loc. cit.

³⁹ Heidegger, "The Origin of the Work of Art," *op. cit.*, p. 65.

⁴⁰ Wright, *op. cit.*, p. 237.

⁴¹ For a detailed analysis of this point, see Dieter Misgeld, "Poetry, Dialogue and Negotiation: Liberal Culture and Conservative Politics in Hans-Georg Gadamer's Thought," in Wright (ed.), *op. cit.*, pp. 165–169.

⁴² Quoted in Heidegger, "Hölderlin and the Essence of Poetry," *op. cit.*, p. 293.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, pp. 301–302.

⁴⁴ Heidegger, *On the Way to Language*, *op. cit.*, p. 124.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 125.

⁴⁶ Gerald Bruns, "Disappeared: Heidegger and the Emancipation of Language," *op. cit.*, pp. 127–128.

⁴⁷ Gadamer, "On the Contribution of Poetry to the Search for Truth," *op. cit.*, p. 106.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, loc. cit.

⁴⁹ Heidegger, *Being and Time*, *op. cit.*, p. 56.

⁵⁰ Valdes, *op. cit.*, pp. 60f.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 38.

⁵² Jean Grondin, "Hermeneutics and Relativism," in Wright (ed.), *Festivals of Interpretation*, *op. cit.*, pp. 50–51.

⁵³ Paul Ricoeur, *Hermeneutics and the Human Sciences: Essay on Language, Action and Interpretation*, ed. and trans. John Thompson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), p. 143.