of the ethics of Oneself as Another. This is the best and most useful part of the book. The triadic analysis in terms of an Aristotelian teleology of the good life, a Kantian deontology of the norms that govern such a search, and the return to Aristotelian practical wisdom as the concretely situated attempt to resolve “the conflicts arising out of the deontological ethics in its path to concrete actions” (229), provides a helpful overview of both the substance and strategy of Ricoeur’s ethics.

Like all of Ricoeur’s work, his ethics is impressive. It is richly learned and subtly dialectical. It well may be, as Bourgeois claims, the most viable philosophical discourse about ethics in the wake of modernity. But the claim to have shown that in this book cannot be granted.

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Limits and Possibilities of Contemporariness


This important Gadamer Festschrift is composed of twenty contributions (all in German, and some in German translation) written by scholars from a dozen countries. The volume is divided into four broad sections: Memory (1–83: C. Scott, N. Davey, D. Barbarić), Antiquity (87–146: H. Ruin, D. Di Cesare, J. J. Cleary), Language (149–240: J. Sallis, D. J. Schmidt, J. Risser, I. M. Fehér, J. Grondin, T. Schwarz Wentzer), and Culture (243–344: P. Kouba, H.-H. Gander, D. Janicaud, K. Wright, R. Brague, A. Honneth, F. Volpi, G. Figal). While some contributions examine Gadamer’s hermeneutics and a few explicitly probe difficulties in it, many of them expand it by applying it to new problems. It is not possible to summarize all the papers separately, nor do full justice to any. I will proceed thematically, underlying two recurring themes: the limits of language and the recognition of otherness. In the last section of the review, I shall discuss the second theme by highlighting disagreements among contributors in an attempt to tackle difficulties in Gadamerian hermeneutics.
Limits of Language

Hermeneutics as theory appears to be primarily a reflection on language. Contrary to analytic philosophy of language, however, the “linguistic turn” in hermeneutics does not consist of a reflection on language as an object \textit{per se}. Rather it examines the limits of language and reflection itself, rehabilitating the natural, largely unreflective use of language in everyday life (Fehér, 193, 196). The limits of language are also those of reflection, as all reflection must itself be constituted in language (Fehér, 193, 195, 201; \textit{GW} 8:408). Understanding is never purely conceptual, and theoretical statements are only an extreme case of language (Grondin, 217; \textit{GW} 8:414). The hermeneutical experience \textit{par excellence} is the awareness that we never succeed completely in expressing the question under discussion (\textit{die Sache}) with adequacy; the right word always escapes us (Barbarić, 76; Gander, 260; Schmidt, 174; Ruin, 104).\textsuperscript{3} Understanding, whenever it occurs, is not the result of controlling reflection, but an anonymous event (Grondin, 208; Fehér, 192; Barbarić, 63).

Jean Grondin examines the rhetorical heritage in hermeneutics, the central importance of which is not fully elaborated in \textit{Truth and Method} (207).\textsuperscript{4} Gadamer’s treatment of the notion of incarnation in Augustine centers upon the implications of that teaching for the nature of language, namely, the materiality of the word: thinking exists only in its actual enactment (\textit{Vollzug}) (213). This does not imply however that all thinking is reducible to uttered statements, since there always remains a difference between the external and the inner word; the former can never exhaust the latter, but only point to it. Of this enigmatic inner word nothing can be said, except that it is, or rather would be, the question under investigation when fully clarified. But such a clarification remains out of reach for our limited, human mind, incapable of pure divine self-presence (215; \textit{TM}, 422; \textit{GW} 1:426).\textsuperscript{5}

The limits of language are paradigmatically illustrated by the problem of translation, which John Sallis discusses in his treatment of Schlegel’s translation of Shakespeare. Ideally, the measure of translation is the reestablishment of the original meaning and intentions of the text. In practice, however, the translator often cannot satisfy this requirement, as this meaning has to be relocated in a new context and thus be interpreted: the identical meaning in many cases cannot be preserved but has to be transformed (151, 155–57). Indeed in the case of poetry, in which form and content are strictly inseparable, unity