

Passages from Heidegger

When we have to do with anything, the mere seeing of the Things which are closest to us bears in itself the structure of interpretation, and in so primordial a manner that just to grasp something *free*, as it were, *of the “as”*, requires a certain readjustment. When we merely stare at something, our just-having-it-before-us lies before us *as a failure to understand it any more*. This grasping which is free of the ‘As’, is a privation of the kind of seeing in which one *merely* understands. It is not more primordial than that kind of seeing, but is derived from it.

--Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 1927

In . . . an interpretation, the way in which the entity we are interpreting is to be conceived can be drawn from the entity itself, or the interpretation can force the entity into concepts to which it is opposed in its manner of Being. In either case, the interpretation has already decided for a definite way of conceiving it, either with finality or with reservations; it is grounded in *something we grasp in advance*—in a *fore-conception*.

--*Ibid.*

If, when one is engaged in a particular concrete kind of interpretation, in the sense of exact textual *interpretation*, one likes to appeal to what “stands there”, then one finds that what “stands there” in the first instance is nothing other than the obvious undiscussed assumption of the person who does the interpreting.

--*Ibid.*

Kant held it to be a foundation of moral action that men should be conceived as ends in themselves, 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 intention to his words we lose the soul of speech, which is to convey meaning and to understand what is intended to be conveyed.

--E. D. Hirsch, *Aims of Interpretation*