Fenomenologija ir hermeneutika

TOWARDS A NEW ACCOUNT OF HERMENEUTICS: GENEALOGY *VERSUS* HERMENEUTICS

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The essay analyses the difference between Hans-Georg Gadamer's and Alasdair MacIntyre's conceptions of hermeneutic philosophy, on the one hand, and Nietzschean genealogy, on the other. It argues that Ricoeur's famous distinction between 'hermeneutics of faith' and 'hermeneutics of suspicion' in the light of the ontological reading of Nietzsche's genealogy is misleading. Rather than trying to understand Nietzsche's philosophy as the hermeneutics of suspicion, it is more accurate to see Nietzsche's and Foucault's interpretive philosophy in terms of genealogy. The contrast between Gadamerian hermeneutics and Nietzschean genealogy, the one hand, as well as reading Gadamer hermeneutics in the light of MacIntyre's conception of tradition-constituted and tradition-constitutive philosophical inquiry, on the other, allow us to formulate an alternative conception of hermeneutics. The essay argues that hermeneutics is inevitably linked to tradition: hermeneutics depend on and draws its moral and intellectual resources from tradition as well as determines and continues tradition further.

Keywords: Hermeneutics, genealogy, tradition, ontology, will to power.

Introduction

The main concern of this essay is to sketch the conceptual difference between Nietzschean genealogy and hermeneutics. In order to do this I shall first of all try to clarify what I mean by genealogy. Distinguishing two different ways of reading Nietzsche's philosophy, I shall argue in favour of the ontological reading of Nietzsche's genealogy (embodied in Deleuze, Foucault, and partly Heidegger). It will be suggested that genealogy has to be understood as closely linked to the conception of the will

to power. Such a reading of Nietzsche will enable me to question Paul Ricoeur's interpretation of Nietzsche's thought as 'hermeneutics of suspicion'. In response to Ricoeur's distinction between 'hermeneutics of faith' and 'hermeneutics of suspicion' I shall present Gadamer's and MacIntyre's conceptions of tradition. Reading Gadamer through MacIntyre's philosophy can provide us with the conceptual resources to arrive at a new and more substantial account of hermeneutics. Thus understood hermeneutics will be seen as

inevitably linked to tradition: hermeneutics not only depends on and draws its moral and intellectual resources from tradition, but also determines and continues tradition further. It is in this sense that hermeneutics, so it will be argued, necessarily presupposes an affirmation of and a belonging to tradition. Thus Nietzschean genealogy cannot be seen as 'hermeneutics' because it breaks with and distances from, rather than affirms its belonging to, tradition.

Genealogy as ontology of the will to power

There are at least two different schools of reading Nietzsche's genealogy within contemporary Nietzsche scholarship. An anthropological reading (e.g. Walter Kaufmann, Peter Poellner or Brian Leiter) understands genealogy as an intellectual interpretative critique enabling us to deconstruct our prejudice, dominant value structures and discursive practices in order to achieve deeper self-understanding. An ontological reading of Nietzsche's genealogy is rather different[1]. In this essay, alongside Foucault and Deleuze, I shall argue in favour of an ontological interpretation of genealogy. The reason for this reading is that it is only an ontological interpretation, which takes Nietzsche's conception of the will to power seriously, that will allow me to confront Paul Ricoeur's twofold conception of hermeneutics. Therefore it is only within the context of such an ontological reading of genealogy that we can seriously pose the question of the relationship between genealogy and hermeneutics. Hence the central issue of this essay: Can we see Nietzschean and

Foucaultian genealogies as hermeneutics? A philosophical attempt to answer this question will also enable us, so I hope, to formulate a more substantive account of hermeneutics.

To address this question it is important to sketch what genealogy, as a mode of doing philosophy, is about. Commenting on Nietzsche's *Genealogy of Morals* Gilles Deleuze, referring to its preface, calls it the 'most systemic book' which should be read as a key for interpreting the whole of Nietzsche's philosophy and its aphoristic character (Deleuze 1983: 87). For Nietzsche himself genealogy was an intellectual tool to question the original value of morality. He states at the beginning of the *Genealogy of Morals* that, despite the fact that the origin of morality and its historical development had been analysed and discussed before, the very *value* of morality was never fundamentally questioned. Thus the primary task of genealogy should not be merely to show the origin of morality but to disclose the very value of morality itself. That is why Deleuze can claim that genealogy means both the value of origin (of morality) and the origin of (moral) values (ibid: 2). Thus its fundamental mode of thinking is the interpretative (re)evaluation of predominant values and what lies behind these values. Indeed, we find such interpretative re-evaluative practice in all of the three essays of the *Genealogy of Morals*. The first essay starts with the genealogy of the morality of good and evil (*Gut & Böse*). It claims that the predominant moral distinction between good and evil is the historical result of the bitter *ressentiment* of the weak. The second essay goes on with the historical analysis of the psychological implications of morality showing that bad conscience has nothing to do with any transcendental feeling of duty. Rather it is simply a result of cruelty against oneself when, due to the cultural development of punishment

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[1] For a more detailed account of these two different types of reading Nietzsche see Bielskis 2005: 189–190.

and other moral practices, it cannot be discharged externally. The last essay deals with, what Nietzsche calls, the ascetic ideal and its historical embodiments and transformations. Fundamental to it is the traditional ascetic ideal of the metaphysical God, which in the hands of 'manipulative priests' functions as a drug against suffering which can transform into a variety of discursive practices such as art, science, and philosophy.

It is important to stress two fundamental features of such genealogical interpretative practice: namely, its negativity and its historicity. Nietzsche takes up the word 'genealogy' and, setting aside its traditional connotation of genealogy as the study of family pedigree, transforms and utilises it for his philosophical purposes. Genealogy becomes essentially negative within Nietzsche's conception – it does not try to validate and strengthen certain aspects of our past but to deconstruct and oppose them. Behind the Nietzschean genealogy there is the fundamental belief that contemporary values are in decay. Both traditional morality and the values it generates are the cause and the symptom of our weakness and thus should be exposed and critically refuted. What has to be exposed in particular is the fact that these traditional values – the 'slave' morality of 'good' and 'evil', bad conscience, a variety of ascetic ideals – have nothing to do with a metaphysical God as their legislator. Rather they are the result of historical process. That is to say, genealogy as the interpretative evaluative enquiry into our history is needed because what we are is due to the long process of history. It is in this sense that Foucault, within his own but also Nietzschean conceptual context, claimed that genealogy is 'a historical ontology of ourselves' (Foucault 2000: 262). Thus we need to study our genealogy in order to understand what we are, for it is only due to

different historical practices and discourses that we have been shaped into our present situation. It is precisely this historicism (not historicism in a Popperian sense) that I take to be the fundamentally anti-metaphysical and anti-essentialist character of genealogy – humanity does not have any essential nature given in advance, but has been historically shaped through the different discursive practices and power structures of our culture / civilisation. Humanity, from a genealogical point of view, is a historical project and has no essential nature.

Now what I want to argue is that the negative character of genealogy rests not merely on the fact that Nietzsche believes that contemporary values are in decay and that they are the values of the weak, but that it is more fundamentally linked to his ontology of power. That is to say, the negative character of genealogy – we have to advance a historical critique of our values not simply to correct but to oppose them – is fundamentally connected to his conception of the will to power. It is here that the affinity of my reading of Nietzsche with Deleuze's and Foucault's will become evident. Our predominant values have to be deconstructed not simply because they are in decay, but because behind them lies the reactive will to power. Behind the values of the weak lies not merely a lack of will, but the will to power of the weak. And that is how Nietzsche himself understands the revolt of the slaves in the *Genealogy of Morals*: the weak, through the 'canny manipulation' of the priests, start to create the nihilistic values which later overturn the aristocratic morality of the 'strong' and 'noble'. It is in this sense that we can claim that the ontological conception of the will to power is implicit within the *Genealogy of Morals*: genealogy is not only concerned with values and morality as such but

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about what will to power lies behind them. Furthermore, it implies that behind any values, morals, discursive practices, and structures of meaning there is always a certain, either active or re-active (to use Deleuze's terms), will to power. In this sense we can say that the process of creation of values or interpretative re-valuation is the expression and the exercise of a certain will to power. What still needs to be clarified is how one should understand the will to power.

In my interpretation of the Nietzschean will to power I follow Heidegger and Deleuze. Deleuze, for example, interprets the will to power as the main instinct of life to which all other instincts and forces should be subordinated[2]. The active will to power is able to affirm itself as well as subdue and command not only others (whether they are other individuals or other forces and instincts) but first of all itself. In a similar manner Heidegger states that the will to power is that which is able to will itself (Heidegger 2000: 175). In this sense the will to power appears as the maximally abstract principle – it is the will to pure potentiality with no reference to teleology (Bielskis 2005: 34). The will to power does not have any concrete identity or aim; in a sense its objects – values, symbols, interpretations, and forces, i.e. everything through which the will to power exercises itself – are secondary. And that is what Nietzsche himself claims when he writes that '[a]ll "purposes", "aims", "meaning" are only modes of expression (…)

of one will that is inherent in all events: the will to power' (Nietzsche 1968: 356). Furthermore, Nietzsche's conception of self-overcoming can be interpreted in this way as well: the law of self-overcoming means not only that all the greatest values are bound to be transformed 'bring[ing] their own demise' but also that the self-overcoming should be willed as the normative principle of the life of the active will to power (Nietzsche 1994: 126). Hence the importance of *agon* in Nietzsche's philosophy and its interpretations by some of his commentators (Thiele 1990 and Schrift 2001). That is why Nietzsche's statements – '[r]eality has been deprived of its value, its meaning, and veracity' and 'now that the shabby origin of these values is becoming clear, the universe seems to have lost values, seems "meaningless"' – could be interpreted not only as signifying nihilism as a temporary situation (i.e. the demise of traditional metaphysical values is realised while new 'positive' values have not yet been created), but something which is more fundamental and permanent (Nietzsche 1979: 34 and 1968: 10–11). That is, if the conception of self-overcoming as the mode of existence of the active will to power is accepted, then creative nihilism with regard to already existing values (whether they are ones' own or someone else's) becomes essential rather than a mere temporal situation in our history. It is in this sense that we can claim that Nietzsche's own philosophy, in particular his doctrine of the *Übermensch* and the eternal recurrence, is not an attempt to create new values or ideals, ideals which, as it were, would take the place of traditional metaphysical values. Nietzsche's proclamation in *Ecce Homo* that the last thing he wanted to accomplish was to improve mankind and to set up new idols supports this interpretation (Nietzsche 1979: 34).

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[2] Deleuze warns us not to read Nietzsche's will to power as a primitive desire to dominate others, not only because it would remain trapped within the understanding of power as involving recognition (i. e. only the obedience of others would demonstrate my power), but also because it cannot be seen in terms of the craving for power as an object. See Deleuze 1983: 80–81.

Paul Ricoeur: hermeneutics of faith *versus* hermeneutics of suspicion

It is at this point that my disagreement with Paul Ricoeur can be articulated. However, before doing so it is important to emphasis the fact that my disagreement with Ricoeur here is limited to one particular issue, namely his distinction between hermeneutics of suspicion and hermeneutics of faith, on the one hand, and his reading of Nietzsche, on the other. What I do not agree with is not Ricoeur's hermeneutic project as such, but only one aspect of it – his interpretation of Nietzsche as essentially a hermeneutic philosopher. In fact, Ricoeur's later thought, in particular his conception of tradition in terms of traditionality, traditions, and tradition, developed in the third volume of *Time and Narrative*, is very similar to the idea of tradition developed in this essay. Both Ricoeur and MacIntyre, as we will see, acknowledge that there are different traditions which transmit different contents and different structures of meanings. Furthermore, both of them insist that the conflicts between rival traditions and their rival claims to truth should be settled through critical debate:

> Tradition, as an instance of legitimacy, designates the claim to truth (the taking for true) offered argumentation within the public space of discussion. In the face of criticism that devours itself, the truth claim of the contents of traditions merits being taken as a presupposition of truth, so long as stronger reasons, that is, a better argument, has not been established (Ricoeur 1988: 127).

Nonetheless I chose to utilise MacIntyre's conception of tradition rather than Ricoeur's because it is MacIntyre rather than Ricoeur who developed a detailed hermeneutic account of what these rival traditions are.

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In various essays and books Paul Ricoeur provides a famous distinction between two types of hermeneutics, namely hermeneutics of faith and hermeneutics of suspicion (see Ricoeur 1970 & 1974). To put it very briefly, the hermeneutics of faith is interpretation which seeks to recollect the meaning of a text. Its preoccupation always is the care and concern for the object whose meaning it seeks to interpret. It is an attempt to capture the meaning of an object without any reduction. The best example of the hermeneutics of faith is the phenomenology of religion as it is embodied in the exegesis of canonical texts. The hermeneutics of suspicion is rather different. Its gesture is opposite to an attempt at the recollection of meaning – it seeks to demystify 'the illusions and lies of consciousness' (Ricoeur 1970: 28). According to Ricoeur, the school of suspicion is best represented by three thinkers: Marx, Freud and Nietzsche. What is essential to all of them is that despite their negative suspicious character their thought is interpretative and thus could be seen as exemplifying a form of hermeneutics: through the negative interpretative critique of false consciousness all of them seek to arrive at a new set of values and meanings. Hence for Ricoeur Nietzsche's philosophy is hermeneutics. For him Nietzsche's eternal recurrence, the *Übermensch*, and the will to power constitute such new 'enlightened' meaning. Thus understood hermeneutics, whether it is of suspicion or of faith, is interpretation of signs and symbols. The meaning of signs and symbols by its nature is never straightforward and thus cannot be exhausted by its immediate (or first) designation. That is why interpretation of signs is essential because it is only through interpretation that the meaning of signs can be disclosed. Nietzsche engages in negative interpretation to demystify

the 'lies of consciousness' in order to arrive at a new set of values and better meaning. Thus, according to Ricoeur, Nietzsche's interpretative re-valuation is hermeneutics because through the demystification of traditional structures of meaning he aims to arrive at the creation of new meaning.

It is here that Ricoeur's interpretation of Nietzsche becomes dubious. First of all it can be asked why Ricoeur calls Nietzsche's interpretative re-evaluative practice hermeneutics if Nietzsche himself chose to call this practice genealogy. This objection gains support in the light of Foucault who, adopting Nietzsche's genealogy within his own philosophical project, extends genealogy and distances it from hermeneutics. It is not only Foucault's commentators such as Hubert Dreyfus and Paul Rabinow, who read Foucault's philosophy as different from hermeneutics (Dreyfus and Rabinow 1982). It was also Foucault himself who, both in his archaeological and later genealogical methods, sharply distanced himself from hermeneutics as an attempt to approach discursive practices through capturing their internal meaning[3]. However, my disagreement goes deeper than this objection for it touches the very nature of the Nietzschean genealogy. The question is whether it is true, as Ricoeur thinks, that Nietzsche's genealogy, through a negative detour, aims at the creation of a new and more enlightened set of values and meanings. If my reading of Nietzsche's genealogy is correct, then the answer must be 'no'. And this is so for several important reasons.

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[3] See for example Foucault 1972: 162, where Foucault sees hermeneutics as an attempt to rediscover what is expressed in discourses through understanding of their internal meaning and thus distinguishes it from his archaeology.

My ontological reading of Nietzsche's genealogy suggested that the notion of the will to power should be understood in terms of self-overcoming and *agon*. It is only in this sense that values, ideas, interpretations, and sets of meanings, i.e. everything through which the will to power exercises itself, can be seen as secondary. That is why Nietzsche's notion of the *Übermensch*, for example, is not a new ideal or *telos* to combat the nihilism of our culture. Indeed, the preface to *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* suggests precisely this: the buffoon who jumps over the tightrope-walker warns Zarathustra that he should stop preaching the *Übermensch* because otherwise he will jump over Zarathustra as well. (Thus the buffoon who overcomes the last man denies the preaching of the overman.) But if it is not an ideal, then what is it? It is a function, *the* function of the active will to power as self-overcoming. In a similar way genealogy does not aim at the establishment of new ideals, values or a set of meanings but at the void and suspension of meaning from which the event of self-creation can be advanced. It is here that we come to the most important issue, namely the relationship between genealogy and the will to power, on the one hand, and genealogy and existing values and structures of meaning, on the other. Genealogy then appears as an intellectual tool and a function of the will to power: not only does it deconstruct existing values but it also serves and strengthens the will to power. Genealogy sees itself as an attempt to resist the dominant power relations as well as actively seeking to strengthen the will to power in order that the energy of artistic self-cultivation may be constantly released. It is in this sense that we can say that Nietzsche's, and especially Foucault's, genealogies aim not at the establishment or continuation of meaning (which, we shall see, is the aim of

hermeneutics) but towards the will to power (whether it is self-overcoming in Nietzsche or micro-resistance in Foucault). The primary aim of interpretation as re-valuation in genealogy is not meaning itself. Here Nietzsche's own characterisation of interpretation in the *Genealogy of Morals* is instructive: genealogy is not an attentive interpretation to a text's meaning, but rather freedom to exercise one's creativity through allowing oneself to use 'forcing, adjusting, shortening, omitting, filling-out, inventing, falsifying, and everything else *essential* to interpretation' (Nietzsche 1994: 119). Thus the way genealogy proceeds with its interpretative re-evaluation is through a break from and suspension of existing values and structures of meaning. That is why the fact that Nietzsche demystifies the values of the slaves becomes secondary and thus Foucault, adopting the Nietzschean ontology of power, goes further than Nietzsche and rejects his, and also the Deleuzean, dualism of the masters *vs.* slaves and the active *vs.* reactive will to power. Everything becomes power relations, even discourses and their meanings have to be seen through the logic of power. All that is available to those who seek even relative autonomy is a constant resistance. Genealogy becomes a fundamental part of such resistance; it is only through the opposition to, breaking and suspension of already existing structures of meaning that the aim of genealogy – 'to be otherwise' – can be achieved.

Gadamer and MacIntyre on tradition

If genealogy thus understood cannot be hermeneutics, then how can one conceptualise what hermeneutics is? To answer this it is instructive to turn briefly to Gadamer's and MacIntyre's conceptions of tradition. I shall suggest that the most illuminating way of distinguishing hermeneutics from genealogy is through linking it to the philosophical notion of tradition. It is in relation to the conception of tradition that a more substantive account of hermeneutics than that offered by Ricoeur will become possible.

The philosophical concept of tradition in *Truth and Method* was developed in response to 19th century hermeneutics. Gadamer moves away from Schleiermacher, Dilthey, and others. He neither seeks to formulate universally applied rules of hermeneutic understanding, nor sees the task of hermeneutics as grasping the original meaning of a historical text. The concept of tradition allows Gadamer to distance himself both from the Enlightenment and from Romanticism. Gadamer shows that tradition is invoked in any attempt to understand a historical text. The nature of hermeneutic understanding has a circular, or as Gadamer calls it, centrifugal structure. We understand a historical text through being able to project our fore-meanings and in doing so anticipate the meaning of a text or a conversation. Thus any understanding always moves from the primordial anticipation of meaning as a whole to its re-articulation and re-confirmation through the more detailed comprehension of the parts. What Gadamer is interested in is the nature and provenance of such fore-structures. Where does our ability to foresee the meaning of a historical text, e. g. Aristotle's *Politics*, come from? Gadamer's answer is that it comes from tradition. Fore-understanding is related to our linguistic world-view that we already have and which we have inherited from the past. Thus the nature of fore-meaning is that of prejudice: any act of understanding requires that we project the judgements that we already have onto the meaning of a text that we want to understand. Hence prejudice as pre-judge-

ment, which is rooted in our historical situatedness and our cultural-linguistic context, is constitutive of our ability to understand as such. Now what is important is precisely our openness in being able to acknowledge such historical bias. What this implies is not only that everyone unavoidably has pre-conceptions and prejudices which in part constitute our understanding, but also that it is a task of hermeneutics to be critically aware of them. In other words, a mature hermeneutical thinking has to be critically aware of its own historical prejudices which grounds our understanding because it is only through being critically aware that certain prejudices can become legitimate.

To say that tradition is the bearer of the structure of fore-meaning and that it conditions our understanding is to tell only one part of the story. The question that we have to pose is what happens to/with tradition when we understand a historical text. The answer Gadamer provides is that we further continue tradition. It is in this sense that Gadamer can claim that the issue of hermeneutic understanding is not only epistemological but also ontological. To repeat what an author of a historical text meant is to fail to understand it. Instead, to understand a text is to apply it within our contemporary situation. It is an ability to recapture and rearticulate the significance of a historical text within the present. Thus understanding a historical text is a creative act of its actualisation. What is significant is that it is precisely through this ability to creatively understand a text that tradition is continued: tradition is continued in our ability to apply a text within the present. Through the ontological act of understanding the horizons of the past and present are fused. Thus, risking a gross oversimplification, it is possible to define Gadamer's conception of tradition as

'continuity of meaning in history through its re-articulation and re-actualisation' (Bielskis 2005: 106). Tradition premises our understanding but nonetheless comes to being only through the interpretation of its discourses and their meanings. Tradition then is both the condition and the *process* of our understanding. That is, tradition is not only something which conditions our understanding but also is itself conditioned and partly constituted by hermeneutic understanding. It is this aspect – we constitute and continue tradition through being able to creatively understand a historical text – that allows us to see tradition as having an open-ended and futuristic character. This will become clearer when we have presented MacIntyre's conception of tradition.

We can already see how different Nietzschean genealogy is from Gadamer's hermeneutics. In *Truth and Method* Gadamer, for example, claims that recognizing the fact that our situatedness within a tradition "does not limit the freedom of knowledge but makes it possible" constitutes openness to tradition as the highest type of hermeneutical experience (Gadamer 1989: 361). Furthermore, he criticises the Enlightenment's unrealised prejudice against prejudice claiming that we have to be critically aware of our prejudice as well as affirming some of them as legitimate. Nietzsche, on the other hand, aims to deconstruct and oppose all our traditional prejudices and values. Nietzsche's genealogy does not simply criticise them but seeks to overturn them. So, on the one hand, we have an attempt to continue the structures of meaning (hermeneutics), while on the other hand, to resist / oppose them (genealogy). We encounter here contrasting ontological dispositions: on the one hand, there is an affirmation of meaning and tradition which is seen as enabling us to give purpose and structure to our life (Gadamer), but on the other hand, there is a constant

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attempt to oppose meaning and tradition in order to affirm life (as self-overcoming) itself (Nietzsche). But why does Gadamer insists that hermeneutics necessarily presupposes our openness to tradition, and even the affirmation of our belonging to tradition? Now what I want to suggest is that this question can best be answered in a more substantive way within MacIntyre's conception of tradition.

In *Whose Justice? Which Rationality?* Alasdair MacIntyre provides this definition of tradition:

> A tradition is an argument extended through time in which certain fundamental agreements are defined and redefined in terms of two kinds of conflicts: those with critics and enemies external to the tradition who reject all or at least key parts of those fundamental agreements, and those internal, interpretative debates through which the meaning and rationale of the fundamental agreements come to be expressed and by whose progress a tradition is constituted (MacIntyre 1988: 12).

What we find here is a far more substantive definition of tradition than that found in Gadamer. First of all, the difference between this definition and Gadamer's is that Gadamer writes about tradition in singular terms. For him tradition is our linguistic and cultural horizon which both pre-conditions our understanding and is constituted through the continuity of meaning, i.e. our ability to share the meaning of the past within the present. An abstract definition such as Gadamer's, however, does not specify the content of tradition. Thus it is not entirely clear why the highest hermeneutic experience is openness and affirmation of tradition. Was not this the reason for Habermas' critique of Gadamer?[4] For the

question is, Why do we have to affirm tradition, through which the past meanings are transmitted to the present, if we do not specify what exactly is transmitted? And this question was fundamentally posed by Nietzsche and those (such as Camus, Sartre, Chestov and finally Foucault) whom he influenced. The answer they provide is negative – we do not need to affirm tradition even if we know that it structures our understanding. (Foucault's position indeed is that we have to resist tradition precisely because it historically structures our understanding). MacIntyre here goes further than Gadamer because he does indeed provide a historico-philosophical account of what is transmitted via tradition*s*. Hence in MacIntyre's account tradition is not simply our linguistico-cultural horizon but an intellectual and moral argument extended in time. But if this is so, then there can be and, indeed, is not just one tradition but several. And that is what MacIntyre in his post-*After Virtue* writings has been exploring. Namely, what these rival intellectual and moral traditions are, and how their relationship is possible if one accepts that there is no rationality as such but only *a* rationality of and structured by a certain tradition.

This returns us to the question as to why the affirmation of tradition is a necessary part of hermeneutic thinking. The only way to legitimise our intellectual and moral prejudices is through being explicit about what they are.

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[4] Jürgen Habermas in *On the Logic of the Social Science* has criticised Gadamer for his conservative account of tradition. Habermas accepts Gadamer's

claim that all human knowledge is rooted in historical tradition, but he also insists that social sciences through reflective reason should break from the authority of tradition (Habermas 1988: 170). Otherwise Gadamer's account of human knowledge as rooted in tradition makes tradition infallible. That is, if tradition is conceptualised in singular terms and if knowledge is seen as internal to tradition, then, according to Habermas, there is no way to question the rational validity of that tradition since criticism of tradition can come only from non-knowledge (How 1995: 139–153 & Bielskis 2005: 199).

One of the tasks of hermeneutic thinking would be precisely the acceptance (or modification) of the premises of our thinking through being able philosophically to scrutinise them. Such a process could then involve an attempt to engage with those past philosophical accounts which, in one way or another, have shaped and prejudiced our own moral and philosophical positions. But if we accept that it is not sufficient to talk about tradition only in terms of a linguistico-cultural horizon and that, following MacIntyre, there is not just a single but are several different and rival traditions (assuming that hermeneutics is precisely such historico-philosophical engagement with one's predecessors in order not only to clarify, articulate, and in this way philosophically justify our premises, but also correct, or to use Gadamer's terms, apply their philosophical arguments within the present), then we can conclude that there can be as many different hermeneutics as there are different traditions. Thus understood hermeneutics becomes fundamentally interlinked to tradition: it is both constituted by and constitutes tradition. Tradition then is a moral and philosophical argument extended in time which requires the formulation of certain fundamental agreements, while hermeneutics is the philosophical as well as historical ability to explore and envisage a continuity between the wider argument (the already existing tradition which premises my thinking) and my own philosophical engagement. What is common to both Gadamer and MacIntyre is that tradition thus understood is an open-ended and creative activity and thus hermeneutics is something which, through my own individualised philosophical narrative, enables tradition's further development, continuity, and directedness. Thus understood hermeneutics (hermeneutic philosophy) becomes a

co-operative activity. And this is not only in the sense that one starts to develop one's philosophy as a continuation of wider philosophical argument. It is also because once one's belonging to a certain tradition is realised through being able rationally to accept certain of its fundamental agreements, then a further co-operation with others who see themselves as part of that tradition becomes possible.

Conclusion

In this essay I have attempted to sketch an alternative, ontological, reading of Nietzschean genealogy and Gadamer's hermeneutics. Such a reading, which emphasises the ontological aspect of our understanding, is illuminating because it allows us conceptually to distinguish hermeneutics from genealogy, enabling us to develop a more substantive account of hermeneutics. Hermeneutics thus understood becomes necessarily linked to tradition. Through the modification of our prejudices and fore-meanings hermeneutics enables creative continuity between the past and the present. This is not the case with genealogy. The purpose of genealogical enquiry is to provide us with understanding through which resistance to existing discursive regimes and their structures of meaning becomes possible. Our subjectivity, according to Foucault, has been historically shaped through a variety of truth regimes which always support and are supported by power structures. Thus subjectivity (i. e. culturally constructed identities) becomes a form of subjugation. Foucault's dictum "to be otherwise" should be understood within this context: genealogy, as a historical enquiry, is an intellectual tool designed to resist the subjugation of historically imposed identities. Genealogy then presupposes a fundamentally negative relationship to our past and even to

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ourselves: we are the products of domination and thus the only way to escape subjugation is through a constant resistance. Hermeneutics rejects genealogy's ontology of power. From a Gadamerian point of view the distinction between authority and domination/power is fundamental and thus not every authority is a form of domination. It sees the purpose of historico-philosophical enquiry not in resistance to the past and its structures of meaning but in their application within the present. However, the affirmation of one's belonging to tradition does not presuppose blind obedience. Here MacIntyre's conception of tradition is important because it provides us with a means of moving beyond Gadamer's alleged conservatism. The continuity of the structures of meaning, moral values and fundamental agreements, articulated through ongoing philosophical argument, is justifiable only if what is transmitted through tradition enables human flourishing. Hence we continue the structures of meaning of the past not for their own sake, but in as much as they furnish us with the conceptual tools to solve moral and philosophical problems. Furthermore, the affirmation of one's belonging to an intellectual and moral tradition requires philosophical scrutiny and thus intellectual maturity. It is only a philosophically mature mind that is able to rearticulate and modify our prejudices and pre-philosophical beliefs, which we uncritically inherit through our moral and cultural tradition, making them a part of a larger philosophically justified argument. The *critical* aspect of tradition rests not only in our intellectual transition from the naḷve state of consciousness of historically inherited fore-meanings and value structures to the post-naḷve state of critically articulated and thus rationally justified philosophical assertions. It also lies in the fact that the commitment to an intellectual and moral tradition is possible through our ability to engage with other traditions, since today there is more than one tradition and thus the critical assessment of these rival traditions becomes essential. That is why Habermas's critique of Gadamer's conception of tradition, tradition understood in singular terms as our cultural-linguistic horizon which nonetheless functions through the authority of knowledge, becomes barren if we supplement Gadamerian hermeneutics with MacIntyre's philosophical account of rival traditions. Thus understood hermeneutics becomes essentially critical because its successful development within a particular tradition is possible through successful philosophical engagement with the rival hermeneutics of rival traditions. An example of such a live conflict today can be found in the engagement between the competing hermeneutics of two rival intellectual and moral traditions – liberalism and Thomism.

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NAUJOS HERMENEUTIKOS SAMPRATOS LINK: GENEALOGIJA *VERSUS* HERMENEUTIKA

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Santrauka

Straipsnyje analizuojami Hanso Georgo Gadamerio ir Alasdairo MacIntyre'o hermeneutinės filosofijos koncepcijos bei Nietzsche's genealogijos skirtumai. Teigiama, kad Ricoeuro pagarsėjusi skirtis tarp tikėjimo ir įtarumo hermeneutikų klaidina, jei Nietzsche's genealogija suprantama ir interpretuojama ontologiškai. Užuot Nietzsche's filosofiją supratus kaip įtarumo hermeneutiką, kur kas tikslingiau Nietzsche's ir Foucault interpretacinę filosofiją suprasti taip, kaip ją supranta patys autoriai, t. y. kaip genealogiją. Atskiriant gadamerišką hermeneutiką ir nyčišką genealogiją ir perinterpretuojant Gadamerio hermeneutiką MacIntyre'o tradicijos-nulemtos ir tradiciją-formuojančios filosofijos koncepcijos plotmėje, galima suformuluoti alternatyvią hermeneutikos sampratą. Straipsnyje teigiama, kad hermeneutika turi būti suprantama kaip tiesiogiai susijusi su tradicija, t. y. hermeneutika ne tik moraline ir intelektualine prasme priklauso nuo tradicijos, bet ir leidžia ją tęsti.

Pagrindiniai žodžiai: hermeneutika, genealogija, tradicija, ontologija, valia galiai.