Operational Hermeneutics

INTERPRETATION AS THE ENGAGEMENT OF OPERATIONAL ARTIFACTS

Aref Ali Nayed

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with a Foreword by
Professor Jeff Mitscherling
University of Guelph

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Contents

Acknowledgements vii
Foreword by Professor Jeff Mitscherling ix

CHAPTER ONE
The Nature and Goal of Operational Hermeneutics 1

CHAPTER TWO
The Hermeneutics of Schleiermacher, Betti, Hirsch and Gadamer 15

CHAPTER THREE
An Alternative Model of Texts and their Interpretation I: Writs 55

CHAPTER FOUR
An Alternative Model of Texts and their Interpretation II: Texts 74

CHAPTER FIVE
An Alternative Model of Texts and their Interpretation III: Engagements 86

CHAPTER SIX
The Contribution of Operational Hermeneutics 116

Notes 125
Bibliography 141

In the Name of God, Merciful, Compassionate

In thankful and loving memory of
ALI AHMED NAYED
(1923–2008)

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Foreword

WHILE ITS ORIGINS are to be located in antiquity and its early development in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, hermeneutics began to flourish as a discipline only after the Reformation, when the problems of biblical interpretation became more urgent than ever before. With the publication of Hans-Georg Gadamer's monumental *Wahrheit und Methode* in 1960 (with its first translation as *Truth and Method* appearing in 1975), hermeneutics achieved a new popularity. Not only was the history of hermeneutics in general suddenly of scholarly interest, but the implications of Gadamer's philosophical hermeneutics in particular caught the attention of researchers working in every discipline imaginable. Over the past fifty years, scholars have continued to elaborate the history of hermeneutics in ever more detail, and researchers have continued to explore the implications of Gadamer's hermeneutics, particularly in the social sciences and social and political philosophy. Yet the scholarly literature has remained noticeably lacking when it comes to substantive critical discussion of the fundamental concepts and principles that orientate and guide not only philosophical but also literary, legal, and scriptural hermeneutics, and there has been no significant contribution to the theoretical foundations of hermeneutics in all this time.

In this ambitious and original study, Dr. Aref Nayed provides hermeneutics with the careful critical scrutiny of its theoretical foundations that it has so long deserved. He identifies several conceptual difficulties lying at the basis of the hermeneutic theories of four of the most influential representatives of the discipline—namely, Friedrich Schleiermacher, Emilio Betti, E. D. Hirsch, and Hans-Georg Gadamer—and his

extensive, thoughtful criticisms enable him to offer a constructive and extremely promising approach to resolving these seemingly intractable difficulties.

Dr. Nayed's approach is novel and ingenious. An extensive survey of the literature in hermeneutics discloses that certain claims that are foundational for the theories of some of its major proponents contradict claims that are foundational for the theories of other proponents, and these contradictory claims all revolve around issues that are central to hermeneutics. As the author demonstrates in his first chapter, there appears to be some truth to be found in all of these claims, so their mutually contradictory character points to a serious problem. Yet, instead of simply listing them as dogmatic antinomies that indicate an irresolvable problem, Dr. Nayed formulates them as six separate *aporiae*, or 'conceptual knots', suggesting that a solution may indeed be possible. After offering in his second chapter a brief yet remarkably thorough examination of the theories of the four representatives of hermeneutics listed above, in which he identifies what he regards as the most valuable insights of these thinkers, the author devotes the next three chapters to the construction of his operational hermeneutics. Drawing from his previous training as an engineer, the author recalls two engineering techniques in order to recast the general hermeneutic problem: Employing the technique of operation analysis, he investigates interpretation as a particular form of operation; and employing the technique of dynamic system modeling, he develops a new model of texts as dynamic human-made systems, which he refers to as 'operational artifacts'. In his concluding chapter he demonstrates how operational hermeneutics, by regarding the activities of interpretation as engagements with texts in which operations are sourced, successfully unties all of the 'aporetic knots' that have plagued hermeneutics until now while at the same time preserving the most valuable insights of its major representatives.

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I

The Nature and Goal of Operational Hermeneutics

THE TASK OF THE PRESENT STUDY

CONTEMPORARY hermeneutic theory is plagued by a set of *aporiae* that revolve around three central issues of hermeneutics. These *aporiae*, which I shall enumerate below, consist of truth claims that contradict one another. These contradictions have arisen from the failure of traditional and contemporary hermeneutic theory to attend with sufficient rigour to the variety of types of text and interpretative activities. The major hermeneutic theorists have, without exception, constructed their general accounts or theories of interpretation by generalizing statements that hold true for a limited number of types of texts and interpretative activities that they have chosen. As different theorists have chosen different types of texts and interpretative activities as their paradigms, their statement, while true for the chosen paradigms, contradicts statements made by other authors who have chosen alternative paradigms. This has given rise to the set of *aporiae* mentioned above. In this thesis I propose alternative models of texts and interpretative activities that proceed from an acknowledgment of their variety. The 'Operational Hermeneutics' I elaborate on the basis of these models is able to accommodate all such contradictory claims and thereby resolve the *aporiae*.

In constructing my models, I employ operation analysis and modelling techniques borrowed from engineering. Philosophy and engineering are two disciplines that seldom have much to do with each other. There have, of course, been philosophers who were trained as engineers, such as Ludwig Wittgenstein, and there have also been engineers who

were trained as philosophers, such as Samuel C. Florman.[1] Nevertheless, hardly any engineering analytical or synthetical techniques have ever been explicitly imported from engineering into philosophy, and hardly any philosophical approaches have ever been explicitly imported into engineering. This situation is rather unfortunate, for considerable benefit might be gained from an interchange of ideas and techniques across the two fields. Philosophers, of course, do pay attention to what is happening in the natural sciences, and part of the reason engineering techniques are ignored is the widespread but mistaken belief that engineering is nothing but applied science. This belief, which is shared even among some engineers who have difficulty describing what they do, has recently been shown—in the important writings of Walter G. Vincenti, Henry Petroski, and others—to be simply wrong.[2] These reflective engineers rightly point out that engineering is mainly a synthetical design-oriented art of making, and that its analytical techniques are practically inspired rather than derived from the theories of the natural sciences. There is now a thriving new field called the philosophy of technology, and while one might expect it to pay attention to engineering techniques, its chief representatives—for example, Don Ihde and Langdon Winner[3]—are more concerned with technologies as end products rather than with the analytical and design techniques of engineering that go into their making.

In this thesis I shall break this pattern of mutual disregard by borrowing some engineering techniques to solve some intractable philosophical problems. Before discussing these techniques, however, I first have to offer a few prefatory remarks concerning hermeneutics, the philosophical field of study to which we want to apply them, and the particular hermeneutic theorists I shall be focusing on in this study.

PREFATORY REMARKS CONCERNING HERMENEUTICS

Originally, the term 'hermeneutics' was employed in reference to the field of study concerned with developing rules and methods to guide biblical exegesis. It was not until the early years of the nineteenth century that 'hermeneutics' became 'general hermeneutics' at the hands of the philosopher and Protestant theologian Friedrich Schleiermacher. Schleiermacher transformed hermeneutics into a philosophical discipline by elevating it from the narrow confines of theological specializa-

tion to the higher ground of general philosophical concerns about language and understanding. As we shall see in what follows (Chapter Two), Schleiermacher made the question, 'How is the interpretation and understanding of language possible?', the central concern of hermeneutics, thereby converting it into a philosophical field, and one much influenced, as the very form of the question indicates, by a Kantian approach to philosophical problems.

During the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, a number of theorists from a variety of humanistic disciplines became interested in hermeneutics, now conceived of as general philosophical inquiry. The German scholar, Wilhelm Dilthey, secured a prominent place for hermeneutics by advancing the notion, in response to scientistic positivism, that it could supply the general methodology for all the human sciences (*Geisteswissenschaften*). During the 1950s and 1960s Emilio Betti—taking for granted Dilthey's view of hermeneutics as supplying the general methodology for the *Geisteswissenschaften*—put forward what remains the most comprehensive systematic treatment of hermeneutics to date. He sought to explain how the interpretation of what he called 'representative forms' works, and to give canons that can guide it.

In the early 1960s, Hans-Georg Gadamer, under the influence of views first advanced thematically by Martin Heidegger, gave hermeneutics a new shape and mandate. In his *Truth and Method*, a book that still dominates the field today, Gadamer countered the idea that the task of hermeneutics should be to provide any sort of 'methodology'. Taking seriously Heidegger's claim that interpretation and understanding are modes of our very existence in the world, Gadamer argued that before any 'method' is invoked, understanding has already taken place. In Gadamer's work, the question 'How is understanding possible?' took on an ontological dimension that replaced the predominantly epistemological concern that it had previously enjoyed in the work of Schleiermacher, Dilthey, and Betti. Gadamer (as I shall explain later) claimed that understanding is primarily an activity of language itself, and not of interpreters, and that language itself, without any theoretical guidance, is capable of assuring the achievement of understanding. Gadamer maintained that the obsession with *method* was a sign of alienation from the truth of language. (For the sake of avoiding confusion, I must note here at the outset that Gadamer uses 'language' in a very broad sense. By the end

of his *Truth and Method* 'language' comes very close to the Hellenistic and Christian notion of *logos*, associated with a kind of primordial dynamic process.)

During the late 1960s and early 1970s, E. D. Hirsch, adopting a modified form of the procedure of conjecture and refutation promoted by Karl Popper, developed a theory of what he called 'Validity in Interpretation'. Hirsch considered himself as a representative of the Schleiermacher, Dilthey, and Betti tradition of Hermeneutics, and fiercely attacked Gadamer for what he took to be threateningly subjective and relativistic tendencies in his position. Many people currently working in hermeneutics regard him as the last representative of the Schleiermacher-Dilthey-Betti tradition. But, as I shall demonstrate in this study, Hirsch is not actually a good representative of that tradition. It is true that Hirsch, like the previous three theorists, accorded a central role to the notion that interpretation is the *re-enactment* of an author's mental states—however, unlike Schleiermacher, Dilthey, and Betti, Hirsch renounced the quest for a 'methodology' of interpretation, claiming that there can be no method of interpretation but only the 'logic of validation'. Hirsch believed, and this is where the Popperian influence sets in, that interpretation is 'conjecture', that conjecture is a form of guessing, and that there can be no method for making guesses. One would have expected Hirsch to advance a methodology similar to Popper's method of falsification, but he did not, and his 'logic of validation' turned out to be an empty promise: it required access to an author's mental states, something that Hirsch admitted was not possible.

Other contemporary thinkers have also made valuable contributions to hermeneutics, particularly those in the fields of literary criticism and theory, semiotics, and critical theory. Notable thinkers include Paul Ricoeur (working in the theory of narrative and hermeneutics), Umberto Eco (working in semiotics), and Jürgen Habermas and Karl-Otto Apel (both working in critical theory and the new and thriving field of discourse ethics).[4] While the insights of these theorists are valuable, I shall not examine their work in any depth in this study, although I shall occasionally be making reference to some of their views. The theorists I propose to focus on are, as stated above, Schleiermacher, Betti, Hirsch, and Gadamer. The decision to work on these four theorists is not arbitrary, for they are undeniably the theorists who have offered the most

systematic general accounts of the problems of interpretation. Also, I should note that the reason for not examining Dilthey's work is that most of his key insights were incorporated and systematized by Betti.

THE *APORIAE* ENCOUNTERED BY CONTEMPORARY HERMENEUTICS

We may now turn to the set of problems that I shall be addressing in this study with the aid of some modified engineering notions. These problems can be formulated in an Aristotelian manner as *aporiae*, or conceptual 'knots'.[5] An *aporia* is a sort of impasse or difficultly that hinders advancement and progress. Someone facing an *aporia* is 'stuck in a bind'. The statement of *aporiae* that follows below presents a set of important binds in which contemporary hermeneutic theory finds itself. These *aporiae* have not been explicitly stated in this way in any of the previous hermeneutic literature; indeed, their very presence appears to have remained largely unnoticed, despite the fact that they constitute the source of so much of the confusion that we find in the current literature. These *aporiae*, which revolve around three central issues, may be stated as follows as six pairs of contradictory statements:

I. The variety of texts and interpretative activities and the quest for a general account of the interpretation of texts.

(1) 'Texts are all the same' *vs.* 'Texts are not all the same'.

(2) 'Interpretative activities are all the same' *vs.* 'Interpretative activities are not all the same'.

II. The fact that texts are often used for the purposes of interpreters, and the ethical imperative to respect an author's intention.

(3) 'Texts are made by authors' *vs.* 'Texts are not made by authors'.

(4) 'The intentions of authors are discernible and important' *vs.* 'The intentions of authors are neither discernible nor important'.

III. The automaticity of understanding and the quest for methods that can guide interpretation.

(5) 'Interpretation is an activity of interpreters' *vs.* 'Interpretation is not an activity of interpreters'.

(6) 'Hermeneutics should be methodological' *vs.* 'Hermeneutics should not be methodological'.

These contradictory claims are drawn from the works of Schleiermacher, Betti, Hirsch, and Gadamer. I shall briefly discuss each of the six *aporiae* in turn.

I. *The variety of texts and interpretative activities and the quest for a general account of the interpretation of texts.*

(1) 'Texts are all the same' *vs.* 'Texts are not all the same':
(*a*) Schleiermacher, Betti, Hirsch, and Gadamer all claim that texts are essentially the same and are therefore amenable to being addressed by one general account. This is a fundamental assumption of all four theorists:

[1] Schleiermacher claims that all texts are expressions of thinking acts.
[2] Betti claims that all texts are representative forms.
[3] Hirsch claims that all texts are sets of inert marks.
[4] Gadamer claims that all texts are manifestations of a luminescent 'language'.

(*b*) Schleiermacher, Betti, Hirsch, and Gadamer, from time to time, and usually only briefly, acknowledge that *not* all texts are the same:

[1] Schleiermacher briefly acknowledges that there are texts that express the individuality of their authors more than do others.
[2] Betti acknowledges that there exist differences among three kinds of texts: [a] Texts that are meant simply to represent the intention of their authors; [b] texts that are meant to be presented to others in another form (e.g., plays); and [c] texts that are meant to be applied (e.g., laws).
[3] Hirsch acknowledges that there are different text 'genres', but not that there are different kinds of texts.
[4] Gadamer, in some of his later papers, but not in *Truth and Method*, acknowledges that there are two main kinds of texts: [a] *eminent texts* that are 'autonomous', and [b] *non-eminent* texts that 'stay close to' their authors.

(2) 'Interpretative activities are all the same' *vs.* 'Interpretative activities are not all the same':
(*a*) Schleiermacher, Betti, Hirsch, and Gadamer all state that interpretative activities are essentially the same and are therefore amenable to being addressed by one general account. This is a fundamental assumption of all four theorists:

[1] Schleiermacher assumes that all interpretative activities are a reversals of the acts of thinking expressed in texts.
[2] Betti claims that all interpretative activities are resonance-activated re-enactments of thought represented in representative forms (texts).
[3] Hirsch claims that all interpretative activities are conjectural constructions of meanings from sets of inert marks (texts).
[4] Gadamer assumes that all interpretative activities are a 'play' of 'language'.

(*b*) Schleiermacher, Betti, Hirsch, and Gadamer, from time to time, and usually briefly, acknowledge that *not* all interpretative activities are the same:

[1] Schleiermacher comes close to acknowledging that there are different kinds of interpretative activities when he claims that there are different 'moments' in interpretation. However, these moments are not really distinct kinds of interpretation *per se*, but are subtypes subsumed under the category of the one kind of interpretation that Schleiermacher acknowledges: the reversing of the act of thinking.
[2] Betti acknowledges that there exist differences among three kinds of interpretative activities: [a] 're-cognitive interpretation', which aims at re-cognizing an author's mental processes, [b] 're-productive interpretation', which aims at presenting to others what has been re-cognized; and [c] 'normative interpretation', which aims at applying what has been re-cognized. All three kinds involve re-cognition. The first is basically [re-cognition], the second [re-cognition *plus* presentation], and the third [re-cognition *plus* application].

[3] Hirsch acknowledges that there are different kinds of interpretative activities, this difference arising from the variety of the possible aims of the interpreter. He does not offer any classification of these activities, but seems reluctantly to accept Betti's.

[4] Gadamer does not acknowledge differences between interpretative activities.

II. ***The fact that texts are often used for the purposes of interpreters, and the ethical imperative to respect an author's intention.***

(3) 'Texts are made by authors' ***vs.*** **'Texts not made by authors':**
(*a*) Schleiermacher, Betti, and Hirsch all acknowledge that texts are made by authors.

(*b*) Gadamer, on the other hand, seems to think of texts as manifestations of 'language'. Gadamer does not explicitly deny that texts are made by authors, but in *Truth and Method* he does not discuss the contribution of authors to the making of texts, and the reader of *Truth and Method* might easily get the impression that texts are not really the works of their authors at all.

(4) 'The intentions of authors are discernible and important' ***vs.*** **'The intentions of authors are neither discernible nor important'.**
(*a*) Schleiermacher, Betti, and Hirsch all hold that intentions of authors are discernible and important. They all claim that this discernment should be the aim of all interpreters. However, they differ slightly regarding the possible extent of discernment. Hirsch, in addition, holds a peculiar view on the possibility of knowing that such discernment has actually taken place:

[1] Schleiermacher acknowledges that complete discernment is impossible, and says that the task of discerning an author's intentions is 'infinite' in that it can approach an exact re-enactment of an author's thinking without ever reaching it. Nevertheless, Schleiermacher says that the interpreter should aim at 'understanding the author better than he understood himself'.

[2] Betti, too, acknowledges that complete discernment is impossible: understanding happens inside one's own mind through resonance with the mind of another, and our minds are undeniably different due to obviously different subjective experiences. However, Betti thinks that our 'shared humanity' allows for a large degree of discernment. The interpreter, according to Betti, should always aim at achieving as much discernment as possible.

[3] Hirsch affirms the possibility of complete discernment, but he denies the possibility of knowing that such discernment has actually been achieved. This particular view sets him apart from Schleiermacher and Betti.

(*b*) Gadamer claims that the intentions of authors are neither discernible nor important. What matters for Gadamer is the 'truth' of texts themselves, which turns out be the 'truth' of 'language' itself. For Gadamer, the obsession with discerning the intentions of authors is a wrong-headed psychologic tendency that results in the 'questionableness of romantic hermeneutics' (that is, the hermeneutics of Schleiermacher and Betti).

III. ***The automaticity of understanding and the quest for methods that can guide interpretation.***

(5) 'Interpretation is an activity of interpreters' ***vs*** **'Interpretation is not an activity of interpreters'.**

(*a*) Schleiermacher, Betti, and Hirsch think of interpretation as an activity of interpreters, or as something that interpreters do:

[1] Schleiermacher says that interpretation is a task that must be pursued by the interpreter.

[2] Betti claims that interpretation is an act through which the interpreter responds to an 'appeal' by the 'other' who authored the text.

[3] Hirsch maintains that interpretation is a vocation of the interpreter.

(*b*) Gadamer thinks that interpretation is primarily an activity of 'language', and *not* of interpreters. Interpreters do participate in this activity, but only by 'being played' by 'language'.

(6) 'Hermeneutics should be methodological' ***vs.*** **Hermeneutics should not be methodological'.**
(a) Schleiermacher and Betti both think that hermeneutics should be methodological. According to both of them, interpretation is a task of interpreters and should be guided by a methodology in the form of 'canons' of interpretation. Such canons, according to Schleiermacher and Betti, ensure objectivity and keep the interpreter from subordinating an author's work to the interpreter's whims.

(b) Hirsch and Gadamer both claim that hermeneutics should *not* be methodological. However, they give different reasons for this claim:

[1] Hirsch maintains that interpretation is a conjectural process, and that there can be no method of conjecture. He also explicitly rejects the notion of 'canons of interpretation'. This is another important point distinguishing Hirsch from Schleiermacher and Betti.
[2] Gadamer maintains that the notion that there can be a method that guarantees truth is a misleading legacy of the Enlightenment, and that truth 'shines forth' of its own accord. Truth, for Gadamer, is primordial and ongoing, and to seek it through method is a form of alienation.

Having identified the above *aporiae* and located their constituent statements in the theories of Schleiermacher, Betti, Hirsch, and Gadamer, we are now in a position to appreciate the danger which they pose to hermeneutic theory. When we consider individually each of the statements that were used above to formulate the *aporiae*, we notice that there exists an element of truth in every one of them. And yet, it seems impossible to maintain all of the twelve statements without contradiction. The bind in which current hermeneutic theory finds itself derives precisely from this apparent impossibility to collapse these twelve true but contradictory statements into any one theory. Let us look again at the individual statements used in the above formulation of the *aporiae*:

(1) (a) 'Texts are all the same'. In a sense, this statement is true. After all, we do call all texts 'texts', and we have no problem in thinking that a newspaper, a business letter, and a novel are all texts.

(1) (b) 'Texts are not all the same'. In a sense, this statement is also true. After all, we do distinguish among newspapers, a business letters, and novels.

(2) (a) 'Interpretative activities are all the same.' In a sense, this statement is true. After all, we call all interpretative activities 'interpretation', even if the texts being interpreted are as different from each other as a poem and a law.

(2) (b) 'Interpretative activities are not all the same.' In a sense, this statement is also true. The way in which a literary critic interprets a poem is not the same as the way in which a judge interprets a law.

(3) (a) 'Texts are made by authors.' In a sense, this statement is true. After all, we all know that a thesis does not just happen—it has to be written or made by someone.

(3) (b) 'Texts are not made by authors.' In a sense, this statement is also true. After all, words have a way of suggesting themselves as a writer writes. Moreover, hardly any elements used in a text are of the author's invention. Generally, the vocabulary is already available in the chosen language, as are the grammatical rules of sentence formation. In a sense, a text is indeed made by language.

(4) (a) 'The intentions of authors are discernible and important.' In a sense, this statement is true. If it were not true, written communication between people—as, for example, communication of desires, hopes, expectations, and so on—would be impossible and pointless, and that is obviously not the case.

(4) (b) 'The intentions of authors are neither discernible nor important.' In a sense, this statement is also true. Intentions are in the mind, and the mind of another is obviously not my own, so how am I supposed to 'discern' the other's intentions, and why should it be important to attempt to do so?

(5) (a) 'Interpretation is an activity of interpreters.' In a sense, this statement is true. After all, we say that 'John interpreted the Bible', and that 'Jane interpreted the novel'.

(5) (b) 'Interpretation is not an activity of interpreters.' In a sense, this statement is also true. After all, as we read and interpret a text, we do not build its meaning the way we build a chair—the meaning just 'occurs' or 'happens' to us. There is an automaticity in interpretation that makes us feel that it is not of our own doing.

(6) (a) 'Hermeneutics should be methodological.' In a sense, this statement is true. A good interpretation leads to understanding what others write, and it would be desirable to devise a method that can guide us towards such understanding.

(6) (b) 'Hermeneutics should not be methodological.' In a sense, this statement is also true. Understanding of what others write happens as an everyday matter of course, and to try to achieve such understanding through the rigorous application of an interpretative method would be like tinkering with something that already works.

None of the theorists I have discussed above is able to grant all of the grains of truth that are undeniably present in these various contradictory statements. If we maintain any one of their theories, we must sacrifice a good number of these true statements. This is what I mean when I state that contemporary hermeneutics is stuck in these *aporiae*.

OPERATION ANALYSIS AND DYNAMIC SYSTEM MODELING

Overcoming *aporiae* is like untying knots. It is tricky, tedious, and often frustrating, and philosophical *aporiae* are perhaps the nastiest of all. This is often the result of a kind of blindness that develops when philosophers develop fixations on particular notions and distinctions. Because the central notions and distinctions advanced by particular philosophers are so intimately related to their methods and techniques, it takes the introduction of new methods and techniques—a new way of looking at things—to break the spell of old dogmas. When fresh light is cast upon a matter, *aporiae* are usually much easier to handle than they are in the darkness of dogma. What we hope to achieve by introducing engineering techniques into the field of contemporary hermeneutics is a shock effect intended to destabilize ossified forms of discourse that have become stuck in its present bind. The two engineering techniques that we shall be importing into hermeneutics are *operation analysis* and *dynamic system modeling*.

Operation Analysis

In industrial engineering, the technique of operation analysis is used in studying manufacturing operation with a view to making them more efficient. The *Industrial Engineering Handbook* introduces this technique as follows:

> The factors that surround the simplest process or operation are many and varied. Accordingly, small progress will be made toward methods improvement and automation if the job is studied as a whole. The first step in any study that will produce results is to resolve the job into its component parts or elements. Each part may then be considered separately, and the study of the process or operation becomes a series of studies of fairly simple problems. This kind of analytical work is covered by the term 'operation analysis.'[6]

Subsequent portions of the handbook offer detailed instructions on how to apply this technique in industry. These instructions need not detain us here, but the notion expressed in the handbook that operation analysis depends on 'the questioning attitude' is of some interest, for it runs contrary to the kinds of attitudes many people in the humanities often attribute to engineers:

> The questioning attitude is a state of mind that prevents anything being taken for granted in the investigation of a job. It questions everything and determines answers on the basis of facts. It guards against the influence of emotions, likes, dislikes, and prejudices.[7]

While this formulation of the questioning attitude may be a bit naïve in its confident belief in the existence of 'facts' and the possibility of totally dispensing with prejudices, it does remind us that when the interpretation of texts is studied, one must obey the phenomenological imperative to return 'to the things themselves', which we can rephrase as the engineering imperative, 'to the operations themselves'. The handbook continues:

> The questions that the industrial engineer asks take the general form of what, why, how, who, where, and when. What is the operation? Why is it performed? How is it done? Who does it? Where is it done? When is it done in relation to other operations? These questions, in one form or another, should be asked about every factor connected with the job or class of work being analyzed.[8]

The present study offers an operation analysis of that operation which we call 'interpretation'.

Dynamic System Modeling

In the engineering of dynamic systems, the notion of 'model' is often

used. An *Introduction to System Dynamics* textbook says the following about using models in studying systems:

> The combination of ideal elements which is intended to represent the behavior of a physical system is called the *model* of the system. The degree to which the behavior of the ideal model corresponds to the behavior of the physical system represented by the model is a function of the experience, skill, and engineering judgement of the modeler. Usually, the model must represent a compromise between its complexity and the degree of accuracy required in the predicted behavior of the physical system.[9]

Modeling is used in the natural sciences, in economics, and even in some of the social sciences. In engineering, modeling is taken seriously, but not too seriously. Engineers don't usually labour under the illusion that their models are 'true accounts' of the systems or machines they are studying, making, or working with. The modeling process is very much judgement-dependent, always open to revision and even to abandonment. A model is considered good not because of any 'truth' that it may allege, but because it proves fruitful.

In this study we develop a model of texts which takes them to be '*operational artifacts*', or dynamic human-made systems, and a related model of interpretative activities which takes them to be engagements of texts in which operations are sourced. We make no claim to be offering a comprehensive, exhaustive account of what texts or interpretative activities are 'really' like. All we claim is that the models constituting the *Operational Hermeneutics* we propose are fruitful in that they enable us to resolve some important *aporiae*.

In what follows, Chapter Two is devoted to the examination of the positions of Schleiermacher, Betti, Hirsch, and Gadamer; and Chapters Three through to Five are systematic in character and devoted to the construction of alternative models of texts and their engagements which constitute an operational hermeneutics in outline.

II

The Hermeneutics of Schleiermacher, Betti, Hirsch and Gadamer

INTRODUCTION

THE OPERATIONAL HERMENEUTICS developed in this study is informed by the theories of Schleiermacher, Betti, Hirsch and Gadamer. Operational hermeneutics preserves and develops valuable insights of these theories, while avoiding their shortcomings. This chapter offers a succinct examination of the theories of these four thinkers. The aim of the chapter is to point out what we take to be the most valuable insights of these thinkers, as well as the most important shortcomings of their theories. There have been book-length treatments of the theories of Schleiermacher, Betti, Hirsch and Gadamer, and this chapter cannot possibly do justice to the intricacies and full scope of these theories. However, brief as it may be, a Croce-like 'what is living and what is dead' examination of the theories is necessary for my purposes.

THE HERMENEUTICS OF SCHLEIERMACHER

To understand the hermeneutics of Schleiermacher, one must remember that he was a Protestant theologian who lived and thought in Pietist and Romantic circles in Germany at the end of the eighteenth and nineteenth century. Schleiermacher's reverence for the Bible as the 'word of God' and for the intimate communion that comes about in conversations with close friends is the single most important factor directing the thrust of his hermeneutics. Schleiermacher is the founder of general hermeneutics, which he founded primarily for theological reasons.[1] His ultimate goal was to provide a solid basis on which biblical hermeneutics

could be grounded. This basis, Schleiermacher thought, could be provided if the problem of interpreting speech was treated in a philosophical general manner instead of the specialized and provincial manner prevalent at the time.

During Schleiermacher's time there were basically three kinds of specialized hermeneutics: *biblical*, *literary*, and *legal*. Each one of these specialized hermeneutics had a long tradition and was devoted to discussing interpretation problems pertaining to specific kinds of texts. Biblical hermeneutics was devoted to the problems of interpreting the Bible; literary hermeneutics was devoted to the problems of interpreting Greek and Latin classics; and legal hermeneutics was devoted to the problems of interpreting law, especially Roman law. Schleiermacher was strongly influenced by biblical hermeneutics and literary hermeneutics, but not at all by legal hermeneutics.[2]

Schleiermacher's hermeneutics is basically an attempt to treat the common concerns of both biblical hermeneutics and literary hermeneutics by focusing on the general problem of interpreting speech. In this undertaking, Schleiermacher's path was already prepared for him to a much greater extent than some authors would have us believe—such as those who uncritically rely on Wilhelm Dilthey's account of the *Rise of Hermeneutics*.[3] Georg Friedrich Meier (1728–1777) had already tried to elaborate a *hermeneutica universalis* as a general theory of interpreting signs. Meier was strongly influenced by St. Augustine's attempt, in *De Doctrina Christiana*, to develop a kind of general semiotics or doctrine of signs. It is true that Meier's theory remained highly abstract and undeveloped, but it most certainly deserves a better treatment than Dilthey's dismissive remarks.[4] Johann August Ernesti (1707–1781), whose *Institutio Interpretis Novi Testamenti* was being read by Schleiermacher as he jotted down his crucial 'aphorisms of 1805 and 1809–10', had already argued that biblical hermeneutics (*hermeneutica sacra*) should make use of the insight of literary hermeneutics (*hermeneutica profana*), because the Bible, even though it is inspired, is written in human languages.[5] Friedrich Ast (1778–1841), with whom Schleiermacher often argued, had already developed, in this *Grundlinien der Grammatik, Hermeneutik Und Kritik* of 1808, a vision of 'philology' so grand that it aimed at nothing less than fusing the 'spirit of antiquity' with the 'spirit of Christianity'.[6]

Nevertheless, Schleiermacher can indeed be considered the founder

of general hermeneutics as he is the one who most explicitly and vigorously argued for a general treatment of interpretation and, more importantly, argued that general hermeneutics had to be developed as philosophy. In the spirit of the then-prevailing Kantian paradigm in philosophy, Schleiermacher argued that general hermeneutics must ask the vital and general question: 'How is the understanding of speech possible?'

Now, there are different ways of understanding questions of the form 'How is X possible?' It is especially important to distinguish between two of these ways: Such a question can be taken as answerable through the *description* of facts—what is, as '*questio facti*'—or as answerable through the *prescription* of rules—as '*questio juris*'. Schleiermacher conceived of the question mainly as *question juris*, in that he tried to develop 'canons' that ought to be followed by the interpreter of speech in order that understanding be rendered possible. However, because Schleiermacher conceived of interpretation (*Auslegung*) as the work leading to understanding (*Verstehen*), and because 'understanding' was a positively charged emotive word, he often pursued his *questio juris* as *questio facti*.

Thus Schleiermacher's normative and methodological approach to the problems of interpretation often comes across as proceeding by way of neutral descriptions of understanding. Questions of fact, of value, and of method are often conflated in Schleiermacher, and such conflation continues to this day (for example, in Gadamer's claim that he is not *prescribing* anything, but only *describing* 'understanding'). Thus Schleiermacher's *Auslegungslehre* is at the same time both a descriptive and a prescriptive doctrine or account of interpretation (and of understanding, to which, according to Schleiermacher, it leads). When Schleiermacher asked 'How is the understanding of speech possible?', he took the question to be one that demands for its answer the prescription of the rules and procedures to be followed in interpretation in order to achieve understanding, but he pursued the answer to the question by describing the understanding of speech.

The German word *Sprache* is translated both as 'speech' and as 'language'. Schleiermacher blurred the distinction between spoken utterances and written transcribed utterances, and regarded his account of interpretation and the understanding of *Sprache* to be applicable to both. In developing his hermeneutics, however, Schleiermacher clearly seems

to be thinking of texts in ways that are more natural and appropriate when thinking of spoken utterances. As a Protestant theologian, steeped in the Lutheran tradition with its emphasis on the re-speaking or proclamation of God's spoken word, and as a Romantic who dwelt in the world of intimate conversations with Schelling and the Schlegel brothers, Schleiermacher naturally thought of texts as the speaking of unique persons, and of interpretation as a sort of re-speaking, and of understanding as a state of communion with that which has been spoken.

But Schleiermacher was also a philosopher steeped in the Kantian, Fichtean, and Hegelian traditions, and prone to concerns about spirits, and especially *thinking* spirits. For Schleiermacher, all speaking is an expression of thinking.[7] This is basically why Schleiermacher claimed that general hermeneutics belonged to the realm of philosophy. If interpreting is a sort of re-speaking, and all speaking is the expressing of thinking, then interpreting is a sort of re-thinking. This is nothing else than the once-celebrated, and now discredited, doctrine of *re-enactment*. For Schleiermacher, all interpreting is the re-enacting or rethinking of the thinking of the speaker (or writer) of utterances (spoken or written).

Thinking, for Schleiermacher, was a kind of 'contemplating', 'envisioning', or 'cognizing'. Understanding, which he regarded as the goal of interpreting, is then a kind of 're-contemplating', 're- envisaging', or 're-cognizing'. Interpreting, thus, turns out to be the activity of re-enacting or re-thinking a speaker's (or author's) utterances, which leads to understanding as the re-envisaging or recognizing of the speaker's (or author's) mental visions or cognitions. Technically, these visions or cognitions should be called 'spiritual' rather than 'mental'. This is because, for Schleiermacher, as a Romantic figure, envisaging and cognizing are an emotional and spiritual affair, and not just a dry rationalistic matter of apprehending clear and distinct ideas. This explains why the notion of spiritual 'empathy' plays such an important role in his theory. It is empathy, conceived of as a natural capacity with which humans are endowed, that ultimately enables us to re-envisage the thoughts and feelings of our fellow human beings. For Schleiermacher, interpreting is then not just an epistemic activity of re-apprehension, but an emotional and ethical activity of re-feeling, or more broadly, re-living.

The theological and ethical interests which permeate Schleiermacher's hermeneutics made it quite unsympathetic to kinds of interpreta-

tion that did not follow the pattern he prescribed. Because *Auslegung* and *Verstehen* were, for Schleiermacher, such positively charged notions, he dismissed kinds of interpretation that did not follow the pattern 're-enacting leading to re-cognizing' as not being interpretion at all. Traditional non-re-enacting types of interpretation, such as allegory, were dismissed outright by Schleiermacher. Newer types of non-re-enacting interpretation were being floated at the time, and Schleiermacher dismissed these too. He states his opinion on these alternative sorts of interpretation quite clearly:

> All these innovations seem to stem from the belief that there are various kinds of interpretation from which interpreters can freely choose. But were that so, it would no longer be worth the effort to speak or write. Unfortunately, it is abundantly clear that these various interpretations have had a deleterious influence on hermeneutics. Since they grow out of the chaotic conditions of the discipline, we may be sure they will not disappear until hermeneutics assumes the technical form it is due and, starting from the simple fact of understanding by reference to the nature of language and to the fundamental conditions relating a writer and reader or a speaker and hearer, develops its rules into a systematic, self-contained discipline.[8]

This passage supplies us with important insights into the most fundamental features of Schleiermacher's hermeneutics. First, Schleiermacher takes interpreting to be synonymous with re-enacting, and dismisses types of interpreting which he happens not to like as simply not interpreting. Second, he thinks that taking into account other types of interpretation is to the detriment of hermeneutics. Third, he believes that the proper task of hermeneutics is to supply rules, and to do so in a systematic way. And fourth, he thinks that hermeneutics must start from the 'simple fact' of understanding (*Verstehen*) by considering (1) the nature of language, and (2) the conditions relating writer and reader.

This passage already points to two viable or 'living' notions in Schleiermacher's hermeneutics, and to at least two non-viable or 'dead' notions. Let us begin with the two dead notions: First, dismissing types of interpretation that one does not happen to like, and taking pride in excluding them from an account purporting to be a *general* hermeneutic, is nothing more than dogmatic nonsense. General hermeneutics should

account for all interpreting, and not just the types that one likes. This is one of the principles to which operational hermeneutics will adhere.

Second, thinking that general hermeneutics can, and should, dictate the rules that ought to govern all interpretation is presumptuous in at least two respects: (1) Such thinking presumes the right to dictate to others what they should or should not do. This presumption, when based on the notion that these rules are somehow derived from the very nature of interpreting, is especially dangerous in that it takes itself to be based on the *description* of facts; (2) Such thinking presumes the first dead notion just encountered in that it takes all real interpreting to be of one kind (the kind one likes), and maintains that all interpreting can therefore be governed by a single set of rules. Operational hermeneutics will adhere to the principle that it is not the business of general hermeneutics to be dictating rules to people, and that it should, nevertheless, account for the fact that people do indeed follow rules when interpreting, acknowledging that these rules vary depending on the kind of interpreting being pursued. As far as operational hermeneutics is concerned, the second notion of Schleiermacher that was just discussed is most definitely dead.

I shall now turn to the two living notions that we find in the above passage from Schleiermacher. First, the notion that general hermeneutics must pay attention to the nature of language is clearly viable. It is impossible to make much sense of the interpreting of utterances (be they spoken or written) without noting that they occur in language. And second, the notion that general hermeneutics should pay attention to the 'conditions relating writer to reader' is also both viable and important. Interpreting always takes place in situations characterized by particular conditions. Such conditions must indeed be taken into account. We must note, however, that Schleiermacher's focus is exclusively on conditions relating writers to readers, and not on any other situational conditions. This is a flaw which Schleiermacher's hermeneutics suffers, and which operational hermeneutics avoids.

In light of the fact that Schleiermacher clearly states in the above passage, and in many other passages in his writings on hermeneutics, that language is important, and that situational conditions (relating writer to reader) are important, what was said about Schleiermacher's doctrine of interpreting as re-enacting must now be qualified.[9]

For Schleiermacher, any speaking activity is more than an expression of the utterer's thinking. Because every speaking activity must resort to the use of a given language, speaking is also always a social activity. In other words, every speaking activity has an individual dimension stemming from the utterer's uniqueness, and a social dimension stemming from the given language the utterer happens to be using. Interpreting is not just the re-enacting of the individual activity of thinking, but is also, somehow, the re-enacting of the social dimension of speaking, and hence of thinking. However, even though Schleiermacher does clearly state the importance of language as a social given that leaves its imprint in every speaking activity, he does grant more importance to the individual aspect of speaking.[10]

Schleiermacher, like other Romantics, truly cherished the 'unique', and the 'genius' of the individual. Even though he claimed that general hermeneutics should be concerned with the interpreting of speech as such, he defined interpreting in such a way as to give special value to speech that expresses the unique individuality of its utterer. This led Schleiermacher, despite his acknowledgement of the social dimension of all speaking activities, to put special emphasis on the re-enacting of those thinking activities of the other person which express their individuality. Thus, although Dilthey was indeed misrepresenting Schleiermacher when he did not make much of Schleiermacher's comments on language as a social given, he was not wholly unjustified in his emphasis on Schleiermacher's doctrine of interpreting as re-enacting the thinking of an individual unique person.[11]

Because of the added emphasis that Dilthey put on Schleiermacher's doctrine of re-enactment as the re-thinking of another's thoughts, this doctrine was made into the central most important doctrine in general hermeneutics, and it remained so for a long time. The doctrine of re-enactment, conceived of as 're-thinking leading to re-cognition', and stripped of Schleiermacher's acknowledgment of the social aspect of speaking and of interpreting, became the single most important legacy of Schleiermacher to the field which he founded: *general hermeneutics*.

While he dismisses non-re-enactment types of interpreting, Schleiermacher does distinguish between two 'moments' within the activity of the interpreter, and claims that these moments correspond to two different aspects of the utterance being interpreted: the individual aspect,

and the social aspect.[12] In this acknowledgment of moments, Schleiermacher comes close to admitting that there are two types of interpretative activities: those concerned with the *individual* aspect, and those concerned with the *social* aspect. However, Schleiermacher, even though he does in a few passages seem to see, at least dimly, a limited variety in types of utterances and in types of interpretative activities, his devotion to the uniqueness of persons and their unique thinking led him to attribute value and pay attention exclusively to a kind of interpreting so devoted to the author that it wanted 'to understand the author better than he understood himself'. Mental and emotional re-enactment turned out to be the chief legacy of Schleiermacher and, along with notions associated with it (like 're-envisaging','re-cognition', and 'empathy'), it became the dominant feature of later hermeneutical theorizing well until the early 1960s. I take this doctrine itself to be non-viable or dead, as I shall explain below.

Before going on to discuss Betti, Hirsch and Gadamer, I should point out one final feature of Schleiermacher's hermeneutics that is especially attractive—namely, his insistence that interpreting is the interpreter's *task*.[13] Schleiermacher criticized severely specialized hermeneutics for its assumption that understanding happens as a matter of course, and that misunderstanding happens occasionally, and can be taken care of with special techniques. Schleiermacher insisted that the opposite was in fact the case. For Schleiermacher, it is *misunderstanding* that happens as a matter of course, and *understanding* must therefore be strived for by the interpreter at every point. While one may not agree that the kind of understanding (re-cognition) which Schleiermacher had in mind is to be strived for all the time, one could agree that interpreting (after it has been broadened to include types of interpreting where re-cognition is not the aim) is indeed a task of the interpreter and is often hard work. Operational hermeneutics preserves the notion of *interpreting as task*, but develops it by broadening it, and considering its multiple dimensions. Let us now turn to the hermeneutics of Betti.

THE HERMENEUTICS OF BETTI

Emilio Betti (1890–1968), an Italian scholar of Roman law, jurist, and hermeneutics theorist, provided what is perhaps the most systematic work on interpretation to date: *Teoria Generale della Interpretazione*. Betti was

equally at home in Italian and German scholarship, and considered his work on interpretation to be a continuation of the work of G. B. Vico as well as the Romantic-Historicist German tradition of Schleiermacher, Boeckh, Steinthal, and Dilthey.[14]

Betti conceived his hermeneutics as a general theory of interpretation which serves as a general methodology of the human sciences (*Geisteswissenschaften*). In his conception of the scope and function of hermeneutics, Betti was heavily indebted to Dilthey. He followed Schleiermacher in thinking of interpreting as the re-enacting of an author's thinking leading to the re-cognition of what the author originally envisaged. When Betti is referred to today, he is usually considered a follower of Schleiermacher and Dilthey, and a contemporary representative of their re-enactment-centered hermeneutics.[15] While this view has some merit, it does fail to notice Betti's most distinct contributions to hermeneutics: (1) Betti offered the first extensive typology of interpretation types (it constitutes a full two thirds of his two-volume *Teoria Generale*); (2) He was the first theorist to establish an institute for the study of interpretation issues encountered in different fields.[16] Both of these contributions indicate an acute awareness of the variety of interpretative activities, and of the need to account for them. Nevertheless, Betti's hermeneutics remained committed to the Schleiermacherean doctrine of re-enactment, and because of that largely failed to achieve the status that it should have achieved.

Betti's starting point is the observation that human beings have a natural need to understand each other. This need stems from the common humanity which all human beings share. A person 'appeals' to others, and issues a 'call' to them to make an effort to understand him or her. When a person issues an appeal to be understood, other persons are naturally summoned by that appeal, and naturally feel obliged to answer it. As Betti puts it, 'Nothing is as close to the heart of a human being as mutual understanding with other human beings.'[17]

A person's appeal to being understood, however, is never made directly, but only through the mediation of what Betti called 'representative forms'. This notion of representative forms is crucial to Betti's theory. The best formulation he provided for it was the following:

> [N]o interpretation can arise without a representational form. In this expression the word 'form' should be understood in the very broad sense

> outlined by my late lamented friend Adelchi Baratono, as *a unitary relationship of sensible elements, suited to preserve the mark of the one who has molded it or of the one who incarnates it* (for example: the face of a person), and the qualification of 'representational' function is be understood in the sense that another mind different from ours and nonetheless intimately linked with ours must make itself recognizable to us through the form, calling upon our sensibility and intelligence.[18]

As Betti indicates, his notion of representative form is borrowed from Adelchi Baratono. Baratono (1875–1947) was an Italian philosopher influenced by both Kantianism and Marxism. In his aesthetics, published as *Mondo Sensibile: Introduzione all'Estetica*, Baratono emphasized the concrete materiality of works of art and saw them as incarnations of values. Betti, who was also influenced by Nicolai Hartmann and his Neo-Kantian value theory, found the idea of incarnated values quite attractive.[19] The unmistakable ethical concern permeating all of his hermeneutics is largely due to this notion.

Another very important influence on Betti's notion of representative form, however, was Dilthey's notion of objectifications of spirit'. Betti's list of examples of these corresponds to the one given by Dilthey in his *Rise of Hermeneutics*. Betti's list is interesting in that it indicates the broad scope which he, following Dilthey, gave to hermeneutics:

> Whenever we find ourselves in the presence of sensible forms, through which another spirit, objectified in them, speaks to ours, calling upon our intelligence, our interpretative activity begins to move, trying to 'understand what sense those forms have, what message they are sending us, what they mean to us. From living and fleeting speech to the motionless document and monument, from writing to the conventional sign, to the number and to the artistic symbol, from language that is articulated, poetic, narrative, deductive, to language that is not articulated, like that which is figured or musical, from the statement to the silent gesture and to personal behavior, from physiognomy and the expression of the face to the direction of conduct and the manner of behavior, everything that comes to us from another mind extends a call to be understood, a request and a message to our sensibility and our intelligence.[20]

As we have seen above, general hermeneutics was founded by Schleiermacher as an account of the interpretation of texts. In Betti, following Dilthey, it becomes an account of the interpretation of all objectifica-

tions of spirit. It is this kind of broadening of the scope of hermeneutics that eventually led to the grand claims of generality and universality that general hermeneutics makes today. This is a good place to make it very clear that the scope of the operational hermeneutics presented in this thesis is deliberately limited to texts and their interpretation, and not to other 'objectifications of spirit'. Like a man who risks losing a small fortune in hand because of grandiose ambitions at achieving a massive one, hermeneutics, when it pretends to be an account of interpreting everything, risks losing all by becoming epistemology. Epistemology is very important, but when one is dealing with epistemology there is no need to give it the new name—'hermeneutics'. As we shall see later, Gadamer broadens the scope of hermeneutics even further so that it becomes indistinguishable from ontology. What we just said about epistemology applies equally to ontology.

Betti's representative forms are essential for interpretation as he conceived it, since they mediate communication among human beings, and such communication would be impossible without these forms. Betti stressed what he called the 'triadic structure' of all interpretative activities. There are always two persons plus a form mediating their communion in understanding:

> The phenomenon is presented, therefore, as a *triadic process*, at the one end of which is the interpreter, as a living and thinking spirit, and at the other end of which is the spirit which is objectified in the representative forms. The two ends do not come into contact, and do not immediately touch each other, but only through the mediation of those representative forms in which lurks the objectified spirit as *something of another*, as an irremovable objectivity.[21]

The interpreter never contacts the other person directly, but only the form as objectively given.

This given, however, is not passive, but actively elicits a response from the interpreter. This response is basically a 'resonance' with the thinking of the author. This doctrine is basically a modified version of Schleiermacher's doctrine of interpreting as re-enacting. Betti's modification was intended to avoid the need to resort to somehow 'getting into the mind' of another person, a feat which everyone who opposed the doctrine was quick to ridicule. Betti's modification attempts to circumvent

this difficulty by making it unnecessary to get into the mind of another. This is done via the doctrine of resonance.

> In fact, humans get to the point of understanding one another not by exchanging material signs of things or by setting out to produce exactly the same idea by means of some sort of exchange automatism, but rather by reciprocally putting into motion, each one of them, the same link from the chain of his own representations or conceptions, and—to adopt a figurative image—by touching in each other the same string of each individual mental instrument, as if to sound a chord, so that ideas corresponding to those of the one who speaks or writes will be stimulated in the one who listens or reads.[22]

> Indeed the doors of the mind can be opened only from the inside, through an inner spontaneity, and that which is received is only an incitation *to vibrate in harmony with the stimulus*, as a function of the energy that communicates its signifying or semantic value.[23]

I have quoted Betti at length because while his notion of resonance is crucial, beyond what we find in these quotations he says very little about it by way of clarification. The reason Betti wanted to hold a rather vague notion like resonance is that he wanted to keep the doctrine of re-enactment without having to postulate any superhuman capacity to get into other people's minds. Since one's own mind is available to one, it seemed reasonable to simply assume that one can have access to the thinking of another when one's own thinking 'resonates' with that thinking. The notion of resonance, however, remains so vague as to mystify the whole process Betti was attempting to describe. And resonance is not the only questionable doctrine that Betti had to resort to in order to save his commitment to re-enactment. This commitment is made quite clear in the following passage:

> [. . .] the task of the cognizing subject consists in knowing again in these objectifications the creative thinking which animates them, rethinking the conceptions, reinvoking the intuitions which they reveal. Here, then, knowing is a recognizing and a reconstructing of a meaning—and with the meaning a spirit that is knowable again through the forms of its objectifications, and which speaks to the thinking spirit which has affinity with it in common humanity.[24]

The hermeneutics of Betti, along with that of Schleiermacher and

Dilthey, is today largely discredited mainly because of its insistence on the doctrine of re-enactment. Many scholars have rightly pointed out that the notion of rethinking someone else's thoughts is a difficult notion to accept, and that the mechanisms of 'empathy' or the more refined 'resonance' are too vague to be of much help. As far as operational hermeneutics is concerned, re-enactment as re-thinking leading to re-cognizing is a doctrine that should be discarded.

Betti thought that the problems of interpretation are basically problems of knowing, or epistemic problems, that were special only because the object known was an objectification of spirit and not a mere thing. Just as the knowing of mere things can be methodologically guided, so can the interpreting of representative forms be methodically guided.[25] Four 'canons' were proposed by Betti; two of these canons pertained to the interpreter and were 'subjective', while the other two pertained to the text and were 'objective'. The two subjective canons required the interpreter (1) to strive to make the text his own, and (2) to have empathy with its author. The two objective canons required the interpreter (3) to respect the text's 'otherness', as the product of another mind, and (4) to treat the text's parts in light of the whole text, and the whole text in light of the parts (this is a version of the celebrated 'hermeneutic circle'). These canons were supposed to be, 'Principles, the observation of which guarantees the epistemological outcome of interpretation'. But their ability to guarantee anything at all is obviously questionable. All they are saying, in effect, is: (1) respect the text as other; (2) but relate the text to your interests, (3) have empathy with the author; and (4) acknowledge the interdependence of wholes and their parts. How can such 'canons' possibly guarantee anything? Here again we find Betti wanting to uphold views of Schleiermacher and Dilthey that he should have discarded. Such views have prevented his most valuable contributions from truly coming to fruition.

The most significant contribution of Betti was his typology of types of interpretation, which is quite impressive, but almost completely ignored in discussions of Betti's work. The details of this typology are many, and we cannot possibly go into them here. We shall present only the bare bones of Betti's typology.

Betti first distinguished among three main types of interpretation: *re-cognitive*, *re-presentational*, and *normative*. In re-cognitive interpretation

the aim of the interpreter is to re-cognize or apprehend the author's intended meaning. When you read Aristotle and you aim at grasping what he originally intended, you are engaged in re-cognitive interpretation. In re-presentational interpretation the aim of the interpreter is not only to grasp the author's meaning, but also to present it to another person in terms which that person can understand. When one translates a text, conducts a Beethoven symphony, or produces a Shakespearean play, one is engaged in re-presentational interpretation. In normative interpretation the aim of the interpreter is to normatively apply the text to a particular situation. When one reads the Bible in order to live a Christian life, one is engaged in normative interpretation.

Betti further distinguished various subtypes within each of these three types. Within re-cognitive interpretation he distinguished three subtypes: *philological*, *historical*, and *technical*. The aim of philological recognitive interpretation is the apprehension of a linguistic meaning. In historical re-cognitive interpretation the aim is to apprehend the historical significance of what the text says. In technical re-cognitive interpretation the aim is the apprehension of formal or structural elements in the text's meaning. In this last subtype, the aim is to apprehend ideals, values, and forms for which the text serves as a vehicle of expression. Depending upon the nature of the ideals and values involved, this subtype of re-cognitive interpretation also divides into six further subtypes: *literary*, *artistic, scientific, judicial, sociological*, and economic.

Re-presentational interpretation is divided by Betti into three subtypes: *translational*, *dramatical*, and *musical*. Translational re-presentational interpretation aims at the re-presentation of what has been understood to another person in the form of another language. In dramatical re-presentational interpretation the aim is to dramatically present what has been understood (the production of a Shakespearean play belongs to this subtype). In musical re-presentational interpretation the aim is to bring to performance and life a piece of music which has been understood (conducting a Beethoven symphony belongs to this subtype).

Normative interpretation similarly divides into three subtypes, as dictated by the particular area in which the meaning of the text is to be applied as norm: *theological*, *juridical* and *psychological*. Theological normative interpretation reads a text as a guide to a religious life. Juridical normative interpretation is concerned with the application of laws.

Psychological normative interpretation is concerned with guiding one's mind.

Betti's distinctions may be conveniently summarized by means of the following outline of his typology:

BETTI'S THREE TYPES OF INTERPRETATION

1. RE-COGNITIVE

- (a) Philological
- (b) Historical
- (c) Technical
  - [1] *artistic*
  - [2] *literary*
  - [3] *scientific*
  - [4] *juridical*
  - [5] *sociological*
  - [6] *economic*

2. RE-PRESENTATIONAL

- (a) Translational
- (b) Dramatical
- (c) Musical

3. NORMATIVe

- (a) Theological
- (b) Judicial
- (c) Psychological

It is important to note that while Betti's three general types of interpretation—the re-cognitive, the re-presentational, and the normative—are different in their concerns, they nevertheless share one feature in common: they all *begin* with re-cognititon. The three types of interpretation actually reduce to three species of the same type, which is exactly the re-enacting kind that Schleiermacher made into interpreting as such. One may accurately describe these types as: (1) [re-cognition]; (2) [re-cognition *plus* presentation]; and (3) [re-cognition *plus* application]. The re-cognitive type remains the basis of all three types.

This is unfortunate, for it makes Betti's impressive undertaking nothing more than the enumeration of types of re-enactment. While such a typology of re-enactment is quite valuable in its own right, it is by no

means a typology of interpretation broad enough to account for the obvious variety of all the activities we call 'interpretation'. Despite his distinction between three types of interpretation, Betti provided a set of canons which he claimed applies to all interpretation, and he never abandoned the idea that interpretation is always the attempt to re-cognize an author's intended meaning from the givenness of representative forms which embody his or her spirit. For Betti, the act of interpreting was essentially an 'inversion of the creative process'.[26]

Betti's typology, as stated above, is quite valuable in that it portrays an awareness that there is a variety of interpretative activities, and a need to sort out those activities. Betti came closer than any other theorist in hermeneutics to working out a full study of interpretative types. However, Betti's typology remains limited. The reason for this limitation derives from insistence on identifying interpretation with the re-cognition or re-creation of an author's thinking.

The motivation for this insistence appears to have been ethical in nature. Betti regarded texts as manifestations of spirit, and manifestations of spirit, unlike things, are to be respected, and not merely used. Betti spoke of interpretation as a 'communion' with others. This communion required attending to the author's intention.[27]

Now, Betti's ethical concern is indeed commendable. However, this concern precluded him from seeing that the variety of interpretative activities cannot be exhausted by re-cognitive types of interpretation. These types comprise only one kind of a host of interpretative activities. It is this variety that operational hermeneutics makes a point of accomodating.

Despite its limitations, Betti's typology is quite useful as a classification of interpretative activities in which the author's intentions are respected, and it also makes it clear that the task of sorting out and classifying kinds of interpretation is important. Betti knew that his classificatory work was only a beginning, and he hoped to pursue it further with the help of others. This is why he established everywhere he taught or lived an 'Institute of the General Theory of Interpretation'. The idea was to discuss with others working in a multitude of fields the special problems of interpretation which they encounter in their respective fields. There were several meetings held in the Institutes while Betti lived, but when he died his Institutes basically died with him. It is only

quite recently—and mainly through the efforts of Giuliano Crifo, a student of Betti, and a custodian of his legacy—that Betti's Institute has been revived in Rome.[28] The operational hermeneutics presented in this study is esentially a revisionist revival of Betti's concerns with the close study and classification of types of interpretation. Operational hermeneutics, however, dispenses with the unreasonable doctrine of re-enactment which made Betti ignore other types of interpretation and resulted in his theory being less effective and useful than it could have been. Operational hermeneutics preserves and develops the most important insights of the hermeneutics of Betti.

THE HERMENEUTICS OF HIRSCH

The American literary critic E. D. Hirsch (1928-) is well-known for his epistemological defense of resorting to authorial intention as a norm in interpretation. There is an ethical dimension to Hirsch's work, however, which is relatively neglected, and which is the single most important factor in hindering Hirsch from developing the full implications of his recognition of the variety of interpretative aims and, hence, activities. Because this kind of ethical concern, which we have already encountered in Betti, may be considered a stumbling block to the operational hermeneutics developed in this thesis, I shall devote most of this section to sorting out and refuting Hirsch's contention that because of an ethical imperative, we ought not to be concerned with types of interpretation other than the re-cognitive one.

The bulk of Hirsch's work in the theory of interpretation is devoted to showing that aiming at the re-cognition of an author's intended meaning is not a hopeless endeavour. His main concern is to show that the re-cognition of an author's meaning is *possible* by showing *first* that such a meaning exists, and *second*, that it is graspable. Hirsch attempts to show this through the following moves: (1) He upholds the existence of an 'essence' of a text which consists in its author's intended meaning; (2) He upholds the persistence of the text's essence (which Hirsch calls 'meaning') despite the variety of 'attributes' which it takes on in different contexts and for different interpreters (Hirsch calls the conjunction of a text's changing attributes 'significance'); and (3) He defends the logical *possibility* of grasping the essence of the text through a Popperian process of conjecture and refutation.

It is Hirsch's attempt to uphold the logical *possibility* of re-cognizing an author's intended meaning that has received the most attention. Hirsch's attempt has been the centre of a great deal of controversy, and his attempt has been severely attacked on the grounds that it ignores the historicity of all acts of interpretation. This historicity, his critics say, renders the distinction between meaning and significance questionable, and the objective grasping of meaning impossible. This has been the main line of the argument of Hirsch's critics, and I shall not pursue it here at length.[29] It is incisive, and there is no need to keep flogging a dead horse. In contrast to the attention paid to Hirsch's defense of the possibility of re-cognizing an author's intended meaning, little attention has been paid to Hirsch's moral defence of the claim that such re-cognizing *ought to* be aimed at.[30] It is on this defence that I want to concentrate here. Before I turn to that defence, however, some important epistemological features of Hirsch's hermeneutics must briefly be pointed out. It suffices for our purpose to present these features by way of quotations from his work.

First, despite the fact that Hirsch considered his work to be in the tradition of Schleiermacher and Betti, he does not share with them the interest in methodology, or in canons. Hirsch maintains that interpretation is a process of conjecture followed by refutation, and that conjecture consists simply in guessing. A few quotations should suffice to make his position clear.

> ... in interpretation the divinatory moment can be followed by the critical. The divinatory moment is unmethodical, intuitive, sympathetic; it is an imaginative guess without which nothing can begin. The second, or critical, moment of interpretation submits the first moment to a 'high intellectual standard' by testing it against all the relevant knowledge available. Thus, although the critical moment is dependent and secondary, it has the indispensable function of raising interpretative guesses to the level of knowledge ...

> The notion that a reliable methodology of interpretation can be built upon a set of canons is thus a mirage. Precooked maxims carry less authority than informed probability judgements about particular cases, and verbal constructions cannot possibly be governed by *any* methods. No possible set of rules or rites of preparation can generate or compel an insight into what an author means. The act of understanding is at first a genial (or a mistaken)

> guess, and there are no methods for making guesses, no rules for generating insights. The methodical activity of interpretation commences when we begin to test and criticize our guesses. [31]

Second, Hirsch nevertheless regards interpreting as a constructing task of the interpreter:

> But, in fact, all understanding of cultural entities past or present is 'constructed' ... There is no immediacy in understanding either a contemporary or a predecessor, and there is no certainty. In all cases, what we understand is a construction, and if the construction happens to be unthinking and automatic, it is not necessarily more vital and authentic for that.[32]

Third, he does accept, to some extent, the notion that there are different kinds of texts, but he claims that the main difference between them is a difference in 'genre'.

> One result of the preceding discussion of the genre concept has been to suggest that the distinction between types of interpretation is not really antithetical to the idea that 'the functions of understanding are everywhere the same.' If understanding is always governed by the genre conventions of an utterance, it follows that different types of texts do indeed require different types of interpretation. But, on the other hand, the underlying hermeneutical principle is always and everywhere the same: valid interpretation is always governed by a valid inference about genre. Thus, while the same methods and categories are not universally applicable to all texts, the proper categories are nevertheless always determined by a universal principle—namely, their appropriateness to the intrinsic genre of a text.[33]

Fourth, despite his enthusiasm about a 'validation process' that can raise guesses to the level of knowledge, Hirsch fails to forward a validation technique, and his claims remain largely empty. He seems to be aware of this to some extent when he writes:

> The following pages are mainly concerned with the second moment in interpretation. Since there are no methods for making imaginative guesses, the reader will be disappointed if he expects to discover in these pages a new interpretative program or 'approach'. The only methods advocated in this book are those for weighing evidence. Nor can the reader expect to find complete and exemplary demonstrations of the validating process ....

> The argument of the book is unabashedly and I think necessarily theoretical. Of course a theoretical essay on validity ought to have practical implications for achieving valid interpretations, and I hope this will turn out to be so, but I recognize that the practical consequences of a book like this are bound to be largely indirect.[34]

The reason for Hirsch's failure to deliver the validation technique which he kept touting is rather simple, and has to do with a logical bind in which he landed himself. He began by claiming that meaning is a mental matter that exists in an author's mind. He then claimed that, because meaning does exist, it is *in principle* graspable. He further acknowledged that it is impossible to access what is in another 's mind, and that one can never be sure that what one guesses is in another's mind is what is actually in it. Having done that he denied himself of the only way validation could have worked: access to the validation criterion. Hirsch's critics have already pointed out the basic logical incoherence of Hirsch's position. Not much has been said, however, about Hirsch's *ethical* efforts to defend re-cognitive interpretation.

Hirsch opens 'Meaning and Implication', the second chapter of *Validity in Interpretation*, with the observation that a text is open to being interpreted in a variety of ways, and with a variety of interpretative aims in mind. There is nothing in the text as such, Hirsch claims, that in any way requires the interpreter to envision a particular aim in interpretation. The nature of the text itself does not require the interpreter to uphold the author's original meaning as normative: 'Since it is very easy for a reader of any text to construe meanings that are different from the author's, *there is nothing in the nature of the text itself which requires the reader to set up the author's meaning as his normative ideal.*'[35]

Hirsch believes that normative matters are matters of values and ethics, and not of ontology. A normative dimension is always associated with a choice, and choices are made by human interpreters, and not by mute signs. The choice which the interpreter makes depends on his or her interpretative aim: 'Any normative concept in interpretation implies a choice that is required not by the nature of written texts but rather by the *goal* that the interpreter sets himself.'[36] This is why, Hirsch insists, we have to think of the meaning sought by the interpreter not as a given, but rather as a freely chosen and freely pursued task: 'Bluntly, no necessity requires the object of interpretation to be determinate, changing or

unchanging. On the contrary, the object of interpretation is no automatic given, but a *task that the interpreter sets himself. He* decides what he wants to actualize and what purpose his actualization should achieve.'[37]

This may very well sound like an invitation to arbitrariness in interpretation. If the meaning is a task which one undertakes, then it would seem that one can choose to construct whichever meaning suits one's whims. However, Hirsch is quick to point out that this is not the case, arguing that there may be a compelling reason to adopt a particular aim as the best one to have:

> Thus, while it is a fallacy to claim that a particular norm for interpretation is necessarily grounded in the nature of this or that kind of text, rather than in *the interpreter's own will*, it is quite another matter to claim that there can be only one sort of norm when interpretation is conceived as a corporate enterprise. For it may very well be that there exists only one norm that can be universally compelling and generally sharable.[38]

The one aim which Hirsch thinks may be both sharable and compelling to all is that of re-cognizing an author's original meaning:

> ... no presently known normative concept other than the author's meaning has this universally compelling character. On *purely practical grounds*, therefore, it is preferable to agree that the meaning of a text is the author's meaning.[39]

It is the sharable nature of this aim which makes it a matter of prudence or practical convenience to accept it as the aim which all interpreters ought to have in interpretation. Hirsch lashes out violently against all schools of thought that want to dispense with the aim of recognizing an author's meaning, and he regards the efforts of such schools, as the New Critics, as attempts to destroy the only viable norm that criticism can have: 'To banish the original author as the determiner of meaning was to reject the only compelling normative principle that could lend validity to an interpretation.'[40]

Hirsch notes that his defence of re-cognitive interpretation as the best interpretation on practical or prudential grounds is different from its traditional defence, which is based on the contention that only such a recognitive interpretation is capable of broadening one's horizons:

> Usually it is true that the defence of the old ideal of re-cognitive interpretation is carried out on *a different front*. It is pointed out that the main

> reason for studying texts, particularly old ones, is to expand the mind by introducing it to the immense possibilities in human actions and thoughts —to see and feel what other men have seen and felt, to know what they have known.[41]

Only a human being who is willing to strive to understand others *as others*, and not as projections of one's own self, is able to transcend the limitations of one's world view. Such a person would not benefit all that much from projecting his or her whims and wishes onto the texts of others. As Hirsch observes:

> Furthermore, none of these expansive benefits comes to a man who simply discovers his own meanings in someone else's text and who, instead of encountering another person, merely encounters himself. When a reader does that, he finds only his own preconceptions, and these he did not need to go out and seek.[42]

Hirsch finds the argument from the need to expand one's horizons attractive, but he refuses to make it the main argument of his work: '*There is nothing despicable in this argument*, nor can any considerable objection be raised against it, except that the knowledge sought may be, for various reasons, impossible to achieve.'[43] He is confident that he can successfully counter this objection with his extensive attacks on scepticism and relativism. But Hirsch states that he is still not interested in using what he now calls the 'moral arguments': 'However, I shall not repeat at length the moral arguments in favour of viewing interpretation as a re-cognition of the author's meaning.'[44]

It is not clear which arguments Hirsch is here referring to as 'the moral arguments'. While it seems natural from the context to assume that he is referring to the argument from the possibility of expanding one's horizons, Hirsch introduces another argument which might be the one he is actually referring to. Of course, it is possible that Hirsch is referring to both the argument from expanding horizons and the new argument. But what is this new argument? It is introduced so very briefly and incidentally that it might easily be missed. Hirsch writes:

> It is, of course, quite true that the choice of a norm for interpretation is a free social and ethical act. Any reader can adopt or reject any norm, and he is justified in thinking that there is no absolute necessity for his choosing one or another. Furthermore, he may or may not accept the idea that *all uses*

> *of language carry moral imperatives which derive from the double-sided, interpersonal character of linguistic acts.* All this he may reject as unconvincing, and nothing in the mute signs before him will compel him to change his mind or bring him ill fortune if he does not.[45]

Thus, the new moral argument runs as follows: all acts of language-use are associated with a moral imperative to have a re-cognitive aim, so it is morally required to aim at what the author intended.

Regardless of the value of this moral argument, Hirsch chooses not to use it because he thinks that an interpreter can choose not to follow it and insist instead on pursuing whatever aim he chooses: '*Partly for this reason, I have chosen a different sort of defence*—one that appeals *not to the ethics of language* but to the *logical consequences* that follow from the act of public interpretation.'[46] The fact that the interpreter can elect not to pursue the aim which Hirsch regards as ethically warranted leads him to invoke a 'logical necessity'. Hirsch basically claims that if the interpreter wants to put forth his interpretation as a valid one, then he must appeal to a public standard. This standard, Hirsch believes, must be the author's intended meaning:

> As soon as anyone claims validity for his interpretation (and few would listen to a critic who did not), he is immediately caught in a web of *logical necessity*. If his claim to validity is to hold, he must be willing to measure his interpretation against *a genuinely discriminating norm*, and the only compelling normative principle that has ever been brought forward is the old-fashioned ideal of rightly understanding what the author meant.[47]

In *Validity in Interpretation* Hirsch invokes what he alternatively calls the 'practical' or 'logical' argument to support the contention that the interpreter ought to aim at the re-cognition of the author's intended meaning. 'Consequently,' he writes, 'my case rests *not on the powerful moral argument for re-cognitive interpretation*, but on the fact that it is the only kind of interpretation with a determinate object, and thus the only kind that can lay claim to validity in any straightforward and practicable sense of that term.'[48] What he now has to show, he thinks, is that the author's intended meaning is both determinate and reproducible: 'Even though only one compelling normative principle exists, it is still necessary to show that it is a viable principle. Thus, I shall have to show that the author's verbal meaning is [1] *determinate*, [and] that it is [2] *reprodu-*

cible …'[49] Most of Hirsch's efforts in *Validity in Interpretation* are devoted to defending the contention that there is such a thing as an author's intended meaning, and that it is *in principle* possible to grasp it.

Hirsch opens 'Three Dimensions of Hermeneutics', the fifth chapter of *The Aims of Interpretation*, by observing again that there is nothing about the nature of a text which compels us to have re-cognition as our aim. This is because interpretation is not *essentially* re-cognition, but rather only the construing of something non-physical from the physical text: 'Stated bluntly, the nature of interpretation is to construe from a sign-system (for short, "text") something more than its physical presence. That is, the nature of a text is to mean whatever we construe it to mean.'[50] What we choose to aim for when construing what a text means varies a great deal. This is because such a choice of aims is an ethical one—that is, it is an answer to an ethical question: 'For the goals of interpretation are determined ultimately by value preferences, and interpreters do not exhibit more agreement in their values than the generality of people.'[51] Any equating of all interpreting with interpreting which has a particular aim is, for Hirsch, an act of deception.

To clarify this point, Hirsch contrasts Schleiermacher's claim that all interpretation aims at the reconstruction of the original context and thought behind a text with the claim of the Christian allegorizers who hold, according to Hirsch, that all interpretation aims at something other than the reconstruction of the original context and thought.

If the aim of interpretation is a freely chosen one, then why should we aim at the re-cognizing of an author's intended meaning? This is the question which Hirsch answers in the last section of 'Three Dimensions of Hermeneutics'. Hirsch's answer is basically this: We must aim to re-cognize an author's intended meaning because it is morally imperative upon us to do so:

> Therefore, let me state what I consider to be a fundamental ethical maxim for interpretation, a maxim that claims no privileged sanction from metaphysics or analysis, but only from general ethical tenets, generally shared. *Unless there is a powerful overriding value in disregarding an author's intention (i.e. original meaning), we who interpret as a vocation should not disregard it.*[52]

Hirsch derives this ethical maxim from a quasi-Kantian argument. Upholding the Kantian notion that we have an obligation always to treat

human beings as ends in themselves, Hirsch extends that obligation to the words of human beings:

> Kant held it to be a foundation of moral action that men should be conceived as ends in themselves, and not as instruments of other men. *This imperative is transferable to the words of men* because speech is an extension and expression of men in the social domain, and also because when we fail to conjoin a man's intentions to his words we lose the soul of speech, which is to convey meaning and to understand what is intended to be conveyed.[53]

Hirsch holds that, 'To treat an author's words as grist for one's own mill is ethically analogous to using another man merely for one's own purposes.'[54] Following the example of Kant, Hirsch formulates the obligation towards the texts composed by other human beings as a categorical imperative:

> The question I always want to ask my critics who dismiss authorial intention as their norm is one that could be transposed into the categorical imperative or simply into the golden rule. I want to ask them this: 'When you write a piece of criticism, do you want me to disregard your intention and original meaning? Why do you say to me "That is not what I mean at all; that is not it at all"? Why do you ask me to honor the ethics of language for your writings when you do not honor them for the writings of others?'[55]

Hirsch regards authors who attack aiming at re-cognizing intended meaning but at the same time expect others to aim at re-cognizing their intended meanings as upholding a 'double standard'.[56] For Hirsch, '[t]he *vocation* of interpretation has always carried ethical duties.'[57] What Hirsch demands is that the interpreter live up to the ethical duties to which he commits himself when he chooses interpretation as a 'vocation'. Short as Hirsch's moral argument is, he is convinced that it shows clearly why the re-cognition of intended meaning ought to be aimed at. For Hirsch, re-cognitive interpretation is morally superior to other types of interpretation. As he puts it: 'in ethical terms, original meaning is the "best meaning".'[58]

Let us now attempt to summarize and organize the essential points of Hirsch's remarks regarding interpretative aims and obligation in *Validity in Interpretation* and *Aims of Interpretation*. Hirsch's most important propositions are the following: (1) in interpreting a text, an interpreter can

aim at any one of a variety of different aims; and (2) the interpreter ought nevertheless to aim at the re-cognition of the author's intended meaning. Proposition 1 is put forth as true by observation. Proposition 2, however, is supported by five different arguments, some of which are conflated by Hirsch. In what follows, I shall refer to these arguments as: (1) the argument from prudence; (2) the argument from expanded horizons; (3) the argument from moral obligation; (4) the argument from the 'golden rule'; and (5) the argument from vocation.

Hirsch's remarks about interpretative aims are pretty much the same in both *Validity* and *Aims*. They basically amount to the observation that the aims of the interpreter are not dictated by the ontology of the text, and that the interpreter is therefore free to choose his or her aim. That the aims of interpreters can vary is taken for granted by Hirsch as a matter of direct observation. His remarks about interpretative obligations, however, change substantially from the *Validity* account to the *Aims* account. In *Validity*, Hirsch introduces arguments (1), (2), and (3). He seems to think that arguments (2) and (3) are essentially the same and that they are both ethical in nature, and while he appears to believe that these two arguments are sound, he does not want to rely on them, probably because of his assertion that an interpreter can still refuse to abide by their conclusion. In this account he relies heavily on the argument from prudence. In *Aims*, arguments (1) and (2) are left out, and Hirsch presents arguments (3), (4), and (5) in a more concise manner by simply combining them. Unlike the arguments (1) and (2), arguments (3), (4), and (5) are all ethical in nature, and they all conclude that the interpreter has *a moral obligation* towards the author. I shall here summarize and examine each of these arguments in turn:

(1) The argument from prudence (which Hirsch calls 'the practical' or 'logical argument') can be summarized as follows: If an interpreter wants to claim validity for his or her interpretation, then he or she must appeal to a collectively accepted standard. Most interpreters want to make such a claim. Therefore, most interpreters are obliged to appeal to a collectively accepted standard. There is only one collectively accepted standard, and it is the one that holds a valid interpretation as one which aims at the re-cognition of an author's intended meaning. Therefore, most interpreters are obliged to appeal to this standard.

This argument from prudence is unsound: it rests on a false premise. It

is simply not true that aiming at the recognition of intended meaning is a collectively accepted standard. A glance at any account of the history of contemporary literary criticism will show that there is no such general acceptance of this standard. It is possible, as P. D. Juhl points out, that Hirsch is putting forth the standard as one which he *recommends* to others to accept collectively.[59] In that case, the rejection of Hirsch's recommendation is sufficient to discredit this argument. The fact of the matter is that Hirsch's recommendation has not been accepted, not even by any substantial number of people, let alone by the entirety of the critical community.

(2) The argument from expanded horizons (which Hirsch refers to as 'the traditional moral argument') can be summarized as follows: Human beings ought to attempt to expand their horizons. Interpretation which aims at recognizing another person's intended meaning expands one's horizons. Therefore, interpreters ought to aim at recognizing an author's intended meaning.

While the argument from expanded horizons is interesting, it remains open to the devastating objection, which Hirsch himself points out, that re-cognition is not possible. Of course, one might argue that one has a moral obligation to *attempt* to expand one's horizons, even if such expansion is actually impossible.

(3) The argument from moral obligation (which Hirsch also refers to as 'the moral argument', or sometimes 'the argument from the ethics of language') can be summarized as follows: Humans ought to treat other humans as ends and not merely as means. Texts, being expressions of the humanity of humans, ought also to be treated as ends and not merely as means. When the interpreter aims at the re-cognizing of another person's intended meaning, the interpreter is treating the author's text as an end. Therefore, the interpreter ought to aim at the re-cognizing of the author's intended meaning.

This argument is worthy of more serious concern than the two preceding ones. While Hirsch admits that there is a variety of interpretative acts which arises because of the variety of interpretative aims, he maintains, in this argument from moral obligation, that re-cognitive interpretation is morally required. However, while we might agree with Hirsch that respect for a person implies respect for their work as *their* work, and also that there is indeed a moral obligation to practice re-cognitive inter-

pretation, there nevertheless seems to be no good reason to agree with his further claim that the argument from moral obligation in any way shows that re-cognitive interpretation is the only worthwhile type of interpretation to practice. The only cases in which the argument from obligation is compelling arise when the situation requires that I attend to the author's intended meaning, or when I claim that I am attending to that meaning. A judge who is sitting in a court of law trying to pass judgement on a person who wrote a threatening letter had better attend to the author's intended meaning. He is not only morally but also legally obliged to do so. If I write an article in which I claim that you intended such and such, I may have a moral obligation to attend to what you intended to say. However, Hirsch's argument from obligation in no way unconditionally and absolutely requires me to practice re-cognitive interpretation.

(4) The argument from the 'golden rule' (which Hirsch seems to think is just another formulation of the third argument) can be summarized as follows: Human beings ought to live according to the principle 'do unto others as you would have them do unto you'. The interpreter would prefer to have others interpret his own text with the aim of recognizing his intended meaning. Therefore, the interpreter ought to aim at re-cognizing the intended meaning of others.

The same sort of objections that were raised against the argument from moral obligation can be raised against the argument from the 'golden rule'. Yes, I do want others to practice re-cognitive interpretation on my work, when the situation requires it. Consequently, I feel that I should practice that type of interpretation when it comes to their work, when the situation requires it. But I do not think that others should attend to my intended meaning in all situations. When an interpreter explicitly says that he is not dealing with my text as my text, but as an instance of philosophical prose which he wishes to deconstruct, I do not feel that he is in any way violating my rights. I would not hesitate to do the same to the other person's text, provided that I did not put forth the interpretations I came up with as that other person's views. The golden rule holds good in that feel I ought not to intentionally misrepresent another person's views, for I would object to their intentional misrepresentation of my own. But if there is no pretence to representation, and the situation clearly indicates that no such representation is intended,

then there is no reason why the golden rule should require recognitive interpretation.

(5) The argument from vocation (which Hirsch seems to equate with both the third and the fourth arguments) can be summarized as follows: Interpretation is a vocation. This vocation entails certain moral obligations. Among these obligations is the obligation to aim at the re-cognition of the author's intended meaning. Therefore, one who does interpretation as a vocation ought to aim at such recognition.

This argument is open to the same sort of objection. Not all interpreters regard their vocation as practicing recognitive interpretation. As long as they do not say that re-cognitive interpretation is their vocation, there is no reason for them to practice this particular type of interpretation. There undeniably exist situations which entail a vocation to practise re-cognitive interpretation. A case in point is that of the translator in a summit meeting of world leaders. That translator has to take his vocation seriously, and that vocation entails that he pay close attention to the intended meanings of the participants in the summit meeting. If he were to practice deconstruction in this situation, he would indeed be failing miserably to fulfill his vocation.

While Hirsch rightly discerns that an interpreter may have a moral duty to practise re-recognitive interpretation, he wrongly thinks of this duty as categorical or absolute, instead of conditional and relative. Interpreters do indeed have duties, but these are more like the Stoic situational and positional duties than the Kantian absolute ones. Hirsch, like Betti, shows commendable ethical concern, and he correctly calls attention to the ethical dimension of interpretation. However, all that Hirsch succeeds in demonstrating is that there do exist situations in which the re-cognitive type of interpretation should be practised. The mistake Hirsch makes consists in thinking that because re-cognitive interpretation is an ethically sound interpretation to practice in some situations, it is therefore the *only* ethically sound type of interpretation to practice in *any* situation. This is why Hirsch, despite his acknowledgement of the variety of interpretative acts, simply does not bother with other types of interpretation.

There is no harm in someone who is fond of a particular type of interpretation attempting to characterize it, ground it, and devise an appropriate method of conducting it. This sort of work is indeed demanded

if a comprehensive account of the various interpretative acts is to be developed. However, there is a great deal of harm done when one type of interpretative act is put forth as 'interpretation in general', and when the account of that type is put forth as 'general hermeneutics'. General hermeneutics can only become truly general if it attends to all types of interpretation without prejudice and without *a priori* schemes or agendas, regardless of whether these be ethically motivated or not.

The ethical concerns of Betti and Hirsch, which are expressed in terms of the conception of re-cognition as re-enactment, stood in the way of their developing a comprehensive account of interpretative acts. As I have demonstrated, the view that the interpreter is always bound morally to attempt to re-enact the author's intention is mistaken, and if we fail to recognize this error we shall be led, like Betti and Hirsch, to regard all 'interpretation' in such a way as to preclude from the outset the consideration of acts of interpretation in which such an attempt seems clearly inappropriate. The operational hermeneutics that I shall be proposing in subsequent chapters, by means of the elaboration of models of texts and their interpretation, acknowledges from the outset the variety of texts and interpretation, and does not commit the error of Betti and Hirsch. Before I undertake this systematic work, however, it is necessary to consider the theory of Hans-Georg Gadamer. As we shall see, Gadamer too commits an error, but of an entirely different kind.

THE HERMENEUTICS OF GADAMER

The Heidelberg philologist and philosopher Hans-Georg Gadamer (1900–2002) is the most prominent figure in contemporary hermeneutics. The very word 'hermeneutics' is now hardly ever mentioned without some reference to Gadamer and his *magnum opus*, *Wahrheit und Methode* [*Truth and Method*].[60] However, it must be noted from the outset that the sort of hermeneutics Gadamer offers is very different from the sort of hermeneutics that Schleiermacher, Betti, and Hirsch worked on. All three of the theories we have considered thus far focus on interpretation as the activity of interpreters. Gadamer, however, is not at all concerned with interpretative activities, but with the 'event' of understanding. This event of understanding turns out to be an activity of 'language'. Before examining Gadamer's conception of 'language', it will be helpful to discuss his overall project in *Truth and Method*, and I shall

do so by way of addressing two widespread misunderstandings of that project: (1) the view that *Truth and Method* is methodological, and (2) the view that *Truth and Method* is anti-methodological. After having discussed these two misunderstandings, I shall turn to the examination of Gadamer's conception of language in the discussion of (3) the Metaphysics of Light.

(1) Truth and Method as Methodological

The first misunderstanding of Gadamer's project stems from the fact that Gadamer calls his project 'hermeneutics' rather than the more appropriate 'ontology'. Because hermeneutics has traditionally been associated with the effort to develop a methodology of the *Geisteswissenschaften*, many people have wrongly thought that Gadamer was basically supplying the latest version of this methodology. This view is clearly mistaken. In the preface to *Truth and Method*, Gadamer explains that his aim is to discover that which is common to all activities of interpretation or understanding, and he explicitly denies having any methodological aims:

> ... the purpose of my investigation is not to offer a general theory of interpretation and a differential account of its methods ... but to discover what is common to all modes of understanding and to show that understanding is never a subjective relation to a given 'object' but to the history of its effect; in other words, understanding belongs to that which is understood.[61]

The denial of concern with methodology is repeated by Gadamer in other places in his works. In another passage of *Truth and Method*, for example, he writes:

> My revival of the expression *hermeneutics*, with its long tradition, has apparently led to some misunderstandings. I did not intend to produce a manual for guiding understanding in the manner of the earlier hermeneutics. I did not wish to elaborate a system of rules to describe, let alone direct, the methodical procedure of the human sciences. Nor was it my aim to investigate the theoretical foundation of work in these fields in order to put my findings to practical ends.[62]

What Gadamer says about the confusion caused by the use of the term 'hermeneutics' is quite important. Hermeneutics has traditionally been

associated with methods of interpretation, but Gadamer uses the term in a different way. Following Martin Heidegger's lead in *Sein und Zeit* (*Being and Time*), Gadamer uses the term to refer to the study of man's particular mode of existence in the world. More specifically, Gadamer uses 'hermeneutics' to refer to the ontological activity of 'thinking' as it is discussed by Heidegger in such works as *Was Heisst Denken?* [*What is called Thinking*] and *Gelassenheit* (*Discourse on Thinking*): 'I have ... retained the term "hermeneutics" (which the early Heidegger used) not in the sense of a methodology but as a theory of the real experience that thinking is.'[63]

Gadamer associates methodological concerns with an interest in *prescription* instead of *description*, with the 'ought' instead of the 'is', and he does not want to provide an 'ought-theory', but an 'is-theory':

> Fundamentally I am not proposing a method; I am describing *what is the case* ... In other words, I consider the only scientific thing is to *recognize what is,* instead of starting from what ought to be or could be. Hence I am trying to go beyond the concept of method held by modern science (which retains its limited justification) and to envisage in a fundamentally universal way what always happens.[64]

It is important to note that when Gadamer says that he is describing what happens, he does not mean describing the subjective activity of the interpreter. Gadamer is not interested in providing an account of subjective activities, be they activities that are being done, can be done, or ought to be done. Instead, he is interested in something ontologically prior to all such subjective acts: 'My real concern was and is philosophic: not what we do or what we ought to do, but what happens to us over and above our wanting and doing.'[65] This concentration on the 'philosophic' or 'scientific' (in the sense of 'rigorous') description of what is the case, is something which Gadamer appropriates from Edmund Husserl's phenomenological method.[66] Gadamer is here demonstrating '[t]hat conscientiousness of phenomenological description which Husserl has made a duty for us all.'[67] Husserl's insistence on going back to the 'things themselves' is very much respected by Gadamer. And the 'thing itself' which interests Gadamer is interpretation/understanding.

Gadamer's approach to the description of what is the case is, however, thoroughly Kantian, a fact which is not surprising given that he was a close student of the eminent Neo-Kantians, Paul Natorp and Nicolai Hartmann:[68]

> ... I have recorded my acceptance of Kant's conclusions in the *Critique of Pure Reason*: I regard statements that proceed by wholly dialectical means from the finite to the infinite, from human experience of what exists in itself, from the temporal to the eternal, as doing no more than setting limits, and am convinced that philosophy can derive no actual knowledge from them.[69]

In describing the activity of interpretation, Gadamer does not seek to describe the 'essence' of the activity, but rather the 'conditions for its possibility'. Just as Kant asked how knowledge is possible, Gadamer asks how understanding is possible.[70] As Gadamer observes:

> Kant certainly did not intend to prescribe what modern science must do in order to stand honorably before the judgement seat of reason. He asked a philosophical question: what are the conditions of our knowledge, by virtue of which modern science is possible, and how far does it extend?[71]

Gadamer conceives of his task in *Truth and Method* in a similar way:

> It asks (to put it in Kantian terms): how is understanding possible? This is a question which precedes any action of understanding on the part of subjectivity, including the methodical activity of the 'interpretive sciences' and their norms and rules.[72]

Gadamer's attempt to phenomenologically describe the conditions of the possibility of all understanding largely accounts for its lack of concern with providing methods of interpretation. The question that he asks is prior to any question of method.

However, the Kantian 'transcendental' approach which Gadamer takes is not the only reason for his ignoring of methodological concerns. Another important reason lies in his acceptance of the spirit of the Aristotelian view of the philosophic life. A key notion, which Gadamer adopts from Aristotle is that of *theoria*, or contemplation. In Book X of the *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle defends the view that contemplation is the highest and the best way of life (or the highest form of praxis; we shall be returning to this in Chapter Five). In the book Aristotle develops themes which he addressed in an earlier dialogue called *Protrepticus*, and which go back to Plato and Pythagoras. These themes can be summarized as follows: (1) Man has a multi-component soul; (2) The most 'essential' part of man's soul is *nous* or the intellect; it is what makes man

different from animals, plants, and minerals; (3) The intellect is of divine nature, and makes the connection with the divine possible, although such a connection demands a great deal of effort; (4) The contemplative life consists in attempting to reconnect with the divine. This might not be achievable in this life, but one must do all that is humanly possible to achieve it; (5) The contemplative life is the most self-sufficient life. (6) The contemplative life has no utilitarian goal. Rather, it has the highest goal of all: the Good or the True.

It is Gadamer's development of the sixth theme which is important to keep in mind here. Gadamer sees hermeneutics as contemplative in nature. Using the term 'theory' in a thoroughly Aristotelian sense, Gadamer says:

> So when I speak about hermeneutics here, it is theory. There are no practical situations of understanding that I am trying to resolve by so speaking. Hermeneutics has to do with a theoretical attitude toward the practice of interpretation ... [73]

Gadamer does point out that his hermeneutics is also practical, but by calling it 'practical' he does not mean that it is 'utility-oriented', but only that it is a way of living. We must keep in mind that Aristotle's contemplation is presented as the best way of life, as the best *praxis* that one can be involved in. It is in this light that Gadamer's statement that 'hermeneutics is philosophy, and as philosophy it is practical philosophy' must be understood.[74] 'Practical' here is broadly conceived as pertaining to the good life, rather than to utility or usefulness. Hermeneutics is contemplative, and it is practical because *theoria* itself is a practice.[75]

To say that hermeneutics is practical does not justify expecting methodological guidance from it. Just as Aristotle thought in his ethics, so does Gadamer believe that:

> For one to dedicate one's life to theoretic interests presupposes the virtue of *phronesis*. This in no way restricts the primacy of theory or of an interest in the pure desire to know. The idea of theory is and remains the exclusion of every interest in mere utility, whether on the part of the individual, the group, or the society as a whole.[76]

In view of Gadamer's own statements about what he is not doing, it is surprising that some still insist that his hermeneutics provides a method of interpretation or understanding. The phenomenon of social scientists

and biblical interpreters enthusiastically championing Gadamer's hermeneutics as the proper method of their fields of study is conspicuous. But Gadamer is not even attempting to describe what interpretation is. He is concerned with describing the conditions of the possibility of interpretation—and not as an activity, but as an event—and his description is purely contemplative in motivation.

(2) Truth and Method as Anti-Methodological

Having shown that Gadamer is not concerned with providing a general methodological hermeneutics, we must briefly consider, and dismiss, an opposite misunderstanding committed by several authors. This misunderstanding consists in taking Gadamer's work to be *against* methodology. The view that Gadamer is anti-methodological is held by many of his foes. Hirsch, for example, writes: '… Gadamer protests that there can be no methodologies of textual interpretation because interpretation is not, after all, a *Wissenschaft* whose aim is objective and permanent knowledge.'[77] If it were only Gadamer's foes that accused him of being against method, there would be a strong suspicion that they did not represent him well. However, some people who are close to Gadamer's position, and even some of his supporters, make a similar claim. Paul Ricoeur, for example, sees an anti-methodical stance even in the title *Truth and Method*: 'The very title of the work confronts the Heideggerian concept of truth with the Diltheyan concept of method. The question is to what extent the work deserves to be called Truth *and* Method, and whether it ought not instead to be entitled Truth *or* Method.'[78]

As stated above, this view of Gadamer's project is wrong. Even though Gadamer's work is non-methodological, it is by no means anti-methodological. To begin with, the opposition which some see in the title of *Truth and Method* is explicitly denied by Gadamer: 'Admittedly the methodical alienation that comprises the very essence of modern science is indeed to be found also in the *Geisteswissenschaften*, and the title of *Truth and Method* never intended that the antithesis it implies should be mutually exclusive.'[79] Gadamer is not against method, but only against any claim that method is sufficient for the achievement of truth. This is clear from the following quotes:

> This does not in the slightest prevent the methods of modern natural science from being applicable to the social world … The methodical spirit

> of science permeates everywhere. Therefore, I did not remotely intend to deny the necessity of methodical work within the human sciences (*Geisteswissenschaften*).[80]

> He [Betti] was fearful for the scientific nature of interpretation, as I presented it in my book. I showed him in a private letter that this concern was unnecessary ...[81]

Gadamer explicitly says that he is using a method in his work, and, unless he was contradicting himself, he could not be against method: 'It is true that my book is phenomenological in its method.'[82]

While Gadamer is not against method, it must be granted that he might easily be read that way. In the process of arguing for his position, Gadamer attacked many appeals to method as pretentious. He fiercely attacked any attempt to uphold the application of method as a sufficient condition of truth, and those attacks might well be misconstrued as attacks on method of any form. But the method that Gadamer attacks is method which pretends to be sufficient. Useful and helpful method is by no means attacked by Gadamer.

It is appropriate to conclude our comments on the two misunderstandings of the project of *Truth and Method* with a passage from another text of Gadamer's that many people have failed to heed:

> *Many* have seen and continue to see in hermeneutic philosophy *a repudiation of methodical rationality.* Many others misuse the term and that to which it refers by seeing in it *a new methodological doctrine* that they then use to legitimate methodological unclarity or ideological concealment. This is especially the case now that hermeneutics has become fashionable and every interpretation wants to call itself 'hermeneutical'.[83]

(3) The Metaphysics of Light

Now that we have dispelled two popular misunderstandings of Gadamer's project in *Truth and Method*, we may return to his conception of language. A fruitful manner in which to approach this work is to regard it as a philosophical and secular meditation on the prologue to the Gospel of St. John. This may strike the reader as bizarre, but a close consideration of the structure and strategy of *Truth and Method* will show that such a characterization is not inappropriate.

Truth and Method, is a book that is very close in its strategy to Hegel's

Phenomenology of Spirit, a fact which should not be surprising given Gadamer's admiration of Hegel, and his supremacy in Hegel scholarship. Just as is the case with the *Phenomenology*, *Truth and Method* presents the account of a long journey undertaken by consciousness. In Gadamer's work, this journey begins with the experience of the work of art, proceeding through subjective characterizations of that experience, rejecting them in stages. Consciousness settles (for a moment) for a characterization of the aesthetic experience that centers on 'play' as an activity of the work of art itself, which turns out to be 'playing' its spectator. Consciousness having realized that a fixation on the subjective is faulty, then moves on to a greater awareness of history and culture and their activity. The activity of the work of art seems for a moment (though a prolonged one) to be an activity of history.

Eventually, however, consciousness realizes that it is not being aware of its own historicity. This is when it matures through 'experience' and ascends to the level of 'effective-historical consciousness', or consciousness which is aware of its own historicity. This is when consciousness discovers the important role of prejudice, and abandons the Enlightenment ideal of a prejudice-free understanding.

Many readers of *Truth and Method* appear to have stopped at this station in the journey. If one stops at this station of *Truth and Method*, one is left with the impression that Gadamer is expounding a new methodology of interpretation, one that makes it imperative to be aware of one's prejudices. Important as this station may be, however, one must not dwell on it, but move on through the rest of *Truth and Method*. In this final and crucial stage of this text, consciousness realizes that it is conditioned by 'language' manifested as tradition, and that it has to give up trying to guide itself and let language lead the rest of the way.

The journey of *Truth and Method* must be followed to its final stage, at which language becomes guide and goal. What is said here about language is initially negative. Language is first shown not to be what we normally take it to be, an instrument of users. The more appropriate Greek '*logos*' is then identified with language. But that too proves insufficient. Only when *logos* becomes equated with the medieval Christian '*verbum*' is progress definitely made. The notorious problems of the doctrine of the incarnated word suddenly haunt consciousness, and it has to begin to invoke approximations and analogies. The most appropriate

analogy, and the one that consciousness finally settles for, is the analogy with light. Invoking the crucial Neo-Platonic image of the fountain of light, a final culmination is finally reached.

Language turns out to be light. It turns out to be that which naturally and spontaneously emanates or 'shines forth'. Now, that which shines is that which is beautiful or radiant. The German word for the beautiful *Das Shone*, becomes very significant. The beautiful is that which shines, and it does so naturally and with absolute spontaneity. Language is precisely this Beautiful. Of course, and this is a classical Neo-Platonic move, the Beautiful is also the True because by shining forth, it makes itself self-evident. In another Neo-Platonic move, the Beautiful turns out also to be the Good. 'Language = The Good = The True = The Beautiful = Light' is the shortest possible way to summarize the culmination of *Truth and Method*. The end of *Truth and Method*, yet again in Neo-Platonic fashion, connects with its beginning, when 'play' is invoked once more as the mode of being of Language. The play of language is, of course, nothing other than the Neo-Platonic 'play of light'.

Now we see how Truth and Method is not inappropriately regarded as a commentary on the Prologue to the Gospel of St. John, which opens as follows:

> In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God, all things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. [*John* 1:1-5]

We should compare this with the following passage from the concluding section of *Truth and Method*:

> The light that causes everything to emerge in such a way that it is evident and comprehensible in itself is the light of the word. Thus the close relationship that exists between the shining forth (*Vorscheinen*) of the beautiful and evidentness (*das Einleuchtende*) of the understandable is based on the metaphysics of light. This was precisely the relation that guided our hermeneutical inquiry.[84]

The reference to the Metaphysics of Light is of supreme importance. Rather than being a hermeneutics in the tradition of Schleiermacher, Dilthey, and Betti, Gadamer's is really a Metaphysics of Light.[85] It is an

ontology that postulates a single principle that emanates, and in its play creates all. This principle, called 'language', is the ultimate condition of the possibility of all understanding. It is Gadamer's answer to the question 'How is understanding possible?'.[86]

Clearly, the problem of texts and their interpretation by individual interpreters is far from being the focus of Gadamer. This is why he hardly considers the diversity of texts or of interpretative activities. What matters to him is a primordial activity which he calls 'language'. After *Truth and Method*, Gadamer did try to say something about the diversity of texts with his distinction between *eminent* and *non-eminent* texts. However, those distinctions proved rather artificial, and often inconsistent, as has been pointed out by Robert J. Dostal.[87]

Given the kind of project it actually is, one wonders why anyone who is interested in the actual human activity of interpretation would be interested in considering Gadamer's work. The answer is important, for it expresses an insight that will be central to operational hermeneutics: By insisting on what happens to us in understanding, Gadamer provides us with a valuable warning against thinking of interpretation as the activity of only the interpreter. The text itself, as something which is written in a particular language, seems to operate on us of its own accord. Gadamer's warning provides a powerful corrective to the theories of Schleiermacher, Betti, and Hirsch, all of which stress interpretation as a task, without doing justice to the *automaticity* of understanding. Operational hermeneutics will take this automaticity into account, but instead of following Gadamer in placing its source within a Neo-Platonic luminescent 'language', it will place it at the more down-to-earth level of linguistic competence.

THE *APORIAE* FACING GENERAL HERMENEUTICS

The above examination of the accounts of the four theorists has done more justice to their positions than the brief statements by means of which I summarized them in Chapter One. But it has also demonstrated that those statements, while perhaps somewhat misleading if taken on their own, do represent quite accurately central features of their respective positions. The examination has also shown that there exists disagr ement among these thinkers on central issues regarding interpretation. Much of this disagreement, as we can now see, stems in large part from

the fact that the theorists have been engaged in different projects, with each project demanding or lending itself to the adoption of a particular paradigm of 'text' and 'interpretation' differing from those of the others.

The attempt to make general claims regarding texts and their interpretation proceeding from any one of these positions is doomed from the start, for it will always encounter a contradictory general claim proceeding from another position. This is the situation in which general hermeneutics finds itself at the moment: it is faced with *aporiae* regarding central issues of interpretation which no currently available hermeneutic theory is capable of resolving. Operational hermeneutics, while it does not pretend fully to replace these four theories, does indeed enable us to overcome major difficulties which they encounter. It is to the task of constructing the models that constitute operational hemeneutics that we now turn.

III

An Alternative Model of Texts and their Interpretation I: Writs

INTRODUCTION: THE TRADITIONAL MODELS OF TEXTS AND THEIR INTERPRETATION

IN THE PRECEDING TWO CHAPTERS of this thesis, I enumerated six *aporiae* facing hermeneutics in the form of a set of twelve contradictory statements and located them in the theories of Schleiermacher, Betti, Hirsch, and Gadamer. I shall return to these *aporiae* in Chapter Six. In the present chapter, we begin the task of applying the techniques of operation analysis and dynamic system modeling in the construction of an alternative model of texts and their interpretation. The preliminary analysis of writs and writ engagement offered in this chapter prepares the way for the further analysis of texts and their engagement to be presented in Chapters Four and Five. We proceed in the next section of this chapter according to the following outline:

WRITS AND THEIR ENGAGEMENT

1. The Notion of 'Writ'

(a) *The Classification of Writs*
(b) *The Analysis of a Simple Writ*
(c) *Linguistic Competence and the Designing of Writs*

2. Four Manners in Which Writs may be Engaged

(a) *Actuating*
(b) *Manipulating*
(c) *Utilizing*
(d) *Actualizing*

3. Three Sorts of Factors Influencing the Engagement and Operation of Writs

(a) Writ Factors
- [1] *Writ Type*
  - [a] Assertive Writs
  - [b] Directive Writs
  - [c] Commissive Writs
  - [d] Expressive Writs
  - [e] Declarative Writs
- [2] *Writ Source*
- [3] *Writ Tone*

(b) Reader Factors
- [1] *Reader Initiative*
- [2] *Reader Base*
- [3] *Reader Attitudes*
- [4] *Reader Anticipations*

(c) Situation Factors
- [1] *Theatre of Engagement*
- [2] *Context of Engagement*
- [3] *Engagement Friction*

WRITS AND THEIR ENGAGEMENT

(1) The Notion of 'Writ'

The theory of speech acts is associated with the work of J. L. Austin, especially with his Harvard lectures, published as *How To Do Things With Words*. It is also associated with the work of John R. Searle, who develops the findings of Austin, and gives them a more systematic expression, in such works as *Speech Acts* and *Expression and Meaning*. Since the work of Austin and Searle many others have elaborated various aspects of the theory. It is not our task here to do justice to all that work, nor to enter the realm of the field of 'pragmatics' which developed out of speech act theory. We shall only consider some of the basic claims of the theory and, most importantly, Searle's classification of speech acts .[1]

The most basic of the claims of speech act theory is that utterances or speech acts are deeds. As deeds, utterances are prone to the same kinds of things other deeds are prone to, including success and failure. The implications of this one central claim are crucial. When we consider an

utterance, we are no longer solely concerned with whether it is true or false, but with such matters as whether the utterance is successful or unsuccessful, sincere or insincere, genuine or fake. The evaluation of an utterance becomes a matter of studying the extent of its 'felicity' or success. When utterances are taken to be deeds, social and conventional matters come to the fore. Whether or not particular deeds are acceptable, or successful, or proper, is largely a matter of social conventions. Furthermore, such matters depend heavily on contexts. What is proper in one context may be improper in another; what is successful in one context may be a failure in another, and so on.

Speech act theorists have worked out in great detail the notions of speech act, context-dependency, and felicity. It will not be necessary, for our purposes, to immerse ourselves in all of this detailed analysis. We do, however, have to consider a classification of speech acts that was developed by Searle in his 'A Taxonomy of Illocutionary Acts'. Using a variety of classification factors, such as the 'point' or 'aim' of utterances and the 'direction of fit' between utterances and the world, Searle develops a five-fold classification of utterances. According to Searle, 'we find there are five general ways of using language, five general categories of illocutionary acts. We tell people how things are (Assertives), we try to get them to do things (Directives), we commit ourselves to doing things (Commissives), we express our feelings and attitudes (Expressives), and we bring about changes in the world through our utterances (Declarations).'[2]

It is interesting to note that there are two peculiar features of speech act theory as developed by Austin and Searle. First, this theory focuses on spoken language or utterances, and pays little attention to written language or texts. Second, this theory focuses on such single utterances as 'I name this ship The Queen Elizabeth II', and not on complexes or bundles of related utterances. We shall amend both of these features of speech act theory in order to serve our present purpose.

We shall call a written sentence that transcribes a single utterance a 'writ', and we shall call bundles of related writs a 'text'.

(a) *The Classification of Writs*

Searle's classification of speech acts may be modified so as to generate a corresponding classification of writs. There are, then, five kinds of writs: (1) *Assertive writs*; (2) *directive writs*; (3) *commissive writ*s; (4) *expressive*

writs; and (5) *declarative writs*. To illustrate this classification of writs, let's consider a letter written by John Smith to his employer, Mrs. Jones:

> *Dear Mrs. Jones:*
> Your policy of not allowing employees to take Sundays off is against the law. I am quite upset about it. I hereby resign from your company. I will submit all company documents to your secretary. Please send all outstanding benefits to my home address.
> *Sincerely,*
> [signed] John Smith

The first sentence of the letter is an assertive writ which tells Mrs. Jones that her policy is against the law. The second sentence is an expressive writ that expresses Mr. Smith's feeling regarding the matter. The third sentence of the letter is a declarative writ that brings about the removal of Mr. Smith from his job. The fourth sentence of the letter is a commissive writ that commits Mr. Smith to returning all company documents. The last sentence of the letter is a directive writ that requests the sending of all benefits to Mr. Smith's home. The letter as a whole—that is, the whole bundle of related writs—is an example of a short text.

It is important to note from the outset that a single writ may perform more than one of the operations classified in this typology. Consider, for example, the writ 'Your letter was very insulting to me'. This writ is: (1) an assertive writ in that it informs one that the letter was insulting; (2) an expressive writ in that it conveys the other party's hurt feelings; and (3) a directive writ in that it indirectly demands an apology.

(b) *The Analysis of a Simple Writ*

There are many things that can be said about writs with the help of Mr. Smith's letter. However, before studying a text, or a bunch of related writs, it is better that we be more cautious and begin with a careful analysis of a simple writ so as to identify and examine in a preliminary manner these fundamental elements of texts. Let us consider, then, a simple writ—namely, the sign '*No Smoking*', which, according to the classification above, would be considered a directive writ, since it prohibits its reader from smoking.

We may begin our analysis of '*No Smoking*' with some basic observations. First, '*No Smoking*' is a thing. Like any other thing which is before

me, it operates upon us at least minimally by positing itself in our field of vision. Furthermore, '*No Smoking*' is an artifact, it is human made, and not a naturally occurring thing. '*No Smoking*' is an artifact made of particular materials and having particular physical dimensions. It is a tangible artifact. We can touch '*No Smoking*'. And at the physical or tangible level, '*No Smoking*' is inert and does not operate upon me in any significant manner. Granted, it does *minimally* operate upon us at this level by positing itself in our field of vision, but it does not operate upon us in the way in which, for example, a portable fan would. It shares the inertness of a chair but not the activity of a portable fan. Were we to place our finger upon '*No Smoking*' sign, our finger would not be operated upon in the way in which it would be by a fan. At the intangible level, however, '*No Smoking*' does operate upon me in a significant manner in that it prohibits me from smoking. '*No Smoking*' performs a prohibiting operation upon me. It is a directive writ, or more specifically a prohibiting one.

The operation that '*No Smoking*' performs upon me is not an arbitrary operation, but a function of the design of '*No Smoking*'. After all, '*No Smoking*' is not a randomly generated set of marks, but a set of letters that were deliberately put together (i.e., designed) in a particular way so as to constitute a prohibiting writ. The design embedded in '*No Smoking*' becomes quite apparent if a decomposing analysis is performed upon it. '*No Smoking*' decomposes into '*No*' and '*Smoking*'. '*No*' decomposes into '*N*' and '*o*'. '*Smoking*' decomposes into '*S*', '*m*', '*o*', '*k*', '*i*', '*n*', and '*g*'. '*N*' was placed next to '*o*' to form '*No*'. Then '*S*', '*m*', '*o*', '*k*', '*i*', '*n*', '*g*' were placed next to each other in that order to form '*Smoking*'. Finally '*No*' was placed next to '*Smoking*' with a space between them to form '*No Smoking*'.

'*No Smoking*' was designed and made in such a way as to prohibit a person who engages it from smoking. '*No Smoking*' does not encourage us to smoke, but prohibits us from smoking. This is not arbitrary or coincidental. '*No Smoking*' was designed to operate upon me in the way that it does. '*Please Smoke*' would have encouraged us to smoke, but '*No Smoking*' does not. '*No*' does not prohibit me from smoking. '*Smoking*' does not prohibit me from smoking. But '*No Smoking*' does indeed prohibit me from smoking. This prohibiting operation is not an operation of '*No*', nor of '*Smoking*', nor of the simple combination of the separate operations of '*No*' and '*Smoking*', but an *emergent* operation that arises upon the combination of '*No*' and '*Smoking*'. The prohibiting operation is an operation

of '*No Smoking*' as a whole. '*No Smoking*' is a directive writ of the particular prohibiting kind precisely because of the way in which it is designed.

If the elements from which '*No Smoking*' is composed were to be scrambled or reordered, they might lead to either (1) a construct that had no discernible operation, or (2) a construct that had a different operation. Consider '*Ns Smoking*', '*Ing Oksmno*', '*Gnkimoson*', and '*Son Mo King*'. These constructs are made of the same elements as '*No Smoking*' , yet none of them prohibits me from smoking in the manner in which '*No Smoking*' does.

'*No Smoking*' is an artifact in which a particular design is embedded. It is set up with a definite built-in design. We do not need to discern or re-enact the psychological state of the maker of '*No Smoking*' in order for '*No Smoking*' to prohibit one from smoking. Its maker's intention is not a mental state or act to be re-enacted, but an *embedded structure*. Of course, the maker of '*No Smoking*' was *thinking* when he or she made '*No Smoking*'. Still, we do not need to rethink the maker's thinking to be prohibited from smoking. '*No Smoking*' performs its prohibiting operation upon us because of its design, the way it is set up.

'*No Smoking*' is an artifact of a particular design. '*No Smoking*' needs its designer and maker in order to be designed and made. It needs its designer to come into being, and to do so in the form it does. However, once '*No Smoking*' is made it stands on its own, and no longer needs its designer and maker. Once made, '*No Smoking*' is autonomous. '*No Smoking*' has a stand-alone operational capacity. Its maker may perish or go insane or start smoking, but '*No Smoking*' will still stand. The design embedded in '*No Smoking*' will always be that of its original designer, but that embedded design can survive and give rise to the intended operations no matter what happens to the designer.

(c) *Linguistic Competence and the Designing of Writs*

Of the process of designing '*No Smoking*' so that it performs the prohibiting operation that it does perform, two things can be said: (1) it is likely that it happened rather automatically; and (2) it was pursued with a particular reader or audience in mind. The automaticity of the sign's design process, like its directedness towards a particular reader or a particular kind of reader, is a function of the natural ability we call *linguistic competence*. Since linguistic competence is also demanded of the

reader of '*No Smoking*', an analysis of its most important components is in order.

When a writer writes a writ, he does not do so by randomly selecting words and randomly sticking them together into a larger unit. The writer deliberately selects the right words for his purposes, and puts them together in just the right way so as to enable them jointly to operate in a particular manner upon the reader of the writ. As the writer designs his writ, he resorts to his competence in the language used. This competence can be analyzed into at least the following sub-competences: (1) a '*dictionary competence*' that enables the writer to know words that may be of use in accomplishing the task that he wants the writ to accomplish; (2) a '*grammar competence*' that enables him to formulate a grammatically correct sentence of the kind required for the task; (3) an '*etiquette competence*' that enables him to know which sentence is appropriate in particular circumstances, for a particular audience, and for a particular purpose; (4) an '*encyclopedia competence*' that enables him to know the requisite background information about the subject matter; and (5) an '*experiential competence*' that enables him to have the requisite existential maturity and experience, including an '*audience competence*' that enables him to foresee to an adequate extent the kinds of effects that the operation of his writ will have on its prospective audience.

No writer writes a writ in a vacuum. A writer always wants to accomplish some particular task. Writing a writ is nothing more than the designing and making of a linguistic artifact that meets the specifications required for producing a particular effect on an anticipated audience; this is because a writ does not operate in a vacuum, but only on readers who have the linguistic competence required for entering the realm of a particular language, a writer always has an anticipated audience in mind as he writes the writ. To be a good writer is to have full competence in the language used, and sufficient mastery of the language to make writs that succeed in accomplishing the tasks that the writer wants them to accomplish.

A writer who wants to inform his reader, but who fails to design and make an informative writ, makes a defective artifact that does not perform or operate in a satisfactory manner. Similarly, a writer who wants to entertain his reader, but who designs and makes a boring writ, makes a defective artifact. However, whether or not a writ actually performs the

operation its writer intended depends also upon the reader's linguistic competence.

Being prohibited by '*No Smoking*' requires my having a competence that corresponds to that of the writer: (1) my dictionary must include '*No*' and '*Smoking*'; (2) My grammar competence must include the ability to be operated upon by the emergent operation of the combination '*No Smoking*'; (3) my etiquette competence must enable me to appreciate the appropriateness or lack thereof of '*No Smoking*' in the setting in which it is used; (4) my encyclopedia competence must enable me to realize that the 'smoking' present in '*No Smoking*' is not the smoking of a forest fire, nor that of a jet engine, but the act involving tobacco; and (5) my past experience of things similar to '*No Smoking*', of the settings in which such things as '*No Smoking*' are used, and of the possible designer and maker of '*No Smoking*' all contribute to the sign's ability to operate upon me in a prohibiting manner.

Since I have achieved a reasonable competence in English, '*No Smoking*' operates upon me automatically. Between a complete lack of competence in English and a reasonable competence in it lies a continuum of degrees of competence. If I had a beginner's English competence, '*No Smoking*' could operate upon me, but only after I had made some effort in engaging it. I may have had to resort to a dictionary to look up 'smoking', or may have had to ask an English-speaking friend about the relationship-between smoke (as in the smoke issuing from a burning bush) and the '*No Smoking*' before us. I may have had difficulties with the order of the two words, wondering why it is not '*Smoking No*'. I may, if I was a real beginner in English, have attempted to read '*No Smoking*' from right to left as one would read in native Arabic. In such a case '*No Smoking*' would have appeared as '*Gnikoms On*' thereby preventing any prohibiting operation from being performed.

Thus there are degrees of competence, and these degrees are the result of the degrees of competence in such sub-competences as those mentioned above. Given my competence in English, '*No Smoking*' does prohibit me from smoking, and it does so automatically. The automaticity of the operation of '*No Smoking*' upon me has a great deal to do with habituation. When I first learned to drive a car, I had to make an effort to keep the car properly centered in the lane I was driving in. At that time I drove very badly because I was self-conscious of what I was doing.

After some practise, my hands started making the right adjustments of the steering wheel without my having to think about it, or make an effort; my steering became automatic. I gazed upon the road ahead of me, and everything began to take care of itself automatically. Similarly, when it comes to competence in the writing or the reading of English writs, after much practise an ever higher degree of automaticity is achieved.

It is important to note that no writ is written in language as such or language in the abstract. Every writ is written in a particular language (or sometimes in more than one particular language). There are English writs, and German writs, and Arabic writs, but no writs that are written in language as such. A writ always operates in a particular language, or, to speak more precisely, in the realm of a particular language. To someone who does not know any English, an English writ is as inert as a chair. To someone who does know English, that same writ is an actively operating thing that can perform such operations as informing, guiding, warning, inspiring, and entertaining.

The language in which a writ is written is very much a realm that can be entered only by people who have acquired competence in that language through an apprenticeship in it. Someone who is competent in a language and can enter its realm can engage writs written in that language. There are many ways in which such a person can engage such a writ, but no engagement is possible without competence in the language or 'engagement system' used.

The English language is an engagement system. It has rules of engagement. It determines how words operate, how they are combined, and the level and kind of force that particular expressions have. One who does not share the engagement system cannot be involved in engagement. Like a piece of software which cannot cope with the operating system on a computer, someone who does not know the language of a writ does not have the compatability required to be engaged according to that system. Of course, partial participation in the engagement system is possible, and it leads to partial engagement. Full engagement, however, demands full knowledge of and participation in the engagement system.

A language is an infrastructure. It is assumed by all operations conducted upon it or in it. It is like a computer's operating system that must be in the background of all operations done on the computer. For a person to operate and to be operated upon in a linguistic realm, he or she must have

access to it, must share the infrastructure. A language is like a telephone system, or an electrical system, or a road system to which one must be connected in order to reach other persons using that system. All activities of writ writing and writ engagement take place in the realm of a particular language, and one must share that language in order to operate and be operated upon in it. When such linguistic competence is present, the engagement can take place. It is to specific manners in which writs may be engaged that we now turn our attention.

(2) Four Manners in Which Writs May Be Engaged

There are at least four different ways in which we can engage '*No Smoking*': (a) We can allow it to work on us; (b) We can work on it; (c) We can put it to work for us; and (d) We can allow ourselves to be put to work by it. We shall give these four ways the following names: (a) *actuating*; (b) *manipulating*; (c) *utilizing*; and (d) *actualizing*. Let us look more closely at each engagement kind:

(a) *Actuating*

'*No Smoking*' operates on us automatically upon our reading of it. We do not have to make a conscious effort to read it, it is simply there for us as a prohibition against smoking. It is sufficient that '*No Smoking*' be in our field of vision, and within the realm of our attention, for it to operate upon us. This kind of automatic engagement, where the writ is simply allowed to operate upon one, is what we mean by 'actuating'.

(b) *Manipulating*

In manipulating, we operate upon '*No Smoking*'. There are many kinds of manipulating operations that we can perform on '*No Smoking*'. Besides the kind of decomposing operation that we performed on it in the preceding analysis, we might also for example perform a genealogical operation on preceeding by studying it with a view to finding out where it comes from, or what its sources are. We can perform a 'symptomizing' operation by studying '*No Smoking*' with a view to discerning activities or phenomena of which it is a by-product or symptom. We can perform a synthesizing operation on '*No Smoking*' by attaching it to other elements; for example, by synthesizing '*No Smoking*' with '*Please*' to get '*No Smoking Please*'. We can perform a truncating operation by cutting off or ignoring the '*No*' and ending up with only '*Smoking*'. We can perform an inserting

operation by inserting '*Cigarette*' between '*No*' and '*Smoking*' to get '*No Cigarette Smoking*'. We can perform a modification operation by transforming '*No Smoking*' into '*Do Not Smoke*'. In manipulating, the reader works on the writ by taking it apart, or putting it together with other writs, or transforming it, or studying it, and so on. Unlike actuating, manipulating does not simply let the writ operate or work upon the reader, but subjects the writ to the operating or work of the reader.

(c) *Utilizing*

In utilizing, we use '*No Smoking*' as a tool. We can use '*No Smoking*' to point out to the person sitting next to us that he or she should not be smoking in the room. We can use'*No Smoking*' as an example in developing a model in a philosophical work, as in the present discussion. We can use '*No Smoking*' to illustrate a point about North American municipal by-laws. We can use '*No Smoking*' to test our child's knowledge of the alphabet. In all these engagements, we use '*No Smoking*' as a tool. It is true that '*No Smoking*' may still operate upon us, and in that sense we are actuating it. However, our central concern in utilizing it derives from treating it as a means to achieving whatever aims we might happen to have in mind.

(d) *Actualizing*

Having actuated '*No Smoking*', we could very well refuse to heed its prohibition, even though we grant that it does succeed in prohibiting usfrom smoking. If we do heed its prohibition, then we have not only actuated '*No Smoking*', but have 'actualized' it. In actualizing a writ, we allow ourselves to be put to work by it. We change our patterns of behaviour in response to the writ.

(3) Three Sorts of Factors Influencing the Engagement and Operation of Writs

How a writ is engaged and how it operates depends on many factors. It is necessary to be aware of some of the most important of these factors if progress is to be made towards constructing a model of how textual interpretation works. Writ engagement is an activity that involves a writ, a reader, and a context. The factors to be discussed can be classified according to corresponding categories: (a) factors having to do with the writ; (b) factors having to do with the reader; and (c) factors having to do with the situation. I shall briefly examine each category in turn.

(a) WRIT FACTORS

The writ factors enumerated below are doubtless not the only ones. The following enumeration, while not exhaustive, nevertheless serves to demonstrate that factors pertaining to writs themselves greatly influence the way in which writs are engaged. The most significant writ factors are of three kinds: [1] *writ type*; [2] *writ source*; and [3] *writ tone*.

[1] *Writ type*

How a writ is engaged depends on what kind of a writ it is. As illustrated in the preceding classification of writs, writs are of five kinds: [a] *assertive writs*; [b] *directive writs*; [c] *commissive writs*; [d] *expressive writs*; and [e] *declarative writs*.

[a] An *assertive* writ tends to elicit mere actuating rather than manipulating, utilizing, or actualizing. '*The sky is blue*' does not usually move a reader to work upon it, use it, or be put to work by it. An assertive writ does, however, often elicit manipulating when we think that it is false. False assertives tend to invite us to reject them, and rejecting is a kind of manipulating (we work on the writ in a rejecting manner). True assertives, on the other hand, especially if they are taken to be of special importance, tend to elicit in us a kind of devotion that may lead to engaging in an actualizing way by cherishing and defending their truth. Consider, for example, the lengths to which theists have often been willing to go in order to defend the writ '*God exists*'. An assertive writ may also be used if it is deemed useful by the reader, and may be engaged in a utilizing fashion. Most of the assertive writs that we encounter, however, tend to elicit no more than actuating.

[b] A *directive* writ tends frequently to elicit not only actuating but actualizing. If a writ is a command or request coming from what we consider to be a legitimate authority, we tend to be put to work by it. On the other hand, a command or request coming from what we consider an illegitimate authority may very well make us angry, and put us to work in rejecting it, and reprimanding its author. This is not to say that directive writs cannot be engaged in other ways. Sometimes a directive writ is analyzed (manipulating), and at other times it is employed to illustrate or to guide (utilizing). In all cases directive writs are actuated in the very act of reading them and prior to any other kind of engagement taking place.

[c] A *commissive* writ, apart from eliciting the always preliminary actuating, tends to elicit an actualizing attitude in that it puts us to work in such a way as to anticipate the fulfillment of the commitment made by it. A promise, when it comes from an honest person and is reasonable, makes us anticipate its fulfillment. Even a promise coming from a person known for breaking promises tends to put us to work in that it makes us evaluate it, and dismiss it. It is not typical of commissive writs to elicit only actuating.

[d] An *expressive* writ, apart from eliciting actuating, tends also to elicit an actualizing engagement in that, if taken seriously, it requires an active search within our own experience for the feelings or attitudes expressed in the writ. The writ '*I am crushed, my friend betrayed me*' tends to elicit in us an effort to remember our own experience of disillusionment and disappointment upon a friend's betrayal. Even if we feel that the feeling expressed in a writ is unjustified or immature, the writ nevertheless tends to put us to work in demanding the addressing of the existential claims which it makes.

[e] A *declarative* writ, such as '*I resign*', tends to elicit only actuating. Of course, such writs can also be engaged differently. An employer, for example, may use '*I resign*' as evidence for its writer's inability to take responsibility. And if the writ happens to be an attempt to bring about a state of affairs that we find objectionable, then it may elicit actualizing by putting us to work in opposing it.

[2] Writ source

Writs are not generated *ex nihilo*—they always have writers or sources. The kind of engagement a writ elicits depends primarily upon who the writer or source is. Writs are not created equal because their writers are not equal. The valuation of the writ's source carries over to the writ itself and influences the way in which the writ is engaged. Authoritative writs, or writs written by trusted authorities, tend to elicit obedient actualizing engagements. Dubious writs, or writs coming from writers with questionable credentials, tend to elicit dismissive actualizing engagements. The valuations of writers which carry over to their writs are not carved in stone, and depend a great deal on experience, opinion, and the writer-reader relationship.

[2] Writ Tone
A writ manifesting a condescending tone tends to elicit a scornful engagement. A writ manifesting an exaggerating tone tends to elicit a sceptical engagement. An advising writ that has a loving and caring tone tends to elicit an actualizing engagement that is appreciative and accepting. An advising writ that has an arrogant tone tends to elicit a rejecting engagement. How a writ is engaged depends upon how it comes across. The shades of tone are incredibly varied and so too are the shades of engagement they elicit. An exhaustive classification of these shades would seem to be nearly impossible, but it is important at least to be aware of the influence they exercise upon the way in which a writ is engaged.

(a) Reader Factors
The most significant reader factors appear to be four in number: [1] *reader initiative*; [2] *reader base*; [3] *reader attitudes*; and [4] *reader anticipations*.

[1] *Reader Initiative*
Human beings have initiative in that they can initiate actions. Furthermore, they have the capacity to initiate actions that are intimately connected, sequentially ordered, and strategically planned. Such actions constitute what I shall refer to as 'projects'. Human projects come in a great variety of types. Humans engage in building, destroying, putting together, taking apart, cutting, cooking, writing, drawing, traveling, and a myriad other project types.

Readers sometimes read writs by sheer coincidence or accident, and their readings may be quite valuable precisely because they are accidental. A writ encountered in a subway station advertisement may be read because of sheer boredom, and may still turn out to be of the utmost importance for triggering some creative ideas. Most of the time, however, writs are read because one is pursuing a project. In such cases writs are read with initiative and with some definite purpose in mind. Even the subway writ is read because one is lazily pursuing a boredom-alleviating project.

The initiative of the reader and the project which he or she happens to be pursuing greatly influence the way in which a writ is engaged. If I am pursuing the project of testing my daughter's English, then I am more likely to use '*No Smoking*' as an educational aid by asking her to read the letters. If I am pursuing the project of getting my neighbour in a res-

taurant to stop smoking, then I am more likely to use '*No Smoking*' to preach at her. If I am pursuing the project of quitting smoking, then I am more likely to let '*No Smoking*' operate upon me as a reminder of my commitment to the project. If I am pursing the project of being a good parent, then I am more likely to let '*No Smoking*' put me to work explaining to my daughter the dangers of smoking.

There are many different twists that a reader's initiative and project can put on the way in which he or she engages a writ, and an exhaustive enumeration is out of the question in the present study. However, it is important to remember that when engaging a writ one is rarely without a project or agenda, and that this project and the initiative that provides its impetus greatly influence the way in which a writ is engaged.

[2] *Reader Base*

A reader's engagement of a writ is never conducted from nowhere. It is always launched from an engagement base. This engagement base is never absolutely rigid, and is open to constant modification and revisions inspired by any number of factors, including the operating of the writ itself. In a way, the commitment to projects of the kind mentioned above is part of this base. However, the most important constituents of this base are the reader's presuppositions. These presuppositions are beliefs and views that are taken for granted and form a given on the basis of which engagement is pursued.

If I encounter [1] in a restaurant, I am likely, and wisely, to presuppose the following: (1) that it is not a joke; (2) that violating its prohibition would lead to possible confrontation with the restaurant patrons, manager, and possibly the police; and (3) that it is a prohibition of cigarette smoking and not of the practice of sending smoke signals. If any of these presuppositions were replaced by its opposite, the way in which I engage [1] would change.

Presuppositions are not always wise, and are not usually consciously reflected upon. The investigation, elucidation, critique, and possible alteration of presuppositions is an important topic, and which we discuss later (in Chapter Six). For our present purposes, it is sufficient to note the importance of a reader's presuppositional base, and the influence that it exercises upon the way in which the reader engages a writ.

[3] *Reader Attitudes*
The way in which a reader engages a writ is also influenced by a reader's attitudes, or 'attitudinal base'. If I come to '*No Smoking*' with a respecting attitude, then I am more likely to let it direct my behaviour than were I to come with a scoffing attitude. '*No Smoking*', when engaged with a personalizing attitude, is more likely to be taken as a prohibition directed at me personally. There are significant differences between such attitudes as those listed in the following sets, and these differences carry over to all engagements pursued from a given attitudinal base: [a] A trusting (accepting) attitude *vs*. a suspicious (critical) attitude; [b] A personalizing attitude *vs*. a detaching attitude; [c] A respecting attitude *vs*. a disrespecting attitude; [d] A serious attitude *vs*. a playful attitude; [e] A friendly attitude *vs*. a hostile attitude.

[4] *Reader Anticipations*
Closely related to a reader's initiative, presuppositions, and attitudes are reader hopes, aspirations, and anticipations. A reader who is pursuing a particular project has a particular set of presuppositions and attitudes towards the writ that he or she chooses to engage. A reader often chooses to read a writ because he or she hopes and anticipates that it will operate in a particular way, can operate in a particular way, can be used to operate in a particular way, or can put him or her to work in a particular way. Sometimes one's hopes and anticipations are dashed outright. Most of the time, however, they are refined or modified by the writ. A traveller reading the yellow directional writs in an airport terminal is doing so in the hope and anticipation that they will lead him to his departure gate. This hope and anticipation influence the way in which he engages these writs. An ergonomics engineer studying the writs as part of a project to improve their visibility has different hopes and aspirations, and these hopes and aspirations put a different twist on the way in which he or she engages the writs.

(c) Situation Factors
The most significant situation factors appear to be: [1] *theatre of engagement*; [2] *context of engagement*; and [3] *engagement friction*.

[1] *Theatre of Engagement*
The engagement of writs never takes place in a vacuum, but is always

situated in a particular environment or theatre. The theatre of engagement is seldom a static environment, and may very well change and shift with time. However, a theatre of engagement usually changes slowly or in insignificant ways so that, for all intents and purposes, it is considered constant. I do not encounter '*No Smoking*' in empty space, but in a restaurant, a classroom, or a library. In each case the theatre influences the way in which I engage '*No Smoking*'. In a restaurant '*No Smoking*' is more likely to prohibit than to amuse. In a smoke-filled university dormitory room, the opposite is true.

It is important to note that theatres of engagement do not always have clearly defined borders, and that it is quite possible to have theatres within theatres within theatres. For example, '*No Smoking*' may be located within the smoking section of a restaurant in terminal 1 of an airport in Toronto, and so on.

[2] *Context of Engagement*

While engagement theatres are physical environments that influence writ engagements, there also exist textual environments that greatly influence how a writ is engaged. A writ is seldom encountered in isolation. Writs are usually accompanied by other writs. The environment of writs in which a particular writ is found exercises a profound influence on the way in which it is encountered. If we consider the writ '*I hereby resign from your company*' which we encountered above in Mr. Smith's letter to Mrs. Jones, we can clearly see that the way in which we engage the writ is influenced by the presence of the other writs contained in the letter.

More will be said on this very important fact in the chapter that follows, when I discuss the manner in which writs are put together to form texts. For now, it is sufficient merely to note that the textual context in which a writ is encountered strongly influences the way in which it is engaged. It is crucial, however, to point out here that the context in which a writ is encountered is not just a synchronic context or a flat field in which the writ happens to fall, but a diachronic context or temporal and sequential one. The writs that happen to be read prior to another writ strongly influence the way in which that writ is engaged. Similarly, the writs that happen to be read subsequently to that particular writ lead to revisions in the traces of engaging that are left in the reader's memory.

[3] *Engagement Friction*
The theatre and context of engagement in which 'a writ is engaged are not empty domains. A theatre of engagement is full of agents and artifacts, the presence and operation of which influence the way in which a writ is engaged. A context of engagement is full of writs, all of them contending for attention, and all of them operating in particular fashions. The actuation, manipulation, utilization, and actualization of a writ never take place in isolation. There are always other things or persons present and operative, and a whole host of other actuating, manipulating, utilizing, and actualizing engagements are simultaneously, previously, or subsequently taking place. The totality of all of these happenings and operations we call 'engagement friction'. Engagement friction is so complex as to defy sorting out and classification. It is inherently chaotic, and because of properties, operations, and functionalities that emerge and submerge in it unceasingly, it is in a state of constant flux.[3]

One would think that with such a chaotic state of affairs as is always present in writ engagement, any hope of communication using writs is impossible. However, when one considers that despite many misunderstandings and mishaps human beings are able to send one another bundles of writs that do make sense, and that are successfully engaged by their readers, any illusions about the impossibility of meaningful writ engagement must be put to rest. Astonishing as it may seem, the linguistic competence of human beings allows them to produce and engage writs and bundles of writs with a great degree of efficiency and success. If one considers the amount of paperwork circulating on any given working day in any given bank, one can be satisfied that despite errors and mishaps writ production and writ engagement go on without too much trouble in spite of, and often with the help of, engagement friction.

A great deal of engagement friction can be anticipated, and the writer of a writ can often foresee possible friction with the reader's engagement of the writ. The ability to write well has much to do with the ability to anticipate difficulties that the operation which the writ is intended to perform may run into on account of reader factors. A writer can modify his or her writ to circumvent anticipated trouble caused by friction, and may supply other related writs designed to take care of the trouble. A good writer can even use anticipated friction to his or her advantage in order to produce desired effects, just as a mechanical engineer may

deliberately use, or even produce, friction among machine parts in order to achieve a particular mode of operation. Nevertheless, there remains engagement friction that is, practically speaking, impossible to anticipate, and many of the unpredicted effects that writs end up having are due to the fact that a writ is always enmeshed in a bustling world full of operating agents and artifacts, and can never have the luxury of an ideal vacuum.

SUMMARY

In this chapter the techniques of operation analysis and dynamic system modeling have been used in order to isolate and develop the following notions:

1. Writs: assertive, directive, commissive, expressive, and declarative writs;
2. Writ engagement;
3. Linguistic competence and sub-competences;
4. Writ engagement types: actuating, manipulating, utilizing, and actualizing;
5. Writ factors: writ type, writ source, and writ tone;
6. Reader factors: reader initiative, reader base, reader attitudes, and reader anticipations;
7. Situation factors: theater of engagement, context of engagement, and engagement friction.

These notions will be carried over to Chapter Six, in which these ideal elements, factors, and distinctions will be employed in the construction of a model of texts and their engagement which we want to propose as an alternative to the traditional models that are still employed in the current hermeneutic literature.

IV

An Alternative Model of Texts and their Interpretation II: Texts

INTRODUCTION

In the present chapter, employing the notions isolated and developed in Chapter Three, I construct a model of texts and the manners in which they operate. I first introduce and develop the notion of 'operational artifact', then construct a model of texts that regards them as operational artifacts. This model uses analogies with machines and machine-design to explicate the notion of a text having its author's inten-tion embedded in its very make-up as design.

THE NOTION OF 'OPERATIONAL ARTIFACT'

Things in our world can be classified into two broad categories: natural things (such as trees, birds, stones, lakes, and rain), and artificial things (such as chairs, elevators, streets, radars, fire hydrants, paper, and lamps). Natural things are simply found in nature. Artificial things, or artifacts, are human made. Of course, there are things that are difficult to classify in either one of these categories because they are natural, but have been modified or interfered with artificially (examples include domesticated animals, some varieties of vegetables and fruits, and genetically engineered organisms). It is also true that all artifacts are made of elements that originate in nature, and in that sense have a natural base. Furthermore, more humans are also natural beings, and what they make is in that sense natural. However, the distinction between that which is found in nature and that which is made by humans remains useful, and still holds despite the qualifications just made.

Humans do not haphazardly make artifacts. They always make them

deliberately and for particular purposes. It is true that when humans make artifacts some unplanned and unwanted byproducts are often produced, but we don't normally call these byproducts 'artifacts'. There is a sense in which these byproducts 'just happen' and are not made. It is also true that humans sometimes produce things accidentally, but we usually do not say that those things are artifacts. To say that a human being made an artifact is to say that he or she deliberately chose elements and transformed and arranged them in such a way as to produce that thing.

Human beings make artifacts because they feel they need them. Artifacts are of use to us in that they fulfill our felt needs. For the fulfillment of particular needs some artifacts are more suitable than others. A chair is an artifact that fulfills the need for physical support as one sits. A piece of paper hardly fulfills that need. A piece of paper fulfills the need for a portable surface to write on. A chair hardly fulfills that need. Artifacts do not all have the same properties, and it is the particular properties of a particular artifact that make it suitable for the fulfillment of particular needs.

The useful properties of artifacts, unlike those of natural things, are not just present. Such properties are deliberately designed into the artifact. The properties that give a chair its ability to support me as I sit are not accidental properties. On the contrary, the chair was deliberately designed to have such properties. The designer and maker of the chair has carefully considered many questions in order to design and make an artifact suitable for supporting a sitting person; for example: 'What materials should I use?'; 'What kind of load does the chair have to support?'; 'What is the best manufacturing procedure to follow in order to make this chair?'; 'What structure should the chair have?'; 'What kind of appearance and color should the chair exhibit?'

In many cases needs can be fulfilled by the mere presence of an artifact that has particular static properties. A paper or a chair does not have to do much beyond being there in order to fulfill the needs or wants that we may have. In such cases it is quite possible, and quite adequate, to use inert artifacts. Inert artifacts are artifacts that do not do much beyond be there for us. Plates, forks, tables, chairs, sidewalks, pavements, boxes, carets, walls, and cups are all inert artifacts. They all have useful properties which fulfill particular needs and wants, but they do not do anything beyond sitting there for us to use.

There is a wide variety of needs that can only be fulfilled by artifacts that do things beyond being merely present. Such needs and wants require that an artifact need or want to drill a hole in concrete cannot be fulfilled by an artifact that just sits upon it. What is required in such a case is an artifact that operates, or an operational artifact—namely, a power drill. A power drill is like a chair in that it too is an artifact. But unlike the chair, a power tool does not just sit there, but operates. The properties that make a power tool useful are not merely static properties, but dynamic properties. These properties are temporal, sequential, and active.

A power drill, like a chair, is made of static elements, but the elements of the drill are put together in such a way as to make it possible for the drill to operate and not to merely be there. The distinction between the chair and the power drill is useful in that it points to a more general distinction between inert artifacts and operational artifacts. Inert artifacts are designed and made in such a way as to have particular static properties conducive to the fulfillment of particular needs and wants. Operational artifacts, on the other hand, are designed and made in such a way as to have particular dynamic properties conducive to the fulfillment of particular needs and wants through the active performance of particular sequences of acts which may be called 'operations'. There are many sorts of inert artifacts; for example: paper, chairs, tables, curtains, tiles, walls, doors, rails, and cutlery. There are many sorts of operational artifacts; for example: cars, airplanes, blenders, telephones, word-processors, trains, motors, facsimile machines, photocopiers, electrical sanders, and compressors. The fundamental claim of operational hermeneutics is that texts are operational artifacts.

THE MODEL OF TEXT AS OPERATIONAL ARTIFACT

Writs such as '*No Smoking*' or '*I resign from my job*' are operational artifacts in that they operate upon their reader, given that he or she has competence in English. Writs are not like tables and chairs—rather, they are like such basic operational machines as electrical motors and solenoid valves. They do not just passively sit there but, as soon as they are actuated, they operate. There is a very important difference between writs and electrical machines, and that concerns the realm of operation. Machines operate in the physical realm, while writs operate in a linguistic realm. Only persons who are able to enter the realm of the language in which a writ is

written can operate and be operated upon by a writ; that is, writs are operational artifacts that operate only in particular linguistic realms. Now, writs are indeed operational artifacts, but they are relatively elementary ones. Just as an electrical motor consists of several parts, so does a writ. But just as a host of electrical motors can be combined with a host of other electrical operational artifacts in the construction of larger and larger electrical/mechanical machines, so too can writs be put together with other writs in the construction of larger and larger texts.

When writs were first introduced above (in Chapter Three), a text was defined in passing as a bundle of related writs. It is now time to investigate in some depth the nature of those bundles of writs that we call texts, and to examine the manner in which they are designed and made.

(1) The Notion of 'Embedded Design'

Texts, according to my model, are operational artifacts that are composed of more elementary operational artifacts called 'writs'. Instead of continuing to refer to texts as 'bundles' of writs, let us now speak of texts more accurately and call them 'complexes' of writs. These complexes are highly organized. An English book usually consists of intimately related writs put together into related paragraphs, which are in turn put together into chapters, which are then put together into a book. A book, like a complex machine, is not simply a 'bundle' of parts but a well-organized complex of parts. A book, like a machine, is not a mere heap of parts, but a set of writs deliberately and intelligently put together according to a design in such a way as to operate in a particular way when engaged.

The very make-up of a machine is determined by a design created by its designer. The mechanical elements that the machine designer uses have operational features that influence the designer's choice of other elements of the machine and many of his or her design decisions. However, it is the designer who designs the machine. Once a machine component is chosen, it does tend to suggest the use of other components, but the designer always has the choice of dispensing with the first component itself. When the designer finishes designing a complex machine, a prototype of it is usually built, and the re-designing of some parts may prove necessary in light of the way the prototype operates in test runs. In a sense, the anticipated operation and the test operations of a machine participate in the design of it too.

Once all the necessary changes and adjustments have been made, the machine is ready for actuation and use. The machine that emerges from this preparatory activity is one that has an *embedded design* in its physical make-up itself. In order to activate a machine, one need not re-enact the thinking of its designer, or repeat the initial design process. The machine simply operates according to the designer's design which is now embedded in it. The mystery of how an abstract design ideal becomes embodied in a machine is akin to the mystery of how Michelangelo's vision of 'David' becomes the David carved in stone. Such mysteries are indeed difficult to give an adequate account of and their full clarification may well require solving, among other things, the mind/body problem and the famous Christian mystery of the incarnation. We have no intention of attempting a metaphysical account of how it is possible for a design to be embedded in a machine. But we can say is that it is undeniably possible, and happens every day as engineers and technicians continue to build machines.

In an analogous manner, a text has an embedded design built into its very make-up. When an author is writing a text, some of the words he uses tend to suggest the use of other words, but it is always the author who chooses the words he uses. An author does use words that generally are already available in a given language, but he chooses the ones he wants, and uses them in his own way for his own purposes. An author does generally follow the grammatical rules of a given language, but he often generates sentences that were never generated before. These sentences are his sentences. An author makes the writs he needs and puts them together in the manner in which he sees fit. An author may build drafts of his or her final text, and may even 'test run' them by reading them and by giving them to friends and colleagues to read.

The final product, the text, like a machine, has its author's design embedded in its very makeup. When actuated, the text, like a machine, operates in accordance with its embedded design. And just as is the case with machines, in engaging a text there is no need for psychic discernment or re-enactment of the author's original intention—there is only a need for actuating the text.

Every time a machine operates successfully, its designer's intentions are fulfilled in its very operations. And every time a text operates successfully, its author's intentions are fulfilled in its very operations. The

reason this happens does not have do with any *psychic re-enactment* of intentions, but with *intentions embedded as design*.

A 'Last Will and Testament' may be employed here in illustration of the manner in which an author's intention is embedded in the text. Consider the following will, borrowed in modified form from David I. Botnick's *Wills for Ontario*:[1]

This is the last will and testament of me, *John David Cooper*, of the City of York in the Regional Municipality of Metropolitan Toronto, Engineer.

I. *I hereby revoke* all wills, codicils, and testamentary dispositions of every nature and kind whatsoever by me heretofore made.

II. *I nominate, constitute, and appoint* my wife, *Lorraine Elizabeth Cooper*, to be the sole executrix of this, my will.

III. *I direct* my executrix to pay my just debts, funeral, and testamentary expenses and all income taxes, estate, inheritance and succession duties, or tax wheresoever payable.

IV. *I give, devise and bequeath* of all my property of every nature and kind and wheresoever situate, including any property over which I may have a general power of appointment, to my executrix.

V. *I hereby* direct my executrix that I be buried in a simple manner and that all expenses in connection with my burial be kept to a bare minimum.

VI. *I direct* that I be buried by the *John Higginbotham Funeral Home* and that all funeral arrangements be made through that funeral home.

In witness hereof I have to this, my last will and testament, written upon this page of paper, subscribed my name this 15th day of June, 1993.

Signed, published, and declared by the said testator, *John David Cooper*, as and for his last will and testament, in the presence of us, both present at the same time, who, at his request, in his presence, and in the presence of each other, have subscribed our names as witnesses.

[*signed*]
JOHN DAVID COOPER

Witness:

[*signed*]	[*signed*]
WALTER WITNESS	WANDA WITNESS
Address: 123 View Road	Address: 123 View Road
Toronto, Ontario	Toronto, Ontario
Occupation: Clerk	Occupation: Mail Carrier

Using notions that have been developed above, it is Possible to confidently make the following statements about this will:

1. It is a thing.
2. It is a human made thing, an artifact.
3. It is an artifact made by a person called 'John David Cooper'.
4. It is not a heap of words, but a well-designed complex of writs.
5. It is designed not just to sit there as an inert artifact, but to do things, or operate. It is an operational artifact.
6. It is designed by Mr. Cooper in such a way so as to operate in a specific manner, one that accomplishes the following tasks:
   (a) Make his wife executrix.
   (b) Give his properties to his wife.
   (c) Instruct his wife regarding burial, debts, taxes and other matters.
7. It is designed very carefully, and includes provisions and qualifications that forestall many kinds of possible engagement friction.
8. It has a deliberate design embedded in its very make-up, and it is this design that sets it up to operate the way it does.
9. For the will to become operative it has to be engaged. If it sits in a safety deposit box that is never opened, it will not operate.
10. The will is supposed to be engaged by Mrs. Cooper in the following ways (further elaboration of these manners of engagement must be postponed until Chapter Five):
    (a) She has to actuate the will or let it work on her. To do this Mrs. Cooper must know English, and if she does, the will would inform and instruct her automatically.
    (b) She has to actualize it or let the will put her to work doing the following:
        [1] Taking responsibility as executrix.
        [2] Taking possession of the properties given to her.
        [3] Paying debts, funeral, and testamentary expenses etc..
        [4] Arranging for burial by the specified funeral home, and with minimum expenses.

Now, if Mrs. Cooper does all the things she is supposed to do—as detailed under (10) above—and as she is supposed to do them, then she

can be said to have engaged the will in such a way as to let it operate according to its author's embedded design. Notice that Mrs. Cooper does not have to re-enact her dead husband's mental states. All she really has to do is let the will operate on her as an English text, and operate according to the text's instructions. If Mrs. Cooper does that, Mr. Cooper's wishes and intentions are automatically fulfilled. Things work this way because Mr. Cooper's wishes and intentions are embedded psychically re-enacted or re-experienced by Mrs. Cooper.

(2) Limitations of the Machine/Text Analogy

In Chapter Three, we pointed out that linguistic competence enables a writer to design and generate a grammatically correct and appropriate writ. It is this same linguistic competence that enables a writer to put writs together in such a way as to compose a text that performs in a desired manner. Just as the 'know-how' of engineers enables them to design and make machines, so does the linguistic 'know-how' of writers enable them to make texts. Know-how is not automatically acquired, but usually requires hard work, apprenticeship, training, practice, and a willingness to learn from mistakes.

The analogy between texts and machines has proven helpful in explaining how writs are combined to make texts, and how texts have their authors' intentions embedded in them as design, and it will prove of further use to us in what follows. Like all analogies, however, the analogy between texts and machines does have its limitations, and we risk oversimplification and error if we do not bear these limitations in mind. It is therefore wise to point out where the analogy simply breaks down.

First, machines are tangible operational artifacts that operate at the tangible or physical level, whereas texts are tangible operational artifacts that ope-rate at an intangible linguistic level. Second, machines have inner parts that may never come into contact with their users or with the materials on which they operate, whereas texts have all their parts 'on the outside' and all the parts come into direct contact with the reader who operates on them or is operated upon by them. Third, most machines, unless they are confronted by terribly weird conditions, tend to operate without much sensitivity to, or influence by, their users or their environment, whereas texts operate quite differently depending on how they are engaged and on engagement factors of the kinds enumerated in the

preceding chapter. Fourth, many machines, once actuated, can continue to operate in the absence of human operators, whereas texts cannot possibly operate in the absence of readers, even if they have previously been read; that is, a text cannot continue to operate if I stop reading it.

Of course, there are machines that are designed to stop operating in the absence of a human operator (a manufacturing press designed for safety so as to stop immediately if the operator simultaneously takes his or her hands off two buttons would be a good example), and there are machines being designed such that all their parts interact with the environment (a MIT robotics program is basically devoted to building such machines).[2] But once one has to search for esoteric examples in order to save an analogy, it is time to admit its limitations. Despite these important limitations, however, the machine analogy, if used carefully, can prove of much assistance, and resort to it from time to time in what follows.

THE VARIETY OF MACHINES AND TEXTS AND THEIR VARIOUS MODES OF OPERATION

I wake up in the morning and read the morning newspaper. I go grocery shopping and read my shopping list. I study a philosophy book. I check my daughter's homework. I read the advertisements in the subway station. I go to a restaurant and consult the menu. I look something up in my encyclopedia. I recite the Qur'an in the evening. I read a novel before I sleep. In all these cases I am engaging texts. Theorists often subsume all text-engaging activities under name of 'interpretation', and subsume all kinds of texts under the name of 'text'. To some extent, such generalization is inescapable, and it is often quite useful. I have resorted to such generalization many times already in this study. Useful as generalizations are, however, we must be careful when we use them. Generalizations can stifle awareness of diversity and variety, and may lead to a blindness so congenial that it is especially dangerous.

In my next chapter, I shall be examining, under the deliberately general and flexible rubric of 'engagements', a host of activities that often go by such names as 'reading' and 'interpretation'. Before I do so, however, it will be helpful to discuss briefly various sorts of machines and texts, and their various modes of operation.

(1) Varieties of Machines

Under the seemingly harmless label of 'text', a great deal of variety is hidden. To get an idea of the kind of differences 'text' may hide, we consider different kinds of operational artifacts hidden under the name 'machine', paying special attention to their different modes of operation:

(a) *Transporting Machines.* Airplanes, the wide varieties of servicing vehicles, escalators, and conveyor belts are all examples of transporting machines. These machines neither alter the structure nor the matter of what they transport. A plane does not change the bodies of its passengers. Nor does a conveyor belt change the form or material of luggage (at least it is not supposed to). Transporting machines do no more than take a thing (X) from place (A) to place (B). These machines only operate on (X)'s placement.

(b) *Transforming Machines.* An airport cafe has orange reamers, grilling and frying surfaces, and food-processors. These machines do not preserve a thing (X) as is, but transform it into a related, but different, thing (X') orange reamers change oranges into orange peels and orange juice. Grilling surfaces change the chemical and physical properties of steaks, and frying surfaces do the same to eggs. Food-processors chop up vegetables and fruits into feces of a myriad of shapes. Transforming machines change an (X) into an (X'). These machines operate only on (X) itself.

(c) *Conditioning Machines.* Airport terminals have central air-conditioning systems, heating systems, and lighting systems. These systems condition the environment around people. Air-conditioning systems do not condition or transform people, but only their environment. If one considers the air which these systems condition, one may accurately describe air-conditioners as transforming machines, because they change the hot air into cold air, an (X) into an (X'). However, if one considers them with regard to the people using the terminal, these systems are not transforming: they do not change people, but only their environment. (Granted, technically speaking they do change the body temperature of people by producing cold air that takes heat away. Still it is better to consider such machines as a separate category.) Conditioning machines change the environment (E) of a thing (X), or (E of X) into (E of X) without changing (X). These machines operate upon (E of X).

(d) *Representational Machines.* Airport terminals have boards that announce flight schedule, televisions, announcing and paging systems,

photocopiers, and fax machines. These machines receive a set of things (x1, x2, x3, ..., xn) and output a set of corresponding but not necessarily identical things (X1, X2, X3, ..., Xn). The sequence of key strokes entered into the computer controlling the announcement board are basically mapped onto a board of large moving letters. The words spoken into the microphone of an announcement system are represented by much louder words coming out of the speakers. The marks on a sheet of paper are mapped onto another sheet by a photocopier, and with a fax machine the two sheets of paper may be thousands of miles apart. It should be noted that there are also transforming, transporting, and even conditioning effects going on in the operation of representational machines. However, the primary operation of these machines is that of mapping (x1, x2, x3, ..., xn) onto another medium in such a way that it becomes (X1, X2, X3, ..., Xn). These machines operate on the medium of (X).

(2) *Varieties of Texts*

Just as various sorts of machines have totally different modes of operation, so do various sorts of texts. Consider the differences among the modes of operation of the following kinds of text:

(a) *Informing Texts.* Texts like encyclopedias, handbooks, newspapers, stock market reports, notices of various kinds, and bus schedules are basically designed to inform their reader of facts. Of course, they may perform other operations; a newspaper, for example, also has advertisements that persuade people to buy things, and letters to the editor that express people's opinions. For the most part, however, such texts are information providers. There are differences in the kinds of information provided. A newspaper provides daily fresh information, while a handbook often provides well-tested, fairly old information. If (T) is the text, and (R) is the reader, then in the case of informing texts, (T) informs (R).

(b) *Instructing Texts.* Texts like cook-books, computer manuals, 'in case of fire' notices in hotel rooms, company policies and procedures, self-help books, and laboratory manuals are basically designed to instruct their reader on how to make, use, or conduct something or other. The authority and force with which instructions are given varies greatly. A self-help book usually 'suggests' that you do things in a particular way, while the 'in case of fire' label tells you that you had better do things its way. Here (T) instructs (R).

(c) *Arguing Texts.* Many philosophy texts, summaries of the arguments of lawyers, United Nations speech transcripts, letters to the editor, and lots of university student papers are designed to convince or persuade their reader by supplying arguments. The kinds of arguments differ widely, ranging from rhetorical arguments, o logical arguments, to emotional arguments. Such texts may try to inform or instruct as well, but their main task is to argue a case. Here (T) supplies (R) with arguments.

(d) *Reminding Texts.* The yellow 3M stickers on the desks of bureaucrats, memoranda of various kinds, shopping lists, the appointment pages of a businessman's filofax, and library notices telling one how many semester loan books he or she still hasn't returned are all examples of texts that remind their reader of things. Such texts may perform other functions; for example, the reminder of a doctor's appointment may also inform one of the doctor's address and telephone number. The main task of such texts, however, is to remind people of things. Here (T) reminds (R) of something.

The above categories of different kinds of texts are not meant to be mutually exclusive or exhaustive. They are simply meant to make it fully clear that what we call texts are things that are often quite different from each other. Obvious as it may seem to be, this variety is largely ignored in the major theories that have been advanced as general theories of interpreting texts. Even though claims to generality are made, they are usually made on the basis of an arbitrary elevation of one kind of text to the status of 'text' in general.

We should conclude this section with two words of warning. First, the four sorts of text operations that we have just listed must not be confused with the five types of writs that we developed, using a modified version of Searle's classification of speech acts, in Chapter Three (assertive writs, directive writs, commissive writs, expressive writs, and declarative writs). A text is often made up of writs of all five kinds, but employs them to perform on overall operation of one particular kind. And second, the above four categories must not be regarded as exhaustive or mutually exclusive. As we shall see in the next chapter, the matter is not that simple.

V

An Alternative Model of Texts and their Interpretation III: Engagement

INTRODUCTION

In the present chapter, employing the notions isolated and developed in Chapters Three and Four, we construct a model of the engagement of texts. The chapter is devoted to two tasks (listed here with the letters of the following sections in which they are undertaken): (1) To examine the variety of interpretative activities employing notions and factors parallel to those developed in Chapters Three and Four; and (2) to construct, in outline form, a model of text engagement that incorporates this variety. This model will regard interpretation, or text engagement, as a process of sourcing a text's operations for the purpose of making new states of affairs. I proceed in this chapter according to the following outline:

1. Varieties of the Engagement of Texts

(1) *Actuating the Bible*
(2) *Manipulating the Bible*
(3) *Utilizing the Bible*
(4) *Actualizing the Bible*

2. Text Engagement as Sourcing of Operations

(1) *Making*
(2) *Interpretative Projects as Making Projects*
(3) *Interpretative Projects and the Sourcing of Items from Texts*
(4) *Interpreting as the Sourcing of a Text's Operations*
(5) *Asking Texts Questions: Explicit Sourcing*

(6) *Historical Examples of Explicit Sourcing in Different Interpretative Projects*
(7) *Sourcing Factors*
  (a) Source-Interpreter Relations (1)–(6)
  (b) Sourcing Tactics
    [1] Blanket Sourcing *vs.* Discrete Sourcing
    [2] Deep Sourcing *vs.* Surface Sourcing
    [3] Outsider Sourcing *vs.* Insider Sourcing
    [4] Puritan Sourcing *vs.* Juxtaspositional Sourcing
    [5] Partial Sourcing *vs.* Holistic Sourcing
  (c) Sourcing Control
    [1] Sourcing Control through Control of Source
    [2] Sourcing Control through Control of Access to Source
    [3] Sourcing Control through Paradigms
    [4] Sourcing Control through Explicit Instructions and Rules
    [5] Sourcing Control through Pre-emptive Moves
    [6] Sourcing Control through Monitoring and Control Institutions
  (d) Sourcing Valuation
  (e) Observations Regarding Sourcing Presuppositions (1)–(37)

VARIETIES OF THE ENGAGEMENTS OF TEXTS

Having already discussed the great variety of texts (in Chapter Four), we may now examine the great variety of text engagements that go by the name of 'interpretation'. Consider, for example, some of the varied activities involving the Bible that go by that name. A preacher deriving edifying moral lessons from the Sermon on the Mount, in preparation for his own sermon, is said to be interpreting it. A philologist making and testing hypothesis about the multiple sources of Genesis is said to be interpreting it. A liberation theologian finding hope-inspiring expressions of the 'preferential option for the poor' in Exodus is said to be interpreting it. A literary theorist 'deconstructing' the Book of Job is said to be interpreting it. A monk letting himself be uplifted by God's spirit as he does his daily Sacred Reading (*lectio divina*) is said to be interpreting it.

Although no pretence to exhaustive generality is made, the classification of modes of writ engagement that I developed above (in Chapter Three) can be invoked here in offering an account of text engagement that does justice to the variety of activities we must consider. I shall proceed by using illustrations from contemporary approaches to the Bible, since it is a text that has invited so much attention and has been approached in such a rich variety of ways. One may plausibly say that there are at least four general manners of engaging the Bible: (a) actuating the Bible; (b) manipulating the Bible; (c) utilizing the Bible; and (d) actualizing the Bible. Let us consider each of these in turn, bearing in mind that there may very well be other general approaches not discussed here.

(1) *Actuating the Bible.* Any person who can read English can read an English Bible. The 'straightforward' reading of the Bible demands no special techniques beyond those of common linguistic competence in English.[1] The strategy in this kind of engagement is to simply let the text operate on you in the way English words normally operate on any English reader. Now, when something operates on something else, there is a good chance that it will transform it or alter it. However, the degree to which something is transformed depends on its 'transformability' or malleability.[2] The reader who is involved in an actuating engagement of the Bible may or may not emerge from the engagement transformed. There are reader attitudes that make a reader's transformation more likely. Someone who respects the Bible or who thinks that it is the word of God takes it seriously, and as its writs operate on such a reader he or she allows them to operate in a profound way. Such a reader exhibits a high degree of malleability. Someone who thinks, on the other hand, that the Bible is a confused record of outdated cult practices and dogmas is less likely to be transformed by it. Such a reader exhibits a very low degree of malleability. Nevertheless, even such a rigid reader can read the Bible, and it operates on him or her at least to a minimal extent by virtue of his or her competence in English. Anyone who has used a household electrical drill knows that both a dry wall and a concrete ceiling can be operated upon by the drill, but with varying degrees of success.

Many Christians have strived to discover and formulate ways of increasing one's malleability to the Bible's operations. Western monasticism, inspired by the rule of St. Benedict, gives a prominent role to *lectio divina*. In his rule, St. Benedict provides for a good portion of the day to

be spent in this kind of reading. There have been various attempts to say what sacred reading is like; for example, Guigo II's *The Ladder of the Monk*. This book offers what is perhaps the clearest indication of what is involved. Guigo says that *lectio divina* is basically an attempt to achieve communion with the Bible's author, God, by letting it operate on one's soul, and he discusses four steps that, if followed, lead the reader to a malleable state in which God's word's may become operative to the fullest extent. The details of Guigo's account need not detain us here.[3] It is necessary only to stress that while the actuating of the Bible can be engaged in by any English reader, there are varying degrees of 'letting the text operate on you', and that some Christian writers have attempted to formulate ways of letting the Bible operate on you to the maximum degree possible.

(2) *Manipulating the Bible.* Any manipulating engagement with the Bible must begin with actuating it at least to a minimal extent. If the Bible is not read, it is difficult to manipulate it. So even a Bible manipulator lets it operate on him or her to some extent. However, a Bible manipulator is not interested in letting the Bible work on him or her, but in working on the Bible. The masters of the 'historical-critical method' used in biblical studies have devised a whole battery of techniques of operating upon the Bible. Technically speaking, there is not one 'method' of historical-critical criticism, but a host of techniques that can be used to operate on the Bible. The number of such techniques is quite large, and we need not consider them in detail here. A very brief consideration will suffice to illustrate this kind of approach to engaging the Bible.

The basic presupposition of manipulative biblical engagement is that the Bible is an historical document written over many years by different human authors in different circumstances and in different languages and linguistic idioms. Given this presupposition, scholars who engage the Bible in this way apply to it a vast array of tools and techniques that were previously used only in application to classical 'profane' texts. The Bible is analyzed into its constituent parts, the sources of the parts are traced, conjectures on how the parts were put together over the years are made, word variations are noted, accounts of historical events are compared, parables are analyzed into their components and compared with other parables and stories, proverbs are investigated in the attempt to pinpoint their origins, and references to cult practices are closely examined in the

attempt to determine their influence on later practices. The historical-critical approach has developed a large number of ways of operating on the Bible, with such names, for example, as 'redaction criticism', 'source criticism', and 'form criticism'. These techniques greatly differ from one another and give rise to significantly different kinds of Bible engagement.[4] We need not pursue the classification of these kinds of engagement here, nor the fact that there exist other techniques , such as Rudolf Bultmann's 'demythologizing', of manipulating the Bible.[5] It is sufficient for our purpose merely to note that even within manipulative engagement there exist many different kinds of manipulating, all of which, however, are similar in that their main concern lies in working on the text, not in letting it work on you.

(3) *Utilizing the Bible.* Any person who wants to use the Bible must read it first, and in that sense all Bible utilizing engagements involve actuating engagement at least to a minimal extent. While actuating the Bible is basically a 'letting it work on you', and manipulating the Bible is a 'working on it', utilizing the Bible consists in 'putting it to work for a particular purpose'. Over the centuries the Bible has proved very useful in the sense that it has been used for an astonishing array of purposes. It has been used to inspire believers, to preach to them, to summon them to war, to justify divine rule, to legitimate social practices, to free people, to dominate people, to order life, to revolt against established orders, and to find God. The many uses to which the Bible has been put have often been pointed out and documented, and I shall make no attempt to classify them here. It suffices to say that there are many of them, and that each kind of use is really a different kind of engagement. These various kinds of engagement follow a common pattern of '(R) uses (T)' or '(R) puts (T) to work for his or her purposes'.[6]

It is important to note, however, that just because the person engaging the Bible is using it for his or her purpose, it does not follow that it is being used in a way contrary to the manner in which its authors wanted it to be used. If an author writes his or her text as a tool for doing something, then someone who uses the text to do that thing is not doing anything contrary to the author's intentions. This point is similar to what I said above (in Chapter Four) about 'embedded design'. When tools are made, they are made in such a way as to be conducive to being used in order to perform a particular kind of operation. Tools have 'a being used

intentionality' embedded in them. An example drawn from contemporary Christian theology may help to clarify this point.

Liberation theology is an important movement in contemporary Christian theology. Liberation theologians argue that God intended the Bible to be used in order to liberate the oppressed, and not to justify oppression and domination. Theologians such as Gustavo Gutiérrez and Juan Luis Segundo have elaborated a 'hermeneutics of liberation' that maintains that the Bible contains many liberation themes, and that it is a tool for liberation and should be used as such. When such a liberation theologian uses the Bible to stir up the masses against oppressive governments in South America, he or she sees this as an action that is in full accordance with God's intentions. Many critics of liberation theology question, of course, precisely the claim that the purpose to which these theologians put the Bible is in accordance with divine intention. It does not matter, for our purposes, whether it is the liberation theologians or their critics who are correct.[7] What matters is the crucial observation that one may think of a text as a tool to be utilized without giving up the notion that its author's intentions are respected.

(4) *Actualizing the Bible*. All actualizing begins with actuating. However, while in actuating the reader is content to let the text work on him or her, in actualizing the reader lets the text put him or her to work. While in manipulating the reader uses the text, in actualizing the reader lets the text use him or her. There have been a number of theological efforts to elaborate how this actualizing works. Dietrich Bonhoeffer, for example, claims that one must 'implant' the Bible, as 'God's word', in his or her heart through daily biblical meditations, and let it be one's guide in all one's activities. To understand how actualizing works, however, it is more fruitful to look not at the theoretical speculations of theologians, but at the activities of people who have actually been put to work by this text. Bonhoeffer's own activities, and the execution he suffered because of them, indicate that he did indeed actualize the Bible.[8] But the example that perhaps best illustrates this kind of engagement is Mother Teresa of Calcutta. In recorded interviews and talks, she has explained that throughout her entire life, in her efforts to help the 'poorest of the poor', she has been striving to do no more than respond to a single biblical passage in Matthew: 'I was hungry, I was naked, I was sick, and I was homeless, and you ministered to me' (Matthew 25:31-46). Her life's work has

been inspired by this single passage.[9] There are, however, many ways of letting the Bible use you. Consider the fact that many a Crusader thought they were being the Bible's tool, then compare a military Crusader with Mother Teresa. The difference is indicative not only of different readers having different understandings of what the Bible wants them to do, but also of the different ways in which they allow themselves to be used by it.

TEXT ENGAGEMENTS AS SOURCING OF OPERATIONS

In this section we shall develop a model of text engagement that takes into account the variety of texts and text engagements that has been surveyed above (in Chapter Four). The model regards text engagement as a process of what we call 'sourcing' a text's operations for the purpose of 'making' new states of affairs. I shall start with the notion of 'making' new states of affairs, invoking an analogy between manufacturing and interpretative projects, and a related analogy between interpretation and the purchasing function in manufacturing. (Regarding the latter, it should be pointed out immediately that the items 'purchased' in interpretation are operations, and that this activity is not unlike securing services or hiring workers, or, to put it in Marxian terms, sourcing labour power.) I shall then draw a distinction between articulated and unarticulated sourcing and discuss the base from which sourcing stems, returning to the notion of presuppositions and elaborating the distinction between articulated presuppositions (assumptions) and unarticulated presuppositions (presumptions). I shall then turn to the examination of the related issues of the raising of questions, the arising of questions, and the control of sourcing, and conclude with a few remarks concerning valuation in matters of interpretation.

(1) *Making*

Aristotle distinguished among three kinds of human activities: contemplating (*theoria*), doing (*praxis*), and making (*poiesis*). Philosophers, including Aristotle himself, have tended to the present day generally to focus on contemplating and doing, and have largely neglected making. When making does get discussed, it is usually within aesthetics, and in connection with the making of works of fine art. Even Marxism, with its talk of production and manufacturing, sees itself as being concerned with *praxis*, or doing, and not with making.

Some philosophers, Aristotle included, have sometimes blurred the distinctions between contemplating, doing, and making by identifying one of these activities with another. In Book X of the *Nicomachean Ethics*, for example, Aristotle regards contemplation as the highest form of *praxis*, a theme which has been adopted and developed by Gadamer (as has already been pointed out in Chapter Two). Similar blurring of these distinctions is found, for example, in Francis Bacon's notion of '*opus*', Giambattista Vico's etymological identification of knowing and making, and Ibn Khaldun's view of the sciences ('*ulum*) as crafts (*sana'i*).[10]

In the following analyses, we shall employ the term 'making' in referring to a general sort of activity that comprises the two specific sorts of activity called 'contemplating' (or 'thinking') and doing. I think it common sense to distinguish between contemplating the chair before me by gazing upon it, and cutting the chair into pieces with a saw or constructing a new chair from pieces of wood. According to my use of the above terms, however, both of these activities are specific sorts of activities belonging to the general category of 'making'. My purpose in distinguishing among the activities and terms in this way is to bring attention to the role played by the *project* of the person engaged in an activity. I am claiming, in short, that any particular act of contemplating or of doing always belongs to some project of making—that is, to some 'making project'—and specifically to the project of 'making a new state of affairs'.

These states of affairs can be either mental or physical. When I am engaged in activities such as sawing a chair into pieces, I am clearly involved in making a new set of states of affairs—one that includes pieces of wood taken from the previously intact chair. And when I am making a chair, I am obviously involved in altering the present set of states of affairs—one that includes pieces of wood, glue, and perhaps some nails. But the sets of states of affairs that I am interested in making need not pertain to states of affairs in the physical world. *Sensibilia* are not the only items that comprise states of affairs; *Intelligibilia* are also items that comprise states of affairs. When I think about a chair, it is because I want to make a new set of mental states of affairs different from the old one, which did not include any thought concerning the chair. (My reason for wanting to make such a new set need not concern us here.)

A making project is any project that aims at transforming a set of states of affairs into a new set of states of affairs. As I have explained above,

contemplating and doing may be regarded as kinds of making. Contemplating is the making of new sets of states of affairs in the mind, or the realm of the intelligible; doing is the making of new states of affairs in the world, or the realm of the sensible. In case one has any doubts about the possibility of making things in the mind, one should consider the kind of things one is able to do by connecting 'ideas' and 'notions' into theories and mental constructs.[11]

(2) *Interpretative Projects as Making Projects*

Interpretative projects are 'making' projects that involve the making of new sets of mental and/or physical states of affairs.

It is fashionable nowadays to think of interpretation as production, and thus to blur the distinction between interpretation and writing. Hirsch, for example, claims that a text is nothing but a set of inert marks which have to be used to produce meaning. I must stress that this is not the sort of claim I am making when I regard interpretative projects as making projects. What I claim is quite different—namely, that interpretation or the engagement of texts is always part of larger making projects.

In Chapter Three, I defined a project as a set of actions that are intimately connected, sequentially ordered, and strategically planned. An interpretative project can be defined as a project that involves text engagement. This is not to say that an interpretative project is the same as a text engagement project. Rather, if the set of actions constituting a project includes actions of text engagement, then the project is interpretative in that it involves interpretation.

Since we are always contemplating things or doing things, it means that we are always making by transforming old sets of states of affairs into new ones, whether in the mind or in the world. All interpretative projects, then, are making projects. These projects are special not because they are making projects, but because they involve the engagement of texts. This is what makes them interpretative.

(3) *Interpretative Projects and the Sourcing of Items from Texts*

Let us consider four people reading the Book of Exodus. The first is a theologian involved in developing a theology of liberation. He appeals to the text for inspiration, and for guidance, and he learns lessons from the situation of Israel in Egypt. The second person is a historian interested

in the history of the Near East. She is reading Exodus preparation for a major book that she is writing. She appeals to it as a source of information about the ancient Near East, she finds information about work arrangements, about society, about language, about clothing, and about a host of other things, acts, and events. The third person is a devout Jew reciting the Torah as part of his celebration of the Passover holiday. He appeals to the Torah as a source of inspiration and as a clarifier of the meaning of his life and existence as a Jew. In the Torah he finds supporting promises, commands, and warnings made by God that are meant to guide his life. He re-enacts the spirit of Exodus in his celebration of Passover with its special foods and special prayers, including the reciting of the Passover *Haggadah*, containing many allusions to Exodus. For him the Exodus is a source of religious enlightenment, guidance, and inspiration. It fills his life with meaning. The fourth person is an historical-critical scholar who is hunting through Exodus for clues as to how that book was composed, what its sources were, and how they were edited into the canonical book of Exodus.

Each of these interpreters is appealing to the text as source. While it is a source of different items for each of them, all of these interpreters have something in common: they are all engaging the text, and. appealing to it as a source of items that are needed for some project or another. The projects of these interpreters are all making projects, and the text, in each case, functions as a supplier, albeit a supplier of different items. These items then become integrated and serve the project on which the person is working. These projects are making projects: making a liberation theology and a better South America, making a history book, making a more appreciative, inspired, and worshipful soul, and making a better story of how Exodus was made. The texts which these interpreters are using can be considered as suppliers of intangible items. But what kind of intangible items? The answer is *operations.*

When a reader engages a text, he or she is involved in treating it as a source of needed operations. Consider the following everyday situations: (1) A hungry patron engaging a restaurant menu as a source of informative operations regarding the food available; (2) A student engaging an encyclopedia as a source of fact-giving operations; (3) A computer user engaging an instruction manual as a source of instructional operations that tell him or her how to use a particular piece of software; (4) A stressed out

businessman engaging a self-help book as a source of guiding operations on how to lead a more relaxed life; (5) A person engaging the old letters of a friend as a source of memory stimulating operations; (6) A widower engaging the Bible as a source of consoling operations in a time of grief. In each of these cases, the person engaging a text is appealing to a source for operations needed for particular making projects.

Any set of items may be classified in a number of ways depending on the principle of classification used. The furniture pieces in a room may be classified according to color, material, number of legs, or function. In Chapter Three, we introduced a classification of writ types that was an adaption of Searle's classification of speech acts, and it is possible to think of the items sourced from texts as writ operations. Thus, there would be a kind of sourcing that appealed to the text for (a) assertive writ operations, another kind that appealed to it for (b) directive writ operations, another for (c) commissive writ operations, another for (d) expressive writ operations, and finally another for (e) declarative writ operations:

(a) *Assertive writ operations* result in the reader obtaining information about how things are. This kind of sourcing seeks informing operations. Someone that approaches Exodus with view to gathering information about ancient Israel, such as the names of ancient Israelite tribes, is involved in this kind of sourcing. A historian of the ancient Near East is likely to practice this kind of sourcing.

(b) *Directive writ operations* result in the reader being guided. This kind of sourcing seeks guiding operations. Someone who approaches Exodus with view to learning divine laws and regulations to live by is involved in this kind of sourcing. An observant Orthodox Jew keen on living according to the rule of Torah is likely to practice this kind of sourcing.

(c) *Commissive writ operations* result in the reader being given promises. A believing Jew who approaches Exodus because he wants to be assured of God's divine and personal covenant with him as a Jew, and to be comforted by God's promises of ultimate salvation, is involved in this kind of sourcing. A Jewish family hearing passages of Exodus as part of the Passover *Haggadah* recitation during Passover celebrations is likely to practice this kind of sourcing.

(d) *Expressive writ operations* result in the reader coming to appreciate and share the feelings or attitudes expressed in the text. A worshipper

approaching Exodus with a view to sharing the feelings and attitudes expressed in the accounts of Israel's ordeals is involved in this kind of sourcing. A worshipper piously chanting the Psalms in a Church or a synagogue is likely to practice this kind of sourcing.

(e) *Declarative writ operations* result in the reader finding passages that aim at world-transformation. A rabbi approaching Exodus with view to finding passages which justify and authorize the priestly class to which he belongs is involved in this kind of sourcing. A frightened religious person hunting in a sacred text for prayers and incantations that would drive away evil and ensure salvation is also likely to practice this kind of sourcing.

Attractive as the above classification may be, it is not the only possible one. It is possible to classify kinds of sourcing using other principles. We shall not examine here all of the various alternative ways in which kinds of sourcing might be classified. It suits our present purpose, however, to suggest another way of classifying kinds of sourcing. This classification is based on the idea that interpretative projects are making projects. A preacher can be said to be involved in sermon-making (and in making his congregation better people), the judge in a judgement-making project (and in making a just society), and the philosopher in a philosophy-paper-making project (and hopefully in making things clearer).

Now, if we consider such tangible making projects as manufacturing, we notice that here too we have sourcing activities. These activities are sometimes actually called 'sourcing', more often, however, they are called 'purchasing' or 'acquisition'. In such production activities as manufacturing, it is possible to classify the purchasing activities according to the kinds of items purchased, which are often called 'means of production'.

There are different classifications of means of production, but a fairly common one is the classification into materials, tools, energy, and labour. In a factory that makes wooden tables; the *materials* include the wood, glue, and metallic joints; the *tools* include the saws, saw blades, hammers, and clamps; the *energy* used in municipally supplied electrical energy, and the labour used is of two kinds: manual labour or craftsmen, and management. The materials are things from which or of which the product is made. The tools are things with the aid of which or using which the product is made. Energy is what powers or empowers the production process. And labour is work, ingenuity, and organization.

The purchasing department of a manufacturing operation buys from a number of suppliers. It deals with suppliers of materials, suppliers of tools, suppliers of energy, and suppliers of labour. While the way in which purchasing operations are organized is pretty much the same in dealing with the different kinds of suppliers, the items supplied are very different in character, and in the function they play in the manufacturing operations.[12]

Returning now to the less material or tangible production activities—the making of such things as sermons, judgements, and philosophical papers—we find that they all appeal to texts, just as the manufacturing concern appeals to its suppliers. In an interpretative project particular operations are required and are therefore demanded from texts. The question is, to what kind of means of production are the operations sourced from texts analogous? It may appear that a text is appealed to for 'materials'—for ideas, arguments, illustrations, bits of information—that go into the making of the set of states of affairs to which the project is devoted. It may also appear that a text is appealed to for 'tools'—for helpful ideas, methods, procedures, guidelines—that are used to help the production project. It may even appear that a text is appealed to for 'energy'—for inspiration, legitimation, justification, authorization—that empower and sustain the making project. But if we consider the consequences of our modeling of texts as operational artifacts, it becomes clear that a text is really appealed to for sheer 'labour': for the actual work or operations it performs.

(4) *Interpreting as the Sourcing of a Text's Operations*

The analogy between interpretative projects and manufacturing projects proves even more helpful if we invoke a notion developed by Marx in his analysis of capitalist manufacturing in *Das Kapital*. This is the notion of labour-power. For Marx, it is human work or labour that endows commodities with exchange-value. Something which requires twice the labour required to produce something else will have twice its exchange-value. But labour also endows commodities with use-value, or at least alters their use-value, so that what is produced can enter the process of exchange. The notion of labour-power is introduced by Marx to explain the phenomenon of surplus-value. This is the phenomenon of the capitalist's ability to sell commodities for more money than the money he

spent buying the commodities which went into making them. Marx explains this phenomenon by claiming that there is a commodity the use of which adds exchange-value to the commodities produced. This commodity, Marx claims, is labour-power.[13]

Labour-power is basically the ability to do useful work which alters or creates use-value and adds exchange-value. Workers do not sell their labour to the Capitalist, they sell their capacity or ability to labour, i.e. their labour-power. The actual doing of the work is labour, the capacity to do the work is labour-power. Surplus value is the difference between the exchange-value of the commodities produced through labour, and what was paid for the labour-power that was actualized or manifested in that labour. Labour cannot be bought and sold as a commodity, but labour-power can. In exchange for a wage, a worker promises to work or labour at the capitalist's behest, thereby selling his/her labour.

By modeling texts as operational artifacts, we in effect end up attributing 'labour-power' to texts. Marx thought that only humans possess labour-power, and are therefore the only beings capable of creating commodities or use-values. For Marx, the only way to make beings that have labour-power is reproduction, and it is exactly in terms of the creation of beings with labour-power that Marx thought of human reproduction.

If we define labour in anthropomorphic terms such that a being would need to have volition before it could be said to labour, then texts, as operational artifacts, could not be said to labour, since they have no volition of their own. A text sitting on a library shelf cannot decide to go for a walk. However, if we remember that texts have embedded in them the intentions of their authors as design, it is clear that they also have an embedded volition which is not their own.

Embedded volition may seem to be too much to attribute to texts, but a consideration of the programming of industrial robots would prove the opposite. In today's industry, robots are employed in many ways. They paint cars, weld metal pieces together, pick and place items, and perform a multitude of other operations. Industrial robots do not have volition like the robots in science-fiction movies. However, robots do have embedded in their hard-wiring, and in the software of their controllers, the volition of their programmers. Now, if a programmer programs a robot to go through a spray painting operation in a particular way, and subsequently dies, the robot continues to perform the operation exactly

as the programmer wanted it to be performed until it is re-programmed—that is, until the volition of another person interferes with or replaces the volition of the first programmer.[14]

If an embedded volition and an ability to operate is all that having labour-power entails, then texts, as operational artifacts, certainly do have labour-power. However, since the idea of texts labouring still sounds anthropomorphic, it is best that we replace it with the more neutral sounding 'operating-power'.

Just as the capitalist buys the labour-power of a worker in order to harness it in manufacturing projects of his or her choosing, the interpreter of a text also harnesses the operating-power of texts in his or her own interpretative projects. As we have seen above, a text is an organized complex of writs. None of the individual writs that constitute the text can operate unless they are engaged, and the text as a whole cannot operate unless it is engaged. Like the industrial worker who cannot make cars unless hired by a car manufacturing company, the text cannot make anything, nor participate in the making of anything, unless it is engaged by an interpreter interested in making the kind of thing the text would be good at making because of the way it has been designed, and because of the volition its author has embedded in it.

When an interpreter engages a text, he or she does so as part of a making project. The way in which the interpreter sources the text, and the kinds of operations that he or she sources from the text, will be largely determined by the kind of project the interpreter is pursuing. Interpretative projects, in short, are making projects that involve the engaging of texts. The engaging of texts is the sourcing of operations, and this sourcing is rendered possible by virtue of the text's operating-power. The sourcing conducted by interpreters, therefore, turns out to be more akin to the sourcing of services or labour than the sourcing of materials, energy, or tools. It remains true, however, that the labour sourced from a text can be used as material if the text is manipulated, as energy if the text is actualized, and as a tool if the text is utilized.

(5) *Asking Texts Questions: Explicit Sourcing*

Keeping in mind that it is operations that are sourced in interpretation, the analogy between interpretative projects and manufacturing projects can now be invoked once again. This analogy proves helpful in at least

two more respects: First, it emphasizes the point regarding a reader's initiative and project and its influence on the way in which he or she engages the text. In manufacturing operations, the kind of items sourced from suppliers depends on the kind of manufacturing being pursued. A shoe factory does not normally source aluminum foil or oil rig tooling, it only sources items needed for the production of shoes. Similarly, interpretative projects vary widely, and we should not expect all text-engaging projects to be sourcing for the same kind of operations. When we wonder why a reader gages a source in a particular way, the answer lies in the nature of the interpretative project in which he or she is involved in.

Second, much can be learned from the fact that in manufacturing, sourcing or purchasing is always conducted in response to a 'demand signal' , which is often called a 'requisition'. In response to the demand signal, the purchasing department issues a 'purchase order' to its suppliers of the particular item demanded. In interpretative projects there is often a kind of 'demand signal' which stems from a felt need for a particular operation, and which leads the interpreter to appeal to the text for the supply of the needed operation. In a way, the interpreter too is sending a kind of 'purchase order' to the text by requesting the supply of the operations that he or she needs for the successful completion of the interpretative project in which he or she is involved. The 'purchase orders' of the interpreter are nothing other than the questions that he or she asks the text.

We should examine a bit further this analogy between sourcing in interpretative projects and purchasing in manufacturing projects. The purchasing department of a factory is responsible for the procurement of items needed for the production of its products. When an item is needed, a demand signal is given to the purchasing department, usually in the form of a requisition. The purchasing department issues a purchase order based on the requisition. The purchase order is issued to the suppliers of the item needed. The purchase order clearly indicates what is needed (along with the quality and quantity needed) and when it is needed. In interpretative projects too we find that when some item becomes needed there is a feeling of need or lack, and a text is appealed to for the supply of what is needed. This appealing can often be explicitly formulated in the form of a question. The question which the exegete puts to the text specifies what is needed, and sources the text for exactly what is needed.

If the interpreter puts the wrong question to the text, he will receive operations which are not needed for the interpretative project, just as a mistake on a purchase order can result in the supply of the wrong size screws to a factory. It is thus possible to learn a great deal about interpretation through the study of the questioning process through which it is conducted.

(6) *Historical examples of how different interpretative projects put different questions to the text*

There seems to be no limit to the questions that can be put to any particular text, and enumerating all possible questions would appear to be impossible. Consider, for example, the questions that have been asked of the Bible, along with the questions that may be asked of the Bible but which have not yet been asked. Surely we are dealing here with an infinite number of possibilities. However, it is useful to enumerate some of these questions just to see more clearly how the questions that are asked largely determine the operations that are received from the text. By way of illustration, let us briefly consider the sorts of questions that have been asked of the Bible.

During the Patristic period of biblical exegesis, we find two main schools. The School of Alexandria practiced the art of allegorizing. The main question it asked was, 'What are the deeper or spiritual meanings of the Bible?' The commentaries produced by this school clearly show that the kinds of operations obtained through questioning the Bible in this way are quite distinct from those obtained by the other school, the School of Antioch. The latter practiced a more sober kind of allegorizing which they called 'theorizing' and which was based on the grammatical-historical study of the Bible. For the School of Antioch, the main question was, 'What are the grammatical and historical meanings of the Bible, and what kind of overall vision emerges from them?' The difference between the kind of operations they obtained from the kind obtained by the School of Alexandria are easily recognized in any comparison of their commentaries.[15]

During medieval times we find a very interesting way of practicing exegesis. The allegorizing of the Alexandrian school continued, but it was systematized into a standard set of four questions: (1) 'What is the literal sense of the text?'; (2) 'What is the theological sense of the text?';

(3) 'What is the ethical sense of the text?'; and, 4) 'What is the eschatological sense of the text?' Each one of these questions gave rise to a particular kind of exegesis, and medieval interpretative commentaries would often devote four sections for each verse, with each section addressing one of the four questions. This four-fold approach to the Bible was called the *quadriga*, and was summarized in the couplet:

> *Littera gesta docet, quid credas allegoria, Moralis quid agas, quo tendas anagogia.*
> [The literal sense teaches what happened, the allegorical what you are to believe,the moral what to do, anagogy where you are going.][16]

In this medieval formula we find recognition of the fact that different kinds of questions give rise to different kinds of interpretative insights, and an early attempt at providing an orderly taxonomy of the kinds of questions that may be asked of a text. Throughout medieval times, the Catholic Church exercised almost total control over the interpretation of the Bible. The Church's canon of the authoritative writings of the Fathers, and its complete authority in all religious matters, insured that only the questions it chose to raise were raised. With Martin Luther all that changed. The Protestant Reformation heralded in a host of new questions to be asked of the Bible. The most threatening for the Catholic Church was the question, 'How does the Bible judge the Catholic Church?' The new questions asked of the Bible led to the making of distinctly Protestant biblical commentaries.[17]

The undermining of the Church's authority over matters of interpretation eventually led to the proliferation of an incredible variety of views about the Bible. The Reformers themselves became concerned about the issue of interpretation and attempted to regulate it by requiring that theology be based on linguistic and historical interpretation. The linguistic and historical questions asked of the Bible, however, led to results unexpected by the Reformers, and in time gave rise to the 'historical-critical method' of biblical exegesis. In historical-critical interpretation, we find such questions as: 'What are the sources of the text?'; 'In what period was the text written, and by whom'; 'How was the text edited into the version which we now have?'; and, 'Are there any archeological clues as to the original site of Solomon's temple?' Such questions had not been asked before, and the answers gave rise to a new body of commentaries.[18]

The twentieth century has witnessed a great diversity of approaches to biblical interpretation, each with its own distinctive kinds of questions. The 'Demythologizing' interpretation of Rudolf Bultmann asked the Bible, 'What is the existential insight underlying this myth?' The 'Discipleship' interpretation of Dietrich Bonhoeffer asked the, Bible, 'How should I live and die as a disciple and follower of Christ?' The 'Correlation Method' of Paul Tillich asked the Bible, 'What are the answers to the questions raised by our present existential situation?' The 'Theology of Liberation' of Gustavo Gutiérrez asked, 'What is the divine preferential option for the poor promised in the Bible?' There are many other approaches which address a multitude of questions to the Bible, and in each case a distinctive approach to interpretation is pursued, and a distinctive body of commentaries emerges.[19]

The above brief sketch has demonstrated that different questions are associated with different kinds of interpretation, but it has not shown us whether it is possible to classify the kinds of questions that can be asked of a text, even if enumerating all the possible questions is impossible. Our reference to the medieval *quadriga* did touch on an interesting four-fold classification. The questions asked were of four basic types: literal-historical, theological, ethical, and eschatological. But surely these four categories do not cover, without fudging, many questions that may be asked of the text, even though they may cover a great number of questions. For example, questions often asked by psychoanalytic interpretation, in which the text is used as a path into the depth psychology of its author, do not get covered.

It is interesting to note that there were other medieval taxonomies of kinds of interpretation based on the fact that different questions are asked. These come from the Jewish and Muslim traditions, and are worthy of attention. Muslim taxonomies are rather extensive, and I cannot possibly do them any justice here. I shall restrict the following consideration of taxonomies to some brief remarks concerning interpretation questions in the Jewish tradition. In the Jewish tradition the kind of Torah interpretation which asks questions about laws, codes, and rules of conduct is distinguished from the kind which asks about ethical edification, theological insight, and the history of the Jewish people and teachers. The first kind of interpretation is called *halakhah* (Hebrew for 'law'), the second *aggadah* (Hebrew for 'discourse').

In their efforts to regulate the interpretation of the Torah, the rabbis developed different rules (*middot*) appropriate for each of two kinds of interpretation. The seven rules of Rabbi Hillel (first century), expanded to thirteen rules by Rabbi Ishmael (second century), were devoted to halakhic interpretation. The thirty-two rules of Rabbi Eliezer ben Yose were devoted to aggadic interpretation.

Another important Jewish distinction came to the fore during the period in which such great medieval commentators as Solomon ben Isaac (Rashi) (1040–1105) thrived. This is the distinction between interpretation that asks questions regarding the plain contextual sense, and interpretation that asks questions regarding homiletical lessons. The first type of interpretation was called *peshat*, and the second *derash*.

During late medieval period a distinction was made between four senses of the Torah: the plain (*peshat*), the symbolic (*remez*), the ethical (*derush*), and mystical (*sod*). The four senses were summarized in the mnemonic '*pardes*', which means 'garden', 'orchard', or 'paradise'. The Torah, according to this conception, is the garden of God. It is a garden which is infinitely rich, and full of items. To source the full richness of the Torah, four corresponding types of interpretation are to be practiced.[20]

The above, very brief, sketch of the history of biblical interpretation as a history of questions that have been asked of the Bible is sufficient to demonstrate that interpretative projects vary a great deal depending on the kind of sourcing conducted, and the kinds of operations sourced in different projects. It is important to note, in concluding this sect.ion, that sourcing need not be articulated in the form of questions, and that it goes on quite successfully when questions are not articulated, but lurk unconsciously as the interpreter engages the text. Before the main features of the model I have been presented can be summarized, it is necessary to isolate and briefly consider some of the most important factors that influence the kind of sourcing and the operations sourced for in text engagements.

(7) *Sourcing Factors*

(a) Source-Interpreter Relations

What we may call 'source-interpreter relations' are clearly of importance. The most noteworthy of these appear to be the following:

(1) An interpreter may source only one text or may have a 'supplier

base' of several texts upon which to draw. The relations among texts in a supplier base are important, for they affect the sourcing conducted.

(2) The interpreter may have a short-term or a long-term relationship with the text. Prolonged contact with the text tends to increase the yield of operations gathered through sourcing. Sacred texts are often meditated upon daily, or even memorized (a tradition practiced in Islam), in which case the contact with the source is quite intimate.

(3) The success or failure in getting the operations needed for one's projects from a source affects the likelihood of their being sourced again. Sources that have proven reliable for the supply of particular operations tend to be appealed to again and again for that kind of operation.

(4) The attitudes that one has when sourcing a text have important repercussions for the results of the sourcing effort. To source for soul-transforming operations from a sacred text without having the requisite reverence and devotion usually ends in transformation taking place.

(5) The achievements of interpreters can be shared by the texts they source. A source which is considered outdated and useless suddenly becomes important if an interpreter succeeds in sourcing for operations that are presently needed by the community.

(7) The sourcing of vital texts is usually conducted by specialists who are authorized by the community to source the texts. Sacred texts, legal texts, and literary texts are usually sourced only by the 'experts' of sourcing in a given community.

(b) Sourcing Tactics

There are many tactics that may be pursued in sourcing texts. The following distinctions illustrate this variety.

(1) *Blanket sourcing vs. discrete sourcing.* In blanket sourcing, one reads the text with a very general notion of what one wants from it. The book is left to operate rather freely in a broad kind of way. Discrete sourcing, on the other hand, is the sourcing of the text for very specificly needed operations.

(2) *Deep sourcing vs. surface sourcing.* A text can be approached at 'face value'. The prima facie operations of a text are what is usually called its literal meaning. But a text can also be approached at a 'deeper' level, and sourced for deeper or 'hidden' operations. Allegorical interpretation provides an example of the latter.

(3) *Outsider sourcing vs. insider sourcing.* An interpreter can approach a text as an 'outsider' would, and can approach it as an 'insider' would. It is difficult to achieve an outsider approach to a text if you are within the community of insiders. It is equally difficult for an insider to achieve an outsider approach. Nevertheless, such shifts in perspective are not impossible, but they can be achieved only with much effort.

(4) *Puritan sourcing vs. juxtapositional sourcing*. An interpreter can source a text as such. But he or she can also source the text 'in light of other texts, events, or bodies of knowledge. Of course, in a way all sourcing proceeds in light of such things as the interpreter's initiative and the prevailing circumstances. However, it is possible to deliberately vary the extent to which juxtaposition takes place.

(5) *Partial sourcing vs. holistic sourcing.* A text is a complex of writs, and it is possible to source the whole text as a unified operational artifact. It is also possible to source only a part of a text. The writs in that part become the source of all operations sourced. The phenomenon of theologians concentrating on a 'canon within the canon' instead of the whole Bible is indicative of the importance of partial as well as holistic sourcing.

(c) Sourcing Control

The importance of particular texts or sources in the life of a community often leads to the laying of great importance on the activity of sourcing them, and especially on the *control* of sourcing them. Whoever succeeds in becoming the legitimate trustee and sourcer of such important texts wields a great deal of power. Sourcing becomes regulated because operations sourced from it have a profound effect on life. This accounts for why communities that have crucial texts, such as sacred books and constitutions, always develop a multiplicity of normative mechanisms and manners in which to control the sourcing of that source.

Sourcing-control mechanisms and approaches differ widely, and there is no telling what new mechanisms may be developed in the future, but there are several general kinds of control-mechanisms which one encounters again and again in readings about interpretation and its history in different traditions. The following are particularly important, and I enumerate them here without going into their details, and with no claim to exhaustiveness:

(1) *Sourcing-control through control of source.* Many communities resort to

such notions as 'canon', 'authorized edition', 'official version', and 'standard version' to control the sourcing of texts at the very source. The exclusion of particular writs as 'non-canonical' leads to the dismissal of the operations that they can supply. Much power and control can be exercised using this method. The history of canonization of the Bible provides interesting examples of how this kind of control works, and how it is connected with notions of orthodoxy, authority, and legitimacy.

(2) *Sourcing-control through control of access to source.* The wide availability of books in the West gives one the illusion that access to texts or sources is unlimited. However, it is very important to notice the kind of control over interpretation that can be exercised through limiting access to texts. The Catholic Church's early claim that the Bible is its book, and that heretics had no business reading it (a point clearly made by Tertullian), and its former index of forbidden books are clear historical examples of how the sourcing of operations from texts can be affected through controlling access to the texts themselves. Sometimes control is effected through controlling the education, language training, or the facilities that make it possible for a person to have access to the texts. Certification, qualification, and authorization are sometimes required before access is granted.

(3) *Sourcing-control through paradigms.* In many communities there are paradigms or exemplars of 'good' or acceptable exegeses or commentaries. Such exemplars play an important role in sourcing-control in that they provide role models to be emulated by subsequent interpreters. Sometimes a community even provides bad exemplars or negative paradigms. Religious communities that cite particular commentaries as particularly heretical are basically indicating to newer interpreters how not to source a text. Academic communities also have celebrated good examples of commentaries, and classical bad examples of which they make newcomers quite aware.

(4) *Sourcing-control through explicit instructions and rules.* Most communities that have vital texts have developed bodies of instructions and rules on how they should and should not be interpreted or sourced. The rabbis had their *meddot* (rules), the priests had their rules and their 'hermeneutics' (in the pre-Schleiermacher sense), and Muslim *'ulama* had their *usul* (principles). Secular communities have their own sets of instructions and rules. English departments often tell their students,

directly and indirectly, how texts are to be sourced. Indeed, instructions and rules governing interpretation or sourcing of texts can assume many forms. I find it useful to think of the following simple formulations and to ask which one of them is followed in the rule-giving text:

[a] 'Do this, and do that'.
[b] 'Do anything you want, but don't do this, or that.'
[c] 'If this, then do that.'
[d] 'If this, then don't do that.'

(5) *Sourcing-control through pre-emptive moves.* Perhaps the most effective and subtle form of sourcing-control is the 'pre-emptive strike' kind. This works in at least two ways: [a] Pre-empt 'bad' sourcing by ingraining the 'right' presuppositions in future interpreters. This is usually done during the early years of education. However, it sometimes occurs in adulthood, when sets of more elaborate 'dogmas' or 'creeds' are inculcated; [b] Pre-empt bad sourcing results. This usually takes the form of warnings against 'bad' interpretations. Sometimes this works the other way: preempt good results. St. Augustine, for example, claims that any interpretation of the Bible is good as long as it says that the Bible teaches love.[21]

(6) *Sourcing-control through monitoring and control institutions.* This kind of control uses mechanisms very similar to those used in controllers of physical systems. Such arrangements usually consist of the following functions: [a] a monitoring function (which samples and monitors results of interpretative projects); [b] a comparison function (which compares these results with a notion of what is acceptable and desirable); and [c] a corrective function (which 'corrects' the interpreting process through censor, pressure, allurement, or other ways) . This is very much a negative feedback kind of control system. The preemptive types discussed above are examples of the 'fee-forward' systems.

Of all of the above control techniques, the pre-emptive kind seems to be the most powerful, and dangerous, because once it is inculcated in the interpreter, he no longer feels that he is being controlled at all, and takes himself to be interpreting without constraint.

I should point out that control is not always a communal affair. An individual often controls his or her own interpretation of texts using many techniques, including the ones discussed above. The control of

texts and their interpretation is ignored in much of the theoretical work in hermeneutics. Yet it is clearly of profound significance, for it affects the vast majority of people engaging texts. I have only scratched the surface of this phenomenon with these very brief remarks, and it is a topic worthy of a far more thorough examination than I am able to offer here.

(d) Sourcing Valuation

Related to sourcing control, but not identical with it, is sourcing valuation. Interpretations are often called 'good' or 'bad' without much reflection on what is exactly meant. An axiology of interpretation, or 'hermeneutical axiology', has never been developed, although the need for such a work is obvious: sourcing valuation, and the various criteria according to which interpretations are evaluated, must be elaborated in any general theory of interpretation. Something along the lines of Von Wright's *The Varieties of Goodness*, or Paul Taylor's *Normative Discourse*, will have to be done for interpretation. Until such an axiology is put forth, however, I can do no more than point to its importance, and simply list some of the different things that are often meant by 'good' in such statements as 'This is a good interpretation'. A hermeneutic axiology would have to explore the meanings of such terms as the following: authentic, accurate, coherent, useful, fresh, elegant, orthodox, provocative, illuminating, critical, liberating, playful, scholarly, informed, deep, devout, timely.

(e) Observations Regarding Sourcing Presuppositions

I have already introduced the notion of *presupposition* when discussing the reader's base in Chapter Three. As we have seen, presuppositions are of fundamental importance in shaping sourcing, and in shaping what is sourced. A thorough treatment of the manner in which sourcing presuppositions actually function lies far beyond the scope of the present work. Indeed, an exhaustive treatment would appear to be impossible. It is necessary, however, that a number of central features regarding these functions be stated:

[1] The sourcing of operations from texts depends (but not exclusively) on being triggered by the cluster of concerns with which the interpreter approaches the text.

[2] The cluster of concerns of an interpreter consists of bundles of questions.

[3] Questions are expressions of human-felt needs.

{4} Concerns are not absolute or static, but are fluid, changing, and dynamic.

{5} Concerns are not there, 'in-themselves', but arise.

{6} Concerns arise from the total living-situations, which involve, among other things, the text and the interpreter.

{7} Total living-situations include, among other things, psychological, social, political, and economic events.

{8} An interpreter engages a text with his or her totality of concerns as they arise in his or her total living-situation.

{9} However, only a limited number of concerns (they may be many, but they are still limited) come to the fore, or arise more pressingly, in the encounter with a specific text.

{10} Which concerns come to the fore, or arise more pressingly, when interpreting depends on the sort of living-relationship the interpreter and the text have.

{11} This relationship depends on what the interpreter presumes the text to be for him or her, and for the total living-situations, or for part thereof.

{12} An interpreter does not have just one presumption regarding the text and the living-situation. Rather, the interpreter carries a cluster of deep seated presumptions.

{13} It is on the basis of this cluster of presumptions that the particular concerns with which an interpreter approaches a text mainly arise.

{14} A cluster of presumptions is not a simple chain of presumptions, nor is it an orderly set of them. A cluster of presumptions is more like a pile of them. And this pile is an ever-bustling one, and the presumptions which constitute it hover around in myriad ways very much like the way in which a swarm of bees zooms around even as they stay together in a recognizable group. However, there is a peculiar feature to this dynamic cluster; there is a definite pattern of arising whereby some presumptions are more basic and constant than others. These give rise to other presumptions. The analogy of smoke ascending from a chimney is instructive: the lower part has a definite shape and is rather limited in its span, yet this limited base gives rise to a very high (and open-ended) pattern which is quite turbulent and seemingly chaotic.

{15} The base of the presumptions cluster is relatively constant (but not absolutely so).

[16] The higher the point in this cluster, the more dynamic the presumptions, and the more open they are to changes in direction due to the surrounding presumptions, and other events in the total living-situation.

[17] The greatest influence on the general thrust, direction, and nature of the concerns with which the interpreter approaches a text is the subcluster of the most basic presumptions.

[18] Basic presumptions are simply taken for granted. They possess a high degree of constancy, and are very resistant to change. Basic presumptions are characterized by resilience.

[19] Basic presumptions do not arise from each other, but give rise to secondary presumptions.

[20] Basic presumptions come in sets.

[21] A set of basic presumptions need not consist of consistent presumptions.

[22] There may be a state of tension between the basic presumptions in a particular set.

[23] Yet, despite possible tension, basic presumptions coexist and give rise to a definite pattern of secondary presumptions and eventually interpretive concerns.

[24] An interpretative endeavour is any process involving a person and a text, in which the person approaches the text with a cluster of concerns, thereby triggering a cluster of operations from the text.

[25] Every interpretative endeavor involves a set of basic presumptions.

[26] This set of basic presumptions goes a long way in shaping its overall character, and the actual concerns which arise in it, and thereby the operations triggered by these concerns.

[27] However, the set of basic presumptions does not determine the character of the interpretative endeavour in a complete and sealed way because of the presence of many other factors in the living situations.

[28] The set of basic presumptions, while quite stable, is not completely static, and can undergo change.

[29] Change in a set of basic presumptions can be spontaneous, as when, due to an inherent tension between two inconsistent presumptions, one or more presumptions are ejected from the set to achieve a better state of equilibrium.

[30] Another way in which change in basic presumptions can occur is

when the effect of the operations of the text triggered by the concerns modifies one or more of the presumptions which gave rise to those concerns in the first place. This kind of change can go on as long as operations stemming from the text continue to be received with openness.

[31] Another way in which change in a set of basic presumptions can occur is when two interpretative endeavors come into close contact with each other, and one or more basic presumptions are copied from one endeavour to the other.

[32] Another way in which change can occur in a set of basic presumptions is for one or more presuppositions not belonging to the set to be deliberately injected into the set. Of course a presupposition can also be deliberately removed from the set.

[33] Most changes in the set of basic presuppositions occur because of the force of other interpretative endeavours, or of surrounding living conditions.

[34] The interpretative endeavours resulting from a modification in the set of basic presumptions still have a relation to the older interpretative endeavour by virtue of sharing basic presumptions which have not changed.

[35] At times the change in the set of basic presumptions is so drastic as to result in an extremely different interpretative endeavour.

[36] At times an interpretative endeavour resolves the inner tension amongst its basic presumptions by splitting into two interpretative endeavours with antagonist basic presumptions.

[37] Although the role of presumptions is crucial for the character of interpretative endeavours, they may go unstated. However, sometimes presumptions are publicly stated, in which case they should be called 'assumptions'. Just as DNA can be deliberately adjusted in genetic engineering in order to effect morphological and behavioural variations, so is it possible deliberately to adjust assumptions so as to effect variations in interpretative endeavours.

As I stated above, it is impossible to present a thorough examination of all of these various functions here. It should be stressed once again, however, that sourcing presuppositions are of crucial importance, and that the manner in which they function must be explicated in quite extensive detail before the mechanisms of sourcing itself may be more clearly understood.[22]

SUMMARY : AN OUTLINE OF OPERATIONAL HERMENEUTICS

In constructing my models of texts and text engagement, I have tried to be as thorough as possible given restrictions of length. Many details still remain to be worked out, and important issues have been touched on far too briefly. But this thesis is not intended to provide a fully elaborated theory of interpretation to replace those of Schleiermacher, Betti, Hirsch, and Gadamer. Its task is more modest—namely, to present in outline a general theory of interpretation that might be capable of resolving a number of important *aporiae* facing traditional and contemporary hermeneutics. The models I have sketched above, by taking into account the great variety of texts and their interpretation, does indeed appear capable of resolving the *aporiae* facing presently available theories. I shall return to the discussion of these *aporiae*, and to the manner in which the operational hermeneutics I have developed above is able to resolve them, in the next chapter.

It might be helpful, however, if I first summarize the main features of operational hermeneutics.

Let us imagine a world with the following furniture:

1. Person (A) in theater (T1).
2. Person (B) in theater (T2).
3. A text (T) written by (A) and interpreted by (B).
4. A language (L) in which both (A) and (B) are fully competent.

About such a world operational hermeneutics says the following:

I. (T) is an operational artifact made up of writs which come in five flavours: assertive, directive, commissive, expressive, and declarative. These writs are deliberately put together by (A) in a particular way so as to operate in a particular way. (T) has (A)'s design embedded in its very make up. (A) is able to handle writs and to make texts using them because (A) has competence in (L). In making (T), (A) always has some audience in mind, and (B) may or may not be amongst the anticipated audience. (A) may also anticipate friction with which (T) may meet, and may even cleverly use that anticipated friction in such a way as to make an artifact that is likely to produce particular effects. (T), as an operational artifact, has operating power and, when engaged, it operates.

II. (B), as a human being, is always involved in some project of making—that is, in transforming sets of states of affairs in the intelligible or sen-

sible worlds. In pursuit of his or her projects, (B) engages (T). (B)'s engaging of (T) is called interpretation, or more accurately, interpreting. Interpreting is the sourcing of operations from texts, or the sourcing of texts for operations. (B)'s interpreting of (T) is a process of sourcing of operations that (T) can perform because it has operating power. (B)'s sourcing of (T) can be an actuating, manipulating, utilizing, or actualizing process. In actuating, (B) sources (T) for operations in such a way that (T) operates on (B). In manipulating, (B) sources (T) for operations in such a way that they can be operated upon. In utilizing, (B) sources (T) in such a way as to use its operations for some purpose or other. In actualizing, (B) sources (T) for operations in such a way as to be put to work, or made to operate, by those very operations.

III. (B)'s interpreting of (T) involves many factors. The most important of these are: (B)'s initiative; (B)'s base; (B)'s attitudes; (B)'s anticipations; the theater in which (B) operates—that is, (T2); and the friction present in (T2). To be able to enagage (T) at all, (B) has to also have competence in (L).

IV. The making project in which (B) is involved, along with his or her total living-situation, make particular needs more felt than others. Needs that are felt translate into concerns with which (B) approaches (T). When (B)'s concerns are made explicit, they translate into questions. All concerns, and expressed concerns, are strongly influenced by the pressuposions (B) has. When these presuppositions are not reflected upon, they form a cluster of presumptions with which (B) approaches (T). When they are made explicit, they become deliberatly made assumptions.

V. Many factors influence (B) in his or her sourcing of (T). These include control factors that regulate (B)'s sourcing of (T), and valuation or axiological factors that influence (B)'s valuation of (T), and (B)'s own effort at sourcing (T). Valuation also influences how others assess (B)'s sourcing of (T).

VI

The Contribution of Operational Hermeneutics

THE *APORIAE* FACING CONTEMPORARY HERMENEUTICS

As was pointed out in Chapter One, contemporary hermeneutic theory is plagued by a set of *aporiae* that revolve around three central issues in hermeneutics. These issues concern: (1) the variety of texts and interpretative activities and the quest for a general account of the interpretation of texts; (2) the fact that texts are often used for the purposes of interpreters, and the ethical imperative to respect an author's intention; and (3) the automaticity of understanding and the quest for methods that can guide interpretation. As I demonstrated in Chapters One and Two, traditional and current theories of interpretation have advanced contradictory statements regarding each of these issues, and while each of these statements contain some elements of truth, their contradictory character makes it appear to be impossible to maintain all of them at the same time. In this chapter I demonstrate that the operational hermeneutics that I have outlined in Chapters Three, Four, and Five can comprehend these twelve true statements without contradiction. Operational hermeneutics offers the sort of solution that a basket would provide for the person who wants to hold twelve eggs at the same time. Let us consider, in the light of operational hermeneutics, the sense in which each of the twelve statements introduced in Chapter One is true.

(1) (a) 'Texts are all the same.' In a sense, this statement is true. After all, we do call all texts 'texts', and we have no problem in thinking that a newspaper, a business letter, and a novel are all texts. But in what sense is this statement true? It is true in the sense that all texts are operational

artifacts that operate on us, and operational artifacts that we operate upon, in the realm of language. It is quite sensible, therefore, to use a common name like 'text' for a newspaper, a business letter and a novel.

(1) (b) 'Texts are not all the same.' In a sense, this statement is also true. After all, we do distinguish between a newspaper, a business letter and a novel. But in what sense is this statement true? It is true in the sense that texts are operational artifacts which are set up differently from each other, and which consequently operate in different ways. Just as a car engine is different from a dishwasher, even though they are both machines, texts differ from one another because they are built differently and operate differently. Newspapers, business letters, and novels are set up differently and operate differently. Operational hermeneutics has explained this by means of its conception of a text being an operational artifact with a particular set-up and a particular way of operating.

(2) (a) 'Interpretative activities are all the same.' In a sense, this statement is true. After all, we call all interpretative activities 'interpretation', even if the texts being interpreted are as different from each other as a poem and a law. But in what sense is this statement true? it is true in the sense that all interpretative activities are activities of text engagement—or, more specifically, activities of sourcing texts for operations. This is why 'interpretation' is employed as a name common to a host of activities involving texts. Operational Hermeneutics, with its conception of text engagement as sourcing, preserves the truth expressed in statement (2) (a).

(2) (b) 'Interpretative activities are not all the same.' In a sense, this statement is also true. After all, the way in which a literary critic interprets a poem is not the same as the way in which a judge interprets a law. But in what sense is this statement true? It is true in the sense that the sourcing of texts works very differently, depending on a host of factors (such as those enumerated in Chapters Three, Four, and Five). Operational hermeneutics accounts for the variations of sourcing, arising from the variety of these factors, that give rise to the variety of interpretative activities. Operational hermeneutics thereby preserves the truth expressed in statement (2) (b).

(3) (a) 'Texts are made by authors.' In a sense, this statement is true. After all, we all know that a thesis does not just happen—it has to be written or made by someone. But in what sense is this statement true? It

is true in the sense that authors, relying on their linguistic competence, can generate writs and put them together in the form of operational artifacts or texts in which their designs are embedded. Operational hermeneutics, with its conception of writing as the putting together of writs in a manner conducive to producing particular operations, preserves the truth expressed in statement (3) (a).

(3) (b) 'Texts are not made by authors.' In a sense, this statement is also true. After all, words have a way of suggesting themselves as a writer writes. Moreover, hardly any elements used in a text are of the author's invention. Generally, the vocabulary is already available in the chosen language, as are the grammatical rules of sentence formation. In a sense, a text is indeed made by language. Operational hermeneutics has no difficulties accommodating the truth expressed in statement (3) (b). It acknowledges the importance of linguistic competence and sub-competence, and the tendency of words to suggest each other by virtue of the way they are related, without falling into the trap of attributing to language any mystical powers of making texts.

(4) (a) 'The intentions of authors are discernible and important.' In a sense, this statement is true. If it were not true, written communication between people—as, for example, communication of desires, hopes, expectations, and so on—would be impossible and pointless, and that is obviously not the case. But in what sense is this statement true? It is true in the sense that the intentions of authors, and even their volitions, are *embedded* in texts, and are made *operative* when texts are engaged. Just as machines and power tools function by virtue of the way they are built and designed to operate, so do texts function by virtue of the way they were built and designed to operate by their authors. Operational hermeneutics, with its conception of embedded design, explains this feature of texts, thereby preserving the truth expressed in statement (4) (a).

(4) (b) 'The intentions of authors are neither discernible nor important.' In a sense, this statement is also true. Intentions are in the mind, and the mind of another is obviously not my own, so it would appear impossible for me to 'discern' the other's intentions, and not really all that important. But in what sense is this statement true? As Operational hermeneutics makes very clear, this statement is true in the sense that the discernment of mental states or acts is not necessary for

the effective engagement of texts. The only intentions of the author that really matter for interpretation are the ones embedded in the very make-up of his or her text. Other fleeting intentions are indeed neither discernible nor important for engaging texts.

(5) (a) 'Interpretation is an activity of interpreters.' In a sense, this is statement is true. After all, we say that 'John interpreted the Bible', and that 'Jane interpreted the novel'. But in what sense is this statement true? It is true in the sense that, as operational hermeneutics points out, interpreting is a sourcing engagement conducted by the interpreter, who sources the text for operations needed in a making project which the interpreter is pursuing. Operational hermeneutics, with its conceptions of project and interpreter's initiative, preserves the truth expressed in statement (5)(a).

(5) (b) 'Interpretation is not an activity of interpreters.' In a sense, this statement is also true. After all, as we read and interpret a text, we do not build its meaning the way we build a chair—the meaning just 'occurs' or 'happens' to us. There is an automaticity in interpretation that makes us feel that it is not of our own doing. But in what sense is this statement true? Operational hermeneutics has demonstrated how the source of this automaticity lies in the operating power that texts possess, and in the linguistic competence that the interpreter possesses. When an interpreter sources a text, he or she does not source for inert items, but for effective and transforming operations. Operational hermeneutics, with its conception of texts as operational artifacts that have operating-power, and its acknowledgement of the importance of linguistic competence, thus preserves the truth expressed in statement (5) (b).

(6) (a) 'Hermeneutics should be methodological.' In a sense, this statement is true. A good interpretation leads to understanding what others write, and it would be desirable to devise a method that can guide us towards such understanding. Operational hermeneutics allows for the possibility and the attractiveness of method. By conceiving of interpreting as an activity of the interpreter, it allows for this activity to be guided by method. By distinguishing between kinds of engagement, and the factors involved in all text engagements, operational hermeneutics even opens the way for the elaboration of methods that are designed to efficiently conduct specific kinds of text engagements, or sourcing endeavours. However, operational hermeneutics does dispense with the

notion of a global method to guide all interpretative activities. Operational hermeneutics, with its conception of text engagement as an activity of the interpreter that may very well be pursued strategically, thus preserves the truth expressed in statement (6) (a).

(6) (b) 'Hermeneutics should not be methodological.' In a sense, this statement is also true. Understanding of what others write happens as an everyday matter of course, and to try to achieve such understanding through the rigorous application of an interpretative method would be like tinkering with something that already works. Operational hermeneutics takes the truth of this statement into account by acknowledging that the notion of a global method to be followed in all interpretative activities is mistaken. Furthermore, operational hermeneutics accounts for the fact that texts do operate on us automatically when we have the requisite linguistic competence. operational hermeneutics, with its conception of multiple kinds of engagement and engagement strategies, and the automaticity of the operating of texts, thus preserves the truth expressed in statement (6) (b).

None of the theorists I have discussed above is able to grant all of the grains of truth that are undeniably present in these various contradictory statements. If we maintain any one of their theories, we must sacrifice a good number of these true statements. I have demonstrated that with operational hermeneutics no such sacrifice is necessary. It is indeed possible to preserve all the grains of truth in these statements by providing a hermeneutics that takes them all into account.

THE CONTRIBUTION OF OPERATIONAL HERMENEUTICS

The above resolution of *aporiae* provided by operational hermeneutics is not an idle exercise in logical disputation. Those aporiae revolve around three crucial issues in the theory of interpretation, and the failure of traditional al and contemporary hermeneutic theories to resolve those aporiae has proven to be not merely a source of irritation but a cause for widespread skepticism regarding the value and importance of the entire discipline of hermeneutics. By enabling us to make progress on every single one of these issues, and by indicating the crucial importance of an account that does justice to the varieties of texts and their interpretation, the operational hermeneutics outlined in this thesis responds also to the skepticism voiced by critics of the discipline in general.

Operational hermeneutics shows us that it is possible to respect the varieties of texts and their interpretation and still give a general account, to use texts and still respect authors, and to cherish the spontaneity of understanding and still value rigour, discipline, and method. The Operational hermeneutics outlined in this study is in much need of further elaboration, refinement, and metaphysical and epistemic grounding. But it has at least demonstrated the manner in which some nasty knots may be untangled and further investigation may proceed.

The three central issues that I have explicitly addressed above are by no means dated. Not much progress has been made on them since the sixties and early seventies. As a result, there remains much confusion in the current hermeneutic literature regarding these issues, and it is not uncommon to find incredibly muddled views being circulated amongst the gurus of texts and their interpretation. Let us consider , for example, what happened as late as 1991, when a distinguished group of scholars, which included Richard Rorty and Jonathan Culler, gathered at Clare Hall, Cambridge, to hear the Tanner lectures delivered by Umberto Eco. These lectures and the discussions that they triggered—published in 1992 under the title *Interpretation and Overinterpretation*[1]—illustrate very clearly a set of concerns, controversies, and impasses currently surrounding texts and their interpretation. Among the most important notions that were floated during the lectures and discussions were Eco's notion of 'a text's intention' and Rorty's notion of texts as 'tools'.

In his lectures, Eco draws a distinction between interpretation' and 'use', and claims that a text has an inherent intention which is more important than its author's intention and the intentions of its readers. To *interpret* a text, Eco contends, is to respect its intention. To *use* a text, Eco adds, is to subordinate it to the intention and purpose of the reader. Eco claims that readers should strive to interpret texts rather use them, and that the use of texts leads to a dangerous 'anything goes' attitude that subverts their value. Eco expresses concern about the tendency in current literary theory to overemphasize the role and freedom of the readers of texts, pointing out that when it comes to matters of textual interpretation, the 'anything goes' attitude encouraged by reader-focused theorists should not be accepted. There are limits to interpretation, Eco contends, and these limits must be respected by the interpreters of texts. Most significantly, he asserts that these limits should not be set according

to the traditional (re-enactment) criterion of correspondence to authorial intention, but according to a new criterion of correspondence to the 'intention of the work'. Eco does not do much by way of clarifying this notion of '*intentio operis*', but he seems to think of it as a 'strategy' of constructing a 'model reader' that is embedded in the text itself.

Eco takes interpretation to be a respectful approach to the text that aims at discerning the text's model reader by assuming that it is written by a 'model author'. Unfortunately, Eco does not elucidate the central notions of model reader and model author. However, in saying that the model reader is a strategy embedded in the work itself and which constitutes the work's intention, Eco seems to think of a work's intention as an embedded *telos*. Yet, Eco is insistent that this telos is not an authorial intention that has to be re-enacted. What Eco seems to have in mind is some kind of a limit on interpretation that is inherent in the text itself. In contrast with interpretation, Eco thinks of the 'use' of a text as a deliberate subordination of the text to the interpreter's own purposes. His basic contention is that the interpreter should not use the text, but interpret it (by respecting the intention of the work).

Eco's lectures triggered a quite fierce response, especially from Rorty, who attacks Eco's distinction between interpretation and use, maintaining that all interpretation is nothing but the use of texts. The only thing that can be done with texts, Rorty claims, is to 'put them to work'. He contends that texts are tools, and that tools can be used any way we want to use them. Rorty attributes Eco's insistence on the distinction between interpretation and use to a nostalgic longing for interpretation based on authorial intention. As stated above, Rorty's attack on Eco's position focuses on the distinction between interpretation and use. Rorty contends that nothing can be done with texts except using them, and that all interpretation is text-use. Rorty uses the example of a screwdriver to illustrate the fact that a tool can be used in ways in which it was not intended to be used; a screwdriver, for example, can be used to open a can of paint. Rorty points out that even if one considers a tool that 'works', like a piece of computer software, there is still no reason why the tool can not be used in ways that were not intended by its maker (a word processor, for example, can be used to prepare tax returns even though spread-sheet software is better). For Rorty, talk of a 'text's intention' is nothing more than a throwback to the discredited psychologistic notion

of authorial intention. As far as Rorty is concerned, the only intentions that matter are those of the text's interpreters. Comparing a text to clay that can be formed into whatever shape its user desires, Rorty maintains that texts are simply things that are to be put to work for whatever purposes its interpreters may see fit.

In response to Rorty and his other critics, Eco simply points out that particular tools are more suitable for particular uses than are others, then basically just reiterates his distinction. The discussion fails to resolve the crucial issues regarding texts and their interpretation that are raised, and the participants are left at an impasse—the same sort of impasse, not coincidentally, encountered by the traditional and contemporary theories I have examined in this thesis.

It is to the task of presenting an outline of a new theory of texts and their interpretation that can resolve such impasses that the present thesis has been devoted. The further elaboration of this programmatic statement of operational hermeneutics will be the task of future studies.

Notes

CHAPTER ONE: THE NATURE AND GOAL OF OPERATIONAL HERMENEUTICS

1. See Samuel C. Florman, *The Civilized Engineer*, St. Martin's Press, New York, 1987. Florman speaks of the need for a 'philosophy of engineering', pp.18–24. See also Walter G. Vincenti, *What Engineers Know and How They Know It*, Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, Maryland, 1990, pp.241–257. Vincenti stresses the need for an 'epistemology of engineering' and attempts a preliminary formulation of its central features.

2. See Vincenti, *What Engineers Know and How They Know It*. See also Eugene S. Ferguson, *Engineering and the Mind's Eye*, MIT Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1992; Henry Petroski, *To Engineer is Human*, Vintage Books, New York, 1992; and *The Pencil: A History of Design and Circumstance*, Knopf, New York, 1993; Herbert A. Simon, *The Sciences of the Artificial*, MIT Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1981 [2nd.ed.], pp.128–159.

3. For a general introduction to the Philosophy of Technology, see Don Ihde, *Philosophy of Technology: An Introduction*, Paragon House, New York, 1993. Ihde has written extensively in this area. His other books include: *Technology and the Lifeworld: From Garden to Earth*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, Indiana, 1990; *Instrumental Realism*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, Indiana, 1991. It has been argued that John Dewey was the first major philosopher of technology in North America. See Larry A. Hickman, *John Dewey's Pragmatic Technology,* Indiana University Press, Bloomington, Indiana, 1990; and Langdon Winner, *The Whale and the Reactor*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1986.

4. Ricoeur's most recent work, where he advances the important theory of distanciation, is Paul Ricoeur, *From Text to Action: Essays in Hermeneutics II*, Northwestern University Press, Evanston, Illinois, 1991. His important essays of the

1960s are published as *The Conflict of Interpretation*, Northwestern Uni-versity Press, Evanston, Illinois, 1974. Ricoeur has also contributed to biblical hermeneutics in *Essays on Biblical Interpretation*, edited by Lewis S. Mudge, For-tress Press, Philadelphia, 1985. An early short formulation of his hermeneutics is *Interpretation Theory: Discourse and the Surplus of Meaning*, The Texas Christian University Press, Fort Worth, Texas, 1976. Essays pertaining to the methodology of the Human Sciences are edited by John B. Thompson as *Paul Ricoeur: Hermeneutics and the Human Sciences*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1981. For a critical and comparative study see John B. Thompson, *Critical Hermeneutics: A Study in the Thought of Paul Ricoeur and Jürgen Habermas*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1981.

The magnum opus of Jürgen Habermas is *The Theory of Communicative Action*, translated by Thomas McCarthy, Beacon Press, Boston, 1981. The most Hermeneutics-related work is *On the Logic of the Social Sciences,* translated by Shierry Weber Nicholsen and Jerry A. Stark, The MIT Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1988. An up to date discussion of Habermas' work can be found in David M. Rasmussen, *Reading Habermas*, Basil Blackwell, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1990. See also Apel, Karl-Otto, *Understanding and Explanation: A Transcendental-Pragmatic Perspective*, The MIT Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1984.

Discourse is well introduced and discussed in Benhabib, Seyla and Fred Dallmayer (eds.), *The Communicative Ethics Controversy,* MIT Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1990. The most important essays of Habermas in this area are collected in *Moral Consciousness and Communicative Action*, MIT Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1990. A work relating discourse ethics to broader ethical discussions in philosophy is David Rasmussen (ed.), *Universalism vs. Communitarianism*, MIT Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1990. A work relating discourse ethics to ethical issues in hermeneutics is Michael Kelly (ed.), *Hermeneutics and Critical Theory in Ethics and Politics*, MIT Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1990.

The most important recent works of Umberto Eco are: *Interpretation and Overinterpretation*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1992; *The Limits of Interpretation*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, Indiana, 1990; *The Role of the Reader*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, Indiana, 1984; *The Open Work*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1989; *Semiotics and the Philosophy of Language*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, Indiana, 1984. His earliest and most systematic work is still *A Theory of Semiotics*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, Indiana, 1979.

5. My approach is inspired by Aristotle's Book B of the *Metaphysics,* which opens as follows: 'In pursuing our science, we ought first to make a careful survey of the difficulties which confront us at the outset. Among them would be the diverse ways in which others have dealt with our problems and in addition any

points that may have been overlooked. To have stated well the difficulties is a good start for those who expect to overcome them; for what follows is, of course, the solution of those very difficulties, and no one can untangle a knot which he does not see. A difficulty in our thinking reveals a tangle in existence, since thought encountering a difficulty is like a man bound; neither the thought nor the man can move. Hence, we must first understand our perplexities, both for the reason given and also because whoever engages in a research without having first stated his problems is like a person who does not know where he is going or whether or not he has found what he wants. Such a person cannot see ahead clearly, as can one who has begun with a statement of his difficulties. Then, too, a person who has heard all the contending parties, as if in a suit at law, is necessarily in the best position to judge' (Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, translated by Richard Hope, University of Michigan Press, Ann Arbor, Michigan, 1987, 995a22–995b5).

6. G. J. Stegemerten, and Duane C. Geitgey, 'Operation Analysis', in *Industrial Engineering Handbook*, edited by H. B. Maynard. McGraw-Hill, New York, 1971 [3rd. ed.], pp.2–45.

7. Ibid., pp.2-51.

8. Ibid.

9. Shearer, J. Lowen et.al., *Introduction to System Dynamics*, Addison-Wesley, Reading, Massachusetts, 1971, pp.103–104.

CHAPTER TWO: THE HERMENEUTICS OF BETTI, HIRSCH AND GADAMER

1. For the life and thought of Schleiermacher, and the influence of the cultural Romantic environment of the time on him, see the following works: Henri Brunschwig, *Enlightenment and Romanticism in Eighteenth Century Prussia*, translated by Frank Jellinek, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, Il., 1974; Eric von der Luft, *Hegel, Hinrichs, and Schleiermacher on Feeling and Reason in Religion: the Texts, of their 1821-22 Debate.* The Edwin Mellen Press, Lewiston, New York, 1987; Leslie A. Willson (ed.), *German Romantic Criticism: Novalis, Schlegel, Schleiermacher and Others*, Continuum, New York, 1982.

For Schleiermacher as theologian, see the following works: Keith W. Clements, *Friedrich, Schleiermacher: Pioneer of Modern Theology*, Collins, London, 1987; Bernard M. G. Reardon, *Religion in the Age of Romanticism*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, England, 1985. The theological concerns that made Schleiermacher undertake the projects of a General Hermeneutics are made very clear in his *Brief Outline of Theology as a Field of Study*, translated by Terrence Tice, The Edwin Mellen Press, Lewiston, New York. 1988. In his work, general hermeneutics is supposed to supply the basis for a biblical hermeneutics that would make knowledge of primitive Christianity possible, and vindicate Protestant claims to being more faithful to the original teachings of Christ.

The sort of religious sentiment that Schleiermacher had is very clear in the following works (the emphasis on the unique, the personal, and feeling is unmistakable): F. D. E. Schleiermacher, *On Religion: Speeches to its Cultured Despisers,* translated by Richard Crouter, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, England, 1988; *Servant of the World: Selected Sermons*, translated by Dawn De Vries, Fortres Press, Philadelphia, 1987; *Christian Caring: Selections from Practical Theology,* edited by James O. Duke, and Howard Stone, translated by J. O. Duke, Fortress Press, Philadelphia, 1988. See also: Gianni Vattimo, *Schleiermacher: Filosofo dell Interpretazione*, Mursia, Milano, Italy, 1968 (This is the most extensive work on Schleiermacher's hermeneutics. The author is an eminent Italian philosopher who also translated Gadamer's *Truth and Method* into Italian. His work dominates the field in Italy); Peter Szondi, 'Schleiermacher's Hermeneutics Today', in *On Textual Understanding and Other Essays.* translated by Harvey Mendelsohn, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, 1986 (This is a short, sympathetic account of Schleiermacher's hermeneutics arguing for its relevance today). The most recent, and perhaps best, brief account of Schleiermacher's hermeneutics is the chapter on Schleiermacher in Anthony C. Thiselton, *New Horizons in Hermeneutics*, Harper Collins, London, 1992.

2. Schleiermacher states explicitly that legal hermeneutics was of no concern to him. See his *Hermeneutics: The Handwritten Manuscripts*, edited by Heinz Kimmerle, translated by James Duke and Jack Frostman, Scholars Press, Missoula, Montana, 1977, p.178.

3. Wilhelm Dilthey's *The Rise of Hermeneutics* has been tremendously influential in nearly all narrations of the story of Hermeneutics. Dilthey's reverence for Schleiermacher should be noted, and his judgements about the turning points of the history of the field are not always neutral. He also has a tendency to project a later notion of hermeneutics backwards in order to find it throughout the history of the West. There are now several histories and introductory works (with substantial historical material) of hermeneutics. The most important of these are: Josef Bleicher, *Contemporary Hermeneutics: Hermeneutics as Method, Philosophy and Critique,* Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1980; Josef Bleicher, *L'Ermeneutica Contemporanea*, Il Mulino, Bologna, Italy, 1986 (the section on Betti in the Italian translation is much better than in the English original); Maurizio Ferraris, *Storia Dell' Ermeneutica,* Bompiani, Milano, Italy, 1988; Marco Ravera, *Il Pensiero Ermeneutico: Testi e Materiali*, Marietti, Genova, Italy, 1986 (this book includes valuable translations from Latin and German of the most important segments of major theorists); Richard E. Palmer, *Hermeneutics*, Northwestern University Press, Evanston, Illinois, 1969 (this was the first English introduction to the field and it is still the best treatment of Betti in the introductory books presently available). The treatment of Schleiermacher is important, but too dependent on Gadamer's

critique of Schleiermacher), Kurt Mueller-Vollmer (ed.), *The Hermeneutics Reader*, Continuum Publishing, New York, 1985; Gaspare Mura Gaspare, *Ermeneutica e Verità*, Citta Nuova, Rome, 1990; Franco Bianco, *Pensare L'Interpretazione: Temi e figure dell'ermeneutica contemporanea*, Editori Riuniti, Rome, 1991; Georges Gusdorf, *Storia dell 'ermeneutica*, Editori Laterza, Bari, 1989; Anthony Thiselton, *New Horizons in Hermeneutics*, Harper Collins, London, 1992 (This is the latest English survey of the field. It covers nearly every corner, but far too briefly. The chapter on Schleiermacher is excellent).

4. On Meier see Ravera, *Il Pensiero Ermeneutico*, pp.64–73; and Ferraris, *Storia Dell' Ermeneutica*, pp.89–91. Ravera offers an Italian translation of a segment of Meier's *Versuch einer allgemeinen Auslequngskunst*.

5. On Ernesti, see Ravera, *Il Pensiero Ermeneutico*, pp.43–51, and Ferraris, *Storia Dell' Ermeneutica*, pp.74–77.

6. See Friedrich Ast, 'Hermeneutics', in *The Hermeneutic Tradition*, edited by Gayle L. Ormston and Alan D. Schrift, State University of New York, 1990, pp. 39–56.

7. For Schleiermacher as philosopher, see the collection of papers: Birkner, H.J. et. al., *Schleiermacher Filosofo*, Bibliopolis, Napoli, Italy, 1985.

8. F. D. E. Shleiermacher, *Hermeneutics: The Handwritten Manuscripts*, edited by Heinz Kimmerle, translated by James Duke and Jack Frostman, Scholars Press, Missoula, Montana, 1977, p.214.

9. Schleiermacher believes that any speaking-act has an individual subjective aspect and a social objective aspect. Hermeneutics as the method of interpreting has to address both of these aspects of speaking. Schleiermacher explains this individual/social duality in the act of speaking as follows: 'Every act of speaking presupposes a given language. This statement could also be reversed, not only for the absolutely first act of speaking in a language, but also for its entire history, because language develops through speaking' (*Hermeneutics: The Handwritten Manuscripts,* p.98). Also: 'Accordingly, each person represents one locus way, and his speech can be understood only in the context of the totality of the language. But then too he is a person who is a constantly developing spirit, and his speaking can be understood as only one moment in this development in relation to all others' (*Hermeneutics: The Handwritten Manuscripts,* p.98).

10. Thus, the speaking-act has two aspects. First there is the social aspect, which is objective in the sense of being given to the individual. When an individual tries to say something, he/she has to do so using a given language. The individual does not invent a language, but uses one that already exists. He/she is limited by this language, and his/her ideas are conditioned by its character. However, the individual is not completely limited by it. As a constantly developing spirit', he/she uses the language in his/her own unique way, and stamps it with

his/her own individual character. This gives rise to the individual aspect of the speaking-act. These two aspects of the speaking-act can be described separately, but are in reality inseparable. The individual/social or subjective/objective duality of the speaking-act is always present. The two poles of the duality depend on each other, and in interpretation they both have to be kept in mind: 'An act of speaking cannot even be understood as a moment in a person's development unless it is also understood in relation to the language. This is because the linguistic heritage modifies the spirit. Nor can an act of speaking be understood as a modification of the language unless it is also understood as a moment in the development of the person (later addition: because an individual is able to influence a language by speaking, which is how a language develops)' (*Hermeneutics: The Handwritten Manuscripts,* p.99).

11. 'By leading the interpreter to transform himself, so to speak, into the author, the divinatory method seeks to gain an immediate comprehension of the author as an individual. The comparative method proceeds by subsuming the author under a general type. It then tries to find his distinctive traits by comparing him with the others of the same general type. Divinatory knowledge is the feminine strength in knowing people; comparative knowledge, the masculine' (*Hermeneutics: The Handwritten Manuscripts,* p.150).

12. 'Consequently, the task of grammatical interpretation is divided into two parts: (1) the task of determining the essential meaning from a given usage and (2) the task of ascertaining an unknown usage from the meaning' (*Hermeneutics: The Handwritten Manuscripts,* p.76).

13. Given the need he perceived for a general theory of interpretation, and his dissatisfaction with what local hermeneutics had to offer, Schleiermacher identified his goal as 'endeavoring to raise that which has hitherto been nothing more than a series of disconnected and unsatisfactory observations into the dignity of a science, which shall embrace the whole of language as an object of intellectual discernment, and penetrate from without into its innermost depths' (*Hermeneutics: The Handwritten Manuscripts,* p.48). Schleiermacher's starting point in the development of his general hermeneutics was the identification of an underlying assumption in traditional local hermeneutics which, in Schleiermacher's view, led to its occasional nature: 'Previous treatments of hermeneutics presuppose an ordinary level of understanding, an understanding that does not require art until it encounters something that does not make sense. Consequently, all of their rules appear arbitrary, special expedients' (*Hermeneutics: the Handwritten Manuscripts,* p.49). And again: 'There is a less rigorous practice of this art which is based on *the assumption that understanding occurs as a matter of course*. The aim of this practice may be expressed in negative form as: "misunderstanding should be avoided"' (*Hermeneutics: The Handwritten Manuscripts,* p.109).

The problem with this approach, Schleiermacher thinks, is that it trivializes the vital task of interpretation: 'This less rigorous practice presupposes that it deals mainly with insignificant matters or that it has a quite specific interest, and so it establishes limited, easily realizable goals' (*Hermeneutics: The Handwritten Manuscripts,* p.109). To the 'less rigorous' approach of assuming that understanding occurs as a matter of course, and that the aim of hermeneutics is to provide collections of observation whenever something difficult or nonsensical is encountered, Schleiermacher opposes his own new approach: 'There is a more rigorous practice of the art of interpretation that is based on the assumption that misunderstanding occurs as a matter of course, and so *understanding must be willed and sought at every point*' (*Hermeneutics: The Handwritten Manuscripts,* p.110). Interpreting, according to Schleiermacher's new approach, involves striving and willing. Interpreting is not something to be taken for granted, but involves hard diligent *work*.

14. See Emilio Betti, *Teoria Generale della Interpretazione*, Giuffrè Editore, Milano, Italy, 1990; *Notazioni Autobiografiche*, CEDAM, Padova, Italy, 1953; *Interpretazione della Legge e degli Atti Giuridici: Teoria Generale e Dogmatica*, second edition revised and enlarged by Giuliano Crifo, Giuffrè Editore, Milano, 1971; 'Le Categorie Civilistiche dell' Interpretazione', *Rivista Italiana per le Scienze Giuridiche*, Vol.II, fasc.1–4, 1948; *Zur Grundlequng einer allgemeinen Auslequnqslehre: Ein hermeneutisches Manifest* (On the Foundation of a General Theory of Interpretation: a Hermeneutic Manifesto), J. C. B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), Tubingen. 1954; 'L'Istituto di Teoria della Interpretazione Costituito Presso l'Universita di Roma', *Rivista di Diritto Commerciale*, Diritto dell 'Economia, Diritto Sociale, Anno VIII, fasc.9–12, 1955; 'Di Una Teoria Generale dell' Interpretazione', *Rassegna di Diritto Romano*, Jovene, 2, 1956/2; 'La Teoria Generale della Interpretazione', *Responsabilità del Sapere*, Vol. XLVI-XLVII, Apl.-Sep, 1956; 'Sulla Teoria Generale dell' Interpretazione', *Rivista di Scienze Giuridiche*, Nuova serie, Anno VIII, fasc. II, June, 1957; 'Di Una Teoria Generale Della Interpretazione', *Rivista Giuridica Umbro-Abruzzese*, Anno XXXIII (N.S.), N. 4–6, July-December, 1957; *Die Hermeneutik als Allegemeine Methodik der Geisteswissenschaften* (Hermeneutics as a General Methodology for Human Studies); J. C. B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), Tubingen, 1962; *L'Ermeneutica Come Metodica Generale delle Scienze dello Spirito*, edited by Gaspare Mura, Citta Nuova, Roma, Italy, 1987; 'Di Una Teoria Generale della Interpretazione', *Rivista Giuridica Umbro-Abruzzese*, Anno XLI (N.S.), N. 1-6, June–December, 1965; 'Di Una Teoria Generale dell' Interpretazione', *Relazione generale al VII congresso nazionale di Filosofia del Diritto*, Roma, 31/104/11, 1965; 'De la Interpretacion del Derecho', *Studia et Documenta Historiae e Iuris*, Pontificia Universitas Lateranesis, XXXII, 1966; 'Traduzione e Interpretazione', *Responsabilità del Sapere*, Vol. 81, January March, 1967.

See also: Giuliano Crifo, 'Emilio Betti: Note per Una Ricerca', *Quaderni Fiorentini per la Storia del Pensiero Giuridico Moderno*, 7, 1978; Tonino Griffero, *Interpretare: la Teoria di Emilio Betti e it suo Contesto*, Rosenberg and Sellier, Torino, Italy, 1988; Susan Noakes, 'Literary Semiotics and Hermeneutics: Towards Taxonomy of the Interpretant', *American Journal of Semiotics*, Vol.3, No.3, 1985, pp.109–119; Susan Noakes, 'Hermeneutics and Semiotics: Betti's Debt to Peirce', in *Semiotics 1982*, edited by John Deely and Jonathan Evans, University Press of America, Lanham, 1987; 'An English Translation of Emilio Betti's *Teoria Generale della Interpretazione*', *Modern Language Studies*, 1982, pp.35–37; 'Emilio Betti's Debt to Vico', *New Vico Studies*, Vol. VI, 1988, pp. 51–57; Giorgio Alberto Pinton, *Emilio Betti's Theory of General Interpretation: It's Genesis in Giambattista Vico with its Relevance to Contemporary Dialogue on Hermeneutics*, Ph.D. thesis, The Hartford Seminary Foundation, 1972.

15. This is the opinion of Josef Bleicher in his *Contemporary Hermeneutics*, Routledge, London, 1980, pp.27–47. Also Palmer, *Hermeneutics*, pp.46–65.

16. Betti considered the Institute so important he wrote the following bulletins and short manifestos of what its function is supposed to be: 'Attivita dell' Istituto di Teoria della Interpretazione Presso le Universita di Roma e Camerino'. Giufre, Milano, 1959; 'L'Istituto di Teoria della Interpretatazione Costituito Presso l'Università di Roma', Giuffrè, Milano, 1955; 'A Proposito di una Profezia circa la Vita dell'Istituto di Teoria della Interpretazione', Giuffrè, Milano, 1956. The last meeting of the revived 'Istituto di Teoria dell' Interpretatazione e di Informatica Giuridica' was held in 1990.

17. *L'ermeneutica come metodica generale delle scienze dello spirito* [henceforth as EMG], Citta Nuova, Rome, 1987, p.60; published also in Bleicher's *Contemporary Hermeneutics* [henceforth as CH], p.53. See also Susan Noakes' translation of a segment of Betti's *Teoria Generale* can be found in Shapiro, Gary and Alan Sica (eds.), *Hermeneutics: Questions and Prospects* [henceforth as HQP]. The University of Massachusetts Press, Amherst, 1984, pp.25–53.

18. HQP, p.30 [my emphasis].

19. On Baratono, see *Dizionario Bompiani dei Filosofi Contempornei*, edited by Pier Aldo Rovatti, Bompiani, 1990, p.30.

20. HQP, p.29.

21. EMG, p.64; CH,56 [my emphasis]

22. HQP, p.31.

23. HQP, p.31 [my emphasis].

24. EMG, p.64; CH, p.57.

25. '[T]he task of the cognizing subject consists in knowing again in these objectifications the creative thinking which animates them, Rethinking the conceptions, reinvoking the intuitions which they reveal. Here, then, knowing is a

recognizing and a reconstructing of a meaning—and with the meaning a spirit that is knowable again through the forms of its objectifications, and which speaks to the thinking spirit which has affinity with it in common humanity' (EMG, p.64; CH, p.57).

26. EMG, p.65; CH57.

27. The part of Betti's *Teoria Generale* most devoted to ethical concern is the very last chapter of the work in which Betti discusses the ethical and educative function of interpretation. See vol. I, pp.923–967.

28. Betti's institute has recently been revived at the University of Rome's Law School by Professors Franco Bianco, Giuliano Crifo, and Vittorio Frosini.

29. For criticisms of Hirsch see: Ray, William, *Literary Meaning*, Basil Blackwell, London, 1984, pp.90–104; Stanley Fish, *Is There a Text in this Class?*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1980, pp.339–341; David Couzens Hoy, *The Critical Circle*, University of California Press, Berkeley, 1978, pp.11–41; G. B. Madison, *The Hermeneutics of Postmodernity*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, 1988, pp.3–24.

30. There are exceptions to the general apathy about Hirsch's ethical arguments. See, 'Hirsch, E.D.', by Wendell V. Harris in the *Encyclopedia of Contemporary Literary Theory*, edited by Irena R. Makaryk, University of Toronto Press, Toronto, 1993.

31. E. D. Hirsch Jr., *Validity in Interpretation*, Yale University Press, New Haven, 1967; p.203.

32. Hirsch, *Validity in Interpretation*, p.43.

33. Ibid., p.113.

34. Ibid., p.x.

35. Ibid., p.24 [my emphasis].

36. Ibid.

37. Ibid., p.25 [my emphasis]

38. Ibid. [my emphasis]

39. Ibid. [my emphasis]

40. Ibid., p.5

41. Ibid., p.25 [my emphasis]

42. Ibid., p.26.

43. Ibid. [my emphasis]

44. Ibid. [my emphasis]

45. Ibid. [my emphasis]

46 Ibid. [my emphasis]

47. Ibid. [my emphasis]

48. Ibid., p.27 [my emphasis]

49. Ibid. [my emphasis]

50. E. D. Hirsch Jr., *The Aims of Interpretation*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1976, p.75.

51. Ibid.

52. Ibid., p.90 [my emphasis]

53. Ibid., p.90 [my emphasis]

54. Ibid., p.91

55. Ibid.

56. Ibid.

57. Ibid., [my emphasis]

58. Ibid., p.92

59. P. D. Juhl, *Interpretation: An Essay in the Philosophy of Literary Criticism*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey, 1980, pp.16-26.

60. See Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, revised by Joel Weinsheimer and Donald G. Marshall, Crossroad, New York, 1989 [Second revised edition]; *Truth and Method*, translated by W. Glen Doepel, and edited by John Cuming and Garrett Baren. Crossroad, New York, 1984 [First edition]; *Verità e Metodo*, translated by Gianni Vattimo, Gruppo Editoriale Fabbri-Bompiani, Milano, Italy, 1983; *Wahrheit und Methode: Grundzuqe einer philosophischen Hermeneutik*, Gesammelte Werke, Vol.I., J.C.B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), Tubingen, West Germany, 1986; *Philosophical Hermeneutics*, translated and edited by David E. Linge, University of California Press, Berkeley, California, 1976; *Ermeneutica e Methodica Universale*, edited by Umberto Margiotta, Marietti Editori, Torino, Italy, 1973; *Wahrheit und Methode: Erganzungen Register*, Gesammelte Werke, Vol. II, J. C. B Mohr (Paul Siebeck), Tubingen, West Germany, 1986; *Reason in the Age of Science*, translated by Frederick G. Lawrence, The MIT Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1981; *The Relevance of the Beautiful and Other Essays*, translated by Robert Bernasconi, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, England, 1986; *Dialogue and Dialectic: Eight Hermeneutical Studies on Plato*, translated by P. Christopher Smith, Yale University Press, New Haven, Conn., 1980; *Hegel's Dialectic: Five Hermeneutical Studies*, translated by P. Christopher Smith, Yale University Press. New Haven, 1976; *Philosophical Apprenticeships*, The MIT Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1985; 'On the Circle of Understanding', in *Hermeneutics versus Science? Three German Views*, edited by John M. Connolly and Thomas Keutner, University of Notre Dame Press, Notre Dame, Indiana, 1988; 'The History of Concepts and the Language of Philosophy', translated by Jeff Mitscherling and Jakob Amstutz, *International Studies in Philosophy*, vol.18 (1986), pp.1–16. See also: Joel C. Weinsheimer, *Gadamer's Hermeneutics: A Reading of Truth and Method*, Yale University Press, New Haven, Conn., 1985; Giuliano Sansonetti, *Il Pensiero di Gadamer*, Editrice Morcelliana, Verona, Italy, 1988; Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, translated by John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson, Harper & Row, New York, 1962.

61. Gadamer, *Truth and Method* [2nd Ed.], p.xxxi.

62. Ibid., p.xxviii.

63. Ibid., p.xxxvi. See, Martin Heidegger, *What is Called Thinking?*, translated by J. Glenn Gray. Harper and Row, New York, 1968; Martin Heidegger, *Discourse on Thinking*, translated by John M. Anderson and E. Hans Freund. Harper and Row, New York, 1966.

64. Ibid., p.512.

65. Ibid., p.xxviii.

66. See Gadamer's 'The Phenomenological Movement', in *Philosophical Hermeneutics*, ed. David Linge.

67. Gadamer, *Truth and Method* [2nd Ed.], p.xxv.

68. See Gadamer's account of the impact of these thinkers on him in his *Philosophical Apprenticeships*.

69. Gadamer, *Truth and Method* [2nd Ed.], p.xxxvi.

70. For different senses of the question, see Norman Kemp Smith's commentary on Kant's First Critique (pp.43–78).

71. Gadamer, *Truth and Method* [2nd Ed.], p.xxix.

72. Ibid., p.xxixxxx.

73. Gadamer, *Reason in the Age of Science*.

74. Ibid., p.111.

75. Ibid., p.90.

76. Ibid., p.111.

77. Hirsch, *Validity in Interpretation*, p.245.

78. Paul Ricoeur, *Main Trends in Philosophy*, Holmer & Meier Publishers, New York, 1979, p.268.

79. Gadamer, *Philosophical Hermeneutics*, p.26.

80. Gadamer, *Truth and Method* [2nd Ed.], p.xxix.

81. Ibid., p.512.

82. Ibid., p.xxxvi.

83. Gadamer, *Philosophical Apprenticeships*, p.175 [my emphasis]

84. Gadamer, *Truth and Method* [2nd Ed.], p.483.

85. For more on the Metaphysics of Light, see St. Bonaventura's *The Mind's Road to God*, The Library of Liberal Arts, Indianapolis, 1953; and Armand Maurer, *Medieval Philosophy*, Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, Toronto, 1982.

86. The following quotations from Gadamer illustrates the play on the word '*Das Shone*'. I have retained the original German words in parenthesis: 'However closely Plato has linked the idea of the beautiful [*des Schonen*] with that of the good, he is still aware of a difference between the two, and this difference involves the special advantage of the beautiful [*Vorzug de Schonen*]' (*Truth and Method,* 2nd ed., p.482; *Wahrheit und Methode*, p.484).

'Thus the beautiful [*Das Schone*] is distinguished from the absolutely intangible good in that it can be grasped. It is part of its own nature to be something that is visibly manifest [*Erscheinendes zu sein*]. The beautiful [*Das Schone*] reveals itself in the search for the good' (*Truth and Method,* 2nd ed., p.481; *Wahrheit und Methode*, p.485).

'That which manifests itself in perfect form attracts the longing of love to it. The beautiful [*Das Schone*] disposes people in its favor immediately, whereas models of human virtue can be only obscurely described in the unclear medium of appearances [*Medium der Erscheinungen*], because they have, as it were, no light [*Licht*] of their own. Thus we often succumb to impure imitations and appearances of virtue. The case of the beautiful [*Schonen*] is different. It has its own radiance [*Helligkeit*], so that we are not seduced here by deceptive copies. For beauty [*Schonheit*] alone has this quality: that it is what is most radiant [*Hervorleuchtende*] (*ekphanestaton*) and lovely" (*Truth and Method,* 2nd ed., p.482; *Wahrheit und Methode*, p.485).

'Through the anagogical function of the beautiful [*des Schonen*], which Plato described in unforgettable terms, a structural characteristic of the being of the beautiful [*des Schonen*] becomes visible, and with it an element of the structure of being in general. Obviously what distinguishes the beautiful from the good is that the beautiful of itself presents itself, that its being is such that it makes itself immediately evident (*einlecuchtend*). This means that beauty has the most important ontological function: that of mediating between idea and appearance [*Erscheinung*]' (*Truth and Method,* 2nd ed., p.481; *Wahrheit und Methode*, p.485).

'This is the metaphysical crux of Platonism. It finds its concrete 'form in the concept of participation (*methexis*) and concerns both the relation of the appearance [*Erscheinung*] to the idea and the relation of the ideas to one another. As we learn from *Phaedrus*, it is not accidental that Plato likes to illustrate this controversial relation of 'participation' by the example of the beautiful [*des Schonen*]. The idea of the beautiful [*des Schonen*] is truly present, whole and undivided, in what is beautiful [*was schon ist*]. Hence, through the example of the beautiful [*des Schonen*], the "*parousia*" of the *eidos* that Plato has in mind can be made evident [*einleuchtend*] and, by contrast to the logical difficulties of participation in the "being" of "becoming," the thing itself can be offered in evidence. "Being present" belongs in a convincing way to the being of the beautiful itself [*Sein des Schonen selbst*]. However much beauty [*Schonheit*] might be experienced as the reflection of something superterrestrial, it is still there in the visible world. That it really is something different, as a being of another order, is seen in its mode of appearance [*Erscheinens*]. It appears suddenly [*scheint*]; and just as suddenly, without any transition it disappears again. If we must speak with Plato of a hiatus (*chorismos*) between the world of the senses and the world of ideas, this is where it

is and this is where it is also overcome' (*Truth and Method,* 2nd ed., p.481; *Wahrheit und Methode*, p.485).

87. Robert Dostal, 'Philosophical Discourse and the Ethics of Hermeneutics', in *Festivals of Interpretation*, edited by Kathleen Wright, State University of New York Press, Albany, 1990, pp.75–80.

CHAPTER THREE: AN ALTERNATIVE MODEL OF TEXTS AND THEIR ENGAGEMENT (I): WRITS

1. See: J. L. Austin, *How to Do Things with Words*, edited by J. O. Urmson and Marina Sbisa, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1980; *Philosophical Papers*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1961. J. R. Searle, *Speech Acts*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1969; J. R. Searle, *Expression and Meaning*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1979; K. T. Fann (ed.), *Symposium on J. L. Austin*, Routledge, London, 1969; Isaiah Berlin (ed.), *Essays on J. L. Austin*, Clarendon Press, 1973; G. J. Warnock, *J. L. Austin,* (*The Arguments of the Philosophers*, edited by Ted Honderich), Routledge, London, 1989.

2. Searle, 'A Taxonomy of Illocutionary Acts', in *Expression and Meaning*, pp. 1–29.

3. I borrow the notion of 'friction' from Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, Penguin Books, London, 1968.

CHAPTER FOUR: AN ALTERNATIVE MODEL OF TEXTS AND THEIR ENGAGEMENT (II): TEXTS

1. David Botnick, *Wills for Ontario: How to Make Your Own Will*, Self-Counsel, North Vancouver, B.C., 1992.

2. See, Rodney A. Brooks, 'Challenges for Complete Creature Architectures', in Jean-Arcady et al. (eds.), *From Animals to Animats*, MIT Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1991, pp.434–443 .

CHAPTER FIVE: AN ALTERNATIVE MODEL OF TEXTS AND THEIR ENGAGEMENT (III): ENGAGEMENTS

1. A 'straight forward' engagement was what led Luther and his followers to claim the 'clarity' of scripture. On this important issue see Anthony Thiselton, *New Horizons in Hermeneutics,* Harper Collins, London, 1992, especially Chapter V on '*Claritas Scripturae*'.

2. The New Testament's famous parable of the sower makes precisely this point about malleability [Matthew 13:3ff., Mark 4:1ff., and Luke 8:4ff.].

3. On *lectio divina* see the following works: St. Benedict, *The Rule of St. Benedict: In Latin and English with Notes*, The Liturgical Press, Collegeville, 1981; Carmela V. Franklin et.al. (trans.), *Early Monastic Rules: The Rules of the Fathers and the Regula*

Orientalis, The Liturgical Press, Collegeville, 1982; Guigo II, *The Ladder of Monks and Twelve Meditations,* translated by Edmund Colledge and James Walsh, Cistercian Publications, Kalamazoo, 1981; Guigo II Certosino*, Tornero al Mio Cuore*, Edizioni Qiqajon, Comunità di Bose, 1987; Louis Bouyer, *Introduction to Spirituality*, Liturgical Press, Collegeville, [nd]; Charles Cummings, *Monastic Practices*, Cistercian Publications, Kalamazoo, 1986, especially the chapter on 'Sacred Reading', pp.7–23; Thelma Hall, *Too Deep for Words: Rediscovering Lectio Divina*, Paulist Press, New York, 1988; Jean Leclercq, *The Love of Learning and the Desire for God*, Fordham University Press, New York, 1961; Susan Annette Muto, *A Practical Guide to Spiritual Reading*, Dimension Books, Denville, 1976; Matthias Neuman, 'The Contemporary Spirituality of the Monastic Lectio', *Review for Religious,* Volume 36, 1977/1; Beryl Smalley, *The Study of the Bible in the Middle Ages*, Basil Blackwell, Oxford, 1983 [3rd edition], especially the chapter: on 'Lectio, Disputatio, Praedicatio', pp.196–213; Ambrose Wathen, 'Monastic Lectio: Some Clues from Terminology', *Monastic Studies*, Volume 12, 1976; Marco Aldrovandi, *Pregare La Bibbia*, Edizioni Dehoniane, Bologna, 1980; Maria Ignazia Angelini, *Il Monaco e la Parabola*, Morcelliana, Brescia, 1981; Baroffico, Bonifacio. *Lectio Divina e Vita Religiosa*, Editrice Elle Di Ci, Torino, 1988; Enzo Bianchi, *Pregare La Parola: Introduzione alla 'Lectio Divina*', Piero Gribaudi Editore, Torino, 1990; Garcia Colombas, *Il Monachesimo Delle Origini*, Tomo 2: Spiritualità, Jaca Book, Milano, 1990, especially the chapter on 'La "Lectio Divina"', pp.338–348; Giuseppino De Roma, *Mostrami Signore it Tuo Volto: La Lectio Divina*, Editrice Ancora, Milano, 1989; Vittorio Gambino, *La Bibbia con it Signore: La Lectio Divina*, Edizioni Dehoniane, Roma, 1991; Guido-Innocenzo Gargano, *La 'Lectio Divina*', Edizioni Dehoniane, Bologna, 1988; Mariano Magrassi, *Bibbia e Preghiera: La Lectio Divina*, Editrice Ancora, Milano, 1990; Mario Masini, *Iniziazione all 'Lectio Divina'*, Edizioni Messaggero, Padova, 1988; Guy-Marie Dom Oury, *Cercare Dio Nella Sua Parola: La Lectio Divina*; Edizioni Paoline, Torino, 1987; Luciano Pacomio, *Lectio Divina: Accostarsi alla Bibbia, Leggere, Meditare, Pregare, Contemplare, Amare*, Edizioni Piemme, Casale Monferrato, 1986; Salvatore A. Panimolle, *Ascolto Della Parola e Preghiera: La 'Lectio Divina'*, Libreria Editrice Vaticana, Citta del Vaticano, 1987; Antonio Riboldi et al, *Signore Insegnaci a Pregare: Interventi Sulla Preghiera e la Lectio, Divina*, Edizioni Paoline, Torino, 1991; Giovanni Saldarini, *Lectio Divina: Incontri con i Giovani*, Edizioni San Massimo, Torino, 1991; Cipriano Vagaggini (ed.), *La Preghiera Nella Bibbia e nella Tradizione Partristica e Monastica,* Edizioni Paoline, Torino, 1988.

4. On the historical-critical method see, Duncan S. Ferguson, *Biblical Hermeneutics: An Introduction*, SCM Press, London, 1986; Robert M. Grant, and David Tracy, *A Short History of the Interpretation of the Bible*, SCM Press, London, 1984; R. N. Soulen, *Handbook of Biblical Criticism*, John Knox Press, Atlanta, Georgia, 1981.

5. See, Rudolf Bultmann, *Jesus Christ and Mythology*, Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1958; *New Testament and Mythology, and Other Basic Writings*, translated by Schubert M. Ogden, Fortress Press, Philadelphia, 1984.

6. Joseph W. Trigg, *Biblical Interpretation*, Michael Glazier, Wilmington, Delaware, 1988; *A Short History of the Interpretation of the Bible*, SCM Press, London, 1984.

7. Gustavo Gutièrrez, *A Theology of Liberation*, Orbis Books, Maryknoll, New York, 1973.

8. Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Meditating on the Word*, Ballantine Books, New York, 1986; and *Life Together*, SCM, London, 1954.

9. See, Mother Teresa of Calcutta's *A Gift for God*, Harper and Row, New York, 1975, pp.15–25

10. Francis Bacon, *The New Organon*, MacMillan, New York, 1960.

11. I cannot here engage in a debate regarding the possibility of making items in a realm other than the 'real world' of physical objects. I refer the reader to the arguments put forth by Richard Sylvan in his refutation of the attempts of some philosophers, especially those of Positivist convictions, to limit our world to the realm of 'existence'. I am sympathetic to the views of Sylvan, who follows Alexius Meinong regarding 'non-existent' objects or items, and to the views of various Muslim Medieval philosophers, such as al-Ghazali, who allow for different realms and kinds of existence and existents. I point this out in order to indicate to the reader the kind of metaphysical assumptions I am making, the justification of which is well beyond the scope of this thesis.

12. In discussions on purchasing, I drew on Michael Harding and Mary Lu Harding's *Purchasing*, Barrons, New York, 1991.

13. Karl Marx, *Capital,* Vintage, New York, 1976, pp.283–290.

14. On industrial robots and their programming see, Mikell P. Groover et. al., *Industrial Robotics*, McGraw-Hill, 1986.

15. James L. Kugel and Rowan A. Greer, *Early Biblical Interpretation*, The Westminster Press, Philadelphia, 1986; Tertullianus, *The Five Books Against Marcion*, in the Ante-Nicene Christian Library, vol. 7, T. and T. Clark, Edinburgh, 1868; Joseph W. Trigg, *Biblical Interpretation*, Michael Glazier, Wilmington, Delaware, 1988; Clement of Alexandria, *The Miscellanies or Stromata*, in the Ante-Nicene Christian Library, vols. 4, 12, T. and T. Clark, Edinburgh, 1869.

16. Robert M. Grant, and David Tracy, *A Short History of the Interpretation of the Bible*, SCM Press, London, 1984.

17. Ferguson, *Biblical Hermeneutics*.

18. See Grant and Tracy, *Short History of the Interpretation of the Bible*.

19. See the chapters concerning these theologians in Thiselton, *New Horizons in Hermeneutics*.

20. On Jewish interpretation, see: Bernhard W. Anderson, *Understanding the Old Testament*. Prentice-Hall, Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, 1975; Martin Buber, *The Way of Man According to the Teachings of Hasidism*, The Citadel Press, Secaucus, New Jersey, 1966; Isidore Epstein, *Judaism: A Historical Presentation*, Penguin Books, New York, 1973; Louis Finkelstein, *Aspects of Rabbinic Theology*: *Major Concepts of the Talmud,* Schocken Books, New York, 1961; Michael Fishbane, *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1985; Gersonides, *The Wars of the Lord, Treatise Three: On God's Knowledge*. Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, Toronto, Ontario, 1977; Michael Grant, *The History of Ancient Israel*; Charles Scribner's Sons, NY, 1984; Julius Guttmann, *Philosophies of Judaism*, Schocken Books, New York, 1964; Moses Mielziner, *Introduction to the Talmud*, Bloch Publishing Co., New York, 1968; Chaim Pearl, and Reuben S. Brookes, *A Guide to Jewish Knowledge,* Jewish Chronicle Publications, London, 1956.

21. St. Augustine, *On Christian Doctrine*, translated by D. W. Robertson, Jr.. Macmillan, New York, 1958.

22. The above observations regarding sourcing presuppositions are greatly indebted to the influence of R. G. Collingwood's theory of absolute presuppositions as presented in *Essay on Metaphysics*. But Collingwood's theory is inadequate in many respects. I take Collingwood to be mistaken on three important points: (1) He claims that presuppositions are strictly correlated so that from an presupposition one and only other presupposition arises. I think that there is no such strict correlation, and that presuppositions hover and zoom around in groups that keep shifting; (2) He says nothing about the influence of living situations, and their influence on presuppositions. His presuppositions unfold in an airtight plain; (3) While he speaks of arising, he does not say much about the deliberate raising of questions, or the role of initiative in changing presumptions into assumptions, or in deliberately changing assumptions.

CHAPTER SIX: THE CONTRIBUTION OF OPERATIONAL HERMENEUTICS

1. Umberto Eco, *Interpretation and Overinterpretation*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1992.

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Index

access to sources, 108
actualizing writs, 65, 91–92
actuating writs, 64, 88
aggadah interpretation of the Torah, 104
aims in interpretation, 40
Alexandria, School of, 102
anticipation of readers, 70
anti–methodical stance of Gadamer, 49
Antioch, School of, 102
Apel, Karl-Otto, 4
aporiae, 1–2, 5–12, 53–54, 116–20
arguing texts, 85
Aristotle, 47, 92–93
artifacts
    embedded design, 77–81
    machine/text analogy, limitations of, 81–82
    operational, 14, 74–76
assertive writ operations, 96
assertive writs, 57–58, 66
Ast, Friedrich, 16
attitudes of readers, 70
audience competence, 61
Austin, J. L., 56
authors, 8–9, 11, 67, 118–19. *See also* texts; writs; intentions.
automaticity of understanding, 9. *See also* understanding.

Bacon, Francis, 93
Baratono, Adelchi, 24
Betti, Emilio
    hermeneutics of, 22–31
    on intentions of authors, 8–9
    on interpretive activities, 7–9
    representative forms, interpretation of, 3
    texts all the same vs. not all the same, 6
    on texts as made by authors vs. not made by authors, 8
Bible, the
    actuating, 88
    actualizing, 91–92
    biblical hermeneutics, 15–16
    Exodus, 94–95
    manipulating, 89–90
    questions asked of, 102–105
    utilizing, 90–91
blanket sourcing, 106
Boeckh, 23
Bonhoeffer, Dietrich, 91, 104

Botnick, David I., 79
Bultmann, Rudolf, 90, 104

canons proposed by Betti, 27
capitalist manufacturing, 98
Catholic Church, 103
Christian theology, 91. *See also* Bible.
commissive writ operations, 96
commissive writs, 57–58, 67
conditioning machines, 83
conjecture and refutation in interpretation, 32
consciousness, 51
contemplating (*theoria*), 18, 48, 92
context of engagement, 71
control institutions, 109
control of source, 107–108
Correlation Method of interpretation, 104
Crifo, Guiliano, 31
Crusaders, 92
Culler, Jonathan, 121

Das Kapital, 98
declarative writ operations, 97
declarative writs, 58, 67
deeds, utterances as, 57
deep sourcing, 106
demand signal in purchasing, 101
description and prescription, 46
design of writs, 60–64
design, embedded, 77–81
determinateness in interpretation, 37
dictionary competence, 61
Dilthey, Wilhem, 3, 16, 21, 23–24
directive writ operations, 96
directive writs, 57–58, 66
discrete sourcing, 106
doctrine of resonance, 25
doing (*praxis*), 92
Dostal, Robert J., 53
dramatical interpretation, 28–29
dynamic system modeling, 12–14

Eco, Umberto, 4, 121–23
embedded design, 77–81
embedded volition, 99–100
eminent texts, 53
encyclopedia competence, 61
engagement
    language as system of, 63
    as sourcing of operations, 92
    of texts, varieties of, 87–92
    theatre of, 70–71
engagement base in writs, 69
engagement friction, 72–73
engineering
    dynamic system modeling, 13–14
    operation analysis, 12–13
    and philosophy, 1
Ernesti, Johann August, 16
ethics of interpretation, 39
etiquette competence, 61
Exodus, 94–95
expanded horizons, argument of interpretation from, 41
experiential competence, 61
explicit sourcing, 100–102
expressive writ operations, 96–97
expressive writs, 57–58, 67

Florman, Samuel C., 2
friction, in engagement, 72–73

Gadamer, Hans–Georg
    arguments against method, 3, 10
    hermeneutics of, 44–53
    on intentions of authors, 9
    on interpretive activities, 7–9

texts all the same vs. not all the same, 6
truth and method as methodical, 45–49
general hermeneutics, 2, 19–22, 53–54
genius of the individual, 21
golden rule, argument of interpretation from, 42–43
Gospel of St. John, 52. *See also* Bible.
grammar competence, 61
Guigo II, 89
Gutiérrez, Gustavo, 91, 104

Habermas, Jurgen, 4
Haggadah, 95–96
halakhah interpretation of the Torah, 104
Hall, Clare, 121
Hartmann, Nicolai, 24, 46
Hegel, 50–51
Heidegger, Martin, 3
hermeneutics
aporiae encountered in, 5–12, 116–20
of Betti, 22–31
of Gadamer, 44–53
of Hirsch, 31–44
methodical vs. non–methodical, 10–12, 119–120
of Schleiermacher, 15–22
Hillel, Rabbi, 105
Hirsch, E. D.
hermeneutics of, 31–44
on intentions of authors, 8–9
on interpretive activities, 7–9
on methodologies, 10
on texts as made by authors vs. not made by authors, 8
texts all the same vs. not all the same, 6
validity in interpretation, 4
historical interpretation, 28–29, 32
holistic sourcing, 107
Husserl, Edmund, 46

Ibn Khaldun, 93
Ihde, Don, 2
illocutionary acts, 57
individual dimension of speaking, 21
inert artifacts, 59, 75
informing texts, 84
initiative of the reader, 68
insider sourcing, 106–107
instructing texts, 84
instructions, sourcing control through, 108
intelligibilia in making, 93
intentions
as discernable and important, 8–9, 118–19
of authors, 11
intended meaning, 31, 38
interpretation
as activity of the interpreter, 9, 11, 119
argument from prudence, 40–41
argument from vocation, 43–44
conjecture and refutation, 32
as construction of interpreter, 33
determinateness and reproducibility, 37
ethics of, 39
from expanded horizons, 41
general theory of, 30
golden rule argument, 42–43
interpretive activities as all the same vs. not all the same, 117
interpretive activities, 7–9, 11
moral obligation, 41–42
normative, 7, 27–29, 34

presupposition, 110–13
re–cognitive, 7, 27–29
same vs. not all the same, 7
in Schleiermacher's hermeneutics, 19–22
source-interpreter relations, 105–106
as sourcing of operations, 98–100
sourcing valuation, 110
triadic structure of, 25
types of engagement, 87–92
typology of, 23
as use of a text, 121
validity in, 4
interpretative projects, 94–98
is-theory, 46

judicial interpretation, 28–29
Juhl, P. D., 41
juridical interpretation, 28–29
juxtapositional sourcing, 107

labour power, 99
language
as light, 52
interpretation as activity of, 9
understanding of speech, 17
understanding as the activity of, 3–4
and writs, 63
See also understanding; interpretation
lectio divina, 88
legal hermeneutics, 16
liberation theology, 91, 104
light, metaphysics of, 50–53
linguistic competence, 60–64
literary hermeneutics, 16
literary interpretation, 28–29
logical necessity in interpretation, 37
logos, Christian notion of, 4, 51
Luther, Martin, 103

machine/text analogy
limitations of, 81–82
varieties of machines, 82–84
See also engineering
making (*poiesis*), 92–94
malleability of readers, 88
manipulating writs, 64
Marxism, 92, 98–99
meddot (rules), 108
Meier, Georg Friedrich, 16
method
in hermeneutics, 10–12
arguments for and against, 3, 10–12, 119–120
modeling, dynamic system, 12–14
moral arguments of Hirsch, 36–38, 41–42
musical interpretation, 28–29

Natorp, Paul, 46
New Critics, school of, 35
Nicomachean Ethics, 47
No Smoking writ example, 58–62
non–eminent texts, 53
normative interpretation, 7, 27–29, 34

operation analysis, 12–14
operational artifacts, 14, 74–76
operational hermeneutics, 20, 114–15, 120–23
operations, 95, 98–100
outsider sourcing, 106–107

paradigms, sourcing–control through, 108
partial sourcing, 107

Patristic period of biblical exegesis, 102
Petroski, Henry, 2
philological interpretation, 28–29
philosophy and engineering, 1–2
Popper, Karl, 4
practicality of hermeneutics, 48
pre-emptive moves, sourcing control through, 109
prescription and description, 46
presuppositional base, 69, 110–13
properties, design of into artifacts, 75
Protestant reformation, 103
Protrepticus dialogue, 47
prudence, argument of interpretation from, 40–41
psychological interpretation, 28–29
public standard in interpretation, 37
purchasing, demand signal in, 101
puritan sourcing, 107

quadriga approach to biblical exegesis, 103–104
questio juris, 17
questioning attitude, 13
questions, putting to a text, 102–105
reader factors in writs, 68–69
readers, transformability of, 88. *See also* interpretation.
re-cognitive interpretation, 7, 27–29
re-contemplating as understanding, 18–22
re-enactment, doctrine of, 26–27
reminding texts, 85
re-presentational interpretation, 27–29
representational machines, 83–84
representative form, 3, 24
reproducibility in interpretation, 37
re-productive interpretation, 7
resonance, doctrine of, 25
Ricoeur, Paul, 4, 49
Rorty, Richard, 121–23
rules, sourcing control through, 108

Schleiermacher, Friedrich
  general hermeneutics, 2
  hermeneutics of, 15–22
  on intentions of authors, 8–9
  on interpretive activities, 7–9
  on methodologies, 10
  on texts as made by authors vs. not made by authors, 8
  texts all the same vs. not all the same, 6
scientific interpretation, 28–29
scientistic positivism, 3
Searle, John R., 56
Segundo, Juan Luis, 91
sensibilia in making, 93
significance in texts, 31
situation factors, 70–73
social dimension of speaking, 21
sociological interpretation, 28–29
sourcing
  control of, 107–110
  explicit, 100–102
  in making projects, 97
  of items from texts, 94–98
  presupposition, 110–13
  source–interpreter relations, 105–106
  tactics, 106–107
  valuation, 110
speech act theory, 56
speech, understanding of, 17–22
Sprache (speech), 17
St. Augustine, 16
St. John, Gospel of, 52
Steinthal, 23

surface sourcing, 106
surplus-value, phenomenon of, 98

technical interpretation, 28–29
technology, philosophy of, 2
Teresa of Calcutta, Mother, 91
texts
  actuating, 88
  embedded design, 78–81
  engagement as sourcing of operations, 92
  as made by authors vs. not made by authors, 8, 11, 117–18
  manipulating, 89–90
  as operational artifacts, 76–82
  presupposition, 110–13
  all the same vs. not all the same, 6–7, 10–11, 116–17
  significance, 31
  source-interpreter relations, 105–106
  sourcing control, 107–110
  sourcing items from, 94–98
  traditional models of interpretation, 55–556
  types of engagement, 87–92
  varieties of, 84–85
  See also writs; interpretation
theatre of engagement, 70–71
theological interpretation, 28–29
thinking, 18
Tillich, Paul, 104
tone, writs, 68
Torah, 95, 104
transformability of readers, 88
transforming machines, 83
translation interpretation, 28–29
transporting machines, 83
triadic structure of interpretation, 25
truth and method
  as anti-methodical, 49–50
  as methodical, 45–49
  metaphysics of light, 50–53

understanding
  automaticity of, 9, 53
  as belonging to that which is understood, 45
  and language, 3–4
  natural need for, 23
  as re-contemplating, 18–22
  of speech, 17
  See also language; interpretation
use and interpretation, 121–22
use-value, 98–99
usul (principles), 108
utilizing writs, 64, 90–91
utterances, evaluation of, 57

validity in interpretation in Hirsch's hermeneutics, 4, 33–34, 40
valuation of sourcing, 110
Vico, Giambattista, 23, 93
Vincenti, Walter G., 2
vocation, argument of interpretation from, 43–44
volition, embedded, 99–100

Winner, Langdon, 2
Wittgenstein, Ludwig, 1
world view, transcending limitations of, 36
writers. See authors.
writs
  analysis of, 58–60
  classification of, 57–58
  context of engagement, 71
  designing of, 60–64
  engaging, 64–65

factors influencing engagement of, 65–67
notion of, 56–64
as operational artifacts, 76–82
reader anticipation, 70
reader attributes, 70
reader base, 69
reader factors, 68–69
situation factors, 70–73
source, 67
tone, 68
See also texts; interpretation; sourcing

Yose, Elizer ben, 105

Contemporary hermeneutics is plagued by a set of 'knots' or *aporiae*. These *aporiae* consist of truth claims that contradict one another and which have arisen from the failure of contemporary 'General Hermeneutics' to attend with sufficient rigour to the variety of types of texts and interpretative activities. In this book, the author, a leading Muslim theologian, proposes an alternative model of texts and interpretative activities that proceed from an acknowledgement of their variety. Through an in-depth study of the variety of interpretive types and the works of Schleiermacher, Betti, Hirsch and Gadamer, the author elaborates an 'Operational Hermeneutics' that is able to overcome key *aporiae* in hermeneutic theory.

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"In this ambitious and original study, Dr. Aref Nayed provides hermeneutics with the careful critical scrutiny of its theoretical foundations that it has so long deserved"
— Professor Jeff Mitscherling
From the Foreword to the book

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