# RUSHDIE AND ME: THE POSSIBILITY OF INTERPRETIVE PLURALISM IN GADAMERIAN HERMENEUTICS

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IN *TRUTH AND METHOD*, Hans-Georg Gadamer presents a hermeneutic theory in which the interpreter's cultural situatedness plays a crucial role. The social, literary, and philosophic tradition in which the interpreter lives forms an indispensable component of the interpretation. Gadamer means precisely to oppose interpretive theories which ignore this sort of historical situatedness in favor of an "objective" access to meaning. If tradition, however, is to play such a central role in Gadamer's hermeneutic theory, then it is important to understand precisely what his conception of tradition really is. Upon close examination, it will appear that Gadamer is working with an assumption that culture is unitary, that—in simplified form—it can be represented by a straight line with Homer closer to the beginning, Plato, Dante, and Shakespeare all in the middle, and contemporary writers and interpreters at the end. It seems clear, however, that tradition does not actually work this way. A better analogy than a straight line may be something like a tree with branches that are sometimes parallel and sometimes intertwining. An important question, then, will be whether Gadamer's hermeneutic theory can be adapted to this pluralistic view of tradition. I will argue that it can, without significant alteration to the underlying theory.

Before addressing the question of interpretive pluralism, I will first briefly summarize Gadamer's ideas on how an interpreter approaches a text. I will then attempt to expand this picture to fit a pluralistic culture. Finally, I will consider whether it is possible to interpret a text from a culture that shares absolutely no tradition in common with the interpreter's.

## Gadamerian Interpretive Theory

Gadamer presents a very Heideggerian account of how an interpreter approaches a text. This approach essentially takes place in three steps. First, the interpreter forms a *fore-understanding* concerning both the verbal meaning and content of the text. Second, the interpreter reads the text openly and forms a *belief* about its content. Finally, he *judges* the fore-understanding against the belief; if the two match, he has his meaning and moves on. If not, he forms a new fore-understanding and re-approaches the text.

As Gadamer describes it, the Heideggerian existentially grounded hermeneutical circle "describes understanding as the interplay of the movement of tradition and the movement of the interpreter" (Gadamer 293). In this circle, the anticipation of meaning (fore-understanding) shapes our understanding of a text, but this anticipation itself is not arbitrary—it "proceeds from the commonality that binds us to the tradition" (293). Because the text both comes out of and helps to shape that tradition, the fore-understanding with which we approach a text is shaped by both that text itself and the tradition of which that text is a part. Hence, "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" (293). In order to better understand Gadamer's point, it can be helpful to look at what Heidegger himself wrote on this issue. Heidegger writes that "meaning is an *existentiale* of Dasein, not a property attaching to entities" (Heidegger H.151)—that is, interpreted meaning inheres in the interpreter, rather than in the object interpreted (the text). Heidegger then describes the hermeneutic circle: "any interpretation which is to contribute understanding, must already have understood what is to be interpreted" (H.152). This circle, however, is not a vicious one, and we should not seek to avoid it. Rather, it expresses the circularity inherent to Dasein's Being as "an entity for which, as Being-in-the-world, its Being is itself an issue" (H.153). Because the circle results from Dasein's Being, it "belongs to the structure of meaning" itself (H.153). This results from Heidegger's relational conception of meaning: an independent, abstract object cannot have meaning; only the relational totality of the world has meaning (hence Heidegger's claim that meaning is an *existentiale*). Thus, Heidegger remarks that, "understanding always pertains to the whole of Being-in-the-world" (H.152). However, if this is the case, then the interpretation of a subset of the world (e.g., a text) already presupposes an understanding of the world of which that text forms a part, and hence, in some sense, of that text itself. This is precisely the existentially grounded hermeneutic circle—existentially grounded because it depends on the entirety of existence (i.e., the world) for meaning. This, again, is meant to stand in contrast to an interpretive theory that finds "objective" meaning in isolated texts.

The first step in this process is thus the formation of a fore-understanding. This fore-understanding, as noted above, is necessarily a sense of the totality of meaning and an approximation of where this particular text fits in that totality. Hence, for Gadamer, it consists of situatedness within and awareness of the tradition. Gadamer thus attempts to rehabilitate the concept of prejudice from the

Enlightenment is "prejudice against prejudice itself, which denies tradition its power" (Gadamer 270). For Gadamer, prejudice means simply "a judgment that is rendered before all the elements that determine a situation have been finally examined" (270). It is thus a value-neutral concept; indeed, some prejudice is necessary to produce meaning, because "the idea of an absolute reason is not a possibility for historical humanity" (276). In other words, the hermeneutic circle must start somewhere. Because we are historically situated beings, it cannot begin from objective pure reason.

> Long before we understand ourselves through the process of self-examination, we understand ourselves in a self-evident way in the family, society, and state in which we live. . . . *That is why the prejudices of the individual, far more than his judgments, constitute the historical reality of his being*. (276-7)

For Gadamer, this explains the necessity of rehabilitating the concept of prejudice: because reason is historically situated, it cannot begin *ex nihilo*. It must always have material to work with, and our prejudices provide this material. Hence, Gadamer, in contrast to the Enlightenment mentality, asserts that there can be "justified prejudices productive of knowledge" (279). Such prejudices rest upon an acknowledged authority that is "earned" by someone acknowledged to be "superior to oneself in judgment and insight and . . . for this reason his judgment takes precedence—i.e., it has priority over one's own" (279). For Gadamer, tradition has this sort of authority. However, acknowledgment of the authority of tradition does not constitute blind obedience, rather:

> The fact is that in tradition there is always an element of freedom and of history itself. Even the most genuine and pure tradition does not persist because of the inertia of what once existed. It needs to be affirmed, embraced, cultivated. It is, essentially, preservation, and it is active in all historical change. But preservation is an act of reason. . . . preservation is as much a freely chosen action as are revolution and renewal. (281-82)

Thus, the historically effected fore-understanding with which we approach a text leaves room for the play of reason in evaluating the prejudices of tradition.

In evaluating these prejudices, we move to the second step of interpretation: forming a belief about the meaning of the text. This is how the interpreter knows that his prejudices are justified. "All correct

interpretation must be on guard against arbitrary fancies and the limitations imposed by imperceptible habits of thought, and it must direct its gaze 'on the things themselves' (which, in the case of the literary critic, are meaningful texts)" (267). Thus, we approach the text with fore-understandings (anticipations) of its meaning. The text then either confirms or refutes this anticipation by producing in us a belief of the form, "The text says P." Unfortunately, Gadamer is rather sparse in his discussion of how the belief-formation side of interpretation operates. I will attempt to piece together such an account from what he does give us. His language of "the thing itself" on its face seems to make the claim that our belief-forming side is ahistorical, seeking after something like Fregean *Gedanken* embodied in the text. This, of course, leaves Gadamer open to the critique that he is here ignoring the very same Heideggerian insight of which he made such use in discussing the anticipation-forming faculty, namely, that our engagement with the text necessarily takes place within-the-world and is therefore historically effectuated.

This critique exploits the seeming inconsistency between Gadamer's Heideggerian and Fregean sides. Although there is tension between these two sides of his hermeneutic theory, they are not ultimately inconsistent; and in fact, it is precisely this tension that is responsible for the "spiral" shape of Gadamer's hermeneutic circle. In discussing the interpretation of historical events, Gadamer writes, "Precisely this indicates the task of a historical hermeneutics: to consider the tension that exists between the identity of the common object and the changing situation in which it must be understood" (309). In history, this "common object" is the past. For Gadamer, as for Heidegger, what defines the past is that its possibilities are closed off; the past is in every case already determined. This facticity of the past is what defines it as past, just as the openness of possibilities—indeterminacy—is what defines the future. The facticity of the past is also what allows us to claim that it is a "common object" to different interpreters. In generalizing this point, we can refer to the "common object" as the text. The text can contain *Gedanken* because the text itself is a *completed* event. Thus, Gadamer writes:

> a written tradition is not a fragment of a past world, but has already raised itself beyond this into the sphere of the meaning that it expresses. The ideality of the word is what raises everything linguistic beyond the finitude and transience that characterize other remnants of past existence. (390)

He tellingly adds that "texts . . . always express a whole" (390). This claim must be read in light of the Heideggerian doctrine that only an

entity whose Being can be circumscribed (i.e., an entity that constitutes a *totality*) can be understood.[1] A text, by virtue of its writtenness has become a historical event—something wholly in the past, something factical, whose possibilities have been closed off. This removal of the text from the flow of history is what allows Gadamer to say that the text carries *Gedanken*, that "writing is the abstract *ideality* of language" (392, emphasis added).

However, Gadamer can also still claim—and on the same page—that the "understanding of something written is not a repetition of something past but the sharing of a *present meaning*" (392, emphasis added). There is no contradiction once we recall that interpretation has two key components: the text and the interpreter. The text, because of its ahistoricity, carries *Gedanken*; the historically situated interpreter, however, does not have direct access to them. Hence, Gadamer remarks that "it is quite right for the interpreter not to approach the text directly" (267). Borrowing a central insight from Hegel, Gadamer scoffs at the notion of unmediated access to the absolute—in this case, the absolute meaning of the text. Instead, one approaches this absolute through the dialectic of fore-understanding, belief formation, and confirmation, all of which are themselves historically effectuated actions (and necessarily so, because they are carried out by the interpreter, an historically effectuated actor).

In summary, the interpreter, on the basis of his situatedness with respect to tradition, forms a fore-understanding, or prejudice, about the text's meaning before even approaching the text. The interpreter then approaches the text respectfully, making sure to guard "against overhastily assimilating the past to his own expectations of meaning" (305). In other words, the interpreter does not seek to force the text to conform to his fore-understanding, but rather seeks an honest and open engagement with the text. In this engagement, what he is seeking are the *Gedanken* in the text. Because he does not have direct access to them, the beliefs he forms about the text's meaning will probably not be perfect. However, because he is an historically situated being, they are the best he can do.

This observation, then, brings us to the third interpretive move: the interpreter attempts to match the belief he has derived from the text with his fore-understanding of the text's meaning. If the two match, then the interpreter assumes that he has understood the text and moves on to a more substantive engagement with it (i.e., he begins to evaluate its truth or falsity). If the two do not match, the interpreter forms a new fore-understanding, conditioned by both his belief about what the text says and by his historical situatedness with respect to tradition. He then re-approaches the text with this new fore-understanding and again

seeks to form a belief as to the text's meaning. The belief he forms this time will not necessarily be the same belief that he formed previously: because the belief-formation process, although it aims at eternal and unchanging *Gedanken*, is itself an historical process. Because the interpreter's fore-understanding of the text's meaning constitutes an element of his historical situatedness, his second approach to the text will be from a different situation than his first approach. The belief formed will thus be somewhat different. Because with each successive iteration of this process the new fore-understanding is conditioned by the old beliefs, the fore-understandings formed and the beliefs arrived at both ought to converge upon the text's *Gedanken*. When the fore-understanding and belief finally do match, it will be at a point closer to the *Gedanke* than either the original fore-understanding or the original belief was. Gadamer's hermeneutic circle is thus a *spiral* process: it moves in circles, but they are *directed* circles. They ultimately aim at a point—the *Gedanke* of the text. If the text did not consist of *Gedanken*, then the concept of a directed hermeneutic process would be incoherent. It would have nothing to aim at, and thus nothing to spiral towards.

Gadamer describes the entire three-step process thus:

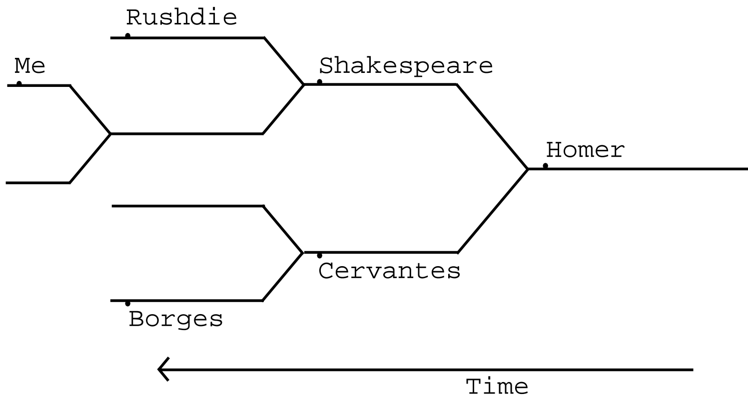
> Every revision of the fore-projection is capable of projecting before itself a new projection of meaning; rival projects can emerge side by side until it becomes clearer what the unity of meaning is; interpretation begins with fore-conceptions that are replaced by more suitable ones. This constant process of new projection constitutes the movement of understanding and interpretation. . . . Working out appropriate projections, anticipatory in nature, to be confirmed "by the things" themselves, is the constant task of understanding. (267)

It is important to consider the nature of tradition on this picture. For Gadamer, tradition seems to be located along a one-dimensional path: it is what situates the text with respect to the totality—i.e., it is what provides the existential grounding for the hermeneutical interpretation of the text. For Gadamer, the nature of this totality changes only across time, and not across space or across cultures. Recall that, in this Heideggerian framework, the totality is different at different times because the totality is circumscribed by temporality. Possibilities that were once open (i.e., future possibilities) have been closed off (i.e., have become past). This is what defines the movement of time, and it alters the totality. However, it seems implicit in Gadamer's theory that the totality is unified across physical and cultural spaces. The progression of tradition is thus linear, moving along a purely temporal

axis. On a Gadamerian picture, Shakespeare and Chaucer inhabit different places in the tradition owing to their different eras, but Shakespeare and his Spanish contemporary Cervantes share the same tradition-space.

## Cultural Pluralism

This Gadamerian conception of a unified cultural tradition seems hopelessly naive. Surely, we do not actually believe that "the tradition" is unified across places and cultures. I suggest that a more realistic representation of tradition than Gadamer's straight line (although this is still *highly* simplified—as any graphical depiction of something like tradition is bound to be) would look something like this:




Note that authors here are used more as types than as actual personalities. I do not actually mean to suggest that Rushdie has never read Updike, but such is the assumption of the diagram. Note also that this diagram treats the Indian literary tradition as exogenous. If viewed in detail it would, of course, have the same tree-like shape as the Western tradition.

This understanding of tradition is far more robust, and far more true to the actual historical situatedness of an interpreter. My historically effectuated consciousness includes, of course, Homer, Plato, Dante, and Shakespeare, but it also includes the wisdom passed on by my parents and the insights gleaned in Professor Wolterstorff's Theological Hermeneutics seminar at Yale in the Fall of 2000. No one else's historical situation is the same as mine; thus, no one else can appropriate the past in quite the same way that I can. This necessarily makes my interpretive process a unique one. As an historically situated being, I can never have direct access to the *Gedanken* of the text, my interpretation will be shaped by my own precise historical situatedness.

Gadamer was close to this insight when he wrote:

> There cannot, therefore, be any single interpretation that is correct 'in itself,' precisely because every interpretation is concerned with the text itself. The historical life of a tradition depends on being constantly assimilated and interpreted. . . . Every interpretation has to adapt itself to the hermeneutical situation to which it belongs. (297)

However, Gadamer fails to recognize that the "hermeneutical situation" to which an interpreter belongs is more than simply a function of his era. It is also a function of his particular cultural place within that era. limits the possibility of vision. Hence essential to the concept of situation is the concept of "*horizon*." The horizon is the range of vision that includes everything that can be seen from a particular vantage point. (302)

Thus, his understanding of horizons follows naturally from his emphasis on historical situatedness; it results from the inherent "limitations" on "every finite present." However, the vantage point which defines one's horizon is anything but static. A horizon "is not a rigid boundary but something that moves with one and invites one to advance further" (245). This again follows from a Heideggerian notion of temporality, in which people constantly define and reshape their futures by reinterpreting and redefining the events of their past. The horizon contributes to understanding by circumscribing a whole—albeit a protean one. Recall that, for Gadamer, meaning derives from placing the text within a totality; horizons define the scope of that totality. Gadamer thus writes that horizons allow a person to know "the relative significance of everything within [his] horizon, whether it is near or far, great or small" (302). The fluidity of horizons allows them to stretch to embrace new texts, and to be affected by those texts in turn, as they stretch again to interpret still other texts. Our understanding of a new text consists precisely in this stretching of our horizon to meet the historical horizon within which the text exists: "*understanding is always the fusion of these horizons supposedly existing by themselves*" (306). In direct opposition to the historicist perspective, Gadamer explains that the horizons all exist within a unified, grand historical framework. He tells us, "everything contained in historical consciousness is in fact embraced by a single historical horizon" (304). Presumably, an objective, infinite, ahistorical being could have access to this single horizon (just as such a being would have immediate access to the *Gedanken* of a text). As we are merely finite, historical beings, our individual perspectives will exist in a minuscule subset of this all-encompassing horizon. However, because there is no analytic

break between various individual horizons (i.e., because they are all contained within the same unified whole), one need not—and indeed, cannot—"escape" from one's own horizon so as to enter another. Thus, the historicist understanding of interpretation, which argues that the interpreter must escape from his own horizon and enter that of the author/text, is wholly misguided. Instead, one *fuses* one's horizon with the horizon of that which one hopes to understand. The interpreter does not surrender his historical perspective, but rather expands it.

> In fact, the horizon of the present is continually in the process of being formed because we are continually having to test all our prejudices. An important part of this testing occurs in encountering the past and in understanding the tradition from which we come. Hence, the horizon of the present cannot be formed without the past. (306)

We can now understand horizons in terms of the three-step interpretive cycle of fore-understanding, belief formation, and confirmation described above. The horizon with which we first approach a text molds our fore-understanding of that text. As we engage with the text, we stretch our horizon to meet its horizon. If our fore-understanding matches the beliefs we form after engaging with the text, then we have fully fused our horizon with the horizon of the text, and we progress to the next text with an enlarged horizon. If not, we try again. It is important to bear in mind that we are not working towards objectivity; rather, we move towards an expanded subjectivity. The historical situatedness of the interpreter is expandable, not dispensable. "Part of understanding," says Gadamer, "is that we regain the concepts of a historical past in such a way that they also include our own comprehension of them. Above, I call this 'the fusion of horizons'" (374).

Note that, on this picture, it is much easier to fuse one's horizons with some texts than with others. Specifically, it is easier to fuse your horizon with a text that is *nearer* to you in the tradition—i.e., a text closer to your own time. Hence, I find it easier to fuse my historical horizon with Updike's than I do with Homer's. I can understand the world about which Updike writes—late twentieth-century America—better than the ancient Greek world. It requires much more of an effort to understand Achilles' anger than Rabbit's promiscuity because examples of behavior similar to Rabbit's are all too common in the present world. Examples of Achillean rage over what would seem a petty slight in a modern historical setting are far less common. In other words, it is easier to meld with horizons that were closer to your own to begin with. There is no reason that this principle should be limited to

the single dimension of temporal proximity—it seems also to be the case that it is easier to fuse your horizon with horizons that are culturally closer to your own. Thus, it is easier for me to fuse my horizon with Updike than with his rough contemporary Rushdie, and for reasons similar to those that made it easier for me to fuse my horizon with Updike than with Homer. Updike's world—the world that created the horizons of his work—is more like my own than Rushdie's is. The difference here, however, is along a cultural axis, not a temporal one.

Why, then, is it possible for me to understand Rushdie at all? The answer is that, although our cultural trajectories have diverged, we do share a significant amount of common tradition. Rushdie comes out of both the Western colonial tradition and the Indian tradition. His references to Western culture (for instance, the character of Methwold or the chapter entitled "Alpha and Omega" in *Midnight's Children*) are much easier to understand than his references to Hindu sacred texts or chutney recipes. I have to make a significant effort to understand the references to Indian culture in his work—I frequently have to look things up (i.e., work towards a shared language). The interaction between the references to Western culture and the references to Indian culture help illuminate the latter for me, but generally my fore-understanding may have to go through several cycles ending in disconfirmation, getting further and further away from my "natural" assumptions—i.e., assumptions based on my immersion in the Western cultural tradition—before I reach a fore-understanding that is confirmed by the belief inspired by the text. However, this is no different from the difficulty involved in fusing my horizon with Homer's. Both Homer and Rushdie exist at a cultural distance from me, and thus it takes more effort to fuse my horizons with theirs than it does with someone culturally closer to me, like Updike.

It is important to note two things about my reading of Rushdie. First of all, on Gadamer's picture, understanding is possible because we share *some* tradition; although our cultural trajectories have diverged, they do share significant parts. Specifically, he was influenced by Western culture through the end of British control of India (again recall that this is only my stylized "Rushdie"; I have no doubt that the real Rushdie continues to be influenced by Western culture after 1947). It is our common tradition that allows me to make sense of what we do not have in common. It is by reference to what we hold in common that I am able to work towards a shared language with the text and thus fuse my horizon with its. Note that this describes how I come to an understanding of Homer, as well. For both, I often use some sort of intermediary—either a reference work or a professor's explanation or a

guess based on surrounding text that is within my cultural purview—to expand my horizon and fuse it with the unfamiliar parts of the text. I will address the situation in which there is no common tradition below.

Secondly, after reading Rushdie, my horizon is fused with that of his text. Some aspects of the Indian literary tradition, some further aspects of the Western tradition, and some insights on the interaction between the two are now a part of my historically effectuated consciousness. This thus moves me closer to being able to understand other texts in the Indian and Indo-Western literary tradition. Rushdie's text itself becomes an intermediary to other texts, a source of information that brings my horizon closer to theirs and gives me more material out of which to form future fore-understandings. Thus, our horizon is "something into which we move and that moves with us. Horizons change for a person who is moving" (304). This is no less true for a person who is moving between cultures at the same time than for a person who is moving to texts further back in time.

**Texts With Which We Share No Common Tradition**

The obvious extension of this discussion results in the following question: how do we approach a text with which we share no common tradition? Consider the case of a text from a lost civilization about which we know absolutely nothing; because of a quirk of geography, the civilization developed in total isolation from every other civilization. The first we have even heard of this culture is this newfound text. How do we begin to go about interpreting it? Gadamer suggests that we have no access to a text with which we share no tradition whatsoever. He dismisses the notion of "homogenous human nature as the unhistorical substratum of . . . understanding" (290) as one of the fallacies of romantic hermeneutics. I propose a slight modification of Gadamer's views. Certainly, the amount we can infer from the assumption of homogenous human nature is remarkably small. Any notion of shared attitudes, practices, mores, or ways of thinking should be rejected as too risky an assumption—one that is far more likely to bluntly impose our fore-understandings upon the text than to actually seek to engage with the text. However, insofar as we are certain that a text is of human origin, there do seem to be certain things that it is safe to assume. For instance, most facts of human biology are constant across cultures. Thus, in interpreting the texts of an unknown culture, we may safely assume that its members had to eat and drink, that they required oxygen, that they reproduced sexually, that they had roughly the same body shape that we do, etc.

This, of course, is not much to go on, but it is something. Our knowledge of the limits of human physiology allows us say with some

degree of certainty that a depiction of unaided human flight in the text (suppose the text is hieroglyphic, so that the problem of decoding is decreased—although, as will be noted in a moment, not eliminated) indicates that the text cannot be read purely literally. Our knowledge of the human need for food helps us make sense of a text depicting two people fighting over a dead animal carcass. Of course, one should be wary of drawing conclusions even from this information: perhaps the people are fighting over the animal because its hide is a status symbol. A depiction of a supine person could mean either that she is sleeping or that she is dead (or perhaps that she is praying, or . . . ). Assumptions from homogenous human nature thus present serious problems of denotation, not to mention problems of more sophisticated levels of interpretation. Nevertheless, they allow us to draw certain very tentative conclusions.

Consider next attempts to interpret a text of non-human origin. Here, interpretive problems would seem to be insurmountable. There is an unscalable wall between text and interpreter. At the most basic level, how would we even be certain that we were faced with a "text" at all? If we assume that, say, patterns scratched into stone form an alien text, then we have already assumed that (a) the aliens have something akin to our senses of sight and/or touch, and (b) that the aliens have the same conception of "pattern" that we do. We have already begun to anthropomorphize the aliens. Of course, we certainly cannot make more substantive assumptions—such as that they have arms or legs or reproduce sexually. If presented with a depiction of one of them, we would have no way of knowing that it was, in fact, a depiction of one of them and not of, say, their pets or their gods. And that assumes we could be certain it was a depiction at all.

Common human nature thus does form some sort of substratum. However, tradition has built towering, endlessly branching, strikingly diverse, and sometimes beautiful edifices upon this foundation. Looking up from the ground, one cannot tell much about the person working in office 3F on the ten-thousandth floor. But one can tell a little about the kind of species that might build such structures. To say that interpretation is possible based solely on such a substratum is naive. However, to claim that common humanity tells us nothing is not quite correct either. Knowledge of those traits common to all human beings constitutes a part of our historically effectuated consciousness. It informs our fore-understandings, and thus our interpretations. The heavy hermeneutical lifting, however, is done by "the continuity of custom and tradition, in the light of which everything handed down presents itself to us" (297).

Gadamer developed the Heideggerian insight that our

understanding is always formed out of our historical situatedness. By situating the interpreter within a totality, tradition enables understanding of other texts through the three-part process of fore-understanding, belief formation, and confirmation. What Gadamer failed to see was that tradition is far more complex an entity than a monolith progressing along the single axis of time. Tradition is branched and diverse, differing across peoples and places, as well as across times. The interpreter's horizons thus expand in more directions than Gadamer thought. Moreover, *contra* Gadamer, there does seem to be some room for a very limited interpretation of the texts of cultures with which we share absolutely no tradition. Such interpretation would make use of the fore-understanding produced by a very limited conception of shared human nature.

These two alterations build upon and expand Gadamerian hermeneutics, allowing for the interpretation of a wider and richer range of texts. The resulting theory is one which retains all of Gadamer's central insights dealing with the historicity of the interpreter and the three-step process of interpretation, while adding a dimension of interpretive pluralism that the theory previously lacked.

## Notes

[1] *See* Ibid., H.232. This line of reasoning, of course, is central to Heidegger's account of Dasein's Being as Being-towards-death, which allows Dasein's Being to be circumscribed, and therefore allows for a primordial ontological interpretation of Dasein's Being.

## References

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