

Gadamer

1. "A person who is trying to understand a text is always projecting. [...] [H]e is reading the text with particular expectations in regard to a certain meaning. Working out this fore-projection, which is constantly revised in terms of what emerges as he penetrates into the meaning, is understanding what is there".

Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, rev. transl. by Joel Weinsheimer & Donald G. Marshall (New York: Continuum, 2004 [5th ed., 1986]), p. 269 [hereinafter: *TM*].

2. "[A] hermeneutically trained consciousness must be, from the start, sensitive to the text's alterity. But this kind of sensitivity involves neither 'neutrality' with respect to content nor the extinction of one's self, but the foregrounding and appropriation of one's own fore-meanings and prejudices. The important thing is to be aware of one's own bias".

TM, p. 271.

3. "[T]he fore-meanings that determine my own understanding can go entirely unnoticed".

TM, p. 271.

4. "[T]he fundamental prejudice of the Enlightenment is the prejudice against prejudice itself, which denies tradition its power".

TM, p. 273.

5. "[T]he idea of an absolute reason is not a possibility for historical humanity. Reason exists for us only in concrete, historical terms—i.e., it is not its own master but remains constantly dependent on the given circumstances in which it operates. [...] In fact history does not belong to us; we belong to it. [...] *That is why the prejudices of the individual, far more than his judgments, constitute the historical reality of his being*".

TM, pp. 277-78.

6. "If we want to do justice to man's finite, historical mode of being, it is necessary to fundamentally rehabilitate the concept of prejudice".

TM, p. 278.

7. "[O]ur finite historical being is marked by the fact that the authority of what has been handed down to us—and not just what is clearly grounded—always has power over our attitudes and behavior. [...] The real force of morals, for example, is based on tradition".

TM, pp. 281-82.

8. "The anticipation of meaning that governs our understanding of a text is not an act of subjectivity, but proceeds from the commonality that binds us to the tradition. But this commonality is constantly being formed in our relation to tradition. Tradition is not simply a permanent precondition; rather, we produce it ourselves inasmuch as we understand, participate in the evolution of tradition, and hence further determine it ourselves".

TM, p. 293.

9. "*Understanding is to be thought of less as a subjective act than as participating in an event of tradition, a process of transmission in which past and present are constantly mediated. This is what must be validated by hermeneutic theory, which is far too dominated by the idea of a procedure, a method*".

TM, p. 291.

10. "[I]t follows that [hermeneutics'] work is not to develop a procedure of understanding, but to clarify the conditions in which understanding takes place. But these conditions do not amount to a 'procedure' or method which the interpreter must of himself bring to bear on the text; rather, they must be given. The prejudices and fore-meanings that occupy the interpreter's consciousness are not at his free disposal".

TM, p. 295.

11. "When a naive faith in scientific method denies the existence of effective history, there can be an actual deformation of knowledge".

TM, p. 300.

13. "[U]nderstanding is not merely a reproductive but always a productive activity as well. [...] It is enough to say that we understand in a *different way, if we understand at all*".

TM, p. 296.

14. "Every double possibility of understanding [...] is an offense [*Anstoß*]".

"Text and Interpretation", transl. by Dennis J. Schmidt & Richard Palmer, in Diane P. Michelfelder & Richard E. Palmer (eds), *Dialogue and Deconstruction: The Gadamer-Derrida Encounter* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1989 [1983]), p. 50 [hereinafter: "Text"].

15. "[W]hatever is alienating in a text [...] is to be overcome and thereby cancelled out by the interpreter".

"Text", p. 41.

16. "To recognize one's own in the alien, to become at home in it, is the basic movement of spirit".

TM, p. 13.

17. "[I]t is perfectly legitimate to speak of a *hermeneutical conversation*. But from this it follows that hermeneutical conversation, like real conversation, finds a common language, and that finding a common language [...] coincides with the very act of understanding and reaching agreement".

TM, p. 389.

18. "One must look for the word that can reach another person. And it is possible for one to find it; one can even learn the language of the other person. One can cross over into the language of the other in order to reach the other. All this is possible for language as language".

"*Destruktion and Deconstruction*", transl. by Geoff Waite & Richard Palmer, in Diane P. Michelfelder & Richard E. Palmer (eds), *Dialogue and Deconstruction: The Gadamer-Derrida Encounter* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1989 [1985]), p. 106.

19. "The interpreter has no other function than to disappear completely into the achievement of full harmony in understanding [*Verständigung*]".

"Text", p. 41.

20. "The discourse of the interpreter is therefore not itself a text; rather it *serves a text*".

"Text", p. 41.

21. "The task of understanding is concerned above all with the meaning of the text itself".

TM, p. 365.

22. "Consciousness of being affected by history (*wirkungsgeschichtliches Bewußtsein*) is primarily consciousness of the hermeneutical *situation*. To acquire an awareness of a situation is, however, always a task of peculiar difficulty. The very idea of a situation means that we are not standing outside it and hence are unable to have any objective knowledge of it. We always find ourselves within a situation, and throwing light on it is a task that is never entirely finished. [...] [T]he fact that it cannot be completed is due not to a deficiency in reflection but to the essence of the historical being that we are".

TM, p. 301.

23. "[W]e must always already have a horizon in order to be able to transpose ourselves into a situation. For what do we mean by 'transposing ourselves'? Certainly not just disregarding ourselves. This is necessary, of course, insofar as we must imagine the other situation. But into this other situation we must bring, precisely, ourselves. [...] Transposing ourselves consists neither in the empathy of one individual for another nor in subordinating another person to our own standards; rather, it always involves rising to a higher universality that overcomes not only our own particularity but also that of the other. [...] In the process of understanding, a real fusing of horizons occurs. [...] [T]he miracle of understanding consists in the fact that no like-mindedness is necessary [...] to open ourselves to the superior claim the text makes and to respond to what it has to tell us".

TM, pp. 303-06 & 309-10.

24. "When the interpreter overcomes what is alienating in the text [...] the tension between the horizon of the text and the horizon of the reader is dissolved. I have called this a 'fusion of horizons' [*Horizontverschmelzung*]. The separated horizons, like the different standpoints, merge with each other".

"Text", p. 41.

25. "[W]e are always already affected by history. It determines in advance both what seems to us worth inquiring about and what will appear as an object of investigation [...]. [...] In our understanding, which we imagine is so innocent because its results seem so self-evident, the other presents itself so much in terms of our own selves that there is no longer a question of self and other".

TM, p. 300.

25. “[L]anguage has its true being only in dialogue, in *coming to an understanding*”.

TM, p. 443.

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