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Paul Ricoeur: Philosophical Reflection and the Interpretation of the Sacred

by

Robert M. Doran, S.J.

Theology 313
Dr. Taylor Stevenson
December 16, 1971

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p. 9 In response to your rhetorical question about S.K.: Yes, it is fair.

p. 38(top) Yes, I agree. Yet, "Christian" university does seem to have, at least potentially, a legitimate role. But perhaps I am mistaken. How do we prevent this from coming our "Barthian"?

p. 39 Agreed.

p. 41 Re your observations: either I do not understand, or I disagree.

This is a most impressive piece of work. A masterful exposition of the central theme of a most difficult book; a good drawing upon secondary materials; a reflective appreciation shows itself throughout.

I will have to consider at length the as to the "tellingness" of the "Questions" you raise at the end. They do indicate that you have your own position from which you can critically appropriate Ricoeur.

Your style has an impressive clarity. Congratulations on having achieved it.

A teacher seldom encounters a piece of research this good. Fare forward!

TABLE OF CONTENTS

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO
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29 June 1973

Fr. Robert M. Doran, S.J.
Jesuit Community
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Dear Fr. Doran:

On the instructions of the Editors, I am returning your manuscript entitled "Paul Ricoeur: Philosophical Reflection and the Interpretation of the Sacred" with the regret that it has not been found suitable for publication in The Journal of Religion.

The manuscript was considered very carefully by several readers over a period of months, and carefully adjudicated by the Editors following that. One of the problems with the paper was its conclusion, which seemed too brief for the bulk of the paper. While one reader found the paper "a sensitive and careful...introduction to the work of an extremely important figure," that reader felt that the references to Lonergan were a bit too unclear. Another reader commented that the paper seemed to have two conclusions, also owing to confusion over your references to Lonergan. Yet another reader said that the paper was "solid and often suggestive," but thought that it was structured more as a book review than as an article. It was with reluctance that the Editors finally decided that the article was not suitable for The Journal of Religion.

I am including these comments in order that you might benefit from the criticisms offerred and that you might have success with the manuscript in another forum. We are grateful for the opportunity to examine the paper and thank you for considering The Journal of Religion. With every good wish , I remain

Sincerely yours,

Daniel J. Davis

Daniel J. Davis
Editorial Assistant

Paul Ricoeur:
Philosophical Reflection and the Interpretation of the Sacred

by

Robert M. Doran, S.J.

INTRODUCTION

This paper represents an attempt to analyze the two major works of Paul Ricoeur since his "hermeneutical turn"[1] with a view toward locating the contribution of these works toward one of the ultimate aims of Ricoeur's entire philosophical project. This project is motivated by a new desire to be addressed, called, approached by the revealing power of the kerygmatic word.[2] The two major works under investigation here are The Symbolism of Evil[3] and Freud and Philosophy.[4] No attempt will be made here systematically to integrate these works with Ricoeur's earlier writings nor with his later explorations into structuralism and linguistic analysis. Given the propadeutic intention which seems to lie behind all of his works vis-a-vis theology and theological method, his earlier and later writings would certainly seem to be of immense significance to the theologian. However, the full theological import of Ricoeur's writings will probably have to await the publication of the long-promised work on the poetics of the will. In the meantime, these two major works on hermeneutics can be read and interpreted by the theologian at least as contributions to the defining of an immense cultural problem, the resolution of which is critical for the very existence and pertinence of theology in the Western world. This problem of culture lies in the conflict of opposing styles of interpretation.[5] With Bernard Lonergan,[6] I view this and similar problems as

primarily and radically resultant upon a crisis of culture and only secondarily as reflecting a crisis of faith. The cultural crisis resulting in the difficulty of religious belief today calls for the kind of dialectical resolution of the opposing styles of interpretation focused upon man's symbolic expressions which Ricoeur has attempted in Freud and Philosophy. In addition, religious symbolism itself may demand a similar dialectic uniting in creative tension the hermeneutics of suspicion and that of recovery or restoration--and this for the very sake of authentic religious belief. With religious symbolism as with other domains of meaning, ". . . it may be that extreme iconoclasm belongs to the restoration of meaning."[7]

Such, then, are the parameters of the present investigation. It is probably already obvious that the discussion that follows will be very favorable to Ricoeur's project, both to the limited portion of this project under investigation here and to the totality of his work. His entire philosophical project is certainly one of the most ambitious and sophisticated attempted in our century. My admiration results not only from enthusiasm over the philosophical rigor of his work but also from a hope that he has indeed made a major contribution toward the possibility that Christian theology may be restored to a position of intellectual respectability in the contemporary world. That such work as his is necessary for respectable theologizing today is obvious, I believe, from the similarly rigorous philosophical and methodological propadeutics of Lonergan, the use made of the

philosophical hermeneutics of Martin Heidegger by theologians from Rudolf Bultmann to Heinrich Ott, and the growing interest of theologians in the work of Hans Georg Gadamer. It seems fair to say that no serious systematic theology is possible today without philosophically locating theology's field of investigation, without rigorously confronting the question of method, without immersing oneself in the difficult problems of interpretation, and without extending one's findings at these levels into the task of systematic reflection upon religious experience which is theology's preoccupation.

I. THE PROBLEM

A. Freud and Philosophy

The problem is posed with sufficient clarity in the first part of Freud and Philosophy. At this still early point in his linguistic and hermeneutical turn, Ricoeur confined the hermeneutic field to that area of language concerned with double-meaning or equivocal expressions, i.e., to symbolism.[8] The hermeneutic problem is created by the distinction between univocal and plurivocal expressions.[9]

The duality of symbols consists in a relation of meaning to meaning. "To mean something other than what is said--this is the symbolic function."[10] Hierophanies, dreams, and poetic images have in common the structure of multiple meaning. "Symbols occur when language produces signs of composite degree in which the meaning, not satisfied with designating some one thing, designates another meaning attainable only in and through the first intentionality."[11] Symbolism is peculiar to and dependent upon man's language. Its power may be rooted in the expressiveness of the cosmos, in the vouloir-dire of human desire, and in man's imagination, yet it appears as such in language. "There is no symbolism prior to man who speaks."[12] It is the task (perhaps interminable) of interpretation to reveal the richness and over-determination of symbols and to demonstrate that symbols have a role to play in human discourse. The manifest meaning of a symbol points beyond itself to a second, latent meaning, or a series of such meanings,

by a type of analogy which cannot be dominated intellectually. The symbol is rather a movement which we can follow, a movement of the primary meaning intentionally assimilating us to the symbolized.[13]

The peculiar problem of conflicting hermeneutical styles arises from the fact that such intentional analogy is not the only kind of relationship that can exist between manifest and latent meaning. The manifest meaning may indeed be a pointer toward an analogous second meaning, but it may also be a "cunning distortion" of latent meaning. In either case, however, ". . . a symbol exists . . . where linguistic expression lends itself by its double or multiple meanings to a work of interpretation." In fact there are no symbols without the beginning of interpretation. ". . . Where one man dreams, prophecies, or poetizes, another rises up to interpret. Interpretation organically belongs to symbolic thought and its double meaning."[14]

The problem of conflicting hermeneutical styles can be seen in the examples of psychoanalysis and the phenomenology of religion. For psychoanalysis, the double meaning of language is the dissimulation of desire, whereas the phenomenology of religion regards symbols (i.e., double-meaning expressions) as manifestations of a further reality, of a depth which both shows itself and hides itself, even of the sacred. The conflict which arises from this difference extends to all double-meaning expressions. The reading of Freud forces one to ask whether double meaning is always a dissimulation of desire. Can it sometimes be a

manifestation of a further reality, even of the sacred? Ricoeur also raises the equally important question of whether this alternative itself is real or illusory, provisional or definitive.[15]

While these two different styles of interpretation and their more generalized consideration under the headings of "the hermeneutics of suspicion" and "the hermeneutics of recovery" do not constitute a complete enumeration of hermeneutical styles,[16] but rather the polar extremes in contemporary interpretation, they point to the key difficulty governing the fate of hermeneutics today, the absence of a general hermeneutics, of a universal canon for exegesis. "The hermeneutic field . . . is internally at variance with itself."[17] For the suspicious pole, hermeneutics is a demystification, a reduction of illusion. For the other pole, at least with respect to religious symbolism, its task is the restoration of a meaning addressed to me as a message, a proclamation, a kerygma. We oscillate between demystification and recovery because of a crisis of language peculiar to our age.

> . . . this tension, this extreme polarity, is the truest expression of our 'modernity.' The situation in which language today finds itself comprises this double possibility, this double solicitation and urgency: on the one hand, purify discourse of its excrescences, liquidate the idols, go from drunkenness to sobriety, realize our state of poverty once and for all; on the other hand, use the most 'nihilistic,' destructive, iconoclastic movement so as to <u>let</u> <u>speak</u> what once, what each time, was <u>said</u>, when meaning appeared anew, when meaning was at its fullest.[18]

This latter description gives us a glimpse of Ricoeur's answer to the question of whether the conflict of suspicion and recovery is definitive or

provisional. "In our time we have not finished doing away with idols and we have barely begun to listen to symbols. It may be that this situation, in its apparent distress, is instructive: it may be that extreme iconoclasm belongs to the restoration of meaning."[19] The reason for this answer lies in the unity of the symbol and in the ambiguity of the sacred, elements which we will be able to consider only after we have explained Ricoeur's notions of reflection and dialectic.

First, however, it would be best to examine more completely the contrast between these hermeneutical styles as this is initially portrayed in the opening pages of Freud and Philosophy. The phenomenology of religion is secretly animated by an intention, a series of philosophical decisions which lie hidden even within its apparent neutrality, a rational faith which employs a phenomenological hermeneutics as an instrument of achieving a restoration of meaning, a second naivete. This implicit intention of every phenomenology of symbols is "an expectancy of a new Word, of a new tidings of the Word."[20] Three philosophical decisions are involved: first, the accent is put on the object of phenomenological investigation; second, a certain fullness of symbol is emphasized; third, the intention is that one may "finally greet the revealing power of the primal word."[21]

First, then, the hermeneutics of restoration is a rational faith characterized by care for the object. This care is manifested even in the seemingly neutral wish to describe and not to reduce, to disengage the implicit object in myth, ritual, and belief rather than focusing upon subjective or quasi-

subjective (e.g., sociological) motivations and determinants of behavior. The task of the phenomenology of religion is "to dis-implicate [the sacred] from the various intentions of behavior, discourse, and emotion."[22] Of course, such concern can be manifested only because one expects that the sacred will address him and because one has a certain confidence in human discourse-- "the belief that language, which bears symbols, is not so much spoken by men as spoken to men, that men are born into language, into the light of the logos 'who enlightens every man who comes into the world.'"[23]

Second, the hermeneutics of recovery is pervaded by a concern for the truth or fullness of symbols. This truth is not acknowledged by positivist methods of verification. Rather the intention of the phenomenology of religion implies that in symbols we meet the fullness of language, in that a second meaning somehow dwells in the first meaning. "Symbols alone give what they say."[24] Ricoeur admits that this implicit intention breaks the supposed neutrality of phenomenological research, which is to say that it already places one within a hermeneutic circle.

> I admit that what deeply motivates the interest in full language, in bound language, is this inversion of the movement of thought which now addresses itself to me and makes me a subject that is spoken to. And this inversion is produced in analogy. How? How does that which binds meaning to meaning bind me? The movement that draws me toward the second meaning assimilates me to what is said, makes me participate in what is announced to me. The similitude in which the force of symbols resides and from which they draw their revealing power is not an objective likeness, which I may look upon like a relation laid out before me; it is an existential assimilation, according to the movement of analogy, of my being to being.[25]

Thus, finally, the hermeneutics of recovery, as manifested in the phenomenology of religion, is characterized by something like the Platonic theme of participation and reminiscence. "After the silence and forgetfulness made widespread by the manipulation of empty signs and the construction of formalized languages, the modern concern for symbols expresses a new desire to be addressed."[26] The phenomenology of religion functions as a propadeutic to the "revelation" of meaning.[27]

Nevertheless, the movement toward our contemporary overriding concern for hermeneutical questions has been prompted much more by the rise of the hermeneutics of suspicion. Karl Jaspers comments[28] that Kierkegaard and Nietszche both prophecied the emergence of an age of infinite reflection in which everything is interpretation. Both could do this because each in his own way was exercising a suspicious and critical hermeneutics with respect to religious and cultural symbolism and practice--Kierkegaard for the sake of the authentic religion of faith, Nietzsche purely for the sake of demystification. (Is it not fair, in Ricoeur's terms, to regard Kierkegaard's hermeneutic as "suspicious," though within and for the sake of Christian belief?) It is this prevalence of suspicion that resulted in the centrality of hermeneutics in the theological and philosophical enterprises.

Ricoeur regards Freud, Marx, and Nietzsche as three central proponents of the hermeneutics of suspicion. No doubt there are many areas of sharp difference among them--add Kierkegaard and one gains an even clearer view of the many forms which the hermeneutics of suspicion may assume! Ricoeur

finds one common intention, however, behind their work; namely, "the decision to look upon the whole of consciousness primarily as 'false' consciousness. They thereby take up again. . . the problem of the Cartesian doubt, to carry it to the very heart of the Cartesian stronghold . . . After the doubt about things, we have started to doubt consciousness."[29]

For Ricoeur, a long-term view of the possible effects of this radical doubt--whose validity, as we shall see, is implicitly admitted by much of phenomenology and is central to Ricoeur's notion of philosophical reflection--will prove it to be salvific for authentic religious belief. This is so precisely because, through such doubt, a true art of interpreting was invented. The horizon is cleared for a more authentic word, "a new reign of Truth,"[30] the deidolization of religion, for, once understanding becomes hermeneutics, the quest of meaning no longer can involve simply listing the data of naive, immediate consciousness (which, Ricoeur agrees, is deceptive) but involves the deciphering of man's expressions. The way is open for a mediate science of meaning, irreducible to the immediate consciousness of meaning.[31] Nevertheless, the stance of the hermeneutics of suspicion is, at face value, radically contrary to the phenomenology of the sacred and to any hermeneutics understood nondialectically as the recollection of meaning.

In anticipation of what he will later say about the unity of the symbol as providing a <u>locus</u> for concrete synthesis, Ricoeur finds that this controversy involves the fate of the "mytho-poetic core of imagination," the very condition of possibility for "the upsurge of the possible," for newness and creativity, and thus for the revelation of the primal Word.[32]

B. The Symbolism of Evil: The Hermeneutic Turn

This posing of the problem represents a sharpening of the focus from the explorations of The Symbolism of Evil, the first clear and extended evidence of Ricoeur's turn to hermeneutics, i.e., to the reading of experience through expression. Symbols and myths are viewed analogically, in accordance with the philosophical decisions involved in the phenomenology of religion. The wager which shatters phenomenological neutrality is admitted.[33] But the root problem of contemporary hermeneutics is not presented as one of mediating a seemingly irreconcilable conflict. Ricoeur's concern, which, as we shall see, permeates all of his work, is with self-understanding; here he tries to read the constitution of the self from the constitution of symbolic language. But the possibility is not confronted of radically opposed notions or interpretations of the constitution of the self. Even the various myths, each expressing a different understanding of man in his relationship to being and the sacred, are dialectically related to one another in a cycle of myths, all of which are deciphered according to the method of the phenomenology of religion. The turn to hermeneutics is manifest through the concern for deciphering expression, language, text. Structural phenomenology has become a phenomenology of language. But the anti-phenomenology of reductive hermeneutics is not confronted head-on as an alternative route to the understanding of man, his destiny or fate, his place in the cosmos.

Nevertheless, it is important to analyze the underlying significance of Ricoeur's hermeneutic turn as this is manifested in The Symbolism of Evil,

for this will help us see the meaning of one of the opening statements of Freud and Philosophy, a statement which locates the field of Ricoeur's advancing efforts at philosophical reflection. For the broad horizon within which Ricoeur poses the problem of conflicting hermeneutical styles and indeed at least his entire work on Freud, if not the remainder of his whole philosophical project, is that provided by the problem of the unity of human language. Language is the area where today all philosophical investigations cut across one another. "Today we are in search of a comprehensive philosophy of language to account for the multiple functions of the human act of signifying and for their interrelationships . . . . Today the unity of human language poses a problem."[34]

When phenomenology takes a hermeneutic turn, the object correlate of subjective representation is exchanged for the field of language or expression. It is this exchange that marks the difference between a phenomenology of perception and phenomenology of language. The order of culture and history, the subject in his cultural setting, rather than the questions of nature and psychology, become the underlying intention of hermeneutic phenomenology. (That this is the case can be seen already in the contrast between Heidegger, on the one hand, and Husserl and Merleau-Ponty on the other). Phenomenology becomes interpretation because it becomes a matter of understanding man's experience by understanding his expressions. Language, especially symbolic language, rescues feeling from silence and confusion.[35] But this interpretation remains phenomenology, because it reflects the latter's concern for the object, in this case the expression. Hermeneutic thinking does not try to explain the symbols by reaching behind them but starts from the symbols and follows the

indications which they give. "Symbols alone give what they say."[36] "The symbol gives rise to thought."[37] Phenomenology thus becomes a reenactment in sympathetic imagination, an imaginative repetition of the symbol.[38] This sympathy is not an immediate belief, a first, prephilosophical naiveté, but a second naiveté. It steps away from the immediacy of meaning of the believing soul so as to display the intentionality of the symbol. This intentionality often needs to be recovered because of the historical or cultural gap between its original "intending subject" and the phenomenologist. Besides, the modern tools of historical research often do not permit a literal immediacy of belief. Hermeneutics, however, still renders appropriation and recovery possible, in fact more authentic than immediate belief.[39] As we shall see, this removal of immediacy on the part of restorative hermeneutics itself enters into the dialectical resolution of the hermeneutic conflict. The myth can no longer be accepted as explanatory or etiological; this demythologization, however, says nothing about its exploratory function, its function as itself hermeneutic or interpretative of man, his destiny, his place in the cosmos.[40] Thus Ricoeur hopes "to elevate the symbols to the rank of existential concepts."[41] Ihde highlights the Kantian impositions which Ricoeur has placed upon this exploration in the realm of symbol. The imaginative symbol aims at an intuition of a cosmic whole to which man is related. This plenitude is not given, even in the symbol, but simply intended--in fact, this is why symbols are symbols; they are intentions without fulfillments. The field of experience which symbols open up can be existentially verified in intention, not in actuality.[42]

Ricoeur employs both an analytic procedure of outlining symbolic and mythical structures and a dynamic or dialectical procedure of relating symbols and myths to one another either in an evolutionary perspective or by showing relations of transposition. Myth is a second-order symbol which adds to primary symbols the temporal characteristics of narrative. Myths, however, retain the analogical structure of primary symbols.[43] The "fullness of language" which belongs to symbols in Ricoeur's hermeneutics results from this double intentionality of the symbol. The relationship between the first and second meanings is not arbitrary--thus, a symbol is other than a sign--nor is the second meaning reducible to the first. As we shall see, this fullness places the symbol at an extreme remove from any formalized language. The symbol is too bound to its primary and secondary content to be subject to the manipulations to which formalized languages such as "symbolic logic" deliver themselves.

The only symbols which Ricoeur chooses to examine are those which can broadly be referred to as "Western." The reasons for this, it would seem, are at least twofold: first, he wants to do a philosophical analysis of these symbols, and philosophy itself is Greek in origin; thus perhaps the religions which may be interpreted philosophically, at least with relative ease, are numerically limited.[44] Secondly, philosophical consciousness has itself become a matter of reflection (the precise meaning of which we shall see shortly). The Western myths of evil display a relative nearness or distance to the quality of reflection displayed in philosophical awareness and activity--

the symbols of defilement and the purely cosmological myths being furthest removed, the symbols of guilt and the Adamic myth being nearest.

Finally, it should be noted that, in a full exposition of Ricoeur's philosophical development, The Symbolism of Evil would be treated not simply for the light it throws upon the further hermeneutical developments of Freud and Philosophy but principally as an integral continuation of Ricoeur's original philosophic project on the philosophy of the will. Methodologically, it marks a hermeneutic turn precisely because this original project demanded a turn to the "language of avowal." At the hermeneutic level Ricoeur discovers, in the concept of the servile will, the same balance of act and habit which his earlier phenomenological investigations had revealed on the more abstract levels of "freedom and nature" and "fallibility."

II. PHILOSOPHICAL REFLECTION AND THE HERMENEUTICAL CONFLICT

It is Ricoeur's contention that philosophical reflection is capable both of resolving any hermeneutic conflict and of revealing that such conflicts are provisional.[45] No other mediation of the conflict is possible; the debate must be moved into philosophical reflection and the standpoint of a transcendental method must be adopted.[46] Psychoanalysis in particular and the hermeneutic war in general provide a critical point for reflective thought and only at this level can the question be dealt with. The issue has become philosophical.

Reflection is defined by Ricoeur in Freud and Philosophy as "the appropriation of our effort to exist and of our desire to be, through the works which bear witness to that effort and desire."[47] Here we shall discuss the general relation of this definition to the previous history of notions of what philosophy is, the recourse of symbols to reflection, and the necessary recourse of reflection itself to language and symbols, and thus to hermeneutics.

A. Notions of Philosophy

Ricoeur maintains (correctly, I believe) that his notion of philosophy stands within the broad tradition extending from Descartes to contemporary times--a tradition of thinkers for whom the Cogito, ergo sum, the positing of the self, is a first truth which can neither be verified nor deduced. But

there have been many differing notions concerning the way in which the self is given up to philosophical reflection, i.e., the way in which philosophy knows the self and becomes self-knowledge. Basically these differing notions can be divided according to whether they regard the Ego of the Cogito as a datum for naive immediacy, as given in psychological evidence, intellectual intuition, or mystical vision, or whether they maintain that the positing of the self can only be retrieved by a detour through the non-self. For Cartesian philosophy (and rationalism in general?) consciousness is the birthplace of meaning; the self as self is given in immediate consciousness. But for a reflective philosophy, this is not the case. "The first truth--I am, I think--remains as abstract and empty as it is invincible; it has to be 'mediated' by the ideas, actions, works, institutions, and monuments that objectify it. It is in these objects, in the widest sense of the word, that the Ego must lose and find itself."[48]

Ricoeur differs, however, from Kant in maintaining that philosophical reflection is not simply a critique of knowledge nor are the only critical operations to be examined those that ground the objectivity of our representations. Epistemology is only a part of the far broader concern of philosophical reflection: to recover the act of existing, the positing of the self, the Sum of the Cogito, in all the density of its works. Such a recovery is characterized as appropriation or reappropriation because ". . . I must recover something which has first been lost; I make 'proper to me' what has ceased being mine. I make 'mine' what I am separated from by space or time, by distraction or 'diversion,' or because of some culpable forgetfulness. . .

I do not at first possess what I am." Reflection thus becomes "the task of making my concrete experience equal to the positing of the 'I am.'"[49] The emergence of our effort to exist or our desire to be--the Sum of the Cogito--is delivered to reflection only through works whose meaning remains doubtful and revocable. Reflection must have recourse to hermeneutics.

B. The Recourse of Symbols to Reflection

As a result of the hermeneutic turn in The Symbolism of Evil, Ricoeur took as a guide for further work the aphorism, "the symbol gives rise to thought." Symbols and myths are prephilosophical but they instruct and nourish philosophical reflection. In line with the tradition of rationality present in Western philosophy, they can be treated by a philosophical exegesis which regards them as exploratory pointers opening upon a world of meaning. Symbols call not only for interpretation but for philosophical reflection, in the sense indicated above, because through symbols an attempt is made "to generalize human experience on the level of a universal concept or paradigm in which we can read our condition and destiny."[50] While the semantic over-determination of symbols calls for interpretation, the paradigmatic quality of myths gives rise to philosophical reflection. In myth, symbols take on a heuristic value, conferring "universality, temporality, and ontological import upon our self-understanding."[51]

C. The Recourse of Reflection to Symbols and Hermeneutics

We have already seen why reflection must have recourse to symbols and turn to hermeneutics for assistance in fulfilling its own task. Here we shall deal with Ricoeur's handling of three rather serious objections to this

thesis. This examination should help to sharpen our notion of what he means by reflection and prepare us proximately to study how he mediates the hermeneutic war.

The first difficulty in maintaining that reflection must have recourse to symbols arises from the fact that symbols are caught within the diversity of languages and cultures and espouse their irreducible singularity. . . . Does not philosophical science require that the singularity of cultural creations and individual memories be reabsorbed into the universality of discourse?"[52] Can philosophy derive its universality from contingent cultural creations?

Ricoeur counters this objection by pointing to the relativity of all philosophy, in fact of every point of view. Philosophy must lose its pretension to universality, at least if it is to be concrete reflection.

> . . . the philosopher does not speak from nowhere: every question he can pose rises from the depths of his Greek memory; the field of his investigation is thereby unavoidably oriented. . . . Through this contingency of historical encounters we have to discern reasonable sequences between scattered cultural themes.[53]

Obviously such discernment calls for interpretation.

The second objection states that the constitutive double meaning of symbols renders them equivocal. "Can philosophy systematically cultivate the equivocal?"[54] Can it build its rigor upon equivocal significations? The existence of "symbolic logic," whose intent is to eliminate equivocation from argumentation, only increases this problem. Symbolic logic calls into question the very raison d'être of hermeneutics.[55]

Only if the work of philosophical reflection--i.e., the appropriation of our effort to exist and desire to be--can be shown to demand a logic of double meaning can the objections presented by symbolic logic be met. In a transcendental sense, it must be shown that one of the conditions of the possibility of such appropriation is a logic of double meaning, "a logic that is complex but not arbitrary, rigorous in its articulations but irreducible to the linearity of symbolic logic. . . . If the advocate of hermeneutics does not carry the discussion to this level, he will soon be driven into an untenable position."[56] Thus equivocal expressions must be shown to have an a priori role in the movement of self-appropriation by self. Ricoeur seems to regard as obvious that a transcendental logic, whose task it is "to extricate by a regressive method the notions presupposed in the constitution of a type of experience and a corresponding type of reality,"[57] can display the a priori necessity of a logic of double meaning pertaining to the various works of man found in culture and history and thus its necessity for philosophical reflection. Such a transcendental logic will bolster the arguments against a strict logicism: namely, that univocity is required only for the discourse of argument; that reflection can and must be distinguished from definitional thinking; and that reflection falls outside of the positivistic alternative between factual information and emotional or hortatory language.[58]

The third objection states that the conflict of opposed hermeneutical styles renders reflection's recourse to symbols and interpretation problematic. "Can [philosophy] subject its vow of coherence to the fluctuations of an indecisive conflict between rival interpretations?"[59] Ricoeur meets

this objection simply by stating the project of the remainder of his study on Freud: ". . . to destroy the idols, to listen to symbols--are not these . . . one and the same enterprise? Indeed, the profound unity of the demystifying and the remythicizing of discourse can be seen only at the end of an ascesis of reflection."[60] Both hermeneutical approaches are alike in that they shift the origin of meaning away from immediate consciousness. Thus both can set true philosophical reflection in motion, for ". . . it is no doubt necessary for us to be separated from ourselves, to be set off center, in order finally to know what is signified by the I think, I am."[61] The crucial question posed by both hermeneutics is the same: "Can the dispossession of consciousness to the profit of another home of meaning be understood as an act of reflection, as the first gesture of reappropriation?"[62] If the answer is affirmative, then the hermeneutic war may well be provisional, not definitive.

The first objection represented a crisis of language, the second a crisis of interpretation, and the third a crisis of reflection. In Ricoeur's view, these can only be overcome together. If reflection is to become concrete, it must become hermeneutic. The fact that there is no general hermeneutics leads reflection to try to arbitrate the war and a pari to enlarge its own capacities to the point of being able to deliver a critique of interpretations.

III. REFLECTION AND DIALECTIC

A. Reflection and Archeology

After an extensive and involved analytic reading of Freud, Ricoeur moves to the point of trying to integrate Freudian discourse, understood here as a prime example of demystifying hermeneutics, into philosophical reflection. Freudian discourse enters into philosophical reflection by providing an "archeology of the subject."[63]

Freud's work is motivated by an intention to provide a critique of immediate consciousness, a decentering of the home of significations, a displacement of the birth of meaning. His topography and economies make me completely homeless, forcing me to admit the inadequacy of immediate consciousness despite the apodictic and irrefutable character of the Cogito, ergo sum. A twofold movement permeates Freudian discourse: a displacement of meaning away from consciousness toward the unconscious and a recapturing of meaning in interpretation. Even the apodictic, though empty, character of the Cogito, ergo sum never figures as such in Freud's systematization; the ego functions only as an economic function. Nevertheless, the movement of interpretation is a first step toward "becoming conscious" in the sense of becoming equal to the authentic Cogito. This movement of interpretation is possible only because instincts, however unknowable and unapproachable, are designated in the psychism by ideas and affects that represent them; thus, there is a certain homogeneity between the unconscious and consciousness. And the reality of the psychical representatives exists only for interpretation. "The reality of the unconscious. . . is relative to the operations that give it meaning."[64]

Reflection can speak of the emergence of desire, which Ricoeur equates with the Sum at the heart of the Cogito, under the rubric of an archeology of the subject. To do so, it examines the Freudian economics, which becomes for philosophy not simply a model but a total view of things and of man in the world of things, a revelation of the archaic, a manifestation of the ever prior.

Dreams and neuroses reveal the unconscious to be timeless in character and desire thus to be "unsurpassable." Such an archeology climaxes in the theory of narcissism, "the original form of desire to which one always returns."[65] Since ideals and illusions are the analogues of dreams and neuroses, the psychoanalytic interpretation of culture is also an archeology. This archeology culminates in Freud's critique of religion, "the universal obsessional neurosis of mankind."[66] The ethical world, too, and the super-ego which accounts for it, are seen to have distinctively archaic features, and the death instinct is the archaic index of all the instincts and of the pleasure principle itself. Man is drawn backward, by a detemporalizing agency, to a destiny in reverse.

Can this archeology be understood within a philosophy of reflection? To answer this question we must first ask about the ultimate meaning of the economic point of view. There is a point within the economic perspective where the fate of the affective representatives of an instinct no longer coincides with that of the ideational representatives. At this point, psychoanalysis becomes the borderline knowledge of that which, in representation, does not

pass into ideas--i.e., desire qua desire, "the mute, the nonspoken and non-speaking, the unnameable at the origin of speech."[67] Only the energy metaphors of the economics can speak this muteness. This regressive movement of psychoanalysis designates, from the border, the Sum of the Cogito. "Just as the 'relinquishing' of consciousness in a topography is intelligible only because of a 'recapture' in the act of becoming conscious, so too a pure economics of desire is intelligible only as the possibility of recognizing the emergence of desire in the series of its derivatives, in the density and at the borderline of the signifying."[68] Desire is at the origin of language and prior to language. Thus, drawing upon Leibniz, Ricoeur states: ". . . as standing for objects or things, representation is pretension to truth; but it is also the expression of life, expression of effort or appetite."[69] "Desire is both the nonspoken and the wish-to-speak, the unnameable and the potency to speak."[70]

What does such an archeology tell us about human existence? Our representations must be studied, not only by an epistemology which views them as intentional relations ruled by objects (as in phenomenology), but also by an exegesis of the desires that lie hidden in that intentionality. Thus human knowledge is not autonomous but rooted in existence, desire, and effort. Epistemology is but one part of reflective philosophy. It is life alone that is unsurpassable. Desire tends to interfere with man's intentionality, and thus truth becomes, not a given, but a task.

This dependence of the knowing subject on the emergence of desire cannot be grasped in immediate experience. It can only be interpreted, deciphered through dreams, fantasies, and myths, "the indirect discourse of [the] mute darkness" of desire.[71] Reflective consciousness must move with Ricoeur beyond structural phenomenology and the phenomenology of perception to hermeneutic phenomenology, for only hermeneutics can understand this rootedness of reflection in life. The hermeneutic turn proves to be justified in terms of the very interest and project of philosophical reflection.

B. Archeology and Teleology

Philosophical reflection has not finished with Freud. The concept of an archeology must, for the sake of concreteness, be placed in a relationship of dialectical opposition with the concept of teleology. Only through such a relationship can reflection become concrete. A second dispossession of immediate consciousness is required, precisely for the sake of "becoming conscious," of attaining to the true being of the subject. This process of becoming conscious, of appropriating the meaning of one's existence, is mediated through figures which give a goal to the process. These figures constitute what Ricoeur, following Hegel, calls "spirit" or "mind." They determine a new decentering of meaning away from immediate consciousness. Heuristically, we may say that to understand the relation between these two dispossessions of consciousness is to understand that the hermeneutical conflict can be resolved. The dialectic of archeology and teleology is "the true philosophical basis for understanding the complementarity of opposed

hermeneutics in relation to the mytho-poetic formations of culture."[72]

The concepts of Freudianism are far more dialectical in nature than Freud himself admitted. Freudianism may be an explicit and thematized archeology, but it relates in and of itself to an implicit and unthematized teleology, much as Hegel's Phenomenology of Mind is an explicit teleological account of the achieving of consciousness, but emerging out of the substrate of life and desire, and thus an implicit archeology.[73]

Hegel presents a phenomenology of figures, categories, and symbols which guide the developmental process along the lines of a progressive synthesis. Man becomes adult by assuming the new forms of master-slave, stoic thought, skepticism, the unhappy consciousness, service of the devoted mind, etc., which serially constitute "spirit." A given consciousness must encounter and appropriate these spheres of meaning if it is to reflect itself as a self, a human, adult, conscious self. Consciousness is the internalization of this movement, which must be captured in the objective structures of institutions, monuments, works of art and culture. Consciousness becomes self-consciousness only through this mediation, thus only by allowing a shift of the center of meaning away from itself just as much as in psychoanalysis.

Ricoeur takes two leading themes of Hegelian phenomenology[74] as guides in the development of a Freudian dialectic: its form and its content. The form of Hegelian dialectic is that of a progressive synthesis in which each figure receives its meaning from the subsequent one. Regarding content,

what is at stake in the progressive synthesis is the production of the self of self-consciousness. The form contrasts with the analytic and regressive character of psychoanalysis. The self that is at stake cannot figure in a topography or an economics. The "education" of the self is not understood economically as a return to narcissism from object-libido. The self in itself will only know itself in reflection, where the self is finally for itself. The way is open for creativity, since each moment includes in its certainty an element of the not-known that all the later moments mediate and make explicit. In contrast, Freudianism appears to be a strange and profound philosophy of fate. Whereas spirit has its meaning in later forms or figures, the unconscious means that intelligibility always proceeds from earlier figures. "Spirit is history and the unconscious is fate."[75]

Nevertheless, the Freudian problematic appears within Hegelian phenomenology. The emergence of desire is central to the spiritual process of the reduplication of consciousness; the satisfaction of desire is inherent in the self-recognition of achieved self-consciousness. The education of the self proceeds on and arises from the substrate of life and desire. Life is the obscure density which self-consciousness, in its advance, reveals behind itself as the source of the synthetic movement. Life and desire are both surpassed, in the sense of being progressively mediated, and unsurpassable, in the sense of being originary.

Conversely, the Hegelian problematic is within Freudianism. Ricoeur finds that three areas of Freudianism reveal an implicit teleology: the theory's

operative concepts, the notion of identification, and the question of sublimation.

By "operative concepts," Ricoeur means concepts that Freud uses but does not thematize. Principal among these is the intersubjective nature of the analytic situation, which contrasts with the solipsism of the topography. Because of this intersubjectivity, the analytic relation between patient and analyst can be understood as "a dialectic of consciousness, rising from life to self-consciousness, from the satisfaction of desire to the recognition of the other consciousness."[76] By the attainment of the equality of the two consciousnesses, the patient is no longer alienated, no longer another; he has become a self. Even more important, the therapeutic relation serves as a "mirror image in reviving a whole series of situations all of which were already intersubjective. . . . All the dramas psychoanalysis discovers are located on the path that leads from 'satisfaction' to 'recognition.'"[77]

The genesis of the superego in Freudian theory also relates to an unthematized teleological dialectic by reason of the concept of identification. Because of the external nature of authority, an <u>acquired</u> differentiation of desire takes place, along with a semantics of <u>ideals</u>. Again, this differentiation is homologous to the Hegelian reduplication of consciousness. The desire in question here, one which precedes the Oedipus complex and is strengthened by its dissolution, is the <u>desire to be like</u>. This process of consciousness-to-consciousness can be understood only by an interpretation other than the metapsychology. It is a process which founds affectionate trends

of feeling and cultural objects. As such, it eludes the economics. Freud's writings can thus be reread from the standpoint of the emergence of self-consciousness.[78]

Finally, there is the question of sublimation, which is only a question in Freud's theory. The more Freud distinguishes sublimation from the other mechanisms, and in particular from repression and reaction-formation, the more its own mechanism remains unexplained. Sublimation is a displacement of energy, but not a repression of it. It precedes and embraces all of the formations derived by way of esthetic transfer of sensual pleasure from erotogenic zones or by way of desexualization of the libido during the dissolution of the Oedipus complex. Ultimately, the task of becoming I, the finality of analysis, a task set within the economics of desire, is in principle irreducible to the economics.[79]

IV. CONCRETE REFLECTION

The dialectic of archeology and teleology is the first step leading from abstract reflection to concrete reflection. To understand that symbols are the area of identity between progression and regression is fully to enter into concrete reflection and to demonstrate most dramatically that reflection needs to have recourse to symbols.

The key to the solution of the hermeneutic conflict lies in the dialectic between archeology and teleology. These are found together in the concrete "mixed texture" of the symbol. These two lines of interpretation find their point of intersection in the meaningful texture of symbols. Symbols are thus the concrete, though not immediate, moment of the dialectic. After thought, after the ascesis of reflection, after the decentering of the origin of meaning away from immediate consciousness--and only after--may one return to the simple attitude of listening to symbols, the "second naiveté." "In order to think in accord with symbols one must subject them to a dialectic; only then is it possible to set the dialectic within interpretation itself and come back to living speech."[80] This is the transition to concrete reflection. "In returning to the attitude of listening to language, reflection passes into the fullness of speech simply heard and understood."[81]

> Let us not be mistaken about the meaning of this last stage: this return to the immediate is not a return to silence, but rather to the spoken word, to the fullness of language. Nor is it a return to the dense enigma of initial, immediate speech, but to speech that has been instructed by the whole process of meaning. Hence this concrete reflection does not imply any concession to

> irrationality or effusiveness. In its return to the spoken word, reflection continues to be reflection, that is, the understanding of meaning; reflection becomes hermeneutic; this is the only way in which it can become concrete and still remain reflection. The second naivete is not the first naivete; it is postcritical and not precritical; it is an informed naiveté.[82]

Ricoeur's thesis is formulated as follows:

> . . . what psychoanalysis calls overdetermination cannot be understood apart from a dialectic between two functions which are thought to be opposed to one another but which symbols coordinate in a concrete unity. Thus the ambiguity of symbolism is not a lack of univocity but is rather the possibility of carrying and engendering opposed interpretations, each of which is self-consistent.[83]

Symbols carry two vectors--repetition of our childhood, in all senses, and exploration of our adult life. But these two functions are not external to one another; they constitute the overdetermination of authentic symbols. Authentic symbols are truly regressive-progressive; remembrance gives rise to anticipation, archaism to prophecy.

The intentional structure of symbols may be described in terms of the unity of concealing and showing. At this point, Ricoeur becomes, I believe, very similar to Heidegger in the latter's notions of truth and language. True symbols both disguise and reveal. While they conceal the aims of our instincts, they disclose the process of self-consciousness. "Disguise, reveal; conceal, show; these two functions are no longer external to one another; they express the two sides of a single symbolic function. . . . Advancement of meaning occurs only in the sphere of the projections of desire, of the derivatives of the unconscious, of the revivals of archaism. . . . The opposed hermeneutics disjoin and decompose what concrete reflection recom-

poses through a return to speech simply heard and understood."[84]

Freud's inadequate theory of symbolism and language leads Ricoeur to suggest that we distinguish various levels of creativity within the symbolic realm. At the lowest level we come upon "sedimented symbolism," symbols so encrusted with age and worn with use that they have nothing but a past. Such are the symbols of dreams, fairy tales, and legends. At a higher level are symbols that function, often without our knowing it, in ordinary human commerce. Interestingly enough, Ricoeur states that these are the symbols appropriate for study by structural anthropology.[85] Finally, there is the level of prospective symbols, creations of meaning which take up the traditional symbols with their multiple significations and serve as the vehicles of new meanings. The task of one concerned with the future symbolic capabilities of man is to grasp symbols in this creative moment, not when they arrive at the end of their course and are revived in dreams.[86]

V. THE HERMENEUTICS OF THE SACRED

After applying this notion of symbol to the affective feelings connected with relations of having, power, and honor or worth, and to cultural objects with the example of Sophocles' Oedipus Rex, Ricoeur moves at last to the problem of the interpretation of the sacred, the hermeneutics of religious symbolism. He immediately confesses that his method of reflective thought does not enable us to solve the question of religious symbolism in a radical way, but merely serves to give us a frontier view of this symbolism. The reason for this is that a problematic of faith--even the very existence of such a problematic--exceeds the resources of a philosophy of reflection. A philosophy of reflection is a philosophy of immanence. If there is a problematic of religious faith, it is because man has been addressed by an Other. Such a problematic occurs in another dimension, that of call, kerygma, word addressed to me. This new dimension concerns the radical origin of the I will, the radical "Yes" or "No" said to the mystery of reality, the very effectiveness of the act of willing. Presumably it is at this level that Ricoeur will be operating in his "poetics of the will." No extrapolation from the archeology and teleology to genesis and eschatology would be tolerated by Ricoeur.

Nevertheless, the field of the problematic of faith is the same as that explored in philosophical reflection. The movement from faith to understanding is a hermeneutic movement and consequently encounters a dialectic

of reflection. Radically, the question of faith is hermeneutic because God, for faith, becomes an event of human speech and thus can be recognized only in interpretation of this speech. To believe is to listen to the call, but to hear the call we must interpret the message. Thus, in Anselmian fashion, we must believe in order to understand and understand in order to believe.

In this way, because of its initiative in becoming immanent to human speech, the Wholly Other does indeed become discernible in and through the dialectic of teleology and archeology. The radical origin becomes discernible in the question of my archeology, the final end in the question of my teleology. This is not by extension or extrapolation of these concepts. Rather, creation and eschatology are the horizon of archeology and teleology, approaching without ever becoming a possessed object. A hermeneutics of the sacred can offer to philosophical reflection new symbolic expressions which can indeed further the work of self-appropriation. A phenomenology of the sacred, however, is not a continuation of a phenomenology of spirit. A rupture has occurred between the two. Hegelian phenomenology, given free rein, tends to move toward a completely mediated self-knowledge, absolute knowledge. This is its eschaton. But a problematic of faith reveals that reflection cannot thus turn in upon itself and achieve its proper meaning in this way. For such a problematic originates with the unsurpassable fact of evil. The symbols of evil resist systematic treatment by rational knowledge. Evil cannot be dissolved in dialectic but is something ultimately inscrutable. The symbols

of evil show that symbolism cannot be swallowed up by absolute knowledge.[87]

In relation to evil as unjustifiable, the sacred appears as reconciliation. Thus there is also a symbolism of reconciliation which invites thought on the part of the understanding of faith. The lineaments of an eschatology that is both symbolic and reasonable, an eschatology that can only be approached, viewed from the borderline, by reflection at the horizon of a teleology of consciousness, are summarized by Ricoeur in three formulas: 1) every reconciliation is looked for "in spite of" evil; 2) out of evil God brings good ("thanks to"); 3) where sin abounds, grace superabounds ("much more"). There is no absolute knowledge of these categories. They cannot be proven but only deciphered by a believing consciousness in the sign of a promise. They are the highest rational symbols which an eschatology can engender by means of its threshold or frontier understanding.

The relationship between the figures of spirit and the symbols of the sacred is very fragile. From the viewpoint of the philosophy of reflection, the symbols of the sacred appear only as cultural factors mixed in with the figures of spirit. But they also designate the impact on culture of a reality which the movement of culture does not contain--the Wholly Other. They exercise an attraction and a call upon the entire series of the figures of culture. The sacred is the eschatology of the philosophy of reflection by its relation to the immanent teleology of the figures of culture. Reflection can only salute the horizon of the sacred as that which quietly presents itself

from afar.[88] Eschatological symbols reveal another dependence of the Cogito, a dependence upon the ultimate.

The relationship of a phenomenology of the sacred to the psychoanalysis of religion is no more one of pure antithesis than is the relation of archeology and teleology. Rather an authentic problematic of faith implies a hermeneutics of demystification. Once again, a dialectical relationship is established.

The need for a demystifying hermeneutics within a problematic of faith is due to the objectifying tendencies of the human spirit, which tends to reabsorb transcendence in immanence. What is only a horizon, by a kind of diabolic conversion, becomes transformed into an object. Man tends to grasp hold of the Wholly Other, to objectify and use it, to create sacred objects, not to be content with signs of the sacred. This objectifying process is the origin of metaphysics and "religion" (as opposed to "faith"). Metaphysics makes God into a supreme being; religion treats the sacred as a new sphere of objects, institutions, and powers within the world of immanence and alongside the objects, institutions, and powers of the economic, political, and cultural spheres. Religion becomes the reification and alienation of faith, vulnerable to the blows of a hermeneutics of suspicion, whether the latter be a process of demythologization from within religion or of demystification from without. The aim of both is the death of the metaphysical and religious object.

Such a cultural movement, as exemplified in Freudianism, is necessary if we are to hear and read the signs of the approach of the Wholly Other. We

are faced with a never-ending task of distinguishing between the faith of religion--faith in the Wholly Other which draws near--and belief in the religious object. The task is very difficult and demanding, mainly because it calls for such a merciless exegesis of our own reference to the sacred. Do we allow religious symbols to point to the horizon of transcendence and to do only this or do we make them an idolatrous reality to which we assign a separate place in our culture, thereby condemning religion to the ineffectiveness witnessed in most organized Churches and religious bodies today?

The task demanded by Ricoeur is particularly difficult, I believe, for one committed to the possibility of authentic sacramentality. For he must admit that many of the ritual practices within his own community reflect indeed at least a "universal obsessional neurosis of mankind" if not a demonic objectifying of the sacred. Sacramental religions probably have even more of a tendency than religions of word to reify the sacred and capitulate to man's idolizing tendencies. The combat over the sacred must become much more heated, it would seem, in those religious communities where, because of an insistence on sacramentality, the ambiguity of the sacred is more pronounced.

The task demanded by Ricoeur is very demanding in another realm too, that of creating a sufficiently nuanced relationship between faith and culture, religious communities and public life, authentic religion and profane institutions. Particularly in this area is there a strong tendency to objectify and use the sacred for the pursuit of goals which are not connected with the problematic of faith. The facile use of the word "Christian," to the point of

rendering it a meaningless symbol with only a past, is a clear instance of this tendency--"Christian" university, "Christian" nation, "Christian" political party, even "Christian" culture. Is the word any longer a symbol in which the Wholly Other draws near or has it been turned into an object alongside other cultural objects? "The idols must die so that symbols may live."[89]

The psychoanalysis of religion can be one of the roads toward the death of the religious object. It can aid us in charging the affective dynamism of religious belief to the point where the latter becomes, not simply the consolation of the child in us, but the adult power of loving in the face of hatred and death. It can help us discern that kerygmatic faith excludes a moral God and a penal Christology.[90] It forces us to acknowledge that every symbol of the sacred is also and at the same time a revival of an infantile and archaic symbol, and thus to admit the ambiguity of all religious symbolism and religious experience. It can aid us in moving toward the suspension of the ethical point of view, moving beyond an ethics of righteousness, losing the immediate consolation of our own narcissism. It can purify the hermeneutics of faith to the point where the latter becomes unambiguously the symbolic exploration of ultimate relationships, of the language of a call in which "I leave off all demands and listen."[91] It is indeed true that the faith of the believer cannot emerge intact from such a confrontation.[92] On the other hand, Ricoeur seems to provide a solid basis for claiming that, despite the supposed origin of religious symbols in instinctual impulses, their present meaning cannot be

exhausted by presenting their archeology. "The question here is not whether a given religious symbol is genetically a psychological projection, but rather whether, irrespective of its being such a projection, what it expresses analogically discloses a genuine aspect of reality."[93]

VI. QUESTIONS

It seems to me that three questions must be posed to Ricoeur concerning his procedure and his conclusions. These questions are posed from the standpoint of one who maintains that Bernard Lonergan's cognitional analysis[94] provides us with an invariant structure of human consciousness, that his theory of objectivity is correct (a theory missed by all of phenomenology to date, I believe), and that his later studies on meaning enable us to raise a question as to whether understanding, rather than language, ought to be the area where all philosophical (and theological) investigations cut across one another. These questions are by no means meant to downplay the critical significance of Ricoeur's work for philosophy and theology. Rather, they raise the possibility of a further intersubjective approximation to truth by comparing Ricoeur's problematic to that of Lonergan.

First, granted the validity of the transcendental method, i.e., of deducing a priori conditions for various domains of human experience, does not this method become truly transcendental only when the self-evident necessity and universality of certain a priori structures of human consciousness are found? I am not referring here to certain logical laws,[95] such as the principles of contradiction or sufficient reason, but to the possibility of arriving at a pattern and structure of human awareness which is in principle not subject to revision. This, I would maintain, Lonergan has done with invincible logic in arriving at the "levels" of experience, understanding, judgment, and decision.[96]

Secondly, must we say that our only knowledge of transcendence is symbolic, that every attempt to know the transcendent realm in another way is inevitably idolatrous? Here I think Ricoeur displays a perceptualist notion of objectivity, according to which objectivity is achieved as a result of doing something analogous to "taking a look." Objectivity is a correlate of conceptualization for Ricoeur. But if objectivity is rather a function of judgment (e.g., the judgment, "God is"), can we not say that God is an object of a non-symbolic knowing that is not idolatrous?

Finally, what is the normative status of linguistic usage for philosophy? Is not meaning at least logically prior to language and are not its structures independent of the contingencies of actual language? Is not actual language a vehicle of meaning rather than its logical presupposition?[97] Is not meaning a matter for understanding more radically than for language? Does not the emphasis on understanding provide philosophy with a starting-point that transcends dependence on actual usage?

To deal with these three areas of questions would demand much more extensive an investigation than that undertaken here--perhaps a doctoral dissertation (or three of them!)

FOOTNOTES

1. That there has been a turn from a structural phenomenology (a la Husserl but with qualifications) to a hermeneutic phenomenology or phenomenology of language is amply demonstrated by Don Ihde, Hermeneutic Phenomenology: The Philosophy of Paul Ricoeur, Evanston, Northwestern University Press, 1971, 192 p. Ricoeur acknowledges this turn in his Foreword to this book.

2. Ricoeur, Freud and Philosophy: An Essay on Interpretation (tr. from the French De l'Interprétation: Essai sur Freud by Denis Savage). New Haven: Yale University Press, 1970, pp. 30-32. (Henceforward this book will be designated FP).

3. Translated by Emerson Buchanan. Boston: Beacon Press, 1969. Henceforward this book will be designated SE.

4. See footnote 2. These works certainly stand in continuity with Ricoeur's earlier works. From a strictly philosophical point of view, Ricoeur's project may be viewed as moving toward a philosophical anthropology. As such, ". . . the basic problem of philosophical methodology is that of reconciling philosophy's traditional goal of rational universality and objectivity with the complex limitation placed on this goal by man's total existential involvement as entailing both a basic human and singularly individual finitude." Stuart C. Hackett, "Philosophical Objectivity and Existential Involvement in the Methodology of Paul Ricoeur," International Philosophical Quarterly, March, 1969, p. 12.

5. SE is part of a much larger project on the philosophy of the will. The first volume of this project is Freedom and Nature: The Voluntary and the Involuntary. Evanston, Northwestern University Press, 1966, tr. by Erazim Kohak. The second volume is to contain three parts, two of which have already been published: Fallible Man, tr. by Charles Kelbley, Chicago: Regnery, 1965, and SE. Freedom and Nature is referred to by Ricoeur as an "eidetics" of the will, employing the method of pure description in order to reveal in the abstract man's fundamental possibilities. Two important factors are omitted from this eidetics, fault and transcendence. Fallible Man and SE consider the domain of fault, the first from the standpoint of investigating that in man which permits fault to arise, the second by investigating hermeneutically the "language of avowal" as a way of dealing with the concrete manifestations of fault. Ricoeur has projected a third part to this second volume, in which he intends to formulate a philosophical anthropology, which will deal with man's "transcendence," and a third volume to his philosophy of the will, the poetics

of the will. Freud and Philosophy, while not part of the Philosophie de la volonté as such, sharpens the hermeneutical tools first used in SE and opens up the entire philosophical project upon the field of language, which Ricoeur has further investigated in more recent studies. How these investigations of language will affect his philosophical anthrophology and the study of the poetics of the will remains to be seen. It seems quite likely, though, that the hermeneutic emphasis will continue to be primary. See Charles Kelbley's "Translator's Introduction" to Fallible Man, pp. ix-xv, and Ihde, op. cit., p. 181.

[6] Bernard Lonergan, "Dimensions of Meaning," in Collection: Papers by Bernard Lonergan, New York: Herder and Herder, 1967, p. 266.

[7] FP, p. 27.

[8] It would seem that recent developments in Ricoeur's thinking extend double-meaning expressions to all language. The symbol loses its uniqueness in this respect, though it would still seem to be the domain of the "fullness of language." See Ihde, op. cit., p. 178. Certainly at the time of the writing of FP, he saw the area of double meanings as narrower than the theory of language as a whole. FP, p. 8.

[9] Ibid., p. 11. Cf. p. 9: "I have decided to define, i.e. limit, the notions of symbol and interpretation through one another. Thus a symbol is a double-meaning linguistic expression that requires an interpretation, and interpretation is a work of understanding that aims at deciphering symbols."

[10] Ibid., p. 12.

[11] Ibid., p. 16.

[12] Ibid.

[13] Ibid., p. 17.

[14] Ibid., pp. 18f.

[15] Ibid., pp. 7f.

[16] Ibid., p. 27.

[17] Ibid.

[18] Ibid.

[19] Ibid.

[20] Ibid., p. 31.

[21] Ibid., p. 32.

[22] Ibid., p. 29.

[23] Ibid., pp. 29f. Here we see a striking similarity with Heidegger's musings upon language. It is possible that Ricoeur would regard Heidegger's almost exclusive emphasis upon language's initiative with respect to man as an unfortunate romanticism; there is no question that Ricoeur considers other dimensions of the problem of language than does Heidegger, and employs a number of methods in attempting to deal with this problem. Nevertheless, at least this description quoted above bears a remarkable resemblance to Heidegger. Heidegger, of course, makes no explicit reference to the Johannine logos as such. For an enlightening discussion of Ricoeur's relation to Heidegger on the question of language, see Ihde, op. cit., pp. 171f. See also Martin Heidegger, On the Way to Language, tr. by Peter D. Heitz, New York: Harper and Row, 1971, and Poetry, Language, Thought, tr. by A. Hofstadter, New York: Harper and Row, 1971. Ricoeur's comments on Heidegger's dealings with language appear in the article, "Existence et herméneutique," Dialogue, IV, no. 1, 1965. For a broader and more inclusive discussion of Heidegger, and particularly of the Kehre, see Ricoeur's "The Critique of Subjectivity and Cogito in the Philosophy of Heidegger," in Heidegger and the Quest for Truth, ed. by M. Frings, pp. 62-75. Chicago: Quadrangle Press, 1968.

[24] FP, p. 31.

[25] Ibid.

[26] Ibid.

[27] Ibid., p. 32.

[28] Reason and Existenz, tr. by William Earle, New York: Noonday Press, p. 31.

[29] FP, p. 33.

[30] Ibid., p. 33.

[31] Ibid., pp. 33f. It is important to add that the hermeneuts of suspicion are no more detractors of consciousness than is Ricoeur himself. Rather, they aim at extending consciousness. Psychoanalysis, for example, aims "to substitute for an immediate and dissimulating consciousness a mediate consciousness taught by the reality principle." Ibid., p. 35.

[32] Ibid., pp. 35f. For the importance of the unifying role of imagination in Ricoeur's thought, see Fallible Man, pp. 26-71. Imagination is understood in the transcendental sense of Kant.

[33] See SE, p. 355: "I wager that I shall have a better understanding of man and the bond between the being of man and the being of all beings if I follow the indication of symbolic thought."

[34] FP, pp. 3f.

[35] See SE, p. 350.

[36] FP, p. 31.

[37] SE, p. 374; FP, p. 38.

[38] SE, p. 19.

[39] SE, p. 350.

[40] See SE, p. 5.

[41] Ibid., p. 357.

[42] See Ihde, op. cit., p. 102; SE, pp. 164, 167.

[43] See SE, p. 18.

[44] See SE, pp. 19-20. It is interesting that, in his writings on structuralism, Ricoeur pursues this notion further. Perhaps only those cultures and religions which are temporally and geographically most removed from Hebrew-Greek influence, or even untouched by it, are so susceptible to the structural analysis and reduction of Claude Lévi-Strauss. Religions influenced by Hebrew and/or Greek thought can certainly be dealt with by structural analysis, but not exclusively. Structural analysis would rather appear to be a first moment in a much more vast project of hermeneutics. See Paul Ricoeur, "Structure et herméneutique," Esprit, 1963.

[45] FP, p. 43.

[46] There seem to be as many variations of "transcendental method" as there are philosophers who employ the term, which would seem to render the use of the word "transcendental" questionable. Nevertheless, common to all variants there seems to be a pattern homologous to Kant's "deduction" of the conditions of objectivity. Ricoeur presupposes and uses the method of tracing aspects of man's knowledge and experience back to the essential conditions of its possibility, the a priori constituents of man's basic structure.

[47] FP, p. 46. Such a definition implies, over against Sartre, an acknowledgment of an affirmative act of existing at the basis of man's reality. See Hackett, op. cit., pp. 22f.

[48] FP, p. 43.

[49] Ibid., p. 45.

[50] Ibid., pp. 38f.

[51] Ibid., p. 39. The instance of the symbolism of evil, which we shall later see to be a privileged example, "the birthplace of the hermeneutic conflict taken in its full extent" (p. 40), provides us with another reason for the recourse of symbols to reflection: namely, the particularity of these symbols within a broader totality, their intrinsic reference to the symbols of salvation. The fact that each symbol belongs to a meaningful totality again calls for philosophical reflection. See p. 40.

[52] Ibid., p. 41.

[53] Ibid., p. 48. Philosophy's claim to universality was seen by Ricoeur in Fallible Man to be discredited also by man's disproportion with himself, because of which "man's linguistic, symbolic precomprehension of himself always contains a wealth of untranslated (and in principle untranslatable) meaning of which reflection can never become the equal without a loss of important dimensions of that self-understanding." Hackett, op. cit., p. 17. Nevertheless the transgression of philosophy's limits can be approached. The fact that reflection knows itself as limited means that it somehow stands above the limit. It can move to discover essential structures within human reality which condition objective self-expression. Nevertheless philosophy is never done with the task of "recovering the irrationality of its non-philosophical source in the rigor of reflection." Ibid., p. 18.

[54] FP, p. 41.

[55] Ricoeur's later linguistic investigations will reveal the opposite: all language is equivocal; the problem will be any supposed univocity. See Ihde, op. cit., p. 178.

[56] FP, p. 49.

[57] Ibid., p. 52.

[58] See ibid., p. 53.

[59] Ibid., p. 47.

[60] Ibid., p. 54.

[61] Ibid., p. 55.

[62] Ibid.

[63] Ibid., p. 419.

[64] Ibid., p. 436. Ricoeur expresses the reflective adventure contained in the Freudian metapsychology: ". . . the dispossession of consciousness is its path, because the act of becoming conscious is its task." Ibid., p. 439.

[65] Ibid., p. 445.

[66] Ibid., p. 447.

[67] Ibid., p. 454.

[68] Ibid.

[69] Ibid., p. 456.

[70] Ibid., p. 457.

[71] Ibid., p. 458. The nature of truth as task is dealt with elsewhere by Ricoeur from the standpoint of the contingent, existential limitations put upon philosophy's ambitioning of total universality. Truth is seen as an intersubjective task and philosophy as the developing insight of interacting perspectives expressing a common human reality. ". . . objectivity is achieved precisely as an ideal of total communication and interaction is approximated." Such communication is never complete but truth can be achieved in an atmosphere of eschatological hope. Hackett, op. cit., pp. 18f; see Ihde, op. cit., pp. 12-14.

[72] FP, p. 460.

[73] "I do not confuse Hegel with Freud, but I seek to find in Freud an inverted image of Hegel, in order to discern, with the help of this schema, certain dialectical features which, though obviously operative in analytic practice, have not found in the theory a complete systematic elaboration." Ibid., pp. 461f.

[74] On the growing importance of Hegel in Ricoeur's thinking, see Ihde, op. cit., p. 15.

[75] FP, p. 468.

[76] Ibid., p. 474.

[77] Ibid.

[78] See ibid., pp. 477-83.

[79] See ibid., pp. 483-93.

[80] Ibid., p. 495.

[81] Ibid., p. 496.

[82] Ibid.

[83] Ibid., p. 496.

[84] Ibid., p. 497.

[85] In other articles, Ricoeur has a different way of designating the symbols which can be directly dealt with by structuralism, without moving the structural analysis into a hermeneutics. This he does in terms of the symbols' nearness to or remoteness from, the Hebraic-Graeco world. See footnote 44.

[86] Ibid., pp. 504f.

[87] See ibid., pp. 524-7. Ricoeur thus "rejects Hegel's ideal of pure self-reflection as an adequate basis for the total understanding of man's being. . . [and] seriously questions the high-handed way in which Hegel seems to claim rational objectivity and final certainty for his own total view. . . . Hegel's ideal of rational universality is seen as refracted through the limiting conditions of man's finite existence." Hackett, op. cit., p. 13. Ricoeur's treatment of this problem in FP corroborates the insistence of SE that man can approach transcendence only through symbol and myth, in which he participates. The treatment of SE moves the symbols of evil into a central role in the establishment of a methodology for religious thought.

[88] FP, p. 529. Cf. Heidegger's notion of "thought hailing the holy."

[89] Ibid., p. 531.

[90] That theology is capable of such discernment apparently drawing almost exclusively upon its own resources is clear from Lonergan, De Verbo Incarnato, Rome: Gregorian, 1964, pp. 486-593.

[91] FP, p. 551.

[92] Ibid.

[93] Hackett, op. cit., p. 31.

[94] Insight: A Study of Human Understanding, New York: Philosophical Library, 1957.

[95] Hackett would like to push this objection in this direction. To do so, I believe, is to miss the point really demanded in response to Ricoeur's insistence that reflective philosophy itself is so culturally relative that no objective certainty can be had regarding its deliverances about the constitution of the self.

[96] See Insight, chapters 11 and 18.

[97] This is the most cogent of the objections raised by Hackett; see op. cit., p. 36. Lonergan has dealt masterfully with the question in Method in Theology, New York: Herder and Herder, 1972, pp. 254-257.