

JEFF MITSCHERLING
University of Guelph, Canada

TRUTH AND METHOD: HERMENEUTICS OR HISTORY?

Abstract: I argue in this paper that the ‘hermeneutics or history’ disjunct in its title is indeed exclusive: we can opt for *either* the ‘art’ of hermeneutics *or* the ‘science’ of history—but not both. Should we attempt to choose both, we default automatically to hermeneutics. I argue that two central features of the overall argument of *Truth and Method* pose a serious threat to the very concept of historical research. First is its view of the essentially methodical character of all science, including ‘historical science’, and second is the essentially ‘phenomenological’ method that Gadamer purports to be employing throughout his book.

Keywords: Hermeneutics, History, Gadamer

1. INTRODUCTION

I shall be arguing in this paper that the ‘hermeneutics or history’ disjunct in its title is indeed exclusive: we can opt for *either* the ‘art’ of hermeneutics *or* the ‘science’ of history—but not both. Should we attempt to choose both, we default automatically to hermeneutics. This situation appears not to have escaped the notice of some historians. Hans-Georg Gadamer’s magnum opus, *Truth and Method*, contains one passage in particular that appears to have caused a considerable stir among historians immediately upon the book’s first publication in 1960. In attempting to point to a fundamental feature shared by history and philology, Gadamer wrote that “Historical understanding [*Das historische Verstehen*] shows itself to be a kind of philology on a larger scale.” Some twenty-five years later, Gadamer introduced the second volume of his *Gesammelte Werke* with an “Attempt at a Self-Criticism” in which he tried to placate these critics by revising his position to be that history is “not just philology on a large scale.”¹ As I’m going to explain in what follows, Gadamer’s historian critics were misguided in taking offence at his comparing the task of the historian to that of the philologist. In identifying Gadamer’s challenge to history to lie in this comparison, these critics totally overlooked the real threat that his hermeneutics poses to the very concept of historical research. This threat is posed by two central features of the overall argument of *Truth and Method*. First is its view of the essentially methodical character of all science, in-

1 My quotations of these passages are from István M. Fehér, “Hermeneutics and philology: ‘Understanding the matter,’ ‘Understanding the text’”, *Continental Philosophy Review*, vol. 34 (2001), 269-70.

cluding ‘historical science’; and second is the essentially ‘phenomenological’ method that Gadamer purports to be employing throughout his book. It will be worth our while to take a brief look at these two features, especially as they help us to discern the fundamentally Hegelian orientation of *Truth and Method* and the ‘non-scientific’ character of Gadamer’s philosophical hermeneutics.

2. THE FUNDAMENTAL HEGELIANISM OF GADAMER’S HERMENEUTICS

The most obvious target of Gadamer’s *Truth and Method* is the extension of the methodology of the natural sciences to the human and social sciences, the *Geisteswissenschaften*. But Gadamer was certainly not the first thinker to challenge this extension from a hermeneutic point of view. Wilhelm Dilthey had already treated this subject at great length in his famous *Introduction to the Human Sciences* (*Einleitung in die Geisteswissenschaften*). Although Dilthey completed only the first, historical part of that introduction—he never wrote the second, systematic part—his contribution in that first part is already substantial. As H.P. Rickman explains:

One of the main theses which the historical material served to demonstrate was this: the germs of both the sciences and the human studies had emerged and developed under the tutelage of metaphysics. In the period from the sixteenth to the eighteenth century the sciences became independent of metaphysics, through an epistemological clarification of their foundations and the development of their methodology. The human studies did not share in this emancipation. Instead they merely exchanged subjection to science which came to be accepted as the model of all knowledge for subjection to metaphysics. Dilthey considered that only by developing a methodology of their own could the human studies achieve their independence.²

Gadamer inherited from Dilthey—in part through the mediation of his mentor, Heidegger—the criticism of the extension of natural scientific method to research in the human sciences. Yet Gadamer disagreed with Dilthey regarding the proper manner in which to free these sciences from their subjection to the natural sciences. As Jean Grondin explains: “Dilthey . . . saw himself as the great methodologist of the historical school when he undertook the task of developing a ‘critique of historical reason’. This critique sought to give a philosophical foundation to the human sciences, analogous to that which Kant undertook in the pure sciences with his *Critique of Pure Reason*.”³ Unlike Dilthey, Gadamer remained convinced that the peculiar sort of truth that we seek in the various *Geisteswissenschaften* will not lend itself to full discovery through the

2 H.P. Rickman, ed., *Dilthey. Selected Writings*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976, p. 157 (Editor’s Introduction to *An Introduction to the Human Studies*).

3 Jean Grondin, *The Philosophy of Gadamer*, tr. Kathryn Plant. Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2003, p. 65.

development of any general methodology. Yet, as he explains in the Foreword to the Second Edition of *Truth and Method*, his real concern in that book is not to attack method, nor even to attack its employment in the *Geisteswissenschaften*: "... I did not remotely intend to deny the necessity of methodical work within the human sciences (*Geisteswissenschaften*). Nor did I propose to revive the ancient dispute on method between the natural and the human sciences. . . . The question I have asked seeks to discover and bring into consciousness something which that methodological dispute serves only to conceal and neglect, something that does not so much confine or limit modern science as precede it and make it possible."⁴ And indeed, Gadamer quite explicitly claims that there is a philosophical methodology behind *Truth and Method* itself. He writes:⁵

I should like to call it the 'problem of phenomenological immanence.' It is true that my book is phenomenological in its method. . . . Hence I must emphasize that my analyses of play and of language are intended in a purely phenomenological sense. . . .

This fundamental methodical approach avoids implying any metaphysical conclusions. . . . Nevertheless, the tradition of metaphysics and especially of its last great creation, Hegel's speculative dialectic, remains close to us.'

As Gadamer would repeatedly stress, the central task of philosophical hermeneutics is to describe what happens in the act of understanding—and indeed, in *every* act of understanding. We have to be careful at the outset to appreciate what Gadamer means by the term 'understanding'. For Gadamer, as for Heidegger and Dilthey, this term enjoys a meaning that is not merely epistemological. The term 'understanding' enjoys also an ontological sense that is never absent from Gadamer's employment of it. Understanding is not simply an activity that we humans engage in—it is an *event* in which we participate and which constitutes our very existence as human beings. It is constitutive of human being itself. Another way of putting this would be to say that the activity or event of understanding is a necessary condition of our being *human* beings. This point is worth stressing, for it provides the key to our appreciation of the hermeneutic approach to the human sciences. All of these sciences, in dealing with human beings as their basic subject matter, have to take into account this ontologically fundamental event of understanding. The goal of these sciences is, accordingly—as Dilthey stressed—not to *explain* human behaviour but to *understand* it. Yet another way of looking at this would be to acknowledge the fact that when we look at events in nature we attempt to explain them, and generally by speaking of *causes*, whereas when we look at events involving humans we try to understand them, and generally by speaking of *reasons*. While Dilthey appears to have held that the study of these reasons in the human sciences could proceed in accordance with the appropriate methodology, Gadamer disagreed. For Gadamer, the operation of human reasons proceeds already at a level that precedes and remains inac-

4 Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, tr. Joel Weinsheimer and Donald G. Marshall New York: Crossroad, 1989. This Second, Revised Edition is based on the revised and expanded fifth German edition in *Gesammelte Werke*, vol. 1 (1986).

5 *Truth and Method*, p. xxxvi.

cessible to the application of method. It is this originary operation of reason itself that first gives rise to both the objectivity to be investigated and the subjectivity that investigates it. And this operation Gadamer locates in the event of understanding.

For Gadamer, all understanding is at the same time, without exception, interpretation. So understanding is always essentially a task of hermeneutics. Gadamer's announced goal in his paper "The Universality of the Hermeneutical Problem" is to answer the question, "What is hermeneutics?,"⁶ and he proceeds by discussing two sorts of understanding: the understanding of the work of art and the understanding of history. More precisely, he proceeds by discussing two sorts of *alienation*: that of the aesthetic consciousness and that of the historical consciousness. We should note the shift here from understanding to consciousness. Gadamer wants to tell us what's happening in the event of understanding, but this demands that he introduce consciousness—and indeed, distinguish between two sorts of consciousness. This distinction rests on a further distinction between respective objects of consciousness: the work of art on the one hand and the work of historical testimony on the other. The latter distinction will prove of more immediate significance to what I'll be saying later, but it's helpful to look first at what he has to say in this paper about the work of art and aesthetic consciousness. And his explicit recollection here of Hegel warrants mention, especially as it involves the notion of 'judgment'. I quote here a longish passage from "The Universality of the Hermeneutical Problem", because each of its sentences is crucial. Gadamer writes:⁷

The aesthetic consciousness realizes a possibility that as such we can neither deny nor diminish in its value, namely, that we relate ourselves, either negatively or affirmatively, to the quality of an artistic form. This statement means we are related in such a way that the judgment we make decides in the end regarding the expressive power and validity of what we judge. What we reject has nothing to say to us—or we reject it because it has nothing to say to us. This characterizes our relation to art in the broadest sense of the word, a sense that, as Hegel has shown, includes the entire religious world of the ancient Greeks, whose religion of beauty experienced the divine in concrete works of art that man creates in response to the gods. When it loses its original and unquestioned authority, this whole world of experience becomes alienated into an object of aesthetic judgment. At the same time, however, we must admit that the world of artistic tradition—the splendid contemporaneity that we gain through art with so many human worlds—is more than a mere object of our free acceptance or rejection. . . .⁸ The consciousness of art—the aesthetic con-

6 Gadamer, "The Universality of the Hermeneutical Problem", in David E. Linge, tr. & ed., *Philosophical Hermeneutics*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1976.

7 Gadamer, "The Universality of the Hermeneutical Problem", in *Philosophical Hermeneutics*, pp. 4-5.

8 I have omitted here the following: "Is it not true that when a work of art has seized us it no longer leaves us the freedom to push it away from us once again and to accept or reject it on our own terms? And is it not also true that these artistic creations, which come down through the millennia, were not created for such aesthetic acceptance or rejection? No artist of the religiously vital cultures of the past ever produced his work of art with any other intention than that his creation should be received in terms of what it says and presents and that it should have its place in the world where men live together."

consciousness—is always secondary to the immediate truth-claim that proceeds from the work of art itself. To this extent, when we judge a work of art on the basis of its aesthetic quality, something that is really much more intimately familiar to us is alienated. This alienation into aesthetic judgment always takes place when we have withdrawn ourselves, and are no longer open to the immediate claim of that which grasps us. Thus one point of departure for my reflections in *Truth and Method* was that the aesthetic sovereignty that claims its rights in the experience of art represents an alienation when compared to the authentic experience that confronts us in the form of art itself.

I want to call attention here to some features of Gadamer's language. When he says, 'as Hegel has shown', he is not merely citing one of Hegel's claims—he is referring to Hegel as an authoritative witness to the workings, or the effects—the *Wirkungen*—of consciousness. In his *Encyclopedia*, Hegel recounts the story of the manner in which Spirit evolves through the stages of logical, natural, and spiritual development, and the last part of that story presents (as the concluding set of a concluding set [etc.] of syllogistic movements) the progression of spirit *qua* consciousness through the stages, respectively, of artistic representation, religious representation, and philosophical representation. Hegel recounts each syllogistic step of each syllogistic stage at length, and his final conclusion marks a masterful return to the beginning. This return arises from the final achievement of the self-consciousness of Spirit, which has at last become aware of the illusory character of all of its preceding—yet *necessarily* preceding—ways, which consisted in one syllogistic judgment after another. What becomes clear in Hegel is that the development of Spirit must proceed through a series of judgments, and that the final judgment consists in the realization that the final achievement of self-consciousness was born of a necessity to make these judgments.

This same view of the necessity of judgment appears to be operating in the passage from Gadamer I quoted just above. What isn't at all obvious in that passage—or in *Truth and Method*—is the distinction that Gadamer is drawing between the experience of art and the aesthetic experience. To state it most succinctly: The experience of art is unmediated and involves no judgment whatsoever, but the experience of *the work of art* entails the necessary condition that the object of the experience be alienated from the experiencing subject. Only given such alienation of subject from object does the necessity of aesthetic mediation—that is, of aesthetic *judgment*—arise. This lies behind Gadamer's claim that: "The consciousness of art—the aesthetic consciousness—is always secondary to the immediate truth-claim that proceeds from the work of art itself." What Gadamer is saying here is that there is a truth that is accessible to us immediately—that is, without mediation—in our experience of art, and that this truth is prior to any judgment claims of our aesthetic consciousness. For Gadamer, the 'real' truth of art—the 'human' truth, if you will—precedes all judgment. This truth 'happens' in the course of our 'deeper', immediate, non-judgmental experience of understanding the work, and he refers to this experience as the 'play' of art.

We should take note here of the implicit, but harsh, criticism of the Kantian—and Neo-Kantian—account of the nature of experience and judgment.⁹ For the (Neo-) Kantian, all experience has the character of mediated judgment. But Gadamer is here suggesting that there exists an experience prior to all such mediated experience, and that it is only at this ‘prior’ level that human truth is accessible. We should also note here that this particular claim of Gadamer is thoroughly Hegelian—although I know of no other Hegel scholar who has so boldly articulated this fundamental Hegelian insight. For Hegel, the force of the syllogism is undeniable and unavoidable: the *truth* of the syllogism is, in fact, what drives and first makes possible its formulation as the particular propositions (the initial premises). The individual categorical propositional judgment is always made only as one part of the larger syllogism, and it is the logical truth of the syllogism as a whole that drives its formulation in its step-by-step articulation as its individual moments. It is in this sense that we properly understand Hegel’s statement that ‘everything is a syllogism’: every individual thing is what it is by virtue of its belonging to a larger whole. In other words, recognition of the individual is not the product of a singular propositional judgment. The achievement of the individual judgment is, in fact, the achievement of a larger, more comprehensive movement that first makes possible the individual judgment. (In just this same way, for the hermeneutic thinker, the part is possible only as a part of the whole. This is the logical motivation of the hermeneutic circle that Dilthey glimpsed, but never clearly, systematically articulated. Gadamer appears to have taken this point to heart already during his first semesters at Marburg, when he was attending Heidegger’s lectures.)

But back to the aesthetic experience and the truth of art. In our immediate encounter with the work of art—in the ‘play’ of art—we ‘understand’ its ‘truth’. It is out of this original—or ‘originary’—play of art that both the aesthetic subject and the aesthetic object first arise, and it is this aesthetic subject who then applies her aesthetic consciousness to the aesthetic object in the activity of aesthetic judgment. Application always requires method—and conversely, method always requires its application by a conscious subject to some object. So, to cut the story short, no method can provide us access to such ‘human’ truth as we find in our unmediated, ‘non-judgmental’ experience of art. So far, perhaps, so good. But Gadamer extends this view of truth and understanding to the entire realm of the *Geisteswissenschaften*, including the study of history. The historian, on Gadamer’s account, wants to study history ‘scientifically’. This means that the historian—the ‘historically conscious subject’—must apply the appropriate method to the object under scrutiny. This ‘object’ is not ‘what happened in the past’—it is the body of historical literature, the ‘texts of history’, on which the historical consciousness attempts scientifically to pass judgment through the rigorous application of ‘historical method’. This is not only proper but absolutely demanded of the historian if history is to be a science. Unfortunately, Gadamer’s account appears to suggest that historians, like philologists, interrogate texts in much the same manner that botanists interrogate trees.

9 And we might recall in this regard that Gadamer’s supervisor, Paul Natorp, was trying to distance himself from the dominant neo-Kantian climate of Marburg when he accepted the young Gadamer as his student.

3. THE HERMENEUTIC CHALLENGE TO HISTORY

I think the problem—and the real challenge that Gadamer’s hermeneutics poses to history—should now be coming more clearly into focus. In its insistence that it be a science, history necessarily has to employ its own scientific method. This employment of method demands that the subjective historical consciousness distance itself from the object under investigation. But this historical distancing creates what proves to be an unbridgeable historical gap between the subject and the object. This ‘distancing’ characterizes one of the problems that Dilthey found most troublesome—namely, *historicism*. To illustrate this, think of the historian in North America in 2008 who wishes to study Athenian democracy. Now he or she will have to take the text of, say, Thucydides, and regard it as an ‘object’ whose provenance has largely ceased to be: the Athens of this last year’s Olympics is not the same Athens that Thucydides lived in, and the Greek they speak today in Athens (or North America) is not the same as the Greek they spoke back then. And a slightly more subtle point: to speak of praising Spartans in Athens enjoys little if any of the emotional content and power that it had for the original audience of Thucydides. In short, in order for the historian methodically to pursue his or her discipline as a science, a staggering difference in time must be presupposed: those texts of Thucydides have to be located in their proper historical setting. In thus locating them, however, we have created an insuperable obstacle in our appreciation of their ‘lived’ content, and their ‘truth’, as a result, has become inaccessible to us. So the scientific study of history can never hope or purport to produce anything more than a positivistic report of lifeless details from bygone days. And in this sense, it seems not to be significantly different from the scientific study of texts—that is, philology.

And that brings us back to the starting point of this paper. It is often remarked that Gadamer began his academic career as a classical philologist, and that his subsequent philosophical work for this reason continued to bear the stamp of philology. This observation is neither idle nor irrelevant when we consider Gadamer’s view of the respective tasks of philology, philosophy and history. In his paper entitled “The History of Concepts and the Language of Philosophy”,¹⁰ Gadamer argues that the philosophical study of ideas—even those current philosophical ideas with which we, as philosophers, are presently engaged—must proceed by way of a preliminary study of the particular conceptuality that provides the context in which those ideas first originated. The study of this conceptuality, he argues further, must itself proceed by way of a study of its language, or the linguistic context in which this conceptuality is ultimately grounded. As Gadamer saw it, philosophy is in this sense an historically grounded discipline that must always become and remain self-conscious by means of an ongoing endeavor to ground itself in its linguistic heritage. Clearly, some kind of philological facility is indispensable for such an endeavor. Yet philology remains, for Gadamer, always the handmaiden of philosophy. And perhaps more significantly, philosophy remains possible as a self-conscious discipline only to the extent that it is aware of its own history—

10 Gadamer, “The History of Concepts and the Language of Philosophy”, tr. Jeff Mitscherling and Jakob Amstutz, *International Studies in Philosophy*, vol. 18 (1986), 1-16.

or more precisely, only to the extent that it sees itself as one moment in the ongoing history of conceptuality in pursuit of the expression of philosophical ideas. We see already here that there is something strikingly Hegelian about all of this. And indeed, a fundamental commitment to Hegel's view of world history underlies Gadamer's criticism both of romantic hermeneutics and philology and of the historical school. In his discussion of what he identifies as "The Dilemma Involved in the Ideal of Universal History"—a central subsection of Part Two of *Truth and Method*: "The Extension of the Question of Truth to Understanding in the Human Sciences"—Gadamer writes:¹¹

So we see that romantic hermeneutics and its background, the pantheistic metaphysics of individuality, was a decisive influence on the theory of historical research in the nineteenth century. This was fatal for the human sciences and for the worldview of the historical school. We will see that Hegel's philosophy of world history, against which the historical school rebelled, recognized far more profoundly the importance of history for the being of spirit and the knowledge of truth than did the great historians [e.g., Ranke and Droysen], who would not admit that they were dependent on him. . . . Thus resistance to the philosophy of world history drove history into the wake of philology. Its pride was to conceive the continuity of world history not teleologically, nor . . . in terms of a final state which would be the end of history. . . . the whole continuity of universal history can be understood only from historical tradition itself. But this is precisely the claim of literary hermeneutics, namely that the meaning of a text can be understood from itself. *Thus the foundation for the study of history is hermeneutics.*

Gadamer proceeds, in the following, incredibly dense sections of this part of *Truth and Method*, to point out the shortcomings of this romantic hermeneutics that he identified as the foundation of the historical school. It is not until the next section of his book, however, that we can begin to discern how he regarded his own philosophical hermeneutics to be capable of avoiding these shortcomings. This section is entitled "Overcoming the Epistemological Problem Through Phenomenological Research", and while that title might seem simply to hand us the answer, it's not as straightforward as it might first appear. Gadamer here writes that "it is clear that Husserl had always intended to apply his ideas to the problems of the historical sciences",¹² and Gadamer's subsequent, quite lengthy discussion of Husserl would clearly seem to suggest that he has in mind the phenomenology of Husserl. But what becomes increasingly clear as we read on in his text is that he has in mind not Husserl's conception of phenomenology, but Hegel's.

I said at the beginning of this paper that I would be arguing that the 'hermeneutics or history' disjunct in its title is indeed exclusive; that we can opt for *either* the 'art' of hermeneutics *or* the 'science' of history—but not both; and that should we attempt to choose both, we default automatically to hermeneutics. I should return to this now by way of concluding. A little while ago I mentioned that when Gadamer alludes to Hegel

¹¹ *Truth and Method*, pp. 198-199.

¹² *Truth and Method*, p. 243.

he is often referring to him—or *deferring* to him—as an authoritative witness to the workings, or the effects—the *Wirkungen*—of consciousness. Dilthey also deferred to Hegel here. Dilthey was, in fact, a committed Hegelian, of sorts, and it was largely as a result of his attempt to reconcile Hegel with his own critique of the extension of the methodology of the natural sciences to the domain of the human sciences that he came to place so much weight on the notion of *Wirkungsgeschichte*, which we usually translate, unhelpfully, as ‘effective history’.¹³ The sense of this term, as used by both Dilthey and Gadamer, can best be captured like this: In studying history, as good scientists, we have to attend exclusively to the posited ‘facts’ (hence the ‘positivism’). But Dilthey suggested that this exclusive attention—or better, this exclusive *definition*—prejudiced and misled the study of history from the outset. He suggested that we ought rather to regard these ‘facts’ as ‘effects’, thereby pulling them into a more comprehensive historical framework. Each posited fact comes thereby to be regarded not only as the effect of a preceding historical cause, but also as exercising some causal efficacy on its historical companions, the other facts that are posited as contemporaneous to it. And to repeat, Dilthey remained convinced that we could produce a method that would enable us to study such ‘effects’ in the human sciences. Similarly acknowledging the power of Hegel, Gadamer appropriates this term, *Wirkungsgeschichte*, from Dilthey—but then he adds to it in such a way as to circumvent the necessity of method, and he does this by coining the term, *Wirkungsgeschichtliches Bewusstsein*, or ‘effective-historical consciousness’. (It’s worth noting in passing that Gadamer frequently cited his introduction of the notion of ‘effective-historical consciousness’ as perhaps his most significant contribution to hermeneutics.) What this term is intended by Gadamer to point to is that original—or ‘originary’—activity, that ‘tradition’, to which all of us conscious subjects naturally belong *as speakers of our language* prior to that distancing of ourselves as subjects that enables us methodically to apply our ‘distanced’ consciousness to the ‘distanced’ object of our scientific study. This ‘effective-historical consciousness’ is not, according to Gadamer, a particular attitude or frame of mind that any of us can adopt at will. Rather, it is the consciousness that we belong to when we engage in the event of understanding—an event that grounds our world of perceived causes and effects, and ourselves as historical subjects.

In its study of the nature of understanding as interpretation, philosophical hermeneutics acknowledges and provides us access to the workings of this fundamental effective-historical consciousness, a consciousness that Hegel’s phenomenology first made available to us. As Gadamer remarks in *The Beginning of Philosophy*: “. . . to this day, Hegel has a hand in everything! Even the historian finds it plausible that all things are bound together in the progressive development of knowledge! This historical way of thinking, which arises in the nineteenth century and still appears plausible to

13 It’s perhaps worth noting that Dilthey employed the term *Wirkung* with pointed reference to the natural sciences. In a chemistry lab, for example, we speak of the *Wirkung* of a reagent, and when you watch what’s happening in a test tube, you’re watching *Wirkungen*. Gadamer extends this natural-science language when he introduces to hermeneutics his own term, *Horizontverschmelzung*: *Ververschmelzung* is what happens when, for example, you melt copper and zinc together to make brass.

us today, seems to me a convincing example of the living Hegelian legacy . . .”¹⁴ The historian who grants this view of history—that is, as ‘the progressive development of knowledge’—implicitly grants also the Hegelian conception of world history as the development of *Geist*, or spirit. And when Gadamer asserts this phenomenology as the methodical basis of his philosophical hermeneutics, he is at the same time asserting the primacy of his hermeneutics over history, and in fact presenting us with precisely the dichotomy of ‘hermeneutics or history’.

JEFF MITSCHERLING
Univezitet u Gvelfu, Kanada

ISTINA I METODA: HERMENEUTIKA ILI ISTORIJA?

Sažetak: U radu se dokazuje da je naslovna disjunkcija – „hermeneutika ili istorija“ – zaista isključiva: možemo se odlučiti ili za „umeće“ hermeneutike ili za „nauku“ istorije – nikako za obe. Pokušamo li slediti obe opcije, automatski se opredeljujemo za hermeneutiku. Pokazaće se da dva temeljna obeležja celokupne rasprave u *Istini i metodi* predstavljaju ozbiljnu pretnju samom pojmu istorijskog istraživanja. Prvu čini stanovište o suštinski metodološkom karakteru svih nauka, uključujući i „istorijske nauke“, a druga je bitno „fenomenološki“ metod, za koji Gadamer podrazumeva da je na delu u njegovoj knjizi.

Ključne reči: hermeneutika, istorija, Gadamer

14 Gadamer, *The Beginning of Philosophy*, tr. Rod Coltman. New York: Continuum, 2000, p. 22. This book is based on lectures that Gadamer first presented at the University of Heidelberg in 1967 and delivered again, twenty-one years later, in Italy. For a full account of the history of this text, see the “Translator’s Preface”, pp. 7-8. The translation is of Gadamer’s revision of *Der Anfang der Philosophie* (Reklam 1996), which is itself a translation, by Joachim Schulte, of Vittorio DeCesare’s revised transliteration of a series of lectures given by Gadamer in Italian in 1988, which DeCesare published in 1993 under the title, *L’inizio della filosofia occidentale*.