

Wilhelm Dilthey's hermeneutics and its relevance to Islamic studies

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Abstract

This study aims to describe William Dilthey's hermeneutics and show its relevance to the study of Islamic history. This research is interesting to do when looking at the relationship between hermeneutics and Islamic studies, in the mainstream, it is in normative Islamic studies. This study uses descriptive analytical methods to describe the ins and outs of Dilthey's hermeneutics and to describe the relevance of this hermeneutics in Islamic studies. The results show that historical Islamic studies can utilize three elements in Dilthey's hermeneutics, namely *Erlebnis* (world of inner experience), *Ausdruck* (expression of life) and *Verstehen* (understanding). In addition, historical Islamic studies can also take advantage of the three conditions in Dilthey's hermeneutics, namely descriptive psychology, hermeneutical circles and socio-cultural knowledge.

Keywords: Hermeneutics, Dilthey, normative Islam, historical Islam

Introduction

The retracement of Wilhelm Dilthey's thought is part of an important process for understanding the different basic characteristics of the natural sciences and the humanities and *their hermeneutic methods*. It is undeniable that many later philosophers and scientists took inspiration from Dilthey's thoughts on the methods offered. Thinkers such as Habermas, Weber, Marx, Gadamer or Paul Ricoeur took much inspiration from Dilthey's thought.

Since August Comte introduced positivism in the mid-19th century, the determinism of method in the natural sciences has penetrated deeply into the methods of the human, social or cultural sciences. The belief that only natural science methods can fall into the scientific category, because it claims objectivity, makes homogenization of methods so viscous. This tendency is strengthened when humanities, social sciences and cultural sciences are unable to solve internal problems of disputes over methods worthy of being called scientific.

This process of homogenization and methodological determination cannot be separated from the preoccupation of philosophers to always talk about how one is aware of the existence of physical objects, and the extent to which subjective elements enter and influence our experience of those physical objects. It is as if the most important objects of knowledge are only physical objects. All intellectual concentration is more focused on how to know physical objects (Poespoprojo, 1987: 46). Immanuel Kant's attempt to provide an epistemological basis for the natural sciences through *his a priori* categories shows how important this methodological project is.

The emergence of consciousness among the social, humanitarian and cultural scientific communities, is

not really a consciousness that suddenly appears. The process of realizing this problem that is so urgent to be solved has arisen long ago in the late 19th and early 20th centuries when Wilhelm Dilthey (1833-1911) tried to distinguish between two fields of science, namely *Geisteswissenschaften* (humanities) and *Naturwissenschaften* (natural sciences) (Verhaak & Haryono Imam, 1997: 67). For Dilthey, these two fields demand different approaches and methods, because they have different objects of discussion. If humanity deals with human behavior of a psychic nature, then natural science deals with objects that are physical.

As a result of this process, the social, humanitarian or cultural sciences apply many natural science methods, which emphasize quantification, such as observation, experimentation, and statistics. As an implication, the application of natural science methods that are more exact and emphasize quantification contributes to several important parts of development in the humanitarian, social or cultural sciences such as sociology, psychology (for example *de la m* Psychology gives birth to the very exact field of Psychometrics) as well as economics (for example in economics gives birth to quantitative Accounting Economics).

In subsequent developments, after some reflection and debate by the community of social sciences, humanities or culture, it was felt that something was lacking and could not be explained when the natural science method was applied. There are certain dimensions of social, historical or cultural events that cannot be touched by exact and quantitative methods (Melsen, 1985: 21)

Methods

In accordance with the research theme concerning hermeneutics problems in the perspective of Wilhelm Dilthey which is a method of humanitarian science in the study of Philosophy, this research material is in the form of a book literature that discusses Wilhem Dilthey's thought process in understanding the basic character that distinguishes between natural sciences and humanities through the method of hermeneutics. By reading the literature book, it can be known the theories related to the research theme. These theories are considered and discussed in the research of this philosophical literature, to then be examined from the angle and study of philosophy in ways that are usually done in field of philosophy. Thus, the research material was analyzed to obtain details of the research theme, which then drew conclusions. The steps in understanding as well as interpretation and assessment are also carried out, especially on the basic ideas or thoughts that exist. All of these things are intended to produce a descriptive formulation of research results that can be philosophically accounted for .

Findings and Discussion

Definition of Hermeneutics

In general, hermeneutics can be defined as a theory or philosophy about interpreting meaning. In recent times hermeneutics has emerged as an important topic in the discussion of the so-called social sciences, humanities or cultural sciences, in the philosophy of art and language, as well as in literary criticism.

Hermeneutics comes from the verb "*hermeneuin*" in Greek which means to mean, interpret, translate. As a noun, "*hermeneia*" means interpretation or interpretation. The classical interpretation of hermeneutics cannot be separated from the myth of Hermes in Greek society which today translates the message of the god Jupiter into a language that can be understood by humans. Hermes acts as an intermediary to bridge two different realities and two languages.

Historically, *hermeneutics* underwent developments that gave rise to various variants. Aristotetles had touched on the issue of hermeneutics in his work "*Interpretation*". According to Aristotle, no human being has the same written or spoken language with one another. Though language is a means of communication. Misconception can arise when someone fails to grasp the meaning of another person's language in a communication process (Sumaryono: 1997: 24).

Although many writings contain the notion of hermeneutics, the beginning of the history of *hermeneutics*

usually refers to the name Friederich Schleiermacher (Ankersmit, 1987: 153). The central point of Schleiermacher's *hermeneutics* is how to understand seemingly foreign texts. To gain this understanding, the interpreter must try to trace the author's intentions based on his own experience. The heart of the notion of *hermeneutics* is when the interpreter while drawing on his own experience can enter into the skin of the author's experience.

The realization that human expression contains meaningful elements that must be recognized and understood in such a way by the subject and must be transformed into a value system as well as its own meaning has given rise to various *hermeneutic* problems, namely how such a process is possible and how to acquire objective meaning when one is limited by one's subjectivity.

Types of Hermeneutics

Josef Bleicher, broadly divided 3 types of hermeneutics, namely hermeneutics theory, hermeneutic philosophy and critical hermeneutics (Bleicher, 1996: 3). Hermeneutic theory focuses more on the problematic general theory of interpretation as a methodology for the humanitarian sciences (*Geisteswissenschaften*) into which the social sciences belong. Among the figures of the theory of *hermeneutics* are Betti and Dilthey. Through the analysis of *Verstehen* (understanding) as an appropriate method to experience or rethink what an author has felt and thought. Emilio Betti – one of the hermeneutic philosophers who researched legal hermeneutics – intended to achieve “light” in the process of understanding in general. Understanding is how we transfer the complex experiences a person has created into our understanding and words.

The theory of hermeneutics as an epistemology and methodology of understanding was further developed by Dilthey at the turn of the 19th to 20th centuries. He pursued a critique of historical reason as a continuation of Kant's unfinished project of pure reason, that is, by seeking a “*transcendent*” condition for the possibility of historical knowledge. Dilthey applied *Verstehen* as an appropriate method of “knowing” in a subject-object relationship where “life meets life”.

Meanwhile the central issue of philosophy of hermeneutics is how social scientists or interpreters and objects are linked by a traditional context, where it implies that the interpreter already has a pre-understanding of the object as he approaches it. Important figures of the philosophy of hermeneutics are Gadamer and Heidegger. Hermeneutic philosophy does not aim to acquire objective knowledge through the use of methodical procedures, but aims to position the human position in a phenomenological descriptive manner about human *Dasein* bound to its temporality and history.

Critical hermeneutics, on the other hand, tries to oppose the previous stance of the two hermeneutika. Hermeneutika is not seen as a means to understand pure reality but to dismantle and explicitly ideologies veiled in a text or reality. The figures of critical *hermeneutics* are Apple and Habermas.

It is called critical in the sense of trying to seek a transformative understanding of what society should be rather than understanding the society that actually exists. The process of understanding is more than just descriptive or pure understanding but also a process of revealing the form of consciousness that underlies a text or reality (Hardiman, 1990: 48).

Hermeneutics in Human Life

For Dilthey, life is more than abiological reality, but includes a very complex reality. Life refers to all mental states, processes and activities whether conscious or unconscious. Life consists of many, individual lives and together make up the lives of all of humanity socially and historically. All products of life such as emotions, thoughts, actions to social institutions, religion, art, science and philosophy are included in life (Bertens, 1981: 88).

Human life, for Dilthey, is full of plurality. Individual anxiety and hope, thoughts and deeds, laws that limit his actions, religion, art, literature, philosophy are part of human life. Life is really not virtual. All manifestations of life, all values and moral principles for Dilthey are not the result of pure knowledge and thinking. All of

them are the results of individual life in a particular time and place, colored by circumstances, influenced by surrounding opinions, limited by the individual's age horizon and therefore relative.

Departing from such beliefs, Dilthey rejected any form of transcendental explanation or narrowing of reality as in positivism. Thoughts, judgments, norms and all rules come from empirical human life. There is no deductive standard that comes from outside life. "Surely there is no blood flowing in the veins of the subject constructed by Locke, Home, Kant.", thus Dilthey (Dilthey, 1970:162). So he rejected Kant's idea of *Thing in self* or Plato's world of ideas. Thus, thinking, judgment and norms cannot be separated from elements of reality (Bulhof, 1980: 2).

Dilthey also rejected positivism that distorts reality too much to sensory perceptions and impressions (Bulhof, 1980:3, Bertens, 1981:88). For Dilthey, reality is more than that, complex and incredibly rich, love, sacrifice, feelings of abandonment, hope and anxiety cannot be returned to sensory reality.

Life can be likened to a continuous stream of endless excitement. However, this does not mean that reality cannot be understood, because experiential reality already has a structure that allows intertwining. It is derived from the process of empirical generalization and not from transcendental deductive principles derived from outside life.

Life is a continuum of constantly moving realities in history. The reality of life is opposite to everything exact, but also opposite to everything metaphysical-essential. So, for Dilthey, life is an inseparable whole, not in pieces, but a current that always creates, that is, creates new value and always moves freely (Poespowardoyo, 1987: 48).

When Kant introduces a priori categories, then Dilthey introduces life categories. Kant's a priori category is more oriented towards explaining physical realities, while Dilthey's life category has the potential to understand life in structured experience. Important categories offered by Dilthey include categories inside and out, category intent, value meaning, category all parts. But the course of the process of life itself (Rickman, 1979: 133).

For example, the inside-out category is used to look at the external and inner aspects of a phenomenon of human action. Value categories allow us to experience the present time, meaning categories allow us to direct the future, and meaning categories allow us to live past experiences. In addition, the whole-part category allows us to interpret flashes of events that occur in a series (Rickman, 1979:133; Poespowardoyo, 1987:50).

Humanities and Natural Sciences

After showing how rich and complex the reality of life is, Dilthey sees two fields of knowledge that have overlapped, even though they have different lands and demand different approaches and methods. Dilthey saw it as counterproductive to approach *Naturwissenschaften* (natural sciences) to approach *Geisteswissenschaften* (humanities). For Dilthey, the dynamics of the life of the human soul are a complex arrangement of knowledge, feelings and will. This cannot be subordinated to mechanistic-causality norms as in quantitative patterns (Poespowardoyo, 1987: 49).

The categories of Kant's thought, for Dilthey are abstract, atemporal and static. It comes from outside of life so it is extrinsic. Life must be captured by the category of life itself so that it is intrinsic. We know ourselves not through the category of introspection but through history, Dilthey said. Thus, the critique for Dilthey is a critique of historical reason and not a critique of pure reason (Rickman, 1979:133).

The difference between natural sciences and humanities lies in two things. *First*, on the object and *second*, on the position of the subject and the object. The object of knowledge of human science is man and the complexity of his network of thoughts, wills and actions. While the position of the subject and object is in a situation that affects each other. This is slightly different from natural science where objects as objects of knowledge have a relatively definite and predictable character. The position of the object in many ways does not affect the subject and vice versa.

The object of natural science is "non-self" and it becomes possible to interpret in *explanatory* terms mathematical principles and historical principles. But on the contrary, cultural symptoms are feelings that

cannot be reduced to the category of "non-self" (Dilthey, 1971: 83).

If Dilthey discusses humanities, he means history, economics, law and politics, literature, psychology and others (Bertens, 1981: 89). Dilthey distinguishes sharply between *Naturwissenschaften* and *Geisteswissenschaften*. All sciences included in the category of natural sciences such as biology, chemistry, physics and others use induction and experimental methods. This method is more *erklären* or explanatory than *verstehen* or understanding. While the humanitarian sciences use an approach that is able to penetrate the heart of the experience that lives in each object.

Humanitarian sciences, for Dilthey, must be distinguished from natural sciences, because the natural sciences have objects of forms that appear in consciousness as something that comes from outside. On the contrary, the science of humanity its object arises from within, as a reality and as a living originality. In short, says Dilthey, "Nature we explain and understand life (Dilthey, 1971:143).

Furthermore, Dilthey pointed out that the world of the soul must be distinguished from the physical world. The physical world aims in an analogous sense, has historically been very superficial, and uses neither scales of value nor imperative principles. The physical world is the world seen and touched, and observation provides a solid basis for something that is known. In contrast, the soul world cannot be directly observed. Neither goals, values nor norms can be seen. Our knowledge of the inner world or soul comes from two sources: inner experience and communication. Inner experiences make us aware of values, norms and goals. With communication the soul becomes enlivened, in order to capture meaning (Rickman, 1979: 66). It is in this framework that Dilthey offers *hermeneutics* as a method for the humanities.

Hermeneutics as a Method

Dilthey's ambition was to establish an epistemological and methodological basis for the humanities, especially history. Dilthey's challenge was how to put historical inquiry on par with scientific research in the natural sciences. The difference in the objects of these two sciences is quite striking. If humanitarian science recognizes two dimensions of exterior and interior for its objects, then natural science only recognizes exterior dimensions (Sumaryono: 1999: 48).

Dilthey advocated for the use of hermeneutics, because for him, hermeneutics was the basis of the *Geisteswissenschaften*. Pleased with the involvement of individuals in the life of society that they want to understand, a special form of understanding is needed. Dilthey's hermeneutics revolves around three elements: *Erlebnis* (the world of inner experience), *Ausdruck* (expression of life) and *Verstehen* (understanding). These three elements are interrelated and presuppose each other.

First, *Erlebnis* or the World of Experience. *Erlebnis* is the conscious reality of human existence and is the basic reality of life from which all reality is explicit. In *erlebnis* life is a fundamental reality that is experienced directly, so it has not given rise to the distinction of object and subject. *Erlebnis* is the basis of reality for the emergence of imagination, memory and thought. It existed before reflection and before the separation of subject and object (Ankersmit:1987:160, Poespoprodjo:1987:54).

Erlebnis is a living experience that underlies all activity, thought and imagination. There has been no theoretical sorting and reflection on the nature of this life experience. For Dilthey, then, the interconnectedness of experience in its concrete reality lies in the category of meaning. This unity is carried in our memory by way of experiencing and being experienced again. "Meaning is essentially contained in experiential relationships," asserts Dilthey (Dilthey, 1971:237).

Erlebnis is an experience in the true, genuine, pre-reflective sense. A basis of life, in which there is a reciprocal process between the past and new experiences (Ankersmit, 1987: 160). The unity between the past and new experiences is then substituted into a person.

Second, *Ausdruck* or Expression. *Ausdruck* is an expression of the activity of the soul. Expressions appear in various forms of action. There are several forms of expression, namely identical expression, human behavior and spontaneous expression. Expressions whose contents have been fixed and identical, such as, traffic signs.

Meanwhile, the expression of human behavior can be individual or a long series of actions. While spontaneous expressions, such as smiling, laughing, amazed and so on. This expression is an expression of feelings that are sometimes superficial, and sometimes very deep (Poespoprojo:1987:57).

Menurut Dilthey this expression is a productive aspect of the intertwining between the past and new experiences. Like a painter who creates based on something unique in his personality. A painter lives and captures reality and re-expresses or projects it out (Ankersmit, 1987:161).

Expression is absolutely necessary for knowledge to be achieved. Because without expression, nothing can be captured. Through the expression of our view of ourselves is also clearer and more mature. But expression is also important for understanding the soul of others. Others cannot be approached through introspection. Other people or *other thoughts* can only be captured through their physical expressions. Facing the expressions of others, there is a process of internalization of their experience in my consciousness (Poespoprodjo, 1987: 56). Dilthey said, "*with the awakening of other people's experiences in my consciousness, there is an appreciation within me*" (Dilthey, 1971:332).

Third is Verstehen or Comprehension. Dilthey refers to *Verstehen* primarily as an activity in which one understands mental phenomena presented in a certain sign of a material nature, an activity in which we understand the inner side of a given sign materially in the visible world (Dilthey:1959:318).

Verstehen is a process of knowing psychological life through its expressions given to the senses. Understanding is knowing what another person is experiencing, through an imitation of his experience. In other words, *verstehen* is reliving or re-embodying one's experience in me (Ankersmit, 1987:162).

The humanities, especially history (Dilthey's special interest), will not acquire the knowledge sought without the use of the *verstehen* or understanding that distinguishes it from the natural sciences. Man as an object of understanding in the science of humanity has consciousness. This allows for an investigation of the hidden reasons behind his observable actions. We can understand actions by revealing their thoughts, feelings and desires. Humanity is not only able to know what humans have done but also the inner experiences (*erlebnis*), thoughts, memories, decisions, values and goals that drive them to do (Sills, 1972: 85).

Actions or actions are expressions of the human soul, ideas and meanings expected by individuals and society, in the form of words, attitudes, works of art and also social institutions. We will understand the expression (*ausdruck*) by reliving it in our own consciousness, the experience that gave rise to the expression.

The human science researcher must strive as living in his object, or make the object live within himself. With this appreciation will facilitate the emergence of *verstehen* or understanding. In the context of historical science, by reliving the past, historians will expand and develop their personalities, incorporating experiences from the past into the present (Anskermit: 1987: 162).

Every new experience, Dilthey argues, is according to its content determined by all the experiences that we have up to that point, whereas it gives new meaning and interpretation to old experiences. If a researcher wants to understand the actions of historical actors in the form of expressions (*ausdruck*), then he must reconstruct his unity and unity with inner experience (*erlebnis*) (Anskermit, 1987: 163).

What Dilthey meant was that by reconstructing the life experience of a historical actor into the mind of a researcher it would produce the same effect as a historical actor experienced it at that time. *Verstehen* or understanding is the activity of solving the meaning of signs of expression that are living manifestations or the result of the activities of the soul. *Verstehen* is the process by which mental life is known through its expression captured by the five senses. However, the expression is more than just a physical reality, because it is produced by the activity of the soul (Poespoprodjo, 1987: 56).

Hermeneutics in Progress

The process of understanding and interpreting as desired by Dilthey above requires several requirements. If these requirements are not met, it becomes difficult for the process of understanding and interpretation (Bertens, 1981: 90). The first requirement is that the researcher must familiarize himself with the psychic processes that

make meaning possible. To understand anxiety, love, hope requires the ability to experience it. For this reason, for Dilthey, hermeneutics needs to be complemented by descriptive psychological studies.

The second requirement is knowledge of context. To understand a passage requires knowledge of the whole. A word can only be understood in a broader context. Likewise, human action can only be understood through a broader context.

The third requirement is knowledge of the social and cultural systems that determine the phenomena we study. To understand a sentence, you must know the context of the rules, rules of the game in the language concerned. This condition is closely related to the second condition. The study of one thought requires the context of other works, and the study of works requires a broader socio-historical context.

In addition, interest and attention are decisive in the process of hermeneutics. Great and earnest interest, according to Dilthey, will lead to a deeper and sharper understanding. Concentrated attention will accelerate the less will certainly result in a superficial and not sharp level of understanding.

Rules and Circles of Hermeneutics

Although people are aware of their own situation through the expressions of others, they still feel the need to make interpretations of these expressions or expressions. Hermeneutics will only work if the expressions or expressions are familiar or familiar to us. If the expression does not contain anything strange or mysterious, then hermeneutics becomes unnecessary. Likewise, if it is completely foreign, hermeneutics becomes impossible (Sumaryono, 1997: 55).

On the one hand, it is inevitable that the interpretation of expressions in order to find their interconnectedness with *erlebnis* always involves the so-called hermeneutic circle. It is too difficult to describe logically strictly when an understanding is reached. According to Dilthey, "the relationships in a life can only be understood through the meaning of the *individual parts used to understand the whole, and each part of human life can only be understood in the same way.*" (Dilthey, 1961:105).

A part can only be understood through the whole, while a whole can only be understood through parts. A researcher can only understand thoughts simply by pointing to the situation that evokes those thoughts. While the situation that arouses the thought can only be understood based on what has been thought.

Understanding and meaning always depend on their relationship and are part of the situation. It is always related to historical perspectives and situations. The fact of the existence of circles in the process of understanding reveals that each part presupposes the other, so that the conception of understanding without suppositions has no factual basis. Relativitas is not something that Dilthey shunned. Because indeed for people who approach the problem logically it will only be difficult to grasp imaginative meanings. "Every world view is historically determined and, therefore, limited and relative" (Dilthey:1971:33).

But that doesn't mean this *hermeneutics* is an arbitrary process. At least Dilthey emphasizes some things that can be considered the rules of the game of hermeneutics. Dilthey places great emphasis on the "inner closeness" that characterizes the "lived experience." It is this experience that is the real object of hermeneutics. Our daily life experiences cannot be called "life experiences" entirely. Only experiences that can give "inner closeness" to the past and future can be called "living experiences" (Sumaryono, 1987: 55).

To gain interpretation and understanding in the humanities, especially history, there are at least three steps in the operation of *hermeneutics*. First, understand the original point of view or idea of the perpetrator. Second, understand the meaning or significance of their activities on matters directly related to historical events. Third, assess the event based on ideas that prevailed when the researcher was alive (Sumaryono, 1996: 57).

This step is actually only explicit from Dilthey's thinking about the basic principle of hermeneutics that when the researcher reconstructs in his mind the experiences of a historical actor, then he is able to understand that actor. Understanding means that "in similar circumstances, I myself will also do and think so (Ankersmit, 1987:164). To be able to understand historical actors, researchers use their experience in the present to be able to enter into the skin of historical actors' experiences.

In other words, a researcher tries to act out what is the experience of historical actors based on his own experience. By doing this, researchers become more aware of themselves as well as being able to evoke experiences that have been played by historical actors.

Relevance to historical Islamic studies

Islamic studies cover a very wide area. Amin Abdullah made two types of classifications of Islamic studies, namely normative Islamic studies and historical Islamic studies. Normative Islamic studies deal with sacred elements in Islam, namely the holy books of the Qur'an and al-Hadith. The areas of study in normative Islam are ritual, fiqh, theology, Sufism, and philosophy. Meanwhile, historical Islamic studies refer to how Muslims understand such sacred dimensions and how behavior is exhibited. The area of study in historical Islam is the relationship of man or group with God, other people, society, the universe and himself based on his understanding of the Quran and al-Hadith (Abdullah, 2002).

Various study approaches have been widely used to study both normative Islam and historical Islam. These various approaches can be semantic, pragmatic, hermeneutic, semiotic, critical, or positivistic approaches. These various approaches can fit into one of various types of science such as ulumul Qur'an, ulumul Hadith, anthropology, sociology, psychology, and philosophy.

Hermeneutics is one of the approaches and methodologies used in Islamic studies. However, it seems that hermeneutics is more dominant in the normative Islamic dimension. As outlined by Ebrahim Moosa (2015:707-719), even in the context of traditional normative Islamic studies, hermeneutics includes approaches and methodologies that do not gain good acceptance among Muslims because they are considered unsuitable for Islamic studies.

Hermeneutics has found a place in Islamic studies in modern times. Some names that use hermeneutic approaches and methodologies on the normative Islamic dimension, including Muhammad Abduh, Rashid Rida, Muhammad Iqbal, Hassan Hanafi, Thaha Hussain, Amin Al-Kulli, and Aisyah Abdurrahman. The focus of their attention reveals diverse interests. For example, Rashid Rida is more interested in theology and moral philosophy, while Thaha Hussein is more interested in literary issues (Moosa, 2015: 713).

When looking at the phenomenon of using a hermeneutic approach that is more dominant in the normative Islamic dimension, it seems relevant to talk about the use of hermeneutics in the historical Islamic dimension. Hermeneutics on this dimension can be used to understand and uncover various forms of understanding and behavior of Muslims.

Thus, Dilthey's hermeneutics has its own place as an approach to hermeneutics in the historical Islamic dimension because there is a wedge between the two. On the one hand, Dilthey's hermeneutics is the method of humanitarian science and on the other hand, historical Islam is a process and result of human history that happens to be Muslim.

As an approach and method to the study of historical Islam, Dilthey's hermeneutics has relevance when viewed on the elements and terms of such hermeneutics. The three elements are *Erlebnis*, *Ausdruck*, and *Verstehen*. With these three elements, objects in historical Islamic studies can be treated as symbols, expressions and human actions (*Ausdruck*) that have meaning (*Erlebnis*) and must be understood (*Verstehen*). In other words, for example, Jalaluddin Rumi's poems are expressions of life experiences that have meaning and demand to be understood.

Furthermore, any research within the object of historical Islam must pay attention to three conditions of knowledge, namely descriptive psychology, hermeneutic circles and socio-cultural knowledge. Thus, the study of historical Islam must be supported by good descriptive psychology, which is able to lead the researcher to the inner mood of the author. In addition, with regard to the hermeneutic circle, a researcher in historical Islam must have a good linguistic knowledge, who is able to see the whole text by its parts and be able to see parts of the text in its entirety. Furthermore, a researcher in historical Islam must have adequate insight into humanitarian sciences such as history, sociology, politics, and anthropology, in order to understand the social and cultural context of the author's life and his work.

Conclusion

Dilthey distinguishes between *erklären* (explanation) and *verstehen* (understanding). The explanation (*erklären*) is suitable as a method of natural science that has a relatively definite and predictable object, based on general laws and limited to external phenomena. While understanding (*verstehen*) is more appropriate as a method of humanitarian science that has a relatively uncertain and complex object, because it involves feelings, thoughts, will and actions.

Dilthey also succeeded in showing that humans who live in the currents of history, are immersed and immersed in the sea of meaning (*erlebnis*). Every part of the world is an expression or *ausdruck* of a meaningful thought, feeling, will, imagination. To capture the appreciation of the inner world requires *verstehen* through its expressions.

The *verstehen* process always involves requirements and hermeneutic circles. If the requirements of psychic experience, context and human behavior will further facilitate the process of *verstehen* hermeneutics. The hermeneutic circle is the process of continually increasing in order to advance in the level and sharpness of understanding.

Dilthey's hermeneutics has relevance to historical Islamic studies, namely on aspects of hermeneutic elements (*erlebnis*, *ausdruck*, *verstehen*) and aspects of hermeneutic requirements (descriptive psychology, linguistic knowledge and socio-cultural knowledge).

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