FROM EPISTEMOLOGY TO ONTOLOGY :

THE HERMENEUTIC CIRCLE OF DIFFERENCE AND

IDENTITY IN THE THOUGHT OF PAUL RICOEUR.

> '... on ne vit que ce qu'on
> imagine; et l'imagination
> métaphysique réside dans les
> symboles; même la Vie est
> symbole, image, avant que
> d'être éprouvée et vécue.'
> (S.M., p. 260)

by

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ABSTRACT

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IDENTITY IN THE THOUGHT OF PAUL RICOEUR.

This thesis has attempted to examine Paul Ricoeur's work as a whole. Its aim has been to enquire whether the dialectics of difference and identity played any essential part in his hermeneutic phenomenology.

The introduction gave an overall view of Ricoeur's writings situated within the contemporary landscape of French philosophy.

Part I set out to study Ricoeur's <u>abstract</u> phenomenology. The results obtained showed:

1. That Ricoeur's philosophical background, especially Husserl's phenomenology and Marcel's existentialism, had a deep influence on him;

2. That his structural phenomenology of the will, developed from an imaginative combination of Husserl's epistemological method and Marcel's ontological vision, to constitute a framework towards the understanding of <u>human nature</u>;

3. That 'man's non-coincidence with himself' brought an existential <u>distance</u> within structural <u>unity</u>, thus leading to an abstract reflection upon the structures of <u>human reality</u>, and to the disclosure of a 'fault'.

Part II enquired into the emergence of Ricoeur's hermeneutics, a turning point towards concrete phenomenology. This study demonstrated:

1. That the 'same' of meaning could be reached only indirectly through the 'other' of signs, of symbols and myths calling for interpretation;

2. That such an 'other' had to be critically deciphered if it was

to disclose the 'same' of consciousness;

3. That the structure of symbols, understood in terms of archaeology and teleology, explained the conflict of interpretations which, in turn, and when arbitrated, revealed a 'same'.

Part III studied Ricoeur's <u>concrete</u> phenomenology of language and narrative. This discussion showed:

1. That the hermeneutic circle of explanation and understanding was itself a dialectics of difference and identity, at the level of text and semantic innovation;

2. That identity could only be a <u>narrated identity</u> since man finds himself via the mediation of stories and histories.

Thus, the conclusion must be drawn that the dialectics of difference and identity is the touchstone beneath Ricoeur's hermeneutic phenomenology.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Full citations for the following works will be found in the bibliography. The items are listed in alphabetical order.

Antinomy	Paul Ricoeur: 'The Antinomy of Human Reality and the Problem of Philosophical Anthropology', 1960, in Charles Reagan and D. Stewart's The Philosophy of Paul Ricoeur, (1978).
C.I.	Paul Ricoeur: Le conflit des interprétations, (1969).
D.I.	Paul Ricoeur: De l'interprétation: essai sur Freud, (1965).
E.N.	Jean Paul Sartre: L'être et le néant, (1943).
E.P.C.	Gabriel Marcel: Essai de philosophie concrète, (1940).
H.F.	Paul Ricoeur: L'homme faillible, (1960).
I.T.	Paul Ricoeur: Interpretation Theory, (1976).
J.M.	Gabriel Marcel: Etre et avoir I: Journal métaphysique, (1928-1933).
Méthode	Paul Ricoeur: 'Méthode et tâches d'une phénoménologie de la volonté', in Problèmes actuels de la phénoménologie, (1952)
M.C.	Edmond Husserl: Méditations cartésiennes, (1931).
M.V.	Paul Ricoeur: La métaphore vive, (1975).
Response	Paul Ricoeur in John B. Thompson's Paul Ricoeur: Hermeneutics and the human sciences, (1981).
S.M.	Paul Ricoeur: La symbolique du mal, (1960).
The Task	Paul Ricoeur: 'The task of hermeneutics', (1973) in John B. Thompson's Paul Ricoeur: Hermeneutics and the human sciences, (1981).
T.R. 1	Paul Ricoeur: Temps et récit, volume I (1983).
T.R. 2	Paul Ricoeur: Temps et récit, volume II (1984).
T.R. 3	Paul Ricoeur: Temps et récit, volume III (1985).
L'Unité	Paul Ricoeur: 'L'unité du volontaire et de l'involontaire comme idée-limite' (1951) in Bulletin de la Société Française de Philosophie, 45.
V.I.	Paul Ricoeur: Le volontaire et l'involontaire, (1950).

Paul Ricoeur photographed at Burrell Gallery
during his visit to Glasgow in February 1986

6 l'Août 1984

Chère Madame,

Je réponds à votre lettre du 27 juin.

D'abord concernant mes projets voyage, je dois donner les Gifford Lectures à Edimbourg au printemps... 86! Vous aurez fini vos travaux en cours. Mais peut-être nous rencontrerons-nous pour en parler.

Je puis vous assurer que je crois nécessaire l'analyse d'œuvres contemporaines selon une méthode qui unisse l'analyse structurale interne et le visée d'un monde fictif, susceptible de servir de modèle à la compréhension quotidienne. Je le tente à la fin de Temps et Récit III qui paraîtra à l'automne. J'ai pris conscience que la Métaphore vive manquait d'analyses de textes. J'ai essayé de corriger ce défaut par d'assez longues analyses du monde temporel de V. Woolf, de Thomas Mann et de Marcel Proust.

Je serai heureux de continuer cette discussion avec vous.

Sincèrement

Paul Ricoeur

Letter sent by Paul Ricoeur to Danielle Piovano
in August 1984

INTRODUCTION

'Le même et l'autre'

> It is true that philosophy,
> in its traditional forms of onto-
> theology and logocentrism ... has
> come to an end. But it is not true
> of philosophy in the other sense of
> critical speculation and interroga-
> tion ... Indeed the whole contem-
> porary discourse of overcoming and
> deconstructing metaphysics is far
> more speculative in many respects
> than metaphysics itself. Reason is
> never so versatile as when it puts
> itself in question. In the contem-
> porary end of philosophy, philosophy
> has found a new lease of life. [1]

The following study is concerned with the philosophy of Professor Paul Ricoeur, which in our view, illustrates perfectly the 'new lease of life' envisaged by Emmanuel Lévinas. The principal argument of this thesis concerns the problem of identity and difference referred to in France as 'le même et l'autre'. This was chosen in response to the current post-structuralist problematic of anti-humanism that leads to the disappearance of the unity of the subject, together with the destruction of the all-powerful 'ego' and - even more disturbing - to the liquidation of identity, in a desperate attempt to think difference as difference, as the 'other', without subordinating it to the 'same'.

Paul Ricoeur's views are too deeply rooted in the tradition of phenomenology to follow such a trend, born of French Nietzscheanism, yet he does not ignore the current intellectual landscape in French philosophy. Rather, he meets the challenge by endorsing the necessity and value of 'suspicion', and by offering his own

1 Emmanuel Lévinas in Richard Kearney's Dialogues with contemporary Continental thinkers, (Manchester University Press, 1984, p.69)

conception of a wounded or split <u>Cogito</u> in reply to the notion of a 'multiplied' subject deprived of 'being'. His own account of subjectivity is made clear in the following statement in Richard Kearney's <u>Dialogues with contemporary Continental thinkers</u>:

> My hermeneutical philosophy has attempted to demonstrate the existence of an opaque subjectivity which expresses itself through the detour of countless mediations - signs, symbols, texts and human praxis itself. This hermeneutical idea of subjectivity as a dialectic between the self and mediated social meanings has deep moral and political implications. It shows that there is an <u>ethic of the word</u>, that language is not just the abstract concern of logic or semiotics , but entails the fundamental moral duty that people be responsible for what they say. (p. 32)

We wish to stress this relationship between ethics and language, between Ricoeur's fundamental quest for an ontology of human reality and his operative concept of the 'text', itself the epistemological cornerstone of his theory of interpretation. The idea of a 'fullness' of language that calls for interpretations leading to an understanding of being and of relations between beings, and to self-understanding, is a key figure throughout the prolific work of Paul Ricoeur. It constitutes the dialectic of distanciation and appropriation, of <u>difference</u> and <u>identity</u>. Both concepts are central to Ricoeurian hermeneutics but in the form of dialectics, even though dialectics was condemned in the nineteen sixties as an illusion, as 'la logique de l'identité'.

Vincent Descombes in <u>Le même et l'autre</u> describes this logic as 'la forme de pensée qui ne peut se représenter <u>l'autre</u> qu'en le réduisant au <u>même</u>, qui subordonne la différence à l'identité. A cette logique de l'identité est opposée une 'pensée de la différence'.' (p. 93).

We shall argue, in the following study, that the 'same' and the 'other' can be thought dialectically, without having to reduce

or liquidate either of them. In our reading of the work of Paul
Ricoeur, we shall both support this argument, and stress the
dominant position that his philosophy deserves in the post-
structuralism of the nineteen eighties. Paul Ricoeur has written
with originality and authority on a formidable range of topics and
we are convinced of the importance of his work for modern philosophy.
Hence, we find it very puzzling to see that his name appears only
once, in a small footnote, in Vincent Descombes' witty book which,
it should be remembered, was meant to be a guide to contemporary
French philosophy in the last forty years, for the benefit of
readers this side of the English Channel. Why is Ricoeur left out
of the 'tintamarre', that is to say, of what has been talked about
by the media and the educated public? Descombes makes it very clear
that he is introducing the reader to 'ce <u>dont on a parlé</u> dans un
certain territoire et à une certaine époque', and that his purpose
is only to report 'ce qui a fait du bruit dans l'auditoire le plus
vaste' (p. 12). But the author who gives the media the final say is
well aware that the public is not necessarily the best judge and that
such clamorous selectivity is unfair:

> ... puisqu'elle laisse de côté ce qui n'a pas
> été entendu par le public, ou ne l'a pas été au
> même degré, mais aurait parfois mérité de l'être.
> (p. 12)

We are convinced that the French public loses much by
ignoring Ricoeur's stimulating and enriching thought, which is
greatly needed today after the wave of nihilism and disillusionment
of the nineteen seventies. Professor Ricoeur is already highly
respected in North America as an outstanding representative of
hermeneutic phenomenology. Despite the fact that 'nul n'est
prophète en son pays', we believe that his time is also coming in
France. His latest book <u>Temps et Récit III: Le temps raconté</u>,

(November, 1985) has been awarded the pretigious Prix Hegel for 1985.

The method we shall follow throughout this thesis is very similar to Ricoeur's own reading of Freud in <u>De l'interprétation: essai sur Freud</u> (1965), and this for two reasons. Firstly, Ricoeur's systematic 'Lecture de Freud' impressed us by its fruitfulness. He describes it in his introduction in the following terms:

> Ce n'est pas une interprétation à un seul et même niveau que je propose, mais une série de coupes où chaque lecture est non seulement complétée mais corrigée par la suivante; on trouvera même, entre la première et la dernière lecture, une distance telle que l'interprétation initiale pourra paraître reniée; il n'en est rien pourtant; chaque lecture est essentielle et doit être conservée. (p. 67)

The three 'coupes' are made according to a movement that begins with <u>abstract</u>, solipsistic Freudian theory and ends in a <u>concrete</u> mythological philosophy. The epistemological study of the first cycle focusses, on the question 'qu'est-ce qu'interpréter en psychanalyse?' (p. 70). The solution to this first problematic leads to an extension, in the second cycle, of solipsistic theory to the sphere of culture and 'par choc en retour' to 'la refonte du modèle initial et du schème d'interprétation' (p. 70). The third cycle completes the theory of culture and the interpretation of the reality principle by lifting them into the mythological realm of Eros, Thanatos and Ananke. In retrospect, this concrete 'opening' of meaning, in Ricoeur's words, 'bouscule ... la forme mécaniste' (p.71) of the first reading and questions - without suppressing - the previous <u>epoche</u>.

Secondly, we observe a similar 'oriented' movement implicit throughout the development of Ricoeur's own work, and we wish to stress its importance. It denotes a philosophy that does

not enclose itself in a system, but rather remains faithful to its 'élan vital' that leads to the 'self', through the mediation of difference, of the 'other' of epistemology.

The three 'coupes' so strikingly evident in Ricoeur's work are as follows: <u>Firstly</u>, his doctoral thesis and first major work: <u>Le volontaire et l'involontaire</u> published in 1950. This is an abstract, 'eidetic' investigation into the relationship between freedom and necessity. Its purpose was to show that both are integral aspects of human existence. In his article 'Méthode et tâches d'une phénoménologie de la volonté,'1952, Ricoeur justified his strict phenomenological method in those terms: 'La phénoménologie doit être, dans un premier temps au moins, structurale' (p. 116). <u>L'homme faillible</u> published in 1960, removes some of the methodo- logical parentheses but remains within the framework of an existential phenomenology. It is the exercise of 'pure' reflection on unstable syntheses and describes the disproportion between the intended meaning of freedom and the experience of finitude. Its aim is to show that freedom is limited not only by human nature but also by man's inner structure, that is by his non-coincidence with him- self, a flaw or fault that Ricoeur calls 'fallibility'. This con- cept of fallibility introduces the possibility of evil, the idea of a human weakness from which evil can enter man.

The <u>second</u> 'coupe' is the emergence of Ricoeurian hermeneu- tics, grafted on to reflective philosophy and phenomenology, in <u>La symbolique du mal</u> published in 1960. This constitutes a profound methodological shift, away from Husserlian phenomenology, in response to a new problematic, due to the passage from the possibility of evil to its actuality. The experience of evil cannot be grasped directly, it eludes an 'essential' analysis of phenomena and yet appears to be the 'real' limit to freedom. Therefore the need arose

to effect a detour via the language that reveals evil, that is via the symbols of evil inscribed in our culture. Symbols are expressions of double meaning, with a primary, immediate meaning referring beyond itself to a second symbolic meaning, which is never given directly. The hermeneutics of symbols set out to recollect and restore the second hidden meaning. However it soon became clear that symbols have another dimension: they not only reveal the surplus of meaning in language, they also conceal and distort it. Therefore, De l'interprétation: essai sur Freud published in 1965, completes the hermeneutics of 'recollection' with a demystifying hermeneutics of 'suspicion'. The debate with Freud and psychoanalysis resulted in the notions of a semantics of desire, of the archaeology and teleology of the subject: the derivatives of desire, accessible to psychoanalysis, when reflectively interpreted reveal a lost archaic heritage - the 'arche' of man which in turn dialectically points towards a 'telos'. Both human archaeology and teleology make up the concrete, mixed texture of symbols, and explain their complex constitution in which Ricoeur sees the key to the many contradictory theories of interpretation, for there is no general hermeneutics. This problem of conflicting hermeneutics constitutes the theme of Le Conflit des interprétations: essais d'herméneutique published in 1969. All that hermeneutics have in common is their shift of the origin of meaning away from immediate consciousness thanks to the 'texts' they interpret. This emergence of hermeneutics as the route to philosophical reflection does indeed 'par choc en retour', as Ricoeur puts it, change the initial model of phenomenological reflection. As Ricoeur says in De l'interprétation, 'elle sera devenue réflexion concrète' (p. 63). It has acquired depth and even more important has been enlarged by the lingual character of symbols.

The <u>third</u>, and last of those 'coupes', is the emergence
of an operative concept of the <u>text</u> which transformed Ricoeurian
hermeneutics into a systematic and comprehensive theory of inter-
pretation. <u>Interpretation Theory: Discourse and the Surplus of
Meaning</u> published in English in 1976, focusses on the problem of
language as <u>work</u>. Challenged by structuralism, Ricoeur deepened
his investigation of language, and extended his definition of her-
meneutics to all textual phenomena. The problem of hidden meanings
became a problematic of indirect reference. The touchstone of this
new development of a philosophy of language lies in the dialectics
of explanation and understanding. It provides hermeneutics with
an epistemological status. And since hermeneutics remains the path
to reflection and to self-understanding, this epistemological
dialectics extends to a dialectics of <u>distanciation and appropria-
tion</u> within the subject that interprets, thus securing the existen-
tial dimension of hermeneutics. Numerous essays and articles
illustrate this aspect of Ricoeur's research. Particularly important
is his theory of metaphor in <u>La métaphore vive</u> published in 1975,
situated within the problematic of texts, and also providing an
understanding of the question of <u>creativity</u> thanks to semantic
innovation. This innovation is closely connected with Ricoeur's
recent work on narratives in his three volumes of <u>Temps et Récit</u>,
published in 1983, 1984 and 1985.

Ricoeur's project of a 'Poetics of the Will', postponed
since 1950, and meant to be a philosophy of the <u>creative imagination</u>,
now reappears 'par choc en retour' with greater strength in the
light of the new theory of interpretation. The 'imaginary', as he
calls it, be it at the cultural level of symbols, at the semantic
level of language, at the social level of epistemology and utopia,
at the scientific level of models, or at the narrative level of

fiction and history, is a constant theme throughout his work, and
at the end of this third cycle, it stands out enriched with deeper
insights and more concrete than ever. His later writings are all
facets of this theme. Ricoeur tells us that the 'imaginary' must be
understood as a deepening of, and not as an alternative to, 'a
theory of interpretation concerned to pursue the dialogue with the
social sciences ... at a level of radicality where the epistemology
of the social sciences would rejoin the ontology of human reality'
(Response, pp. 39-40).

It is at this level of radicality that the dialectics
between 'le même et l'autre' acquires its fullest meaning and
greatest intensity. Indeed, if, as Ricoeur declares in his article
'L'imagination dans le discours et dans l'action' published in 1976,
the reproductive imagination is 'l'acte de distinction, hautement
conscient de lui-même, per lequel une conscience pose quelque chose
à distance du réel et ainsi produit l'altérité au coeur même de son
expérience' (p. 210), then a conception of imagination that posits
at once distance and experience, difference and identity, in such a
way that they may rejoin without merging is, we believe, another way
of expressing the hermeneutic circle of difference and identity.

Moreover, it is our view that, within the hermeneutic circle,
the self is made different by its 'other', that is by the epistemology
of all the social sciences thought as difference. Mary McAllester's
statement, in her article 'Bachelard twenty years on: an assessment'
in Revue de littérature comparée (No. 2, 1984), emphasizes this
argument. She describes Gaston Bachelard's desire to change man in
a radical way, and adds that thanks to his vision, 'we shall learn to
maintain difference, to handle complexity, we are shaken out of the
reductive, identity-ridden habits of ordinary life and thought'(p.160).

Her reflection leads her to the assertion that 'we can no longer say 'je pense donc je suis', but rather 'je pense la différence, donc je deviens différent, et étant différent, je pense d'autres différences' (p. 169).

Such a new state of affairs, in which the 'same' is itself decentred by its 'other', but not destroyed, 'rather nourished and sustained by it' (ibid., p. 166), calls for a re-thinking of the modern problematic. A deepening of our understanding of the self of identity seems to us more appropriate than a simple liquidation of it. We have to understand that a wounded or split Cogito, as Ricoeur calls it, is a Cogito that takes seriously its encounter with its epistemological 'other'. And it must be stressed that each encounter changes the ego that appropriates meaning into an enriched self.

Finally, Ricoeur's hermeneutic circle of human 'arche' and 'telos' is set within the larger horizon of a genesis and an eschatology, of a radical origin and a final end, a 'Wholly Other' that escapes the conceptualization of reflective philosophy. The transcendence gives yet another dimension to the circle itself and highlights the impossibility of the Hegelian concept of absolute knowledge. Ricoeur agrees with Derrida's deconstruction of logocentrism when he says in Richard Kearney's Dialogues with contemporary Continental thinkers, that we have 'to abandon our pretension to be the centre, our tendency to reduce all other discourses to our own totalizing schemes of thought. If there is an ultimate unity, it resides elsewhere, in a sort of eschatological hope' (p. 27).

It seems as if beyond the dialectics of difference and identity, there is for Ricoeur another 'Text', a transcendent 'duplicate', something like Derrida's 'texte double', and another dialectics, the dialectics of evil - the mysterious Other of man - and of reconciliation and restoration, the dialectics of Fault

and Transcendence. Always present in the work of Ricoeur, this dialectics that highlights the 'Tout-Autre' has, along with the 'imaginary', gained depth and clarity in this third cycle. And in return, the hermeneutic circle now appears as an open concrete circle:

> The philosophical task is not to close the circle, to centralize or totalize knowledge, but to keep open the irreducible plurality of discourse. It is essential to show how the different discourses may interrelate or intersect but one must resist the temptation to make them identical, the same. (ibid., p. 27)

The conflict between them must be preserved.

Before embarking on our examination of the hermeneutic circle in Ricoeur's thought, it will be useful to review the work of his critics and to consider, first of all, why recent philosophical argument in France has left Paul Ricoeur out of its 'tintamarre'.

We can only speculate on possible answers by placing Ricoeur's work within its contemporary landscape, that is by making a rapid 'tour d'horizon' of the modern French thought. When existentialism was acclaimed in the nineteen forties and fifties as the victory of concrete philosophy over the abstraction of academic idealism, Ricoeur seemed to share the same themes. He too was concerned with freedom, while his idea of fault expressed the situation of man under the burden of anguish and suffering. When an internal difference, a 'non-coincidence' with oneself was discovered within the identical self of idealism, he was quick to reject Husserl's idealism and the immediate consciousness of the Cogito. He also stressed the need for a concrete reflective philosophy.

However, his method kept him outside existential phenomenology. His search for meaning did not focus on human existence as it is lived, he did not take the short cut of a direct analysis of experience but turned to its expression, to language in need of interpretation. Although human experience is originary, it is, for

Ricoeur, mute until expressed in a text. This conception led Ricoeur to the 'linguistic turn' of the late nineteen fifties and to hermeneutic phenomenology. As he declared in De l'interprétation: essai sur Freud, 'pour devenir concrète, c'est-à-dire égale à ses contenus les plus riches, la réflexion doit se faire herméneutique' (p. 62). What then is the difference between Ricoeur and Heidegger who also opted for hermeneutics in his interpretation of man's situation and who also spoke of man as language?

According to Ricoeur, in Le conflit des interprétations, they both shared the same desire for a radical ontology of under-standing, but Heidegger, along with the existentialists, took the 'short route' that goes directly to the level of an ontology of finite being in order to recover understanding as a mode of being. Instead, Ricoeur chose an indirect route, that is an arduous detour that travelled through linguistic and semantic investigations, through structuralism and psychoanalysis, in a word, through the contemporary epistemology of the human sciences. Ricoeur used those sciences as mediations on his way towards an ontology of human reality.

No doubt such detours, so characteristic of Ricoeur's thought, add to the complexity and the richness of his writings, and possibly the French educated public simply failed to follow them. Yet they have produced works of deep insight, in particular his reading of Freud, his interpretation of the symbolism of evil at the root of our culture, and his creative investigation of metaphor, narrative and the 'imaginary'.

Ricoeur's interpretation of symbols, described as 'le plein du langage', and his study of the symbolism of evil that deals with words already latently rich in polysemy, illustrated the first of his detours. 'Le symbole donne à penser'; so ends his Symbolique

du mal, and this highlights the importance of the pre-reflexive in his philosophy: meaning originates in sources other than oneself. Meaning comes from others, who have thought and spoken in other times and places before us, and it is always prior to the contemporaneous co-presence of subjectivities. Therefore we do not create meaning but re-create it for ourselves in the here and now, according to our own projects and interpretations.

This centering upon symbolic expressions, upon the multiple sense of language calling for interpretation, rather than on direct experience and on 'le vécu', may have appeared too traditional to the post-war public interested in philosophy and in search of novelty. And even worse, it may have sounded rather religious. Indeed it is prophetic in many ways since Ricoeur had the philosophical courage - no doubt sustained by the work of Gabriel Marcel - to proclaim the revival of hope and transcendence, and to stand by the eschatological implications of his belief against the existential tide and the tone of alienation and despair echoed in Sartre and Camus. The spirit of St. Paul, interpreted by Ricoeur in De l'interprétation: essai sur Freud as a 'logic of superabundance', that operates not only 'en dépit du mal' and 'grâce à ...: avec le mal, le principe des choses fait du bien', but also 'A plus forte raison' (p. 507), such a logic is also that of Ricoeur's ethics, emerging at the end of his book on Freud, thanks to the dialectics of the symbolism of evil and of reconciliation.

Descombes declares in Le Même et l'autre that 'les oeuvres sont précédées d'une rumeur' (p. 16). If this is so, then Ricoeur's efforts to recover the spiritual meaning of symbols through a hermeneutics of recollection and of suspicion - efforts which were not in fashion at the time - would not have persuaded

the educated French public to read his work. The prevailing mood
was for novelty in a radical way, which explains why structuralism
was applauded in the nineteen sixties as the new breath of life -
and of scandal as well! The debate lasted a whole decade and swept
away concrete reflection, the subject and, phenomenological
approaches to language. Caught in this huge wave of noisy debates,
the subtle novelty of Ricoeur's message could not be heard outside
his world of students and colleagues.

Although thought-provoking, his grafting of hermeneutics
on to a reflective philosophy mediated by language, the text, and
all the human sciences, remained unnoticed by those who buy books
on philosophy. Yet Ricoeur stood by his innovation, and accepted
the challenge of the new generation of philosophers, by deepening
his thinking.

Both Hegelian dialectics and phenomenology were condemned
by 'la nouvelle vague' as illusory because, as Descombes says, they
reduced difference, the 'other', to identity, the 'same', in their
representation of the world for me. Dialectics was found guilty of
being a concept of 'identity of identity and non-identity'.
Difference had to be recovered and saved as difference.

The 'holy war' of the nineteen sixties is described by
Descombes as having been conducted 'sous l'étendard d'une croisade
unique contre le sujet en général' (ibid., p. 95). We can now
imagine with some amusement the bewilderment - and hence the
interest - of the educated French public then confronted with the
prospect of a promised land, delivered of such concepts as subject,
identity or representation. Whether or not all this really made
sense for a public outside the intelligentsia remains a mystery.
Also, as Descombes remarks, many will have certainly confused
semiology, the theory of signs offering new depths in our conception

of meaning, with <u>structuralism</u>, a <u>structuralist</u> philosophy in
in which Descombes sees a philosophical rationalism and a critique
of both phenomenology and semiology, and which Ricoeur rejects as
reductive and unfounded.

Semiology is not philosophy, it is only a structural science
that distinguishes between language, understood as an unconscious
system of signs constituted by differences and oppositions, and a
speaking subject who consciously expresses his thoughts and lived
experience and who communicates them to another subject placed in
the same semantic field. Ricoeur agreed with the need of an
understanding of structures. He recognized in them a necessary
intermediary to hermeneutic comprehension.

The problem arose with the confusion between this
epistemological science and philosophy, by which man merely appeared
at the service of signifying structures. We can imagine the reaction
of a public that was now told, to quote Descombes, that 'Le sens
apparaît avec le signifiant ' (<u>ibid</u>., p. 118). It remained
flabbergasted. And comments like, 'les structures décident et non
l'homme! L'homme n'est plus rien!' (<u>ibid</u>., p. 125) were not meant
to be reassuring people.

The semiotic disciplines, however, brought their own
objective contribution in their search for a <u>universal reason</u>.
Descombes highlights psychoanalysis and structural anthropology in
their search for privileged methods of understanding the irrational
both before us - the savage - and within us - the madman.
Indeed, Lévi-Strauss applied the structural model to myths on the
assumption that they were systems of communication comparable to
language. He brought out their internal logic and arrangement and
successfully explained their structure in terms of constitutive
units. But, as Ricoeur rightly says, he did not interpret them,

since he left out the 'aporias' of existence to which they refer
through their structure, that is the existential paradoxes concealed
within their hidden meaning, and ultimately he missed the reasons
why they were written in the first place.

Ricoeur fully supported linguistics. He wrote in 'The
Phenomenology of language' (1967) that 'It is through and by means of
a linguistics of language that a phenomenology of speech is today
conceivable' (p. 19). However, on the subject of a generalization
by Lévi-Strauss of the linguistic model to the entire level of
thought, making thought that which does not think itself, Ricoeur
declared as follows, in 'Claude-Lévi Strauss: réponses à quelques
questions' (1963) at the end of a debate:

> ... pour vous il n'y a pas de 'message' ...
> vous êtes dans le désespair du sens; mais vous
> vous sauvez pas la pensée que, si les gens n'ont
> rien à dire, du moins ils le disent si bien qu'on
> peut soumettre leur discours au structuralisme ...
> Je vous vois à cette conjonction de l'agnosticisme
> et d'une hyper intelligence des syntaxes. Par quoi
> vous êtes à la fois fascinant et inquiétant.
> (pp. 652-53)

The danger comes, he argued in Le Conflit des interpré-
tations when the limits of validity are broken:'Avec la pensée
sauvage, Lévi-Strauss procède à une généralisation hardie du
structuralisme' (p. 43).

Ricoeur reacted in a very constructive way to what he
collectively called the semiological challenge - the Freudian
psychoanalytical critique of reflective consciousness and the
structuralist critique of a 'speaking subject' - a challenge
that led him towards an enlarged conception of language with his
conception of the text capable of a re-appropriation of both
reference and the speaking subject. But while he accepted the
findings of semiology, he also condemned abstract, structuralist

philosophy:

> Autant l'anthropologie structurale me paraît
> convaincante tant que'elle se comprend elle-
> même comme l'extension, degré par degré, d'une
> explication qui a réussi d'abord en linguistique,
> puis dans les systèmes de parenté, enfin de proche
> en proche, selon le jeu des affinités avec le
> modèle linguistique, à toutes les formes de la
> vie sociale, autant elle me paraît suspecte
> lorsqu'elle s'érige en philosophie; un ordre
> posé comme inconscient ne peut jamais être, à
> mon sens, qu'une étape abstraitement séparée
> d'une intelligence de soi par soi; l'ordre en
> soi, c'est la pensée à l'extérieur d'elle-même ...
> une pensée qui ne se pense pas. (ibid., p. 54)

It follows, according to Ricoeur, that the structuralist
method is justified only as the abstract and objective moment in
the understanding of self and being, the moment of explanation.
It cannot simply ignore the second moment, that of appropriation,
which consists in someone saying something to someone else about
something: it cannot ignore the basic communicative function of
language.

Moreover, it cannot exclude the process of history by
means of which we come to understand ourselves and our possibilities
through the 'text' of human action left by our predecessors.
Descombes points out that history and political ideologies,
understood as myths that have to 'assimiler l'hétérogène, donner
un sens à l'insensé, rationaliser l'incongru, bref, traduire
l'autre dans la langue du même' (ibid., p. 129), must be denounced
and 'deconstructed'. But in doing so, Ricoeur insists in The Human
Experience of Time and Narrative (1979) that both the anti-
narrativist historians, and the structural literary critics, who
took an a-temporal stand through their narrative models and codes
failed to appreciate that 'All narratives combine in various pro-
portions, two dimensions - one chronological and the other non-
chronological' (p. 24). The logical abolition of time, or

'de-chronologization', that leads to an 'eventless history' is rejected by Ricoeur as a prejudice. He declares in Richard Kearney's Dialogues with contemporary Continental thinkers (1984), that both history and story belong to the same narrative kernel whose temporal structure 'connects our 'élan' towards the future, our attention to the present and our capacity to emphasize and recollect the past' (p. 34). We acquire our identity by retelling what has been and by re-structuring our past in such a way that the meaning behind us opens up meaning in front of us: 'To give people back a memory is also to give them back a future, to put them back in time' (p. 28). Such an existential deepening of history does not however reduce the 'other' to the 'same'.

Ricoeur explains, in Ideology and Utopia as cultural imagination (1976), that the experience of belonging-to requires a 'text' or externalization, a distanciation 'which is a form of putting something at a distance rather than the mere fact of being at a distance' (p. 691).

The same can be said of myths and of utopia. Rather than translate the 'other' into the 'same', myths, according to Ricoeur, in History and Hermeneutics (1976), 'constitute a disclosure of unprecedented worlds, an opening on to other possible worlds which transcend the established limits of our actual world' (p. 44). They give language its third dimension by adding self-understanding to both ordinary and scientific language. But such disclosure is not given immediately, it is dependent upon a hermeneutics that draws from linguistic structures and from subjective existential analysis.

Ricoeur does not deny that ideology is a myth, since it belongs to the socio-political 'imaginary' of every society, and functions as its positive reaffirmation. Such symbolic

confirmation of the past preserves its sense of identity. But Ricoeur understands it only in its relationship to utopia, its 'otherness', at the other pole of the same 'imaginary'. Therefore, when the conservative role of ideology turns pathological, through a distortion of reality, when the symbols of the community become 'fetishized', then utopia intervenes as a rupture to counteract such danger. He says to Richard Kearney, in <u>Dialogues with contemporary Continental thinkers</u>, that utopia offers 'The imaginary project of another kind of society, of another reality, another world' (p. 24). When utopia opens up the field of the possible, then in retrospect the actual 'suddenly looks strange, nothing more being taken for granted' (<u>ibid</u>., p. 25). However, this symbolic opening towards the future can itself turn dangerously schizophrenic if what it projects does not return to the here and now of ideology. Hence utopia and ideology complete one another, as the 'other' and the 'same', and must not be cut off from each other.

So Ricoeur responded to the semiological challenge and structuralism in a very modern and rational, yet also traditional, way by deepening and enriching his hermeneutics. Semiology was soon acknowledged as an essential explanatory method, as a 'depth-explanation' of unconscious mechanisms that makes <u>distance productive</u>, and that offers a path towards a 'depth-interpretation', by uncovering the 'otherness' of texts: of history, myths, ideology, literature and the human sciences. Ricoeur also made it very clear in 'Claude Lévi-Strauss: réponses à quelques questions' (1963), that 'Si le sens n'est pas un segment de la compréhension de soi, je ne sais pas ce que c'est' (p. 641). Or, in other words, explanation does not eliminate the need to understand at an <u>existential</u> level. And to understand in Ricoeur's theory of interpretation centred on the text, means to follow the movement of the text from sense to

reference, from 'what' it says to what it is said 'about', and consequently to receive an enlarged self from the apprehension of proposed worlds. Ricoeur stresses in Le Conflit des interpréta-tions that 'en herméneutique, il n'y a pas de clôture de l'univers des signes' (p. 67). Rather the problematic is one of multiple meaning in accordance with the allegorical function of language, whereby 'une expression, de dimensions variables, en signifiant une chose, signifie en même temps une autre chose, sans cesser de signifier la première' (ibid., p. 65).

Ricoeur's response to psychoanalysis was in many ways similar to his response to structuralism: it is an essential 'depth-explanation'. Interpreted in terms of a semantics of desire, the reading revealed the 'arche' of man, ever prior and structured like a language. This discovery led Ricoeur to the philosophical concept of an archaeology of the subject whereby reflection is mediated by the interpretation of the 'signs' of desire emerging from the speaking subject. Moreover, this detour via our archaic heritage unknown to immediate consciousness dialectically called for another detour, both progressive and complementary, that of teleology.

Ricoeur writes in De l'interprétation: essai sur Freud : 'Seul a une arche un sujet qui a un telos' (p. 444). He borrowed Hegel's 'figures of the Spirit' to show how meaning always lies in the following figure. Desire is at the root of this decentring of immediate consciousness: desire of the self always moving towards itself in the process of becoming conscious. We find Ricoeur's reflective debate with Freud and metapsychology so revealing that we would wish all psychoanalysts to read it in order to place their techniques within the broader context of self-understanding. What they offer is a 'compréhension'suffisante' ... qui ne suffit pas au

philosophe - ne se comprend pas elle-même' (ibid., p. 407). The
dialectics of distanciation and appropriation, or, as we understand
it, of difference and identity, clearly formulated in the nineteen
seventies but implicitly present throughout Ricoeur's work, consti-
tutes the pillar of his thought.

How therefore could it escape the attention of the
educated French public of the post-structuralist era? Maybe the
French were busy wondering why structuralism happened at all, why
a scientific method led to a philosophical discourse that lasted a
whole decade?

For Descombes in Le même et l'autre, 'les déconstructions
ont pris la place des descriptions' (p. 96). Jacques Derrida
initiated the movement by unmasking the Husserlian epoche. He said
to Richard Kearney in Dialogues with contemporary Continental
thinkers, 'I never shared Husserl's pathos for, and commitment to,
a phenomenology of presence' (p. 109). He aimed therefore at a
radicalization of phenomenology that would deliver it of what he
calls the Western 'logocentric' tradition of presence 'while never
renouncing the discipline and methodological rigour of phenomenology'
(ibid., p. 109).

This 'deconstructive' phenomenology that attempted to
dismantle our preconceived notion of identity and to expose us to
the challenge of otherness, of the other side of experience,
retained however the intention of phenomenology. In other words,
'To deconstruct the subject does not mean to deny its existence ...
it simply tries to resituate it' (ibid., p. 125), that is to say, to
resituate the subject in language. Derrida explains how the concept
of 'différance' is 'a non-concept in that it cannot be defined in
terms of oppositional predicates; it is neither this nor that; but
rather this and that (e.g. the act of differing and of deferring)

without being reducible to a dialectical logic either' (<u>ibid</u>.,
p. 110), such a non-concept of non-coincidence with itself, of
<u>non-presence</u>, is rooted in the 'distensio' of time, of a present
already past and still to come, of a present interminably <u>deferred</u>
that produces history. Derrida understands history as a phenomenon
of ruptures <u>and</u> repetition 'we affirm the existence of ruptures in
history, and ... we affirm that these ruptures produce gaps or faults
(failles) in which the most hidden and forgotten archives can emerge
and constantly recur and work through history' (<u>ibid</u>., p. 113)

This problem of the discordance of time, with ruptures that
paradoxically give way to repetitions and therefore to some sort of
concordance, is not far from Paul Ricoeur's dialectics of discordance
and concordance, of difference and identity. But Ricoeur makes it an
explicit dialectics by combining the Augustinian concept of
'distentio animi' with Aristotle's concept of the 'muthos', of the
narration of a story that triumphs over the discordance of time.
Yet both Derrida and Ricoeur would agree that distance is crucial
within self-identity itself, since there can be no self-transformation
without an absolute 'other' that haunts and divides, thus providing
the necessary free space from which to interrogate and for Derrida
to interrogate philosophy anew.

However, because we cannot think outside the present,
philosophy is a 'thinking of presence' says Derrida, even if it
refers to an absence. Hence Derrida's problem: how can there be
<u>another</u> thinking of non-presence? For Descombes, in Le même et
l'autre, 'Tout texte est un texte double, il y a toujours deux textes
en un ' (p. 176). While only the manifest text is read, it shows
traces of the latent text, not its opposite but the 'same' yet 'other',
'le semblable légèrement décalé' (<u>ibid</u>., p. 176). Therefore, the

thinking of non-presence is not another thinking outside philosophy, it is philosophy itself, but as 'other', 'elle-même en tant qu'autre' (ibid., p. 176). And the task of deconstruction is, as Derrida states in Richard Kearney's Dialogues with contemporary Continental thinkers, 'to discover the non-place or non-lieu which would be the 'other' of philosophy' (p. 112). How is such a discovery possible?

Descombes, in Le même et l'autre, speaks of a 'play' in the reading of texts. The basic rule is an openness towards the 'other' of the text and the 'other' of language. This rule is sufficient to make the first reading 'collapse' into the second in such a way that the outcome becomes undecidable:

> Nul ne peut dire si l'identité dialectique et la
> différence sont ou non la même chose ... si l'on
> dit 'identité', celle-ci se change aussitôt en
> différence, et si l'on repère une différence, elle
> se métamorphose en identité' (p. 178)

This 'otherness' of language that transcends the enclosure of semiology is the 'reference' of texts, albeit a problematic reference, unlike Ricoeur's second order reference, easily recognizable by hermeneutics. Therefore, deconstruction is not a suspension of reference. Derrida makes it clear in Richard Kearney's Dialogues with contemporary Continental thinkers that, 'to distance oneself ... from the habitual structure of reference, to challenge or complicate our common assumptions about it, does not amount to saying that there is nothing beyond language' (p. 124).

Rather the challenge and openness is a positive response to an alterity that precedes philosophy and invokes the subject 'Deconstruction is therefore a vocation - a response to a call' (ibid., p. 118).

This is exactly what Ricoeur says of hermeneutics. Derrida assisted Ricoeur at the Sorbonne at the beginning of his career and both are close friends. Hence the similarities. Yet the

approach and methods used by both philosophers in their responses
to the 'call' are very different.

Ricoeur shows in 'Appropriation' in John B. Thompson's,
Paul Ricoeur: Hermeneutics and the Human Sciences (1981) how
heuristic fiction works like play, like 'un jeu' 'Worlds are
proposed in the mode of play' (p. 186),whereby not only reality
but also the author and the reader are metamorphosed by the text.
When we enter a game we abandon ourselves, our ego, and through
this dispossession we receive a 'self'. The rule is, here as well,
the openness towards the 'other' of the text, but the outcome,
unlike Derrida's undecidable outcome, is the concept of appropria-
tion,itself the dialectical counterpart of a distanciation implied
by any textual criticism. Through appropriation, the subject, the
ego, makes his own in the 'here and now' what was in the moment of
distanciation timeless and foreign, and in the process he finds a
'self':

> Appropriation is the process by which the revelation
> of new modes of being ... gives the subject new
> capacities for knowing himself. (ibid., p. 192)

But such metamorphosis is possible only if we follow what Ricoeur
calls the 'arrows' of sense given by the text. This is to say that
if we follow the rules and let ourselves be carried off towards the
reference of text, towards its disclosure of other possible ways of
looking at things, then we are changed. Appropriation is not,
however, a 'taking possession of', nor a form of subjectivism, but
rather a 'letting-go' of the I am. As Ricoeur explains in his
Interpretation Theory (1976), it 'implies a moment of dispossession
of the egoistic and narcissistic ego' (p. 94), that is the moment
of atemporal distanciation which is not an obstacle to be overcome
but the very condition of historical understanding: we need to
'disappropriate' ourselves of our immediate and naive understanding
in order to gain a new comprehension, enriched by the 'matter' of

the text disclosed by its reference. Ricoeur highlights in 'Writing as a problem for literary criticism and philosophical hermeneutics' 1977, that the dialectics of distanciation and appropriation emerges like an existential and endless struggle 'which suppresses and preserves the cultural distance and includes the otherness within the ownness ' (p. 14). In this struggle at the heart of Ricoeur's hermeneutic circle, we actually wonder whether anything is ever really 'the same'. There always appears to be a distance, a difference, <u>within</u> identification itself, as well as a difference in dialectics with identity. Ricoeur's critique of the illusions of the subject takes endless detours that continuously keep this distance between the 'other' and the self, and within the ego itself. Yet the moment of appropriation of meaning is a moment of 'fusion', the fusion of the Other's horizon with my own horizon.

This fusion includes even thinking more adequately that which remains unthought in other thinkers. For example, Ricoeur wrote in his preface to Bultmann, published in <u>Le Conflit des</u> <u>interprétations</u>: 'ces questions, je ne les formule pas contre Bultmann, mais fin de mieux penser ce qui reste impensé chez lui' (p. 388). Ricoeur's desire is to think <u>with</u> and <u>beyond</u> other people through an appropriation of their thought.

Michel Foucault, in <u>Les Mots et les choses</u> (1966), stressed this idea of 'penser l'impensé', and saw in it the modern ethic. But, unlike Ricoeur's interpretation, his understanding of the non-coincidence of man with himself, the 'not-self of oneself', 'l'Autre, le double de soi', seemed to be an alienating duality. This is why he wrote that 'l'Autre de l'homme doit devenir le Même que lui' (p. 339), even though we know that the gap between the two is invincible, since there is no absolute knowledge.

However, his idea of an incompatibility between 'l'être

de l'homme et l'être du langage' (p. 350), and his interpretation
of the human sciences, as that which bring the 'death of man', ruin
what was at first 'la loi de penser l'impensé' (ibid., p. 338),
and establishes a gulf between him and Ricoeur. According to
Foucault, the human sciences, situated in the distance between the
being of man and the empirical sciences, and focussing on the
living, speaking and working man, turn man into an object:

> ... ce n'est pas l'homme qui les constitue et
> leur offre un domaine spécifique; mais c'est la
> disposition générale de l'épistémè qui leur fait
> place, les appelle et les instaure - leur
> permettant ainsi de constituer l'homme comme
> leur objet. (p. 376)

'Man', through them, becomes to himself the 'representation' he has
of himself, and in the process loses himself. We recognize in this
interpretation of the human sciences that operate 'en termes de
norme, de règles et de systèmes' (ibid., p. 372), the moment of
explanation and distanciation in Ricoeur's reflective philosophy.
And at that epistemological stage in the circle, it would be true
to say that 'man' has disappeared as 'being'. But, fortunately
for mankind, there is more to this reduction and reification
there is a second moment - the moment of the phenomenological
appropriation totally ignored by Foucault in Les Mots et les choses.

Unlike Foucault, or Althusser, who, according to
Descombes in Le même et l'autre, abandoned the phenomenological
method to substitute 'la fondation dans le concept à la fondation
dans la conscience ou le vécu (p. 146), before reverting back to
phenomenology in 1969, Paul Ricoeur did not have to choose between
epistemology, understood as the science that states 'that which is',
and phenomenology, between difference and identity, since both have
their place in his hermeneutic circle. Hence his philosophy
comprises at once a scientific and an existential discourse that
leads towards a global understanding of man.

It is indeed curious that the French public should have failed to grasp the richness and completeness of such a dynamic circle. We ourselves find this circle not vicious but intellectually satisfying and existentially fulfilling. And this even more so in the later works where the question of creativity, and through it the dialectics of identity and difference, are deepened. Ricoeur, in ' La Métaphore vive' shows how in metaphors, as in symbols, two meanings are signified at once while retaining their differences:

> La métaphore, figure de discours, présente de
> manière ouverte, par le moyen d'un conflit
> entre identité et différence, le procès qui,
> de manière couverte, engendre les aires séman-
> tiques par fusion des différences dans
> l'identité. (p. 252)

For Ricoeur, metaphor is a semantic innovation produced by the clash between two semantic fields. It first appears as a 'predicative impertinence' that calls for the creation of a new pertinence by means of a violation of the linguistic code at the level of the whole sentence. From the ruins of the literal predication comes the metamorphosis of the 'n'est pas (littéralement)' into the 'est (métaphoriquement)' (ibid., p. 321). But how can something 'be' and 'not be'? Imagination provides the key to this paradox. Ricoeur shows its power of 'rapprochement', of bringing together in its sudden insight what was previously distant. However, even when the 'is not' becomes an 'is', the logical distance grasped as a semantic impertinence resists and is not completely abolished by the new pertinence: 'la distance logique est préservée dans la proximité métaphorique ... l'interprétation littérale impossible ... cède en résistant' (loc. cit.).

So it is imagination that produces the new metaphorical compatability - a new identity of meaning, in spite of the old

incompatability and difference. Imagination displaces meaning
through the great tension between difference and identity, between
the 'is not' and the 'is', and consequently places the whole
process within the dialectic of distanciation and appropriation.
La métaphore vive ends with these words:

> Ce qui est ainsi donné à penser par la vérité
> 'tensionnelle' de la poésie, c'est la dialectique
> la plus originaire et la plus dissimulée: celle
> qui règne entre l'expérience d'appartenance dans
> son ensemble et le pouvoir de distanciation qui
> ouvre l'espace de la pensée spéculative. (p. 398)

The concept of temporal 'repetition' at work in narratives
further illustrates this dialectics of the 'same' and the 'other'. In
'The Human Experience of Time and Narrative' (1979), Ricoeur shows that
Odysseus' travels illustrate in space the circularity of an
imaginary journey, a repetition whereby the hero 'becomes who he is'
(p. 32) through his many challenging journeys that indefinitely
postpone his return to his home and to himself. Ricoeur points out
that in such a voyage 'Retardation ... means growth' (p. 31), a
growth through difference that constantly carries the risk of losing
oneself while at the same time leading to self-identity.

We see a parallel between this voyage of Odysseus towards
himself and Ricoeur's many detours of distanciation that lead to
his continuously postponed project of a 'Poetics of the Will'. He
defines his 'Poetics' in terms of 'a general philosophy of the
creative imagination' (Response, p. 39), of an ontology of human
reality. Those detours must not be seen as a 'suspension' of the
project but rather as an opportunity for growth: they provide the
time and space necessary for further self-rediscovery by means of
the creative appropriation that accompanies each step of critical
thought. In this circle of detours and identity, it is paradoxical
that the 'becoming oneself' points to an ontological identity
always still to be achieved while at the same time already achieved

in the here and now of each appropriation of meaning. In the
light of the modern problematic of _différance_, and in accordance
with it, the 'other' for Ricoeur remains the 'other', the 'is not',
while the self is the 'not yet' self, not yet the same, even though
and paradoxically, the ego finds a self in each and every 'fusion'
with the 'other's' disclosure of its world. The paradox is
similar to that of the new metaphorical meaning, the 'is' produced
from the conflict with the incompatible literal meaning, the 'is
not': the 'is not' becomes the 'is', and yet there is no unity
between the two since that would mean the end of the metaphor itself.
The non-coincidence of man with himself, which Ricoeur calls the
fault, prevents him from reaching any real unity. Furthermore the
complexity of Odysseus' travels reflected in the work of Ricoeur
cannot merely be reduced, in Descombes' words, to a translation of
the 'other' into the language of the 'same'. It rather shows a
dialectics whereby each term 'is' and 'is not' neither exactly the
'same' nor the 'other', and where both are 'en route' towards an
ontological self.

Emmanuel Lévinas' 'ethical' phenomenology overlaps
Ricoeur's hermeneutic phenomenology with regards to this idea of a
creative conflict. According to Lévinas, in Richard Kearney's
Dialogues with contemporary Continental thinkers, the classical
metaphysics of identity and the contemporary conception of
différance need each other: we can appreciate the 'other' only if
we first know our self, through the creative tension between the two
in the space of the 'imaginaire' that opens up possible horizons.
But, unlike Ricoeur, Lévinas gives the 'Other' the primacy over the
'same':

> I am trying to show that man's ethical relation
> to the other is ultimately prior to his ontological

> relation to himself (egology) or to the totality
> of things which we call the world (cosmology).
> (p. 57)

For Paul Ricoeur, both remain in the circle of a balanced dialectics. According to Lévinas in <u>Ethique et infini</u> (1982), we cannot reach the 'Other,' 'Autrui', within the immanence of knowledge or in the communication of it, because we remain 'à côté d'autrui' and therefore within the 'same'. Only 'la socialité', that is 'l'être-pour-l'autre', and Eros, provide a way towards the 'Other', a communication which is 'ni une lutte, ni une fusion, ni une connaissance' (p. 70) and where 'l'altérité et la dualité ne disparaissent pas' (p. 68).

In the relationship of love, Lévinas says, against Plato, in Richard Kearney's <u>Dialogues with contemporary Continental thinkers</u> that 'Man's relationship with the other is <u>better</u> as difference than as unity: sociality is better than fusion. The very value of love is the impossibility of reducing the other to myself, of coinciding into sameness' (p. 58).

We are convinced of the importance of such a statement, not only against Plato, but today against our Christian culture and marriage, since the so-called value of 'union' and 'identity' is there dangerous and harmful.

Finally, Lévinas is apparently at one with both Ricoeur and Derrida, when he says that the deconstruction of Western philosophy must be seized as its <u>chance</u> to open itself to otherness and to transcendence towards a 'new lease of life'.

Gilles Deleuze tackles, as well, what appears to be for the contemporary French public interested in philosophy, the crux of the matter: difference.

According to Descombes in <u>Le même et l'autre</u>, difference for him is neither 'une différence au sein de l'identité' nor 'la

différence entre l'identité et la non-identité' (p. 180) as it is

for Ricoeur.   Descombes explains that it is a difference between

two faculties: concept and sensibility, or in other words,

between what Ricoeur calls naive understanding and explanation.

The context of his argument, according to Descombes, is the drama

between the Hegelian master and slave, between the difference of

the master who affirms himself in his will to power, and the

opposition of the slave who negates such affirmation. The affir-

mation of the master is not the opposite of negation, it is only an

affirmation of difference, whereas the negation of the slave is the

opposite of the master's affirmation. Hence the 'differential'

criterion between difference and opposition requires that 'le

rapport du maître à l'esclave ne soit pas superposable au rapport

de l'esclave au maître. Dans un sens c'est un rapport de

différence; dans l'autre sens, c'est un rapport d'opposition'

(ibid., p. 192). This seems to be an interesting way of saying that

difference is not simply the contrary of identity, but a concept

in itself. Deleuze himself speaks of 'les vraies différences de

nature' (p. 11) in his book Le Bergsonisme (1966). By that he

means a qualitative difference which he contrasts with 'des

différences de degré' (p. 13). The former difference is further

explained in terms of a difference 'en soi et pour soi', an inner

difference, while the latter is seen as a difference 'hors de soi

et pour nous' (p. 94), an external difference. Moreover, the

confusion between the two is, in Deleuze's view, 'la source des

faux problèmes et des illusions qui nous accablent' (p. 13). Yet

together they constitute 'la Différence' (p. 93), a concept which

remains rather obscure and problematic. Nevertheless, it must be

said that Deleuze is enjoying the favour of the French media and

of French 'philosophers'.

And so is Jean-Francois Lyotard. According to
Descombes, in Le même et l'autre, he professes an active
nihilism with the tale of the end of history as we know it.
For Lyotard there appears to be nothing true, there is no origin
nor end but an eternal recurrence that liquidates both identity
and difference. As Descombes puts it:

> Toute identité est simulée. Le même est toujours
> un autre qui se fait passer pour le même, et ce
> n'est jamais le même autre qui se dissimule sous
> le même masque' (p. 213)

The obscurity has here become a mystery and is totally alien to
Ricoeur's thought. Besides, Descombes' comments on French
Nietzscheanism draws attention to the fact that it suppresses
the object while claiming to overcome the subject:

> Le texte n'a pas de référent extérieur à lui-même,
> le récit historique ne rapporte aucun événement
> extérieur au récit, l'interprétation ne porte sur
> aucun fait qu'on puisse distinguer de l'interpréta-
> tion, les points de vue ne donnent sur aucun monde
> commun à toutes les perspectives. Ainsi seraient
> vaincus le Centre unique, le Principe premier,
> l'Identité souveraine. (ibid., p. 220)

It is difficult to comment on such a state of affairs which seems
remote from our intellectual and existential experiences. But it
indeed underlines the relevance, and therefore the attractiveness
to us, of Paul Ricoeur's philosophy. It is like being confronted
with a game of which we do not know the rules. We certainly
appreciate the heuristic value of games, yet are games philosophy?
Paul Ricoeur's thought proves that this is not so. And perhaps it
also highlights, by contrast, the fact that the educated French
public shows more interest in intellectual games than in serious,
reflective philosophy. If this is really so, it may explain why
Paul Ricoeur has been left out of the 'tintemarre'. However, his
importance is currently being better grasped and his value will
soon be clear to those in search of truth, who are growing tired
of nihilism.

Critics, or better, interpreters of Paul Ricoeur, are few by comparison to the wide range and importance of Ricoeur's writings. This again may be linked to the general _failure_ to listen to and appreciate his work. Most of his critics have, in fact, been praised by Professor Ricoeur himself. They have, in our view, commented and added to Ricoeur's stimulating and creative thought rather than actually 'criticized' it.

The year 1971 witnessed the publication of three books, by Don Ihde, David Rasmussen and Michel Philibert.[2]

Don Ihde's Hermeneutic Phenomenology was welcomed by Ricoeur who prefaced it 'with gratitude'. And Don Ihde expressed his own gratitude to Ricoeur for 'his gentlemanly, open, and hospitable help, particularly for the supererogatory act which allowed me access to his study' (p. xx). These few words say a lot about the 'human being' Paul Ricoeur. The main purpose of this book, apart from offering an introduction to Paul Ricoeur's early work, spanning over twenty years, was 'not so much to the content of Ricoeur's work as to the development and intricacies of his methods, which are admittedly often puzzling, due to the indirect paths he takes toward his goals' (p. XIX). Don Ihde highlights the problems of language and the latent continuity of Ricoeur's work, despite a change of perspective due to the difference in the philosophical landscape and to an internal shift of problematics.

David Rasmussen's Mythic - Symbolic language and Philoso- phical Anthropology is 'an argument for the correlation between mythic-symbolic language and the nature of man' (p. 2). Such argu- ment is sustained by his reflection on the work of Ricoeur. His main

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2. Ihde, Don - Hermeneutic Phenomenology: The Philosophy of Paul Ricoeur (Evanston 1971).
   Philibert, Michel - Paul Ricoeur ou la liberté selon l'espérance (Paris, 1971).
   Rasmussen, David - Mythic-Symbolic Language and Philosophical Anthropology (The Hague 1971).

thesis is that mythic-symbolic language is <u>necessary</u> for a full philosophical anthropology, that is for a global understanding of man: it is not outmoded by our contemporary scientific-historical epoch. His analysis of Ricoeur's thought focusses on methodological transformations in the work closely associated with the development of the philosophy of the will. And, quite rightly, we believe, Rasmussen compares Ricoeur's thought to the symbol: it is <u>multivalent</u>. To think 'beyond' such a prolific writer might therefore prove difficult. Rasmussen makes it very clear that this is not his intention, particularly in his final discussion of a theory of language, which is correlated with a philosophical anthropology:

> The final discussion is not an attempt to think
> beyond Ricoeur; rather it is an attempt to think
> in response to his thought' (p. 5)

We share Rasmussen's humility and we shall also endeavour to think <u>in response</u> to such a stimulating and enriching philosophy. Paul Ricoeur himself responded to this book with an essay placed at the end and entitled 'What is a text? Explanation and Interpretation' (an abridged version of 'Qu'est-ce qu'un texte? Expliquer et comprendre' 1970.

Michel Philibert's <u>Paul Ricoeur ou la liberté selon l'espérance</u> is an introduction to 'le penseur responsable', a Christian deeply rooted in his culture and traditions. The history of philosophy, which Ricoeur taught for many years, is compared, very strikingly, to a tree, with Plato and Aristotle as its roots, scholastic philosophy as its trunk, and then important branches like Descartes, Kant and Hegel:

> Sans doute voit-on depuis Nietzsche des philoso-
> phes grimpés à cet arbre, et tout occupés de
> scier la branche qui les porte. Sans doute des
> voix nombreuses prophétisent-elles aussi que la

> cognée est mise à la racine de l'arbre. Et
> plusieurs se moquent de Ricoeur qui se cramponne
> aux branches, et tombera avec l'arbre. (p. 22)

As we know, fifteen years later, the tree still stands,
and we firmly believe that Paul Ricoeur has today a very important
role to play, since he has himself become an important branch of
contemporary philosophy.

Michel Philibert highlights Ricoeur's ethical values, his
'attention créatrice': he knows how to 'listen' to Others: 'Ricoeur
se met au rang de ceux qu'il écoute avec une attention si révéren-
cieuse et si exigeante qu'elle les contraint de se dépasser eux-
mêmes' (p. 26). This explains his gift of thinking beyond other
thinkers with such depth and generosity. The purpose of Philibert's
book which outlines very roughly the 'mouvement de l'oeuvre' is first
and foremost to pay tribute to Paul Ricoeur:

> On veut ici rendre hommage à une pensée dont
> l'ampleur, dont l'honnêteté, dont la force nous
> paraissent aujourd'hui et depuis longtemps, sans
> égales. (p. 6)

Again Ricoeur responded with another essay, a 'texte inédit' entitled
'Evénement et sens dans le discours', which concludes the book.

In 1975, Patrick L. Bourgeois' Extension of Ricoeur's
Hermeneutics focussed on the development of Ricoeur's philosophy
with the aim of making explicit some of the initial implicit themes.
The argument centres on 'a questioning back from the later hermeneu-
tical stage of his philosophy of the will to the initial stage' (p. 2),
in order to show the constancy and continuity of the work, in spite of
its important expansions and of its changes in central positions.
Although Ricoeur's eidetics of the will was at first considered to be
immediate reflection, when looking back on it from the later hermeneu-
tic development, Patrick Bourgeois sees through it an implicit
hermeneutics and therefore concludes that structural understanding

is also interpretation. We cannot help thinking that this 'latent continuity' Bourgeois focusses upon had already been well dealt with four years earlier by Don Ihde. We find this book interesting and argumentative, but not exactly original.

Gary Madison's <u>Sens et existence: en hommage à Paul Ricoeur</u>, also published in 1975, is a collection of essays on various topics dedicated to Paul Ricoeur for his sixtieth birthday:

> L'Oeuvre de Paul Ricoeur est d'ores et déjà assurée
> d'une reconnaissance mondiale ... Il est donc juste
> et normal qu'à l'occasion de son soixantième
> anniversaire, cette collection d'essais par des
> penseurs de différents intérêts, ainsi que d'origines
> et de nationalités multiples, lui soit dédiée. (p. 7)

Ricoeur's philosophical project, which is to say 'le sens non-dit, mais dicible, de l'existence et de la vie' justifies the title of the book. Gary Madison reflects upon Ricoeur's philosophy in an excellent article entitled 'Ricoeur et la non-philosophie' published in 1973. His question is about the rapport between what he calls the 'non-philosophie', that is 'l'ensemble des disciplines qui ont des méthodes, des objectifs et des modes de discours qui diffèrent de ceux qui caractérisent la philosophie (p. 227), and philosophy understood as a reflective questioning.

In other words, he reflects upon the link between explanation and understanding, between the 'other' and the 'same'. He focusses on Ricoeur's refusal to 'integrate' the epistemological moment into the ontological stage - unlike Merleau-Ponty's suggestion, since this would simply 'éliminer un des termes du conflit' (p. 237). Ricoeur chooses to keep them both in a creative tension. 'Plutôt que d'intégrer un univers du discours à un autre, Ricoeur les dialectise délibérément' (p. 238). This supports our thesis: Ricoeur does not sacrifice difference to identity, although his method is dialectical. And even more important, it may well be,

as Madison says, that 'l'ontologie est 'la terre promise'' (p. 240),
that 'une philosophie qui ne s'achève pas' is 'la définition même
de la philosophie' (p. 240). This seems to us another way of saying
that identity and the 'same' in Ricoeur's circle do not take over
difference and the 'other'. On the contrary, they remain themselves
a _horizon_, always still to be achieved, a horizon that belongs to
the 'Tout Autre'. Hence the task of the philosopher:

> Le philosophe n'est ni poète ni prophète; il est
> celui qui, du milieu des choses, guette l'horizon,
> écoute et attend. (p. 241)

These rather beautiful words conclude Madison's article, and high-
light our human reality made of differences yet longing for unity
and a global understanding of being.

Charles Reagan's _Studies in the Philosophy of Paul Ricoeur_,
published in 1979, is a collection of texts that deal with Ricoeur's
work. He acknowledges Ricoeur's kindness towards his critics in
these terms:

> I also thank Paul and Simone Ricoeur for the
> generosity and hospitality they have so graciously
> extended me and my family on many occasions during
> the past five years. (Acknowledgments)

Charles Reagan makes no attempt to introduce Ricoeur's
work because of its diversity and vastness:

> He has written on phenomenology, existentialism,
> symbolism, religion, language, psychoanalysis,
> politics and metaphor. He has produced a pheno-
> menological study of freedom, a long, detailed
> account of the symbols of evil, an extensive and
> profound study on Freud and psychoanalysis, and a
> virtual encyclopedia on metaphor. No modern philo-
> sopher, with the possible exception of Bertrand
> Russel, has written so much on so many different
> topics. (Editor's Introduction)

Such homage to Ricoeur's multiple talents expresses very well the
richness and depth of his work. If we add to this, Ricoeur's
humility and modesty, we cannot but admire the greatness of such a
person in human terms. We see his modesty at work in the last words

of his Preface to Reagan's book, entitled Response to my friends
and critics:

> The truth is rather the lighted place in which it
> is possible to continue to live and think. And to
> think with our very opponents themselves, without
> allowing the totality which contains us ever to
> become a knowledge about which we can overestimate
> ourselves and become arrogant.

John B. Thompson's Critical Hermeneutics: a study in
the thought of Paul Ricoeur and Jürgen Habermas, published in 1981,
offers an interesting and challenging exposition of the work of both
philosophers as well as a critical and fruitful discussion whereby
he uses each one to highlight the limitations of the other. This
method allows him to further sketch a constructive project, a
'critical hermeneutics' directed towards the interpretation of
human action. Also, it must be said, Thompson expresses reserva-
tions not found elsewhere. His basic argument against Ricoeur's
theory lies in his refusal 'to treat language as a paradigm of
human action' (p. 149).

Ricoeur uses the concept of the text as a model for the
analysis of human action. The text is understood as an inscribed
expression, a 'work', emancipated from the event of saying, from
the speaker and his original audience, and from the 'ostensive'
reference. Consequently meaning is inherent in the text since it
is detached from prior events. But, according to Thompson, human
action remains situated within its social context. And meaning is
not inherent in it: it is linked to the way the action is described,
a description itself linked to the circumstances in which the action
was performed, and to the wider context of institutions and social
structures. Therefore an action cannot be 'detached and inscribed
in a manner analogous to the text' (p. 126). Despite Ricoeur's
'remarkable insights' worthy of being pursued, Thompson writes:

> I believe that Ricoeur's proposal to conceive of
> action as a text is unsatisfactory ... an illegi-
> timate generalisation from the linguistic sphere.
> (p. 125)

This leads Thompson to a reformulation of the methodology
of 'depth-interpretation', that connects the understanding of action
to the <u>social level</u> of explanation, by means of explanatory concepts
anchored in institutions. We do not wish in this study to venture
into the complexities of the social sciences. But we think that,
despite the epistemological and methodological difficulties that
may be in Ricoeur's attempt to link philosophy and social science,
he still poses the problem of human action in a particularly pene-
trating light that provides an illuminating perspective for new
research.

In addition to the above critics, many articles have been
written on the work of Paul Ricoeur, in several languages and also
many Ph.D. theses in the United States and Canada. Our bibliography
indicates this critical response to Ricoeur's writings.

In this study we intend to extend the thought of these
critics by drawing from them, and from our own research on difference
and identity, a deeper understanding of Ricoeur's past as well as
recent work. And in doing so, we wish to follow Ricoeur's example,
who himself said, in De l'interprétation, while reading Freud:
'Je ne prétends donc pas compléter Freud, mais le comprendre en me
comprenant.' (p. 445).

This remains ultimately the hidden ontological horizon
of this thesis, which is divided into three parts, as we have stated
in the exposition of our method.

In the first part, we shall discuss Ricoeur's abstract and
structural phenomenology. We shall first place it within its
Husserlian and Marcellian contexts and within the existentialist

movement of the nineteen forties and the nineteen fifties. We
shall make explicit the dialectics of difference and identity
present in both Husserl's epoche and Marcel's dialectics of problem
and mystery.

We shall then examine closely Ricoeur's eidetic and
structural work, and see how nature and freedom are brought
together and reconciled, thanks to their dialectical reciprocity.
The apparent structural 'unity' of the voluntary and the involuntary,
of the 'same' and the 'other' that make up the structures of the
will, will only remain a 'limit idea', and will in fact operate as
a dialectics at a level of abstract possibilities. Moreover, it
will not withstand the existential pressures of lived experience.

Therefore, we shall further examine the new existential
duality, whereby man cannot coincide with himself, because of an
ontological 'fault' deep inside him. Ricoeur's highly abstract and
ethical reflection, will disclose the nature of such a disproportion
within man, situated between a pole of finitude and a pole of infini-
tude, and will show how it constitutes the structures of human
reality that make man neither the 'same' nor the 'other'. Ricoeur's
description will strengthen the dialectics of difference and identity,
by which man is now seen to be at once the 'other' and the 'same',
within an unstable and creative synthesis that retains both aspects
of the dialectics. Ricoeur will interpret this 'faulty' structure
in man as a weakness that opens up the possibility of evil. This,
in turn, will lead him to his hermeneutic phenomenology, to be
examined in our second part.

In the second part of this thesis, we shall discuss
Ricoeur's hermeneutics as it first emerged, in the form of a 'detour'
of reflective thought via the interpretation of symbols and of
psychoanalysis, understood as mediating signs of reflection.

We shall first study Ricoeur's <u>philosophical</u> approach to the symbolism of evil in Western culture and ask why, within the context of the <u>Philosophie de la volonté</u>, evil presented so much interest to him, why Ricoeur could not ignore such an invincible 'other' in its relationship with the 'same' of freedom. We shall stress what distinguishes Ricoeur from other writers and philosophers also interested in myths and symbols. We shall see how Ricoeur broke away from structural and reflective philosophies and entered the realm of the irrational and the religious, thus developing his own hermeneutics, with the aim of returning to the reflective, <u>enriched</u> with symbolic knowledge.

We shall then focus on Ricoeur's debate with Freud and psychoanalysis and stress the continuity and complementarity of this hermeneutics of suspicion, as regards the previous hermeneutics of symbols. Indeed, it continues the investigation into the question of a hermeneutic philosophy and the interrogation of symbolic meaning now transferred into the psychical realm of <u>desire</u>. It further justifies the demystification of a meaning that comes to the immediate consciousness as false and distorted. We shall emphasize Ricoeur's originality as regards his work on Freud, by drawing attention, firstly, to the importance Ricoeur gave to the <u>mixed</u> discourse of psychoanalysis, and, secondly, to the importance of his philosophical contribution: he not only made our psychical archaeology explicit, he also complemented it with the conception of a teleology, thus enlarging our understanding of human-reality. In so doing, Ricoeur added to the concrete structure of symbols in a way that led him to the theme of the conflict of interpretations.

Consequently, we shall examine lastly his dialectical approach as regards the conflict of hermeneutics. We shall see how his efforts to integrate hermeneutics into reflective thought, thus

making it a philosophy, depended upon a satisfactory answer to the objections of opacity, cultural contingency, and dependency on conflicting interpretations, made to symbolic thought. We shall therefore stress his positive response to this problem, in which we recognize his originality. It lies in his interpretation of the rich structure of symbols that offer the possibility of conflicting yet complementary interpretations. Finally, we shall draw a parallel between Ricoeur's 'hermeneutic turn' and the emergence of his philosophy of language, whose growth we shall closely observe in the third part of this thesis.

Throughout this second part, we shall develop our study of the dialectics of difference and identity in this thought. Both hermeneutics and symbols calling for interpretation, will be grasped as the enriching 'Other' in dialogue with the 'same' of phenomenology. We are convinced that it is only through such a creative dialectics that the ego can find a self, and that phenomenology can become concrete reflection.

In the third part of this thesis, we shall discuss Ricoeur's hermeneutics of language and narrativity. We shall first focus our attention on his theory of interpretation, and stress the importance of discourse and of the written text in hermeneutics. We shall closely follow the nine dialectics of difference and identity that lead from the linguistic science of semantics to the hermeneutic spiral of distanciation and appropriation. This will illustrate the uniqueness of Ricoeur's approach to language, from the standpoint of a reflective philosophy in search of self-understanding, via the mediating structures of anonymous linguistic 'codes' and other explanatory interpretations. We shall insist upon the idea of a distance made productive. Ricoeur's theory of metaphor is the example of such productivity, since it will appear at the root of all linguistic disclosure of being. We shall discuss this semantic innovation in terms of a reduction of tension in the

linguistic code, and we shall see how such a use of language leads
to a concept of reality where 'is' signifies 'is' and 'is not',
whereby the world is not what it is literally but what it is like.
This concept of similarity will be stressed as being essential to
an imagination that actually makes distance productive. We will
further emphasize the importance of 'distanciation', understood
as the dynamism by which we become conscious of belonging to a
world, a culture, a tradition. Finally, we shall develop at
length the argument of this thesis. It will have reached its
heights with the notion of productive distance at work at the
heart of language as well as throughout the development of Ricoeur's
theory of interpretation.

We shall finally examine Ricoeur's very recent work on
time and narrative, the last and final volume of which was published
in November 1985. His hermeneutics of story-telling and of
historical consciousness is most revealing as regards self-identity:
it discloses that the always changing self has a narrated identity.
The 'who' of action, as well as the time in which that action takes
place, can be grasped as the 'same' only when told in stories.
To reach that conclusion we shall follow Ricoeur's arguments
throughout the seven dialectics at epistemological as well as
ontological levels. Time, Ricoeur will argue, is in itself an
aporia: it is invisible, and so we can have no immediate intuitive
apprehension of it. We shall once again consider the productive
distance, at work here through historiography and fictional
narrative, and see how together, these two narratives bring out
a 'référence croisée' that deepens the understanding of narrative
as a whole. Ricoeur's original idea of a threefold mimesis,
itself a dialectics of difference and identity, of distanciation
and appropriation, capable of overcoming temporal discordance with
configurational concordance, will further expand the idea of a

'crossed reference' and transform it, thanks to the reader, into a 'refiguration croisée', a refiguration of both time and human action. We shall argue that Ricoeur's hermeneutic circle has reached its full maturity. Indeed, not only does it now include the distanciation provided by what Ricoeur calls the 'emplotment', that is the act of configuration, it has also deepened its ontological roots so as to add the dimension of time to our ontological consciousness. The spiral has enlarged its axis and enriched beyond our expectations our conception of identity, thanks to the difference of time and stories in which our acting self dwells.

P A R T   I

THE ABSTRACT PHENOMENOLOGY OF <u>LE VOLONTAIRE</u>
<u>ET L'INVOLONTAIRE</u> AND <u>L'HOMME FAILLIBLE</u>

> 'La phénoménologie doit être,
> dans un premier temps au
> moins, structurale'
> (<u>Méthode</u> p. 116)

INTRODUCTION

In the first cycle of his 'Lecture de Freud', Ricoeur asks
'Qu'est-ce qu'interpréter en psychanalyse?' (p. 70), or in other
words, what are the fundamental <u>epistemological concepts</u> which
highlight understanding? His research reveals a mixed discourse, an
energetics and a hermeneutics:

> ... tour à tour la psychanalyse nous apparaîtra comme
> une explication des phénomènes psychiques par des
> conflits de force, donc comme une énergétique - et comme
> une exégèse du sens apparent par un sens latent, donc
> comme une herméneutique. (<u>DI</u>, p. 70)

The impossibility of the <u>unity</u> of these two discourses, at
stake throughout his reading, is made clear by the fact that an
energetics is irreducible to ideas - it remains the '<u>other</u>'.
However because this 'other' is 'sayable' through the psychical
expressions that call for interpretation, it is nonetheless <u>linked</u>
to the 'same': force is linked to meaning through the <u>language</u> that
gives to instincts their psychical reality.

In a similar epistemological fashion we shall ask the
question: how does <u>human freedom</u> come to terms with its 'other',
with <u>necessity</u>, within the Husserlian phenomenological context?
The abstract eidetic concepts at work in <u>Le Volontaire et</u>
<u>l'involontaire</u> show a basic <u>reciprocity</u> between the two, between
the voluntary and the involuntary. But the involuntary (like the
Freudism energetics) is accessible only indirectly through an

eidetic description of the voluntary. Ricoeur says:

> Il n'y a pas d'intelligibilité propre de l'involontaire.
> Seul est intelligible le rapport du volontaire et de
> l'involontaire. (V.I., p. 8)

The involuntary is our 'other'. Yet it can be reached in
two ways: firstly through the body of an experiencing subject,
thanks to eidetic phenomenological description, and secondly,
through an interpretation of the signs the experimental sciences
(biology, psychology, for instance) are able to provide. Don Ihde
calls this interpretation the 'latent' hermeneutics of Ricoeur's structural
work, a latency justified by Ricoeur's concept of the 'diagnostic'
which goes beyond an eidetic reading towards our obscure, involuntary
experiences. However, the whole enterprise remains abstract since
it takes place at the neutral level of the possibilities of man
where all ethical valuations are suspended. Ricoeur believes that
such an 'abstraction spécifique qui doit nous révéler les
structures ou les possibilités fondamentales de l'homme' (V.I., p. 7)
must necessarily precede the existential description of man's actual
experience. On this abstract level, Ricoeur achieves a fundamental
reconciliation of freedom and nature, of the 'same' and the 'other'
(as he did of Freudian energetics and hermeneutics), but only to
discover another duality, 'une dualité d'existence', which appears
dramatic and beyond the scope of the eidetic method.

Consequently, this new existential duality requires a
transformation of the method of analysis in L'homme faillible, but it
remains abstract. Before the actual concrete 'hermeneutic turn',
Ricoeur reflects, in a detached and ethical way, upon the 'intimate
disproportion of man with himself', whereby he is neither the 'same'
nor the 'other' but where both are grasped within a dialectics.
The disproportion opens up the possibility of evil within man and
leads to the question: 'Comment l'homme se "trouve exposé" à

faillir' (H.F., p. 21), or in other words how to locate through reflection the 'Tout-Autre' in man? The investigation of the concept of fallibility is pursued regressively, through a step by step reflection on those 'faulty' aspects of ourselves, which are suspended between our finite and our infinite poles. Ricoeur divides them into three levels, the levels of knowing, acting, and the affective forms of the will. On each level, an unstable synthesis confirms man's global disproportion with himself.

        We shall see in this first part how both the structural and the synthetic phenomenology of the will prepare the way for a hermeneutic phenomenology. We will seek to show why phenomenology needs its 'other', hermeneutics, not 'par accident mais par destination' (D.I., p. 76), in order to avoid the trap of idealism, just as in his 'Lecture de Freud' Ricoeur demonstrates that 'l'énergétique passe par une herméneutique' (D.I., p. 75) in order to make sense to both the psychoanalyst and his patient. But we will only highlight in our second part the reasons why a hermeneutics must be phenomenological for a philosopher in search of concrete reflective thinking - just as in psychoanalysis 'l'herméneutique découvre une énergétique' (D.I., p. 75). According to Ricoeur hermeneutics is a valuable method, only if it helps us understand ourselves. And it does this when it is linked to phenomenology in such a way that they come to belong to one another within philosophical discourse, as did hermeneutics and energetics within psychoanalytical discourse. Yet it must be stressed that they also retain their difference.

        This first part is divided into three chapters. In each chapter we shall reflect upon the problem of identity and difference and see its relevance as regards the hermeneutic circle in the work of Paul Ricoeur. The first chapter focusses on the philosophical background to Ricoeur's work with a thorough investigation of

Edmund Husserl's phenomenology. His phenomenological method has
been of very great importance to the thinking of Paul Ricoeur.
We shall also discuss Paul Ricoeur's attitude towards existen-
tialism in the light of the significance of this movement in the
1940's. We shall illustrate this aspect of Ricoeur's work with a
study of the three major themes of the lived body, freedom, and the
'other' in the contrary existential philosophies of Gabriel Marcel and
Jean-Paul Sartre.

The second chapter will offer a detailed account of
Ricoeur's structural phenomenology whereby he set out to investigate
the structures of the will and to demonstrate the basic structural
reciprocity between the voluntary and the involuntary, between
freedom and necessity, or in our own words between the 'same' and the
'other'. The chapter is divided into three sections that correspond
to Ricoeur's definition of the three moments in the process of
willing, that is decision, action and consent to necessity, to the
absolutely 'other'. We shall argue that the concepts of difference
and identity, at the root of Ricoeur's reciprocal dialectics, do
indeed constitute a dialectics since they do neither unite nor
destroy one another at any moment in the process. Rather they
deepen and enrich each other through their reciprocal and complemen-
tary interaction, and thus anticipate the Ricoeurian hermeneutic
circle.

Finally, the third chapter in Part I will investigate
Ricoeur's synthetic or existential phenomenology, which deals with
the structures of human reality, that is with man's non coincidence
with himself. Ricoeur's aim was to show why man is fallible. His
description of an inner ontological 'fault', situated between a pole
of finitude and a pole of infinitude, led him to conclude that there
is an essential weakness in man which constitutes the possibility

of evil. This chapter will be divided into four sections, the
first section explaining the influence of Jean Nabert's reflective
philosophy upon Paul Ricoeur's thought, which led him to the
'hermeneutic turn', while sections two and three closely follow
Ricoeur's arguments and explanations as regards the three levels
of the disproportion where Ricoeur's analysis is conducted; section
four reflects upon the concept of fallibility and its meaning for
our dialectics of difference and identity.

C H A P T E R   I

THE PHILOSOPHICAL BACKGROUND TO THE
WORK OF PAUL RICOEUR

Introduction

Paul Ricoeur was deeply influenced by Gabriel Marcel.
His first published book in 1948 was <u>Gabriel Marcel et Karl Jaspers.</u>
<u>Philosophie du mystère et philosophie du paradoxe</u>. He became
Marcel's student in 1934-35 at the Sorbonne, where he enrolled as
a post-graduate candidate for the <u>agrégation</u>, which he passed
brilliantly, coming second, in 1935 at the age of twenty two.
Ricoeur dedicated <u>Le Volontaire et l'involontaire</u> (1950) to Marcel
with a poem from Rilke's <u>Sonnets à Orphée</u>.

Another major influence on Ricoeur was the phenomenology
of Edmund Husserl. A prisoner of war in Germany until 1945, he
read Husserl and translated <u>Ideen I</u>, which he annotated and
published in 1950 under the title <u>Idées directrices pour une</u>
<u>phénoménologie d'Edmund Husserl</u>. Such an important work established
Ricoeur as one of France's leading authorities on Husserl and pheno-
menology.

From 1948 until 1956, Ricoeur lectured on the history of
philosophy at the University of Strasbourg. His teaching immersed
him in the Western philosophical tradition, whose stress on
<u>rationality</u> distanced him from what was then the modern problem
of existentialism. According to Ricoeur, the <u>telos</u> of philosophy
lies in the <u>rational understanding</u> of existence. Existentialism,
however, lost this <u>telos</u> in the immediacy of 'l'intensité du vécu'.
And this, for Ricoeur in his article 'L'Humanité de l'homme' in
<u>Studium Generale</u> (1962), explains its failure:

> ... l'échec de toutes les philosophies de la
> vie est de n'avoir pas su incorporer à la
> reconquête réflexive de l'acte fondateur de la
> conscience, la motivation raisonnable, qui est
> seule capable d'arracher le sujet aux illusions
> et aux passions du moi empirique. (p. 322)

Ricoeur did, however, remain open to existentialist themes.

In the first section of this chapter, we shall investigate Husserl's phenomenology in view of its overwhelming importance to the philosophical context of the 1940's. We shall take the view that the basic discovery of Husserlian phenomenology, that is the noetico-noematic structure of consciousness revealed by 'epoche' is still valid today, as illustrated in the work of Paul Ricoeur. However, and in full agreement with Paul Ricoeur, we also criticize Husserlian idealism as a reduction of the 'other' to the 'same'. Contemporary critics of Husserl are correct on this matter, when it comes to phenomenology in its most idealistic form. But it must be emphasized that this form is not the whole of phenomenology.

Our principal aim in the second section of this chapter is to consider, at opposite ends of the philosophical spectrum, the existential phenomenologies of Gabriel Marcel and Jean-Paul Sartre, once we have explained the origin and meaning of the word 'existentialism' according to Paul Ricoeur. The reason for this investigation lies in Ricoeur's ambivalent attitude towards existentialism: he is both attracted to its themes of the lived body, freedom, and the 'other', and profoundly influenced by Marcel, and at the same time he condemns it for its lack of <u>distance</u> from the 'vécu'.

We shall limit our investigation to the three major themes of existentialism mentioned above, and through those themes, we shall see how the same method and the same words, driven by different ontological choices, arrive at conflicting interpretations. We shall also highlight the influence of those themes on the thought of

Paul Ricoeur and we shall reflect upon them in terms of our
problem of difference and identity.

1 - The Phenomenology of Edmund Husserl

The term 'phenomenology' has been used in so many
different contexts that it appears today to be associated with a
sphere of ambiguity. Although the name that spontaneously arises
in our minds is that of Edmund Husserl, this philosophical dis-
cipline meant to describe objects instead of constructing explana-
tions, was spoken of as early as 1765 by the Swiss-German Johann
Lambert. He used that term in connection with his theory of
knowledge that distinguishes between truth and illusion. Kant and
Hegel also used the word, but it was Husserl, however, who gave it
a new dimension through his ambition of transforming philosophy
into a rigorous science. In his article 'Philosophy as Rigorous
Science' written in 1911 and published in Phenomenology and the
Crisis of Philosophy by Quentin Lauer (1967), Husserl emphasized
the need for rigour in philosophy:

> From its earliest beginnings philosophy has
> claimed to be rigorous science. (p. 71)

But Husserl claimed that so far it had failed to fulfil its goal:

> I do not say that philosophy is an imperfect
> science; I say simply that it is not yet a
> science at all, that as science it has not yet
> begun. (p. 73)

Consequently, and from the very start of his philosophical career,
Husserl stood up as the great person who would create a scientific
philosophy. His constant and obsessional efforts to lay firm
foundations on which the philosophical edifice could be constructed
stayed with him until the end of his life.

The path towards such a radical, universal and systematic

philosophy, whose goal is absolute knowledge, lies in a thorough
exploitation of the concepts of <u>intentionality</u>, <u>ideation</u> and
<u>constitution</u>, and in the techniques of 'epoche', of phenomeno-
logical, eidetic and transcendental reductions. Those concepts
and techniques constitute the phenomenological method regarded
by Husserl as the only method capable of guaranteeing scientific
rigour in philosophical thinking, and hence as the only method able
to bring about a truly scientific philosophy, a philosophy worthy
of the name.

      Husserl conceived his method <u>against</u> a background of
naturalism and historicism. He set out to show how false was the
claim of all pre-phenomenological and 'natural' attitudes to the
title of scientific philosophy, since for them only the physical was
real. According to Husserl, the natural sciences either deny the
ideal, or 'naturalize' it into a physical reality. Psychology shares
the same naivety with the belief that all objects are there before-
hand, given to us in a pre-given objective world governed by its own
laws and own rationality. In that way, psychology fails to grasp
what 'things' actually are, because it does not come to terms with
consciousness itself. In the same article quoted above, Husserl
says:

> To follow the model of the natural sciences almost
> inevitably means to reify consciousness - some-
> thing that from the very beginning leads us into
> absurdity. (p. 103)

Husserl also rejected historicism because it is a philosophy con-
cerned with facts rather than 'things':

> The impulse to research must proceed not from
> philosophies but from things and from the problems
> connected with them. (<u>ibid</u>. p. 146)

      Hence the famous Husserlian motto '<u>to the things them-</u>
<u>selves</u>'. But the 'things' are not an invitation to realism: they

are not to be confused with empirical facts. The 'things' are
objective entities that are constituted in the acts of consciousness.
Their physical identity becomes meaningful only through the acts
in which they are present to consciousness. Or in other words all
that is given beforehand is changed into a thing - for me, into a
phenomenon constituted by and within consciousness. We must stress
that the Husserlian phenomenon is a thing - for - consciousness,
and not a thing - in - itself, as in the Kantian sense of the word
phenomenon. The confusion between these two interpretations of the
phenomenon led to early mistakes in French phenomenology. According
to Husserl, empirical facts are immediately transformed by conscious-
ness into phenomena and not gradually modified by means of
scientific methods, as for Kant. Hence the Husserlian 'phenomeno-
logy' is the science of phenomena, of the appearing of 'things' to
our consciousness.

Intentionality is fundamental to consciousness and the key
word of phenomenology. It was brought to the fore by Husserl's
teacher at Vienna, Franz Brentano. Brentano's descriptive psycho-
logy stressed the fact that acts are always directed towards an
object. From there, Husserl gradually developed the idea that
consciousness is intentional: it is always consciousness of ...
something, always directed toward an object 'of' which it is
conscious. It follows that there cannot be an empty consciousness
that thinks without a thought, that wants or perceives without a
wanted or a perceived object. It is the property of a subject to
be confronted by an object. And more important still, Husserl went
beyond the psychological notion of receptivity and encounter and
converted intentionality into the remarkable property of conscious-
ness of moving out from itself to where the 'things' are in order
to constitute them. Such a movement outwards in search of meaning,

which was for Husserl a way of avoiding the traps of both idealism and realism, stresses the importance of <u>signification</u> in phenomenology. The question of meaning is the first act of consciousness, as Ricoeur points out in his article 'L'humanité de l'homme' in <u>Studium Generale</u>, 5 (1962):

> Or la phénoménologie n'est rigoureuse que quand elle pose la question préalable du sens de l'apparaître même des choses.   (p. 317)

Therefore, to say that an object presents itself as such only <u>for</u> consciousness does not imply that the world would become empty if suddenly depopulated of all its conscious people!   Nothing would be changed except that meaning would be absent.   Ian W. Alexander in his article 'The Phenomenological Philosophy in France.   An Analysis of its Themes, Significance and Implications' in Currents of Thought in <u>French Literature: Essays in memory of G.T. Clapton</u> (1966) highlights this importance of meaning that uncovers the structures of the world:

> Phenomenology is the science of meanings: it is not concerned with a mere realistic description of the world, but with making explicit the fundamental structures whereby the world is constituted as meaningful for consciousness. (p. 327)

The intentional relation between consciousness and the world <u>in se</u> is described by Husserl by means of the <u>noetico-noematic structure</u> of consciousness.   This fundamental structure is the key to the <u>intentional analysis</u> that unfolds the intentional acts of consciousness, normally merged together in the naive grasp of the physical thing.   Those acts are described in terms of their noematic aspect, understood as the 'correlate' of the corresponding noetic acts. The <u>noema</u> is the objective side of consciousness, that is to say the <u>object intended</u> and constituted in consciousness.   And the <u>noesis</u> is the subjective aspect, the <u>conscious act of intending</u>.

Together, as correlates, they structure consciousness. The
noematic reflection is capable of distinguishing between interwoven
intentionalities, by an analysis of the objective aspect of the
subjective process, for example, thought as opposed to thinking.
Such noematic analysis, in its turn, gives access to a distinction
among the conscious acts themselves, such as thinking. Husserl
explains this process as follows in his Méditations Cartésiennes
(Paris, 1931):

> Dans la perception spontanée, nous saisissons
> la maison, non la perception de la maison.
> Dans la réflexion seulement, nous nous
> 'tournons vers' cet acte lui-même et son
> orientation perceptive 'sur' la maison.
> (p. 28)

In such a process the correlation between the subjective and
objective poles of every act of knowing underlines the transcen-
dental yet fundamentally objective features of phenomenology. And
the task of philosophy appears to be the 'uncovering' of meaning,
hidden in the objective world, as Husserl clearly says:

> ... l'explicitation phénoménologique ne fait
> rien d'autre ... qu'expliciter le sens que ce
> monde a pour nous tous, antérieurement à toute
> philosophie et que, manifestement, lui confère
> notre expérience. Ce sens peut bien être dégagé
> par la philosophie, mais ne peut jamais être
> modifié par elle. (ibid., p. 129)

In this way, phenomenology is for Husserl the path toward absolute
knowledge, closely associated with self-understanding and the
understanding of the world.

However what may seem to be at first a simple 'uncovering'
is in fact a constitution: by uncovering the world consciousness
constitutes it as meaningful. Such a concept of constitution
provides the founding of meaning in consciousness. Eugen Fink, for
several years Husserl's collaborator, in his article 'L'Analyse
intentionnelle et le problème de la pensée spéculative', published

in 1951 in Problèmes actuels de la phénoménologie (Bruxelles,

1952) clarifies the noetico-noematic structure of consciousness

as well as this constitutive aspect:

> Etant donné que Husserl comprend la chose comme
> phénomène et celui-ci à son tour comme un moment
> structural de l'intentionnalité, à savoir comme
> son pôle objectif, qui reste cependant inséparable
> du pôle subjectif porteur d'experience, il aboutit
> finalement à la conception d'un processus universel
> dans lequel l'opposition du sujet et de l'objet est
> englobée dans la totalité concrète de la 'vie
> intentionnelle' ... Ce que nous appelons dans la
> vie courante les choses, ce sont, pour Husserl,
> des produits de constitution. Mais les produits
> sont inséparables des opérations productives ...
> pour le phénoménologue, les activités constituantes
> et les formes constituées dans ces activités
> s'appartiennent de façon essentielle; elles ne se
> distinguent que comme les moments relatifs d'une
> totalité englobante.   (p. 77)

This text clearly shows that phenomenology is not a mere

science of appearances. Rather it stands out as a productive

philosophical method concerned with describing how our logical

concepts and categories emerge and assume an 'essential' meaning.

Husserl answered the question of the relationship between our logical

judgements and our perceptual experience with his concept of 'epoche',

a rigorous method capable of suspending our preconceptions and

prejudices in order to disclose how truth and meaning are generated.

Phenomenological reduction deliberately brackets the existence of

the world, of our ordinary beliefs in order to return to the

beginnings, to the origins of knowledge. Husserl makes it clear in

his article 'Philosophy as Rigorous Science' that:

> Philosophy ... is essentially a science of true
> beginnings, or origins ... (p. 146)

The 'bracketing' occurs not because the existing pre-given world is

doubtful but because, as Fink says in 'L'Analyse intentionnelle et

le problème de la pensée spéculative':

> L'étant s'est transformé en phénomène (p. 73),

because knowledge has now become a phenomenon. Yet why this
reduction of being to meaning, of being to 'being for myself'?
Ricoeur justifies such an 'epoche' because he sees in it a free
action that liberates the subject from the realistic illusion of
the in-itself. According to him it is the 'first free act' of the
ego, the gateway to freedom. He says of the 'epoche' in the
introduction to his translation of Ideen I, E. Husserl. Idées
directrices pour une phénoménologie (1950):

> Par lui je **perds** en apparence le monde que je
> gagne véritablement.   (p. XX)

Before such a 'free act', Ricoeur explains that we are lost in the
world, in the things of the world, where we tend to regard ourselves
as things among others. Our 'presence' to the world blinds us to
ourselves with the result that we are alienated. A difference is
needed, a critical distance. In his article 'L'imagination dans
le discours et dans l'action' in Savoir, faire, espérer: les
limites de la raison, Tome I (1976). Ricoeur draws a parallel
between 'l'imagination productrice' and the Husserlian reduction
in which he sees:

> l'acte de distinction, hautement conscient de
> lui-même, par lequel une conscience pose quelque
> chose à distance du réel et ainsi produit
> l'altérité au coeur même de son expérience.
> (p. 210)

Therefore it must be stressed, in contradiction to Derrida and the
modern philosophers who blame phenomenology for reducing the 'other'
to the 'same', that Ricoeur reads in this very decisive act of
'epoche' the emergence of difference, thanks to the critical
distance it introduces within ourselves between the real and the
imaginary, between the objective 'other' and the self. Ricoeur's
conception of 'distanciation', which is fundamental to his inter-
pretation theory, comes from this difference, as we shall see in

our third part. Husserl explains in his Méditations Cartésiennes
why the phenomenological reduction is needed:

> En m'appréhendant moi-même comme homme naturel,
> j'ai d'ores et déjà effectué l'aperception du
> monde de l'espace, je me suis saisi moi-même
> comme me trouvant dans l'espace où je possède
> déjà un monde qui m'est extérieur ... Il faut
> manifestement effectuer consciemment la
> réduction phénoménologique pour en arriver au
> moi et à la conscience susceptibles de poser
> des questions transcendentales concernant la
> possibilité de la connaissance transcendante.
> (p. 70)

The 'epoche' is therefore the key that leads to a new
understanding of consciousness in terms of distance and absence
from the natural world beyond the first naïve presence. Such
difference, or distanciation, was needed for consciousness to
constitute itself and to reconstitute the world. There can be no
creative meaning, no production nor constitution without distance
and difference. Through this suspension of the spontaneous belief
in the absolute existence of natural things, the concept of inten-
tionality, has itself undergone a real conversion: it has become
a 'productive' concept capable of constituting the world 'for me'.
This is far more than a mere encounter with and receptivity of the
natural world.

The great merit of Husserl is to have drawn attention to
the unquestionably subjective elements in all rational knowledge, by
showing how this objective world is dependent upon a performing
subject. Moreover, he brought back from Greek Philosophy, and from
Plato in particular, the importance of the 'ideal', of essences, of
that which remains the 'same' in a process of variation, the
invariant common to the various manners of viewing a phenomenon.
According to Husserl those essences are immediately and intuitively
present to us, they give themselves to consciousness with the same
evidence and the same immediacy as the Cogito does. The Greek word

eidos is at the root of the Husserlian eidetic reduction, whereby the essence of a phenomenon and its essential structures are given immediately, grasped in pure immanent intuition. This eidetic 'epoche' is revolutionary in the sense that it frees knowledge from all conceptual presuppositions and opens the door to an intuitive knowledge immediately grasped. Its method offers, against the previous scientific knowledge of facts, a scientific knowledge of essences. In this new intellectual framework to know things absolutely is to know their essences, that is their universal and unchangeable structures, discoverable in appearances and given intuitively as evident.

So, after the removal from the mind of all factual knowledge of a world in se, this new technique of 'ideation' now aims at the removal of all presuppositions which might prevent the direct and immediate awareness of essences. According to Husserl we can make sense of our world only if we can see what is invariant in it. The grasping of essences has become the prerequisite and necessary foundation of all sciences, and the ultimate foundation of philosophy, as Husserl forcefully says in 'Philosophy as a Rigorous Science':

> Thus the greatest step our age has to make is to
> recognize that with the philosophical intuition
> in the correct sense, the phenomenological grasp
> of essences, a limitless field of work opens out,
> a science that without all indirectly symbolical
> and mathematical methods, without the apparatus
> of premises and conclusions, still attains a
> plenitude of the most rigorous and, for all
> further philosophy, decisive cognitions. (p. 147)

And Husserl claims, in his Méditations Cartésiennes, that this emphasis on the essential insights of phenomena avoids the trap of transcendental realism, which tried to deal with transcendence in the natural way, by applying the methods of natural sciences to

the realm of consciousness. For Husserl the question is, how can

such a 'realism' be sure of its objectivity when:

> ... toutes les distinctions que j'établis entre
> l'expérience authentique et l'expérience trompeuse,
> entre l'être et l'apparence, s'accomplissent dans
> la sphère même de ma conscience ... Comment
> l'évidence (la <u>clara et distincta perceptio</u>)
> peut-elle prétendre à être plus qu'un caractère de
> ma conscience en moi? (pp. 69-70)

According to Husserl his transcendental idealism is better

equipped to deal with this problem of 'objective significance'.

He gives credit to Descartes for coming very close to discovering

the truly transcendental subjectivity: the <u>Cogito</u> rightly

turned from the objective world to the thinking subject in its

search for a universally rational science of being. But, says

Husserl, in the <u>Méditations Cartésiennes</u>, Descartes somehow missed

the meaning of his reduction to the indubitable because he fell

victim to the prejudices of his time which were rooted in dualistic

and causalistic concepts. Hence he missed the opportunity of

creating a transcendental philosophy and, even worse, became:

> le père de ce contresens philosophique qu'est
> le réalisme transcendental. (p. 21)

Husserl promises to avoid such an error by remaining true to his

intuitive 'epoche':

> Rien de pareil ne nous arrivera, si nous restons
> fidèle au radicalisme du retour sur nous-même et
> par là au principe de 'l'intuition' (ou
> évidence) pure, et si, par conséquent, nous ne
> faisons valoir que ce qui nous est donné réellement -
> et immédiatement - dans le champ de l'<u>ego cogito</u>
> que l'époché nous a ouvert, donc si nous évitons
> d'énoncer ce que nous ne 'voyons' pas nous-même.
> A ce principe Descartes ne s'est pas entièrement
> conformé. C'est pourquoi, ayant, en un certain
> sens, déjà fait la plus grande des découvertes,
> Descartes n'en saisit pas le sens propre, celui
> de la subjectivité transcendentale. Il ne franchit
> pas le portique qui mène à la philosophie transcen-
> dentale véritable. (p. 21)

Husserl made sure that both the <u>cogito</u> and its objective

correlate, the <u>cogitatum</u>, were described <u>together</u> within the
subjectivity of consciousness, where absolute objectivity is.
In this way the dualistic approach is transcended, although the
fight against our natural tendencies towards objectivism is not
over. Husserl was very aware of leading a struggle <u>against</u>
<u>nature</u>, and this explains his insistence on the need, for each
one of us, to return to the beginning of philosophy. It also
explains both his efforts to lay down the foundations of such a
beginning, and the programmatic aspect of most of his work, so
that we may cover the same ground again and again, and follow the
proper path in the reconstitution of our own ego. Phenomenological
thinking is laborious and demanding, because it is a return to the
<u>transcendental ego</u> as the ground for the foundation and constitu-
tion of all meaning, without lapsing into some kind of subjectivism.

      This conception of the transcendental ego justifies
another step in the 'epoché': the <u>transcendental reduction</u> that
radically transforms the world into a human world. Husserl explains
in the <u>Méditations Cartésiennes</u>:

> Par l'epoché phénoménologique, je réduis mon moi
> humain naturel et ma vie psychique – domaine de mon
> <u>expérience psychologique interne</u> – à mon moi tran-
> scendental et phénoménologique, domaine de
> l'<u>expérience interne transcendentale et phénoméno-</u>
> <u>logique.</u> Le monde objectif qui existe pour moi ...
> avec tous ses objets puise <u>en moi-même</u> ... tout
> le sens et toute la valeur existentielle qu'il a
> pour moi; il les puise dans mon <u>moi transcendental</u>,
> que seule révèle l'époché phénoménologique transcen-
> dentale. (p. 22)

      Now that the realistic illusion of the in-itself is
dispelled, now that the philosopher knows that what is not
phenomenologically given is not, another dimension is slowly
emerging, the 'phenomenon-of-the-world-for-my-consciousness'.
Meaning comes from 'moi-même', from my transcendental ego. Yet

it must remain objective .   Ian Alexander in 'The Phenomenological

Philosophy in France', explains that the purpose of this 'epoche':

> ... is not to retreat from the world into a pure
> consciousness but to exhibit the fundamental
> relation between consciousness and the world as
> the permanent, universal structure underlying all
> particular experiences actual or possible. It
> suspends all judgements about the world, or indeed
> about the self, so as to concentrate on the struc-
> ture which makes any reference to a world or to a
> self possible at all, that is the intentional self-
> world relation of compresence itself.   (p. 327)

This text clearly reveals that what is at stake in such an 'epoche'

is the permanent and universal structure of consciousness, at work

in the bond between a self that 'pro-jects' towards the world and a

world that becomes 'for' consciousness. Let us stress however that

this relationship of the 'self-world' is not a unity. Although it

constitutes the 'is' of meaning, it 'is not' meaning but a relation

between two very different entities that ought to keep their

difference. The 'self-world' creates meaning through the tension

between its objective and subjective poles. Therefore, the object

for consciousness, whose presence to consciousness transforms it

into a phenomenon, ought to remain the 'other' of consciousness.

If it were to become the 'same' it would mean the end of the

phenomenon itself. And, according to Paul Ricoeur, this is exactly

what happened with Husserlian idealism. He says that although the

tension between the two demands to constitute the thing as 'other', and

to constitute it in me, is indeed very present throughout the

Méditations Cartésiennes, Husserl failed to draw all the consequences

from it, and consequently fell into a transcendental solipsism.

This failure on the part of Husserl explains Ricoeur's shift away

from Husserlian idealism - but not from Husserlian phenomenology -

towards a hermeneutic phenomenology whose explanations explode

idealism. Ricoeur says in 'Phenomenology and hermeneutics' written

in 1975 and published in John B. Thompson's <u>Paul Ricoeur:</u>

<u>Hermeneutics and the Human Sciences</u> (1981):

> On the one hand, hermeneutics is erected on the
> basis of phenomenology and thus preserves some-
> thing of the philosophy from which it nevertheless
> differs: <u>phenomenology remains the unsurpassable</u>
> <u>presupposition of hermeneutics.</u> On the other hand,
> phenomenology cannot constitute itself without a
> <u>hermeneutical presupposition,</u>   (p. 101)

without an 'explication' of evidence.

It is the mutual affinity between these two disciplines
that provides the philosophical basis for the constructive work of
Paul Ricoeur and that makes his writings at once modern yet deeply
traditional.

Before we conclude our examination of Husserl's phenomeno-
logy, we must emphasize the link between his idealistic interpretation
of phenomenology and the fact that he conceived phenomenology as an
<u>egology without ontology</u>: nothing <u>is</u> except meaning in consciousness.
The <u>transcendental ego</u>, in contrast to the first naïve 'mundane' ego
and to the 'natural thesis' of the world, emerges as the <u>key</u> to
everything: it constitutes both the phenomenological world
inhabited by monads and itself. But when the 'thing' becomes another
Self, the <u>Other</u> with whom I share consciousness, the latent tension
of the 'epoche' between the thing as 'other' constituted <u>in me</u>,
then grows into a real conflict, as the fifth Méditation shows.
Yet the Other for Husserl remains 'over there', beyond the creative
conflict of difference and identity, and so fails to belong to my
own 'here'. According to this intersubjective conception, I
perceive the Other only as another 'me', as the 'same' by association
and <u>analogy</u> with my own ego· I imagine him:

... comme si, moi, j'étais là-bas ... (p. 101 M.C.)

It follows that human beings coexist only as identical monads

reflecting the same world in a:

> ... communauté illimitée de monades que nous
> désignons par le terme d'intersubjectivité
> transcendentale.   (pp. 110-111)

It is within such a community of monads that the ego progressively

constitutes itself, through experience and knowledge and thanks to

its slow conversion away from the limitations of the natural

attitude. The growth leads to the constitution of a systematic

egological science, whereby the ego discovers itself to be the

foundation of the world and the origin of all reality. The pheno-

menon offers the path towards such self-explication as Ricoeur says

in his introduction to his translation of Ideen I, E. Husserl.

Idées directrices pour une phénoménologie:

> La méthode phénoménologique consiste à faire
> l'exégèse de l'Ego en prenant le phénomène du
> monde comme fil conducteur.   (p. XXIX)

The Méditations Cartésiennes show the progression of

Husserl's egology towards an advanced expression of idealism. The

first Méditation sets out the radical point of departure, whereby the

'I' who thinks confronts the 'natural thesis' and reduces it by an

'epoche', and whereby evidence is accepted as truth. The second

and third Méditation can be seen as detours, firstly through a

theory of the cogitatum, of an explication of the constitution of

objective meaning in consciousness and secondly, through an analysis

of transcendental evidence, moving towards the egology of the fourth

Méditation which is meant to constitute phenomenology itself.

Both the objective meaning and evidence are necessary transcendental

guides that structure the ego against possible chaos coming from the

flux of consciousness. Husserl makes this very clear:

> Chaque objet en général (et aussi tout objet immanent)
> correspond à une règle de structure du moi transcen-
> dental ... Le subjectivité transcendentale n'est pas
> un chaos d'états intentionnels.   (p. 46)

The close link between evidence and truth reinforces transcendental idealism:

> Il est clair qu'on ne peut puiser la notion de
> la vérité ou de la réalité vraie des objets
> ailleurs que dans l'évidence ... Tout justifi-
> cation procède de l'évidence et par conséquent
> trouve sa source dans notre subjectivité
> transcendentale elle-même.   (p. 51)

Even the ego is justified by evidence:

> L'ego existe pour lui-même ... avec une évidence
> continue.   (p. 55)

This exteriority of objective phenomena and evidence leads at once to the culmination of egology - whereby it secures the complete reduction of world-meaning to my ego, and to its crisis when the otherness of the world becomes problematic. The fourth Méditation unfolds the radicalization of transcendental-phenomenological idealism with the identification of egology and phenomenology. This is because objects that are for me draw from me their meaning and validity. So we witness a displacement of the ego from the subjective aspect of noematic reflection to the now all-embracing source of the whole process of consciousness. Husserl explains:

> C'est un idéalisme qui n'est rien de plus qu'une
> explicitation de mon ego en tant que sujet de
> connaissances possibles ... Il est l'explicitation
> du sens de tout type d'être que moi, l'ego, je
> peux imaginer ... ce qui veut dire: dévoiler
> d'une manière systématique l'intentionalité
> constituante elle-même. La preuve de cet
> idéalisme, c'est la phénoménologie elle-même.
> (p. 72)

Therefore, according to Husserl, the path to absolute knowledge is necessarily:

> ... la voie vers une prise de conscience universelle
> de soi-même, monadique d'abord et intermonadique
> ensuite.   (p. 134)

In his passionate search for scientific self-knowledge, and in communion with Saint Augustine's belief that truth dwells

in the inner man, Husserl went as far as possible in that

direction. He enriched the 'Know thyself!' in a radical way

with his new and revolutionary insights, and '... un sens nouveau'

(M.C. p. 134) still deeply felt half a century later. However, he

seems to have taken a step too much in the direction of the 'same',

of subjective identity, and in the process lost sight of the 'other',

of difference. Hence the accusation of solipsism and idealism by

subsequent philosophers. But let us conclude this section with a

reminder of the importance of his philosophical innovation centred

around his discovery of the noetico-noematic structure of conscious-

ness. Eugen Fink expresses this very simply in 'L'Analyse inten-

tionnelle et le problème de la pensée spéculative:

> Si la chose elle-même est principiellement phénomène,
> elle n'a aucune autonomie définitive. Elle n'est ce
> qu'elle est que par rapport au sujet auquel elle
> apparaît. Mais celui-ci non plus n'a pas le
> caractère d'un étant fermé en lui-même et délimité.
> Lui aussi n'est ce qu'il est que dans l'acte de se
> représenter l'objet qui lui est présenté ... le
> rapport sujet-objet en totalité, avec toutes ses
> structures noético-noématiques, est désormais le
> thème propre de la phénoménologie. (p. 73)

2 - The existential philosophies of Gabriel Marcel and Jean-Paul Sartre

Since the philosophy of Paul Ricoeur stands at the cross-

roads of Husserlian phenomenology and existentialism, while

retaining the whole rational philosophical tradition, and since

the thought of Gabriel Marcel made such an impact on it, it seems

important to turn our attention briefly to the contrasting

existentialisms of Marcel and Sartre.

Let us first find out where the word existentialism comes

from in Ricoeur's view, and what it means. Ricoeur shows in

'L'humanité de l'homme' in Studium Generale, 5(1962) how existential

phenomenology derives its main themes from a _fusion_ of the
phenomenological _method_ with the _problem_ of existence. Existen-
tialism is:

> ... né de la conjonction de la méthode phénoméno-
> logique illustrée par Husserl et de la question de
> l'existence venue de la philosophie postkantienne.
> (p. 317)

The phenomenological method appeared as a possible way of dealing
with the _problems of existence_, that is with the complexities of the
whole of human experience.

Hegel, according to Ricoeur, was the first philosopher to
introduce the 'tragedy of existence' into the field of philosophy.
In his _Phenomenology of Mind_, Hegel described the passage from con-
sciousness to a self-consciousness, dramatized by the negative
experience of conflict and failure. But he used this concept of
the negative, of the 'negation of the negation', only as a _mediation_
between the previous analytical _logic of identity_ and his new
speculative and dialectical _logic_. Ricoeur looks back critically
at this pre-Husserlian 'phenomenology' rich with the 'sens tragique
de la vie'. He accuses it, in retrospect, of having failed both
phenomenology and existence by replacing the old _system_ by a new
one:

> ... en même temps que l'introduction des thèmes
> négatifs promettait un enrichissement immense de
> la description de l'expérience humaine, elle
> annonçait paradoxalement la fin de la phénoméno-
> logie. (_ibid._, p. 318)

Ricoeur here clearly expects phenomenology to _transcend all
systems_, in accordance with Husserl's phenomenological innovation.
But Hegel obviously thought otherwise in his work on the development
of the human spirit from mere sense experience to absolute
knowledge. However, 'Phenomenology' as such was not yet born.
Kierkegaard gave the word 'existence' its contemporary meaning,

Ricoeur stresses, that is the meaning of an individual emerging
into sadness, doubt and solitude, outside systems. And although
Kierkegaard did not use the word 'phenomenology', paradoxically,
Ricoeur places him, and not Hegel, '... à l'origine de la phénoméno-
logie existentielle française ' (ibid. p. 318), because, in his
obsessional attempt to justify and describe this new subjectivity,
Kierkegaard ended by constructing for himself a rigorous method
that avoided the trap of systems and logic. Once again in
retrospect, after Husserl, Ricoeur recognises the genius of
Kierkegaard.

For other reasons, Ricoeur places Nietzsche's works in
the same position as Kierkegaard, at the origin of existential
phenomenology, as '... l'un de ses pères' (ibid., p. 318). Ricoeur
describes him as a 'master of suspicion', who set out to '...
démasquer les mensonges moraux et spirituels sur lesquels s'édifie
notre culture.' (loc.cit., p. 318). But, in order to do, so he needed
a strict, reductive and descriptive method that could proceed from
the derived to the original, towards an understanding of moral pheno-
mena. Ricoeur sees in this method something similar to the Husserlian
phenomenological reduction, yet practised long before Husserl. It
highlights the avant-garde character of Nietzsche's thought, not only
in phenomenology, but also in 'existential psychoanalysis' with his
critique of the self by the self, and of the whole of Western history.

Finally, the change of emphasis of Husserl's late work
with The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology
(1936) marks the existential turning point of transcendental pheno-
menology.

According to Ricoeur this shift was due to the new
importance given to perception, then grasped as the origin of
all conscious processes. This changed the definition of conscious-
ness itself, which came to be understood in terms of its own
presence in things rather than in terms of distance and absence
from the empirical world, thanks to the 'epoche'. Ricoeur explains
this shift in 'L'humanité de l'homme':

> ... la conscience qui donne, qui voit, qui opère
> des présences, porte et fonde la conscience qui
> signifie, qui juge, qui parle. C'est ce déplace-
> ment d'accent qui marque le passage à la
> phénoménologie existentielle; en effet, c'est
> dans la perception, ainsi réinterprétée, que se
> révèlent simultanément le sens de l'existence
> des choses et celui de l'existence du sujet.
> (p. 317)

The meaning of the world was now 'perceived' immediately, prior to
the 'epoche', at an original level beneath all ideal constructions
and scientific theories. The notion of the 'life-world' emerged
as the foundation of all scientific constitutions of meaning, as
the original truth presupposed in all scientific research.

Paul Ricoeur remained critical of this strong emphasis on
perception, whereby the world is shaped within the immediate
experience of each man. In his article 'Méthode et tâches d'une
phénoménologie de la volonté', published in Problèmes actuels de la
phénoménologie (1952), he made it clear that in his opinion
phenomenology ought to be structural at least in its early stages,
that it ought to be guided by noematic reflection:

> La fécondité de l'analyse noético-noématique de
> la période des Ideen a sans doute été sous-
> estimée par la génération phénoménologique qui
> est allée tout de suite aux écrits de la période
> de la Krisis; cette école de phénoménologues a
> cherché dans la théorie du Lebenswelt l'inspira-
> tion d'une description trop vite synthétique à
> mon gré: si en tout problème on va droit au
> «projet existentiel», au «mouvement d'existence»
> qui entraîne toute conduite authentiquement
> humaine, on risque de manquer la spécificité des
> problèmes ... (p. 115)

This attitude taken by Ricoeur explains both his project of a philosophy of the will, that keeps to the essential structures of consciousness, and the method chosen for his 'Lecture de Freud', that illustrates those stages of understanding. It also explains the distance Ricoeur maintained with regards to existentialism, in spite of his attraction to its main themes of the lived body, freedom, and the Other, to which he refers as 'les trois cellules mélodiques', since they keep on recurring again and again throughout the surge of existentialism. However, it must be remembered that the same method and even the same words coming from various contexts and driven by different intentions may assume different meanings. We see this contrast, and even conflict, between the same language and different meanings at work in the existential phenomenologies of Gabriel Marcel and Jean-Paul Sartre. At opposite ends of the philosophical spectrum, they illustrate the subordination of the descriptive method to the existential intention, and also explain the many ambiguities of 'phenomenology' itself, torn between identity and difference.

We shall now consider the 'same' and the 'other' in each of the three existential major themes mentioned above. We shall see how those themes have influenced the thought of Paul Ricoeur, and also how the conflicting interpretations of Marcel and Sartre, as regards those themes, can be explained in terms of their different ontological choices.

First, the theme of 'le corps propre', the lived body. It offered Gabriel Marcel both the occasion of a break from 'la pensée abstraite', and of a recovery of the concrete. The central intuition of Marcel's philosophy lies in his concept of incarnation. He explains in his Essai de philosophie concrète (1940) what he means:

> Etre incarné, c'est s'apparaître comme corps,
> comme ce corps-ci, sans pouvoir s'identifier
> à lui, sans pouvoir non plus s'en distinguer.
> (pp. 34-35)

This definition points towards an ultimate ontological unity of man's

being-in-the-world, in contrast to the old abstract duality of

nature and freedom, of materialism and idealism. Both the notion

of reciprocity between consciousness and body, and the concept of a

'réflexion du second degré ou à la deuxième puissance ... s'exerçant

sur une réflexion initiale' (p. 38), led Marcel to his concept of

incarnation that explodes the old objective dichotomy. Reflection

works as his basic method, since he defines it as:

> ... la philosophie elle-même dans son effort
> spécifique pour restaurer le concret par-delà
> les déterminations disjointes ou désarticulées
> de la pensée abstraite. (pp. 38-39)

Paul Ricoeur took up Marcel's notion of reciprocity between mind

and body, and developed it systematically in Le Volontaire et

l'involontaire, the doctoral thesis he dedicated to the Master.

This substantial book is clear evidence of the importance of the

theme of the lived body in Ricoeur's early writings. He was very

much influenced by Marcel's search for a concrete ontology.

In addition, the importance of Marcel's 'réflexion seconde' that

introduces a distance, a difference within reflection itself, must

be fully stressed. It is similar to the distance at work in

Husserl's 'epoche' and stands against Husserlian idealism or

Husserl's late concept of the life-world. It will reappear in

Ricoeur's Interpretation theory, in his conception of 'distanciation',

which is central to the hermeneutic circle.

Having said that Marcel's philosophy of incarnation argued

against the old dichotomy of nature and freedom, we must nonetheless

recognise one very important ontological duality in his thought, in

the opposition between problem and mystery. The problem is, he says,

before me, and I objectify it; mystery surrounds me, I exist in
it and participate in it as a metaphysical level. But mystery is
not 'l'inconnaissable', and in his <u>Journal métaphysique</u> (1928-33)
Marcel explains:

> ... l'inconnaissable n'est en effet qu'une
> limite du problématique qui ne peut être
> actualisée sans contradiction. La reconnais-
> sance du mystère est au contraire un acte
> essentiellement positif de l'esprit ... comme
> si je me trouvais bénéficier d'une intuition
> que je possède sans savoir immédiatement que
> je la possède ...' (p. 147)

How can we then become aware of such intuition? 'à travers les
modes d'expérience sur lesquels elle se réfléchit et qu'elle illumine
par cette réflexion même.' (<u>ibid</u>., p. 147). In other words, when
we detach ourselves from our lived experience in order to reflect
upon it, we create an ontological distance, a <u>difference</u>, between
ourselves and ourselves, through which we intuitively recognise
the mystery in which we exist. The lived experience then becomes
the problem - the 'other', before which we grasp our own
mysterious identity and become the 'same'. And, according to
Marcel, the purpose of philosophy is to recover this identity that
belongs to this realm of mystery by means of 'une réflexion sur
cette réflexion ... par laquelle la pensée <u>se tend</u> vers la récupéra-
tion d'une intuition qui se perd au contraire en quelque façon
dans la mesure où elle s'exerce.' (<u>ibid</u>., p. 147).

Therefore, we can detect within Marcel's dialectics of
problem and mystery something of the dialectics of difference and
identity at the core of Ricoeur's hermeneutic circle. This very
important <u>continuity</u> between the two thinkers despite their
difference highlights the influence of Marcel on his former
student. Moreover, the importance of the 'Tout Autre' is common
to both.

Marcel places it within the realm of mystery, and brings it to the fore through the participation of our being in being:

> ... reconnaître que je T'appartiens à Toi, c'est reconnaître que je ne m'appartiens à moi-même qu'à cette condition, - bien plus, que cette appartenance est identique. (EPC., p. 155)

This ontological mystery of the 'I', who belongs to the 'Tout-Autre', seems to Ricoeur to be the other pole of the lived body, for as he says in 'L'humanité de l'homme:

> ... la phénoménologie du «corps propre» joue le rôle équivoque d'un réenracinement dans le concret et d'un contre-pôle du mystère ontologique. (p. 319)

If so, the lived body stands out as a 'problem' through the body which I have and use as my instrument. Marcel defines the problem as, '... quelque chose qu'on rencontre, qui barre la route. Il est tout entier devant moi.' (JM p. 124). But since the lived body constantly oscillates between having and being, it is at the same time a 'mystery': the organ I am and through which I think— 'l'acte de penser est mystère' (EPC p. 108); it is 'quelque chose où je me trouve engagé.' (J.M. p. 124). The lived body is therefore for Marcel the place where problem and mystery meet dialectically.

To conclude this brief examination of the theme of the lived body in Marcel's work, it must be stressed that it is possible to interpret it within the framework of a dialectics of the 'same' and the 'other' that points to Paul Ricoeur's hermeneutic circle, thanks to Marcel's ontological choice of mystery and the 'Tout-Autre'.

Jean-Paul Sartre's ontological choice is very different from Marcel's. Although Descartes' naive dualistic view of the

world was rejected by all existentialists, Sartre's phenomenology

retained the dichotomy of subject and object, because of the

radical opposition he makes between what he describes in L'Etre

et le Néant, (1943) as '... une facticité et une transcendance.'

(p. 95).   According to Sartre, consciousness has a body which I

am not.   Our lived body in this context is at once what we are

immediately and what we are not. We remain separated from it by

the 'density' of the world. Our body is our immediate presence to

consciousness always already surpassed by what we have to be.

Hence its being for-me is apprehended as factual existence.   Even

worse, its purely contingent facticity has, for Sartre, the quality

of a dull and inescapable nausea and a 'coefficient d'adversité'

(an expression taken from Gaston Bachelard), experienced as frus-

trating. We exist in our body as objects, in the mode of being-

in-itself, while we are aware of ourselves as different, as

a being-for-itself that transcends the 'in-itself'. 'Nothingness'

fills the gap between those two modes of being and constitutes

our humanity. Husserl's idea of an 'epoche', of a distance that

separates the conscious being from his world, was welcomed by

Sartre who says that 'Nous ne sommes separés des choses par rien,

sinon par notre liberté.' (E.N. p. 591). But he also used it to

divide body and consciousness, in such a way that it creates an

emptiness that calls for fulfilment through action. It is thanks

to action that we may become what we are not, since, according to

our ontological structure, '... il s'agit de constituer la réalité

humaine comme un être qui est ce qu'il n'est pas et qui n'est pas

ce qu'il est.' (E.N. p. 97).

We witness, in Sartre's work, the transformation of

Marcel's concept of reciprocity into a conception of nothingness,

whereby we do not become aware of ourselves as 'mystery', but rather as ontologically 'nothing'. This new awareness seems to be very hard to assume since the concept of 'bad faith' is so overwhelming in Sartre's writings. Bad faith is a pretence which tempts us to believe that <u>we are</u> what we are not, that we are like things, not 'nothing' but a thing, a being-in-itself and for-others, that we are our body. This is, for Sartre, a mere escape from the 'nothingness' experienced as a lack, a hollowness, in comparison to the existence of things. The influence of Hegel and of his conception of tragedy at the heart of human existence, is evident here: man is now torn between a 'being', which is always ahead of him, and a body always trailing behind. This reminds us of St. Augustine's <u>Confessions</u>, in which time is grasped in terms of a 'distentio animi': man is caught within a present which is not a past any more and not yet a future. The same tragic paradox re-emerges with Sartre's bad faith: we deeply wish to simply become our 'lived body' that belongs to the past, and to possess the solidity of things. Yet, if we were so, we would lose our consciousness and cease to be human. Sartre explains, '... l'acte premier de la mauvaise foi est pour fuir ce qu'on ne peut pas fuir, pour fuir ce qu'on est ...' (<u>EN</u>., p. 111). We cannot run away from our fundamental ontological structure.

However, in one particular instance, that of sexual desire, Sartre speaks of an 'incarnation' of consciousness, whereby the duality of body and consciousness is overcome. Sartre says, '... ils font couple.' (<u>EN</u>., p. 134). He explains how it is through our desire for another being that we come to know and experience our own flesh and body:

> ... la caresse en <u>réalisant</u> l'incarnation de l'Autre me découvre ma propre incarnation.
> (<u>EN</u>., p. 460)

But we must stress that this notion of incarnation has nothing to do with Marcel's vision of it. We are, where Sartre is concerned, talking about a very brief incarnation, about:

> ... une sorte d'extase particulière où la con-
> science ne soit plus que conscience (du) corps
> et, par suite, conscience réflexive de la
> corporéité. (EN., p. 467)   1

More important, this sudden magic unity that soon disappears is actually a reduction of subjectivity to objectivity, since the real hidden purpose of sexual desire is, according to Sartre:

> Ma tentative originelle pour me saisir de la
> subjectivité libre de l'Autre à travers son
> objectivité-pour-moi. (EN., p. 451)

In order to reach and take over the other's freedom I have to become myself an 'objectivité-pour-l'autre'.

We do not see anything fulfilling in such a conflict that replaces the Marcellian concept of love and belonging, by that of possession of another 'for-itself'. Sartre's conception is very distant from both Marcel's and Ricoeur's existential intentions as regards the lived body. Sartre's ontological choice of 'nothing-ness' and 'negation of the negation', borrowed from Hegel, remains abstract and alien to the concrete notion of 'reciprocity' at work in the philosophies of both Marcel and Ricoeur. Moreover, the dialectics of the 'same' and the 'other' does not apply to Sartre's conception of the lived body, since the 'same' of self-identity is never ever achieved, except perhaps in bad faith. Therefore, there is no justification for those who, like Vincent Descombes, may criticise Sartre for reducing the 'other' to the 'same'. Descombes, however, recognises that the Sartrian consciousness cannot lead to

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1 The brackets (du) mean a 'conscience qui se fait corps',
   or in other words, in Sartre's language, a 'conscience
   non-positionnelle du corps', a subjective consciousness
   of the body different from the objectivity of the
   body itself.

identity, since the relation between the two is in fact a non-relation. We see this non-relation even better when we reverse the dialectics, whereby identity and the 'same' would describe the completeness of existence in the world around us. Identity would then be the aim of our bad faith condemned by Sartre as inauthentic and unethical. And difference would point to the Sartrian creative conflict that preserves our 'nothingness', and through it our freedom. This new inverted dialectics highlights difference and consciousness as its ethic, and appears in fact very modern in its nihilism. But it has also lost all common ground with Ricoeur's hermeneutic circle and with Marcel's dialectics of the 'same' and the 'other'. The notion of a non-coincidence of man with himself, tragic as it is in our lived body and our lived existence, whether we interpret it in terms of nothingness or in terms of mystery and fault, now leads a second existential theme, that of freedom. The theme of freedom stresses even more the contrasts between these two phenomenologies which develop according to a very similar descriptive method, and yet reach radically opposed ontologies. According to Sartre we are condemned to freedom and anguish. Freedom bears the 'negative' mark of absence and conflict whereby the self continuously steps away from itself.

Paul Ricoeur in his article 'L'humanité de l'homme' interprets Sartre's concept of freedom as follows:

'Le bouleversement que Sartre a introduit dans
la problématique de la liberté, c'est précisément
d'avoir inversé l'indice ontologique de la
liberté; l'être de l'homme consiste à exister,
disions-nous à l'instant? Disons plutôt qu'exister
consiste à être son propre néant.' (p. 320)

This is to say that Sartre breaks away from the metaphysical tradition whereby being had an essence which determined its nature. He inverts this philosophical state of affairs by

declaring that the being of man consists in being his nothingness, and, in doing so, he makes the ontological and the existential synonymous. Because existence now precedes essence we find ourselves <u>entirely free</u> to fill our internal gap, in any way we choose, according to our projects and ultimate goals. And of course we bear full responsibility for it. Sartre explains his inversion in <u>L'Etre et le Néant</u> :

> 'De ce point de vue - et si l'on entend bien que
> l'existence du Dasein précède et commande son
> essence - la réalité humaine, dans et par son
> surgissement même, décide de définir son être
> propre par ses fins. C'est donc la position de
> mes fins ultimes qui caractérise mon être et qui
> s'identifie au jaillissement originel de la
> liberté qui est mienne. Et ce jaillissement est
> une <u>existence</u>, il n'a rien d'une essence ou d'une
> propriété d'un être qui serait engendré conjointe-
> ment à une idée. Ainsi la liberté, étant assimilable
> à mon existence, est fondement des fins que je
> tenterai d'atteindre, soit par la volonté, soit
> par des efforts passionnels.' (pp. 519-520)

In other words, freedom is inescapable because it is existence itself at the source of everything. We have the full responsibility of becoming ourselves while constantly torn away from ourselves. The process of 'néantisation' of the past, and of being-in-itself oriented towards our being-for-itself, is a painful achievement whereby we are not yet what we ought to be (since it remains a project, a possibility, 'un pur néant présent'), while what is at present ought not to be, and so must become a 'néant par rapport à cet état de choses'. This process actually constitutes 'une double néantisation' (EN. p. 510), and is central to Sartrian freedom, as he himself says:

> 'La liberté, c'est précisément le néant qui <u>est été</u>
> au coeur de l'homme et qui contraint la realité-
> humaine à <u>se faire</u>, au lieu d'être. Nous l'avons
> vu, pour la réalité-humaine, être c'est <u>se choisir</u>:
> rien ne lui vient du dehors, ni du dedans non plus,
> qu'elle puisse <u>recevoir</u> ou <u>accepter</u> ... L'homme ...
> est tout entier et toujours libre ou il n'est pas.'
> (<u>E.N</u>. p. 516)

It seems, therefore, that the theme of freedom in the Sartrian context is even less prone to identity than the lived body, since the neantisation introduces an endless temporal movement within man's non-coincidence with himself. Such a movement highlights the distance that always separates existence and being from its 'having-been'. Difference is here a key word that transcends any dialectics. And its price is heavy since it includes insecurity, anguish, inner struggle and to some extent, despair.

In contrast to such a stoic nihilation of being, Gabriel Marcel's philosophy of participation in being appears intensely liberating. The Entretiens: Paul Ricoeur - Gabriel Marcel, published in 1968, stress an attitude of quest in Marcel's approach to freedom, an attitude that rejects Sartre's abstract system as guilty of reducing being to a problem. It shows 'un cheminement interrogatif' and 'une recherche tâtonnante' (p. 126). In Marcel's Phenomenology of liberation, being is 'une réalité sacrale' (p. 90). Therefore when we question our own being, in search of self-understanding, our question is itself a response to a call from what Marcel calls in his Essai de philosophie concrète, 'une réalité qui me déborde et m'enveloppe' (p. 216).

Freedom is grasped as my answer to this call that comes from Transcendence. Ricoeur remarks in his Entretiens that '... chez vous la liberté-réponse l'emporte sur la liberté-choix' (p. 85). Indeed, for Marcel, freedom means to let oneself be opened up by the liberating presence, to make oneself available to it rather than to search for self-autonomy. In other words, for Marcel, freedom is the discovery of my 'being-with' a presence, that calls for communication and communion, and in my saying 'yes' to the

appeal made to me, since:

> '... douter de Toi, ce n'est pas me libérer,
> c'est m'anéantir.' (EPC p. 217)

Such a notion of freedom is certainly not an abstract concept nor

a problem. It is, in Marcel's view, a <u>gift</u> in which I participate

at the metaphysical level of mystery:

> '... cette liberté-là est un don : encore
> faut-il que je l'accepte.' (EPC. p.155)

A movement is present here as well, but it is the simple,

concrete movement of the <u>homoviator</u>, of 'l'homme en marche' who

does not find the journey through existence easy, for suffering,

bitterness, and at times despair, are very much part of it. Yet

anguish is not a central theme in Marcel's philosophy of existence,

as it is for Sartre. The notions of faith and <u>hope</u>, and the aware-

ness of what Marcel calls:

> '... une expérience existentielle de la joie, de
> la plénitude.' (<u>Entretiens</u>, p. 87)

take over as the dominant factors of this concrete thought. And

although freedom is the key factor in Marcel's <u>Essai de philosophie</u>

<u>concrète</u>, yet even freedom is never really conceptualized.

It remains an encounter, a reciprocity and a collaboration with

the 'other', that is an 'answer' rather than a concept or a choice.

Even better, it is ourselves:

> '<u>Parce que notre liberté est nous-mêmes, elle</u>
> <u>peut nous paraître à certaines heures</u>
> <u>inaccessible</u>.'(EDC p. 88)

But the dialectics of difference and identity has not disappeared

even though our answer to the 'other' points towards self-identity

and the 'same'. And difference is very much part of it since 'le

refus' is always a possibility inherent in any encounter. Indeed

Marcel's description of the passage from unavailability to

availability and generosity can always be reversed.

Paul Ricoeur shared the breadth of Marcel's vision of freedom, but he formalized it in accordance with the Husserlian method of 'epoche'.

A fundamental question throughout his <u>Philosophy of the will</u> is : what is freedom? We gradually learn that freedom is only a human freedom limited by our human nature, that it is a fallible freedom because of man's non-coincidence with himself and last, but not least, that freedom is limited by evil within and outside ourselves.

The theme of freedom is profoundly linked to the theme of the 'other' in all existentialisms. We have seen in the thought of Marcel how the meaning of freedom lies in our answer to the 'other'. This 'other' is a 'tu' rather than a 'lui'. It belongs to the realm of mystery within Marcel's <u>phenomenology of communica-tion</u>, in its search for communion. We need the 'other' to come to know and understand ourselves:

> ... je ne communique effectivement avec moi-même que dans la mesure où je communique avec l'autre, c'est-à-dire où celui-ci devient toi pour moi. (EPC, p. 56)

However, in order to achieve such communion, we must become available, that is, '... au lieu de me défendre de l'autre, je m'ouvre à lui'. (EPC., p.60).

According to Marcel, the subject is not a for-itself as it is for Sartre, it is not a '... puissance existant pour soi et se prenant soi-même pour centre.' (EPC., p. 79). Such a for-itself leads to a dangerous '... obsession de soi.' (EPC., p. 82). Rather it is seen as a for-the-other, as a gift to the 'other' and to God, since '... la fonction propre du sujet est de sortir de soi.' (EPC., p. 79). Yet we need a little push in order to escape our narcissism:

> Tout seul, on ne serait point parvenu à s'en
> dégager, mais la présence de l'autre opère ce
> miracle, pourvu qu'on lui donne son consente-
> ment, qu'on accepte de ne pas la traiter comme
> simple intrusion - par rapport à soi-même - mais
> comme realité. Rien de plus libre, au sens
> véritable de ce mot, que cette acceptation et ce
> consentement. (EPC., p. 82)

This quotation shows how vital the 'other' and intersubjectivity
are not only to the theme of freedom but also to self-identity.
It is clearly through the 'other' - an experience seen as 'une
épreuve' (Entretiens, p. 123), that we come to ourselves, to the
'same'. The dialectics of the 'same' and the 'other' appears to be
here almost identical to Ricoeur's dialectics of appropriation and
distanciation. The same risks of objectivation, of a problematisa-
tion of the 'lui' without its counterpart of mystery are very
present, and with them the dangers of a refusal of the 'other'
that cut us off from 'ce qui nous fait êtres.' (EPC., p. 88).
Marcel, in the Entretiens, expresses his belief in what we interpret
as a dialectics that opens up our egoistic tendencies in spite of
the real risks of self-enclosure:

> ... l'inter-subjectivité c'est l'ouverture à
> l'autre, une ouverture qui est perpétuellement
> menacée car, à chaque instant, le moi risque de
> réobturer cette sorte d'ouverture dans la mesure
> où il devient prisonnier de lui-même, où il ne
> considère plus l'autre que par rapport à lui -
> mais que l'ouverture à l'autre soit possible
> (c'est-à-dire dans un tout autre langage la
> charité), c'est manifestement une des certitudes
> cardinales auxquelles je suis parvenu.' (p. 123)

Ricoeur shares the same eschatological hope, but the 'other' is not
thematized as such in his philosophy. As for the 'Tout-Autre', it
is a 'limit concept' which cannot be known in itself.

Jean-Paul Sartre's attitude to the 'other' is totally

alien to Marcel's. In the Sartrian context, the ontological dangers
do not come from within, from our basic narcissism, but from the
'other' in front of me. In l'Etre et le Néant the 'other' is
experienced not in participation, but in conflict. The 'other's
glance, 'le regard', is indeed a threatening experience. Sartre
agrees that:

> ... j'ai besoin d'autrui pour saisir à plein
> toutes les structures de mon être, le Pour-soi
> renvoie au Pour-autrui. (E.N. p. 277)

But in contrast to Marcel's notion of reciprocity, the relationship
is one of struggle and conflict that aims at the 'possession' of
the 'other's' freedom. In the Sartrian drama of human relations
I am either 'possessed' by the 'other', and consequently changed
into an object for his consciousness, or I possess the 'other',
turning him into an object for my consciousness. We witness a
complete invasion of Marcel's ideas of belonging to someone, of
freely giving oneself to the 'other'. Rather I must now
'appropriate' at all costs the 'other's' transcendence, or else
he will possess me, in accordance with the law of the jungle
whereby there is always a proud winner and a shameful loser.
Let us examine in detail how this human communication works.
I know only one aspect of myself, immediately grasped from within,
that of my possibilities as a being-for-itself in the mode of non-
thetic consciousness (of) these possibilities. But I am also a
being-for-others and a being-in-itself through my lived body.
And the only way for me to know that being is via the 'other':

> ...autrui est le médiateur indispensable entre
> moi et moi-même. (E.N. p. 276)

The 'other' sees in me an object of observation, a phenomenon
to reflect upon and describe. And when he looks at me what I
perceive are not his eyes but his consciousness of me, that is

myself as being seen, as a being-in-itself, myself for my
unreflective consciousness, transcended and alienated. 'Le
regard'is fundamental: it is an intermediary which refers from
me to myself. Sartre describes it as something which goes in
front of the eyes, a gaze which freezes me and steals my world
from me by taking away my freedom. The 'other', '... celui qui me
regarde.' (E.N., p. 315), is a free being-for-itself whose freedom
is the greatest obstacle to my own freedom to do as I wish. Only
freedom separates us:

> Autrui, c'est ce moi-même dont rien ne me sépare,
> absolument rien si ce n'est sa pure et totale
> liberté.' (E.N., p. 330)

And it is thanks to this nothingness that constitutes freedom, to
that distance between us, that I become aware of my body:

> ... la rencontre avec autrui, c'est une révélation
> ... de l'existence de mon corps, dehors, comme un
> en-soi pour l'autre.' (E.N., p. 419)

But this awareness is experienced as shame: my being-in-itself
revealed to me by the 'other's' look is felt as a degraded con-
sciousness radically different from my being-for-itself. It is as
if I have 'fallen' into the world among things where I feel uneasy
and in danger.

In the second moment of Sartre's conception of this
basic relation with what he calls the 'other-me', I must, in
order to survive as a being-for-itself, suppress my fear, and
regain my freedom and transcendence by apprehending as an object
the 'other' who apprehended my own object-state. The situation is
reversed, and it is now with pride that I put the 'other' out of
play as a consciousness, while becoming responsible for his
existence as a being-in-itself-for-me. Therefore the being-with-
someone can take place only in an endless conflict which, for
Sartre, is positive and creative, and the healthy sign that both

individuals have not given in to bad faith. He explains the

process as follows in l'Etre et le Néant:

> ... mes rapports avec autrui -objet sont faits
> essentiellement de ruses destinées à le faire
> rester objet. Mais il suffit d'un regard
> d'autrui pour que ces artifices s'effondrent
> et que j'éprouve de nouveau la transfiguration
> d'autrui. Ainsi suis-je renvoyé de transfigura-
> tion en dégradation et de dégradation en transfi-
> guration ... il n'est que les morts pour être
> perpétuellement objets. (p. 358)

However it must be stressed that this being-with can never be a

communion in the Marcellian sense, since no synthesis is possible

between those two forms of subjectivities:

> '... les subjectivités demeurent hors d'atteinte
> et radicalement séparées.' (E.N. p. 498)

In other words man is not only condemned to freedom but also to

his inexorable existential solitude.

Ricoeur accepts this fundamental solitude but transcends

it through language: we cannot share our lived experiences but we

can share their meaning by expressing them in language.

The dialectics of the 'same' and the 'other' is present

within the Sartrian conflict, since it implies a positive distance

between two individuals, through which I am in turn the 'other',

alienated from myself, and the 'same' that alienates an 'other'.

But we must stress that this self-identity is achieved only

externally: it is 'Je' against 'lui'. Within myself, I remain

what I am not and which I have to become in accordance with the

concept of 'néantisation'. That is to say that I can never be

'the same'.

Conclusion

In this first chapter, dealing with philosophical context

and background to Paul Ricoeur's thought, we have sought to reflect

upon the problematic of identity and difference in both Husserlian

phenomenology and the existential themes of the lived body,

freedom and the 'other' in the existential phenomenologies of

Marcel and Sartre.

We have seen how Husserlian idealism reduced the 'other'

to the 'same', but we have also insisted that this is not the whole

of phenomenology. The basic 'epoche' still offers the necessary

distance and tension that allow the 'other' to survive, together

with the 'same', within a creative dialectics. And we have explained

how this egoistic failure, on the part of Husserl, led Ricoeur to a

hermeneutics that does not abandon phenomenology but rather

fulfils it in a hermeneutic circle of difference and identity.

We have also asked ourselves whether the three major

existential themes at the heart of both Sartre's and Marcel's

philosophies could be placed within such a circle. It gradually

became clear that Marcel's concepts of 'problem' and 'mystery'

which structure all his themes foreshadowed the Ricoeurian

dialectics of distanciation and appropriation, of difference and

identity. On the other hand, we have stressed that Sartre's con-

cept of 'néantisation' could not possibly fit into such a

dialectics, but rather pointed towards a difference whereby the

self is always ahead of the 'same', or behind it in bad faith when

it is 'what it is not'. Although the theme of the 'other' did

indicate some kind of dialectics between 'him' and 'I', we have

argued that this is so only on the surface. Ontologically the

'same' can never achieve such identity until death changes it into

an in-itself.

Finally, we have tried to show how this major gap

between Sartre and Marcel could be explained in terms of their

different ontological choices, expressed by means of the same

phenomenological method. And we have insisted on the similarities

between Marcel and Ricoeur, which are particularly clear in the notions of reciprocity and distance that lead to Ricoeur's hermeneutic circle.

C H A P T E R   II

THE STRUCTURAL PHENOMENOLOGY OF THE WILL:
LE VOLONTAIRE ET L'INVOLONTAIRE (1950)

> '... il faut réintégrer la
> conscience dans le corps
> et le corps dans la
> conscience.' (L'Unité p. 5)

Introduction

At a time when the philosophical landscape in France was
under the influence of phenomenology and of thinkers like Edmund
Husserl and Martin Heidegger, Jean-Paul Sartre and Gabriel Marcel,
Merleau Ponty and Karl Jaspers, among others, Paul Ricoeur sought
to integrate the phenomenological method developed by Husserl with
the thought of Marcel in order to investigate the will, through a
study of the relationship between the voluntary and the involuntary,
which had until then been dominated by the old metaphysical duality
of freedom and nature. But why write a philosophy of the will?
Looking back on it thirty years later, Ricoeur emphasizes the
challenge of the whole enterprise in his 'Response' to John B.
Thompson's Paul Ricoeur. Hermeneutics and the human sciences
(1981):

> The first challenge was that represented by the
> apparent incapacity of Husserlian phenomenology
> to deal with volitional experience, since the
> privilege of theorEtical consciousness and
> perception seemed so much to dominate, to the
> point of saturating, the descriptive field
> opened up by the analysis of intentionality;
> had not Merleau-Ponty as well written a
> phenomenology of perception? Could one write a
> phenomenology of the will without abandoning the
> method of describing the essential structures of
> consciousness? Freedom and Nature attempted to
> respond to this challenge. (p. 32)

Ricoeur attempts to understand the reciprocity of the voluntary
and the involuntary, in a systematic way, through a detailed

demonstration of how each of the three moments of the will -
that is decision, action and consent - comprises both a
voluntary and an involuntary aspect. For each moment the question
is how the will and human freedom — or in our own language, the
'same', the 'I' who says "I will" — relates to its 'other', to
nature and the involuntary?

Ricoeur believes in the unifying action of thought beyond
the tragic 'distentio' of experience, beyond the 'other'. In
'L'Unité du volontaire et de l'involontaire comme idée-limite' in
Bulletin de la Societé française de philosophie (1951), he explains
how we experience a duality and yet understand a unity:

> Bref, ce que je comprends, c'est l'unité; c'est
> sur ce fond-là, sur cet horizon d'unité que je
> vis la dualité dramatique de l'homme. (p. 22)

However, the ultimate unity of the voluntary and the involuntary
remains an unattainable ideal, even though Ricoeur achieves in his
eidetic analysis of the will a valuable reconciliation.

In this chapter we shall examine the fundamental
reciprocity of the 'same' and the 'other' in a context whereby
human freedom is placed within the realm of nature, rather than in
rejection of it, as with Sartre's 'néantisation', and also in a
context where the structural analysis is conducted within the
limits of a double abstraction. Firstly, the phenomenological
reduction that changes the world into a phenomenon for my
consciousness: the body under investigation is mine and cannot
therefore be an objectifying standpoint without intentionality and
self-reference. Secondly, the eidetic reduction that suspends
the effects of actual existence to concentrate on its meaning, on
its essence immediately given.

Consequently both the fault -- defined by Ricoeur in

Le Volontaire et l'involontaire as 'la dégradation déjà effectuée du vouloir et son maquillage sous les couleurs de la passion.' (p. 7) - and Transcendence - understood as 'l'origine radicale de la subjectivité.' (p. 7) - are bracketed so as to reveal 'les structures ou les possibilités fondamentales de l'homme.' (p. 7).

This chapter is divided into three sections. Each section examines one of the three moments in the process of willing. We intend to show the nature of the relationship between the 'same' and the 'other' at each stage of the process, and how this reciprocity foresees the Ricoeurian hermeneutic circle, thus preparing, in an abstract manner, the way for a hermeneutic phenomenology.

As we have already said, Ricoeur uses the Husserlian noematic reflection in his analyses in order to distinguish between our intermingled intentionalities, that is to identify the objective correlates of those intentionalities - the intended, from the affective and volitive intendings. He explains in 'Méthode et tâches d'une phénoménologie de la volonté':

> ... c'est en réfléchissant de préférence sur le voulu comme tel, sur l'émouvant, sur l'imaginé que l'on accède à la distinction des actes eux-mêmes, des visées de conscience.
> (p. 116)

And, as we know, the intentionalities involved here concern the phenomenon of willing that connects with human freedom. These intentionalities were already familiar to Gabriel Marcel, but Ricoeur felt the need for a more rigorous and systematic method. He explains in Le Volontaire et l'involontaire how his meditation on the work of Gabriel Marcel is the basis of the

analyses of this book, which he dedicated to Marcel, and he also

clarifies his intentions:

> ... nous avons voulu mettre cette pensée à l'épreuve
> des problèmes précis posés par la psychologie
> classique ... nous avons voulu nous placer à
> l'intersection de deux exigences: celle d'une
> pensée alimentée au mystère de mon corps, celle
> d'une pensée soucieuse des distinctions héritées
> de la méthode husserlienne de description.
> (V.I. p. 18)

Ricoeur's attempt is therefore a problematization of

lived experience, with the purpose of achieving a distinctive

understanding of subjective structures without losing the 'mystery

of my body'. Clarity and depth are his watchwords in order to

preserve mystery, yet clarify it objectively without degrading it

by turning the meaning of existence into a class of mental facts.

Ricoeur stresses the difference between the phenomenological

objectivity that respects the Cogito, and naturalism that reduces

intentional acts to mere facts severed from the subject. But he

also acknowledges that, as soon as we try to grasp and formulate

our mystery, we cut ourselves off from its presence, from the 'same',

and consequently concepts can only be:

> ... les index d'une expérience vive qui nous
> baigne, plutôt que les signes de la maîtrise
> que notre intelligence exercerait sur notre
> condition d'homme. Mais en retour la vocation
> de la philosophie est d'éclairer par notions
> l'existence même. (V.I. p. 20)

By 'notions' Ricoeur means conceptions like motivation, and

decision, action, consent to necessity, that explain the process

of willing. We shall seek to remain faithful to this philoso-

phical task.

1 - Decisions, the Involuntary and the concept of
     choice: The 'diagnostic' relation

> 'L'involontaire est pour la volonté et
> la volonté est en raison de
> l'involontaire.' (V.I. p. 82)

This reciprocity of the voluntary and the involuntary,

which is opaque to meaning, is fundamental if we are to understand the phenomenon of willing. The involuntary has no objective meaning of its own, as Ricoeur clearly says:

> Non seulement l'involontaire n'a pas de signi-
> fication propre, mais la compréhension procède
> de haut en bas et non de bas en haut.
> (V.I., p. 8)

According to Ricoeur the act of willing comprises three voluntary movements: I decide, I move my body, I consent. Each movement involves a correlate involuntary act. The three are complementary and unfold according to a progressive order:

> Chaque moment de la vie volontaire ... révèle
> un aspect réciproque de la vie involontaire et
> fournit ainsi un principe d'ordre dans la
> comparution des fonctions involontaires.
> (L'Unité, p. 12)

The first moment in the process of willing, when 'I will' means 'I decide', reveals through noematic analysis an intentional object: a decision or project for future action, or, in other words, 'ce que je décide, le projet que je forme ... ce qui est ≪à faire≫ ... par moi. (Méthode, pp. 117-118). And, in accordance with the principle of reciprocity of the voluntary and the involuntary, this project is correlated to its involuntary counterpart, to '... l'autre pôle d'une conscience voulante' (Méthode, p. 121). It presupposes motives which incline the will and are based upon needs organically and socially induced.

Let us examine in more depth how this works in the context of Ricoeur's investigation. When we make up our mind reflectively we do so because we have motives to justify our projects and sustain our decision. Ricoeur explains the process as follows:

> Dans la décision, le moment proprement réflexif
> (je me décide) se comprend à partir du moment
> intentionnel (je décide de), tourné vers un
> projet, et enveloppe un moment réceptif (je
> décide parce que ...), tourné vers des motifs.
> (L'Unité, p. 2)

Those motives are read by Ricoeur as values, and are rooted in

the body :

> Mon corps ... est la source la plus fondamentale
> de motifs et le révélateur d'une couche primor-
> diale de valeurs: les valeurs vitales.
> (V.I., p. 82)

Hence our body nourishes the motivations that incline without

compelling. Moreover, those involuntary motivations whereby the

will '... s'offre aux suggestions de l'involontaire' (L'Unité,

p. 14) are, according to Ricoeur, absolutely reciprocal with our

voluntary projects:

> ... motif et projet, en effet, sont strictement
> réciproques en ce sens que l'avance de mon
> choix et la maturation de mes raisons sont une
> seule et même chose. (L'Unité, p. 7)

Without motives, there are no decisions but only happenings. In

other words, the involuntary plays a part in all important

voluntary acts to be performed by me in my future action. This

structural reciprocity constitutes what Ricoeur calls a 'practical

mediation' between the old dualism of freedom and nature, or mind

and body, whereby the body is reduced to an object. Ricoeur's

approach shows how the body is part of a living subject whose

needs influence his decision. Our affectivity and needs,

understood by Ricoeur as 'la matière de nos motifs' (V.I., p. 82),

are opaque, yet they also retain some intentionality, within an

eidetic analysis, because Ricoeur believes that 'sentir est encore

penser' (V.I., p. 83). Therefore our felt needs cannot be

reflexes nor inner sensations that fit within a stimulus-response

schema. Ricoeur describes them in terms of a lack, of a lacuna

at the heart of existence, as well as in terms of desires that

anticipate a satisfaction:

'Quand j'ai faim, je suis absence de ... impulsion
vers ... ' (VI. p. 87)

And Ricoeur interrelates those needs with _imagination_. Imagina-

tion plays a crucial role in the representation of the missing

thing, of the way to get it, and of the pleasure it will give

when attained:

L'imagination, qui est donc cette espèce de
carrefour de l'affectivité informe et des
attitudes volontaires ... une manière
d'anticiper un réel absent sur fond du
monde ... peut médiatiser le besoin et le
vouloir. (L'Unité, p. 13)

Ricoeur places this anticipating imagination, that

evaluates and sustains all desires, at the _source_ of the reciprocal

relationship of the voluntary and the involuntary, and indeed at

the root of human life itself, since it introduces the values that

transfigure our needs into _human needs_. It works like:

... une intention évaluante qui porte notre
corps au niveau d'un champ de motivation ...
pour devenir corps d'homme, corps d'un moi
voulant. (L'Unité, p. 14)

This explains why man can sacrifice his needs, and even his life,

by weighing them against other cultural values like justice,

friendship and so on. However despite these intellectual values,

Ricoeur reminds us that when we really risk our existence, we

experience the pain through our body and not at an abstract

level:

... le « je suis » ou « j'existe » déborde
infiniment le « je pense »   (VI. p. 82)

We may choose not to eat, and control the urge towards food, but

nonetheless we still feel hunger. Understanding is approaching

its lower limit beyond which _my_ body remains obscure to

phenomenological investigation. In contrast to the idea of an

upper limit of perfect transparence, we here reach through our

affectivity:

le côté non transparent du cogito. (VI. p. 83)

At this stage of the eidetic analysis the 'other' gradually escapes the 'same', while our involuntary experiences get more obscure and opaque to description. Hence, Ricoeur observes that the temptation to switch from our personal body, with which we identify through our 'incarnation', to an object body elaborated by the empirical sciences, a body that has lost its intentionality and its reference to the 'I' of experience. Ricoeur actually admits that:

> ... l'involontaire est souvent mieux connu empiriquement, sous sa forme pourtant dégradée d'événement naturel. (V.I., p. 15)

Yet, at this crucial point when a dichotomy between the 'same' and the 'other' appears inevitable, and threatens the dialectics, we see the genius of Ricoeur's creative thinking. He solves the problem with his conception of a 'diagnostic' relation between the Cogito and psychophysiology: the philosopher operates like a medical doctor, he diagnoses objective data by reading such data as signs or symptoms of opaque involuntary experiences. In this way the philosopher, Paul Ricoeur, gradually builds a sign-learning process. This new 'apprentissage des signes' (V.I., p. 16) leads him to an enriched dialectics between the voluntary and the involuntary, between the 'same' and the 'other'. Thanks to it, the 'same' may now be guarded against the danger of immediacy, and the 'other' against the absence of a transcendental justification.

We are in agreement with Don Ihde's view that this original idea of a 'diagnostic' relation between the human sciences and phenomenology is an anticipation of hermeneutic method with its circle of difference and identity. It is an important step in Ricoeur's thinking, and therefore it must be examined in depth.

Ricoeur justified his first 'detour' via the empirical
sciences, with the aim of recapturing consciousness, as follows.
Firstly, freedom is incarnate in nature, for, if scientific facts
did not belong to the subjective life of consciousness:

> ... s'ils ne retenaient rien du vécu de conscience,
> ils ne concerneraient aucunement l'homme et sa
> conscience, ils ne signifieraient pas du tout
> l'homme. (Méthode, p. 122)

And secondly, psychology holds:

> ... les linéaments d'une phénoménologie qui s'y
> trouvait objectivée et en quelque sorte aliénée.
> (V.I., p. 16)

The aim, therefore, is to uncover those intentional
phenomenological structures, or in other words, to recover the
subjective aspect of the involuntary from the objective signs.
And the result of this sign-learning process is a truly Copernican
revolution. Ricoeur insists on such a revolution in Le Volontaire
et l'involontaire:

> ... ce n'est plus la conscience qui est le
> symptôme du corps-objet, mais le corps-objet
> qui est l'indicateur du corps-propre auquel le
> cogito participe comme à son existence même.
> (V.I., p. 84)

We witness a new relationship between phenomenology and the human
sciences, whereby the enlarged 'other' can now highlight and deepen
the 'same' in a new creative way. And it does so within a conflict
situation. Indeed phenomenology not only brings out moments of
hidden consciousness from naturalistic concepts, but also elaborates
'... ses « essences » du vécu en tension avec les notions des sciences
de l'homme' (Méthode, p. 122). It must, however, be made very clear
that this conflict does not restore the dualistic impasse since it is
not a relation between two realities - 'conscience et corps' - but
between:

> deux univers du discours ... deux points de vue
> sur le même corps, considéré alternativement
> comme corps propre inhérent à son cogito et comme
> corps-objet, offert parmi les autres objets. (V.I., p.85)

In other words we now enter a dialectics between two readings of the _involuntary_, that complete one another without losing their differences, within the larger circle of the voluntary and the involuntary by which both the 'same' and the 'other' are enriched in a way that anticipates the hermeneutic circle.

Thanks to this new dialectics, and to the principle of reciprocity, Ricoeur achieves an apparent 'unity' between decision and the involuntary, only to discover that within their precarious reintegration there exists a deeper _existential split_. This emerges with the irruption of _choice_ and hesitation. A choice, for Ricoeur, introduces an inner _tension_ between a rationalization of motives implying a receptivity of values, and an impulsion towards something entirely new and stimulating. A choice implies an exclusion of rejected motives, and the tension it creates within the voluntary shows that:

> '... la synthèse de la légitimité et de l'inventivité,
> de la valeur et de l'audace, reste aussi une idée-
> limite.' (_Méthode_, p. 133)

We conclude from Ricoeur's new existential discovery that the 'other' in his work cannot possibly be reduced to the 'same'. On the contrary, they enter into a positive and enriching dialectics. This state of affairs emerges gradually, from the very beginning of his creative career, and leads towards his hermeneutic circle. So, a unity between freedom and nature, and in this section between decision and the involuntary, between projects and motives, cannot be achieved even though the dichotomy has been overcome, thanks to their reciprocity.

This conclusion leads us to the second section of this chapter in which, it will be argued, the same pattern re-emerges.

2 - Action, the Involuntary, and the concept of effort

'... la joie ... est la
fleur de l'effort.'
(VI. pp. 299-300)

The second moment in the process of willing is, according
to Paul Ricoeur, when 'I will' means 'I move my body'. It reveals,
again through noematic analysis, the intentional object: an action
or motion, the realization of my project, the work to be done by me
or, in other words:

'... l'agir ... le ≪ fait par moi ≫ ... dans le
monde et non plus sur fond du monde ... non pas
dans mon corps ... dans l'agir le corps est
≪ traversé ≫ : il n'est pas l'objet de l'agir ...
mais son organe; à travers sa fonction organe, où
il s'efface, il est ouvert sur l'oeuvre complète.'
(Méthode, p. 118)

And once more in accordance with the principle of reciprocity of the
voluntary and the involuntary, the action or motion correlated to
its involuntary counterpart now presupposes a bodily power made of
skills, emotions and habits.

According to Ricoeur, the 'other' of my acting is not the
involuntary (as it was for decision) but the project I am to
realize. He explains:

'... l'agir effectif ≪ remplit ≫ l'intention
≪ vide ≫ du projet et se termine aux choses
mêmes, ≪ à travers ≫ le corps.' (L'Unité, p. 2)

The body here becomes the organ of acting and ought to remain on the
margin of consciousness, unnoticed so long as the action is effort-
less:

'... l'intention complète de l'agir n'est pas le
corps, mais à travers lui une oeuvre dans le monde.'
(L'Unité, p. 8)

But we know that action is not effortless most of the time, since
we experience opaque resistance coming from our body and our
involuntary nature. Yet Ricoeur maintains that effort is:

'... la complication d'une motion qui a commencé
de se déployer dans la spontanéité corporelle.'
(L'Unité, p. 2)

Accordingly, effort is a crisis within the self, through which we become aware of the <u>mediating function of our body as organ</u>. But what is first intelligible for Ricoeur is the possibility of ourselves as a docile organ <u>for</u> a will. In other words, and <u>ideally</u>, the voluntary and the involuntary here unite. The 'other' reduces itself to the 'same', through a <u>practical mediation</u>, in order to achieve the projected goal.

We must now investigate in depth how, in Ricoeur's view, this new dialectics of a 'united' self (will and body) and a self projected in-the-world towards its 'other': the work to be done by me, how this new reciprocity made up of tensions actually works.

The involuntary contains the <u>source</u> of all bodily spontaneity. Through our skills, emotions, and habits it offers the vital original <u>power</u> necessary to voluntary action. Ricoeur demonstrates this bodily power with his study of our <u>preformed skills</u> which are a 'knowing how ... ':

> '... avant tout apprentissage, tout savoir sur
> notre corps, nous avons un usage primitif de notre
> corps en liaison avec des objets perçus...'
> (VI. p. 217)

Those performed skills are the most primitive connection of the perceiving <u>Cogito</u> with the acting <u>Cogito</u>. They respond to colour and light, to quality ... and thus provide the very basic structure on which learning builds up towards a hold on the world. Ricoeur insists that they are not reflexes, because they are assimilable to the will, in me, <u>with me</u>, and not apart from me.

Along with these skills, emotions and habits also feed our bodily power. Ricoeur describes them as:

> '... deux formes proprement humaines de l'action
> involontaire qui ... se comprennent l'une par
> l'autre, par leur contraste: l'une est un
> dérèglement à l'état naissant, l'autre affecte
> mon vouloir par la force de l'acquis.'
> (L'Unité, pp.14-15)

A corporeal form of the involuntary and a nascent disorder, emotion is at once desire, that which moves my body by making the world exciting for me, and also a threat to consciousness that begins to destroy itself through shock. Such an ambivalence seems to stress conflict, rather than unity, between consciousness and the involuntary. Ricoeur places desire at the root of both decision and action, since it offers '... l'anticipation imageante du plaisir lui-même' (L'Unité, p. 13), important to motivation, as well as the drive that impels the will to action:

> ... le désir est, de toutes les émotions, la plus
> proche de l'action: il résume tout l'involontaire
> aux confins de l'acte ... le désir c'est le corps
> qui ose et improvise, le corps accordé au ton de
> l'acte. (V.I., p. 250)

However, for Ricoeur, this incentive to act can easily be overwhelmed by emotional shock when the meaningful nascent disorder loses its original relation to the will it moves, and becomes unintelligible. Such a possibility underlines man's vulnerability to the pathological, which Ricoeur finds, '... troublant pour une philosophie du Cogito' (V.I., p. 256). We would argue that it also underlines the 'other' within the 'same' at the root of action.

Habits also contribute to the 'pouvoir-faire' of action. Ricoeur describes them as a nascent objectivation that extends our preformed skills in such a way that we talk of them as a second nature, and even confuse them with automatism, grasped as '... une dégradation typique de l'habitude humaine' (L'Unité, p. 16). They do indeed offer a risk of habitual automatism, of an 'other' within the 'same'. Yet Ricoeur insists that '... l'habitude souple' (L'Unité, p. 15),

increases the efficiency of willing, by freeing it from preoccupation with means, so that we may concentrate on ends. Habits are like a 'quasi-nature' that gradually builds up through practice and time, and provides for new action and new thinking. Knowledge is an example of this valuable ability, as Ricoeur explains:

> '... nos savoirs sont, eux aussi, une espèce de
> corps ... à travers règles de grammaire et de
> calcul, à travers savoirs sociaux et savoirs
> moraux, nous pensons des objets neufs.'
> (L'Unité, p. 16)

However the danger of automation, of an alienated will that has fallen into inertia, re-introduces the same ambivalence and conflict between will and body. This is so even though Ricoeur stresses that such disintegration into 'the thing' is that of a human being who knows what is happening, and not simply a pure mechanistic process, it is that of an individual who gives up his identity, the same, to become a simplified impoverished 'other'. The danger is real, but Ricoeur points out that it is only by facing those risks that the body becomes a 'human body', a body whose emotions and habits are moderated by willing. When this kind of control is possible, we may talk of the body as an organ for the will, by means of which unity between the involuntary and the voluntary is achieved. This appears to be the case when Ricoeur says:

> '... de même que nous avons vu le vouloir descendre
> dans la spontanéité corporelle et la traverser vers
> une oeuvre, de même, en sens inverse, la signification
> du corps est de se faire corps humain, dans la mesure
> où il surmonte sa propre présence à lui-même, sa
> propre fermeture; il la surmonte dans le pouvoir-
> faire...' (L'Unité, p. 16)

It must be emphasized that throughout this analysis Ricoeur has made ample use of the double reading provided by the diagnostic relation. It has allowed him to exploit the limits of experience as indicators of limits within the subject '... en tension avec un

traitement objectif et empirique du corps' (V.I., p. 85). This
'latent' hermeneutics has led to more depth and clarity as
regards the ways the will uses the involuntary as an organ and the
ways the involuntary lends itself to such use. At the same time,
it has avoided the naturalistic reduction of the organ into an
instrument foreign to willing.

It would seem that we have now reached the end of a
successful demonstration, whereby Ricoeur's initial hypothesis that
the 'other' is subordinate to the 'same' has been proved to be the
case. In other words, the body has become, through action, an organ
for a will. Yet we have known from the beginning that this cannot
be the case because human action as we know it is not effortless.
We have stressed the conflicts inherent within the body-organ.
Ricoeur says something very important about these inverse dangers
of habit and emotion, of order and disorder:

> Ces périls même appellent leur mutuelle éducation
> sous le signe de l'effort. (V.I., p. 290)

The concept of effort introduces here a subtle ethical
duality within the apparent organic unity of the voluntary and the
involuntary. We all know of the constant and often painful debate
between conscious effort and subconscious resistance. Ricoeur
confirms this state of affairs:

> ... la motion volontaire est toujours un effort
> naissant, dans la mesure même où la spontanéité
> du corps est toujours résistance naissante.
> (L'Unité, p. 20)

The body is more often than not an obstacle, although it
is also an organ, and therefore conflict rather than unity rules our
actions. However, such a conflict between the novelties of desire
and the docile aspects of habits, between willing and both the
threat of emotion and the alienation of habits, is not a return to

the old dichotomy of freedom and nature. Rather it is the source
of a healthy dialectics. Ricoeur insists on the <u>reciprocity</u> of
the two poles of the dialectics since for him confrontation
involves complicity:

> ... pour le vouloir la spontanéité est tour à tour
> organe et obstacle; l'effort ne s'affronte à
> quelque résistance que si, à un autre égard , il
> rencontre la complicité de cette spontanéité. Il
> ne dit le non que sous la condition du oui.
> (VI. p. 299)

This complicity explains the <u>creative</u> aspect of the Ricoeurian
dialectics and is here justified by the structure of acting itself:

> ... la <u>structure</u> de l'agir n'est pas ce <u>que</u> je
> veux, mais à <u>travers quoi</u> je veux. (VI. p. 310)

We shall therefore conclude this section in very much the same way
we concluded the previous one, arguing that the 'other' in Ricoeur's
writings cannot really be reduced to the 'same', except as an 'idée-
limite'. It is interesting to notice though that <u>joy</u> may be
regarded as the foretaste of a possible unity since, in our fundamental
desire for joy, willing and emotion can sometimes unite:

> La joie est l'émotion que je ne peux plus m'opposer,
> que le « travail du négatif » ne peut plus entamer;
> elle est la fleur de l'effort ... (VI. pp. 299-300)

Moreover, joy is the hidden horizon to which Ricoeur's hermeneutic
circle points, a circle already latently at work in the dialectics
of action on the one hand and emotions, skills and habits on the
other.

3 - <u>Consent, the Involuntary, and the concept of
suffering</u>

> 'Une liberté située par le
> destin d'un caractère auquel
> elle consent devient une
> destinée, une vocation.'
> (VI. p. 350)

For Ricoeur, the third and last moment in the process of
willing is when 'I will' means '<u>I consent</u>'. The intentional object

revealed by noematic analysis is <u>acquiescence</u> or consent to
necessity, to my personal limitations actively adopted as mine,
whereby '... la nécessité en moi et hors de moi n'est pas simplement
regardée, mais adoptée activement' (<u>Méthode</u>, p. 119). The principle
of <u>reciprocity</u> between the voluntary and the involuntary now shows
that consent, correlated to its involuntary counterpart, presupposes
the existence of something <u>absolutely involuntary</u> constituted by
character, by the unconscious, and by biological life. Hence, the
distance between the 'same' and this absolutely 'other' appears here
more difficult to bridge. Ricoeur admits that a phenomenological
analysis dealing with direct experience is now problematic, since
consciousness:

> ... ne pénètre jamais parfaitement une certaine
> <u>matière, principalement affective, qui lui offre</u>
> <u>une possibilité indéfinie de se questionner soi-</u>
> <u>même et de se donner à soi-même sens et forme.</u>
> (V.I. pp. 354-355)

This statement stresses the difficulty of a dialectics between
freedom and its invincible involuntary limit. It also stresses the
invaluable depth and potential of this 'other'. Also it would now
seem that the use of the diagnostic relation, whose signs point to
a 'fate' within us, that is part of the self who thinks and constructs
all explanations, is more appropriate than ever. Let us examine how
Ricoeur uses it in order to achieve, once more, a structural unity
between the 'same' and the 'other', a unity further shattered by our
lived existence, but through which both the 'same' and the 'other',
freedom and nature, do indeed gain in depth and clarity.

Ricoeur defines <u>character</u> as:

> ... la perspective singulière selon laquelle toute
> valeur apparaît; loin de pouvoir être changé, le
> caractère est à chaque instant la formule originale
> de mon efficacité. (<u>L'Unité</u>, p. 10)

And he insists that we must try to understand what character is,
that we ought to know something of character types in order to use
and control our own character more efficiently. Moreover, we must
think of it in the first person. But how can this be done, since
it is:

> '... impossible de raccorder directement le caractère
> ainsi élaboré scientifiquement à la liberté d'un
> sujet?' (V.I. p. 335)

Ricoeur explains:

> '... ce caractère-objet doit plutôt nous servir
> d'index pour repérer et diagnostiquer une certaine
> nature en première personne ...' (V.I. p. 335)

This is possible because, according to Ricoeur, freedom is present
within nature. How? Ricoeur admits that we are not in a position
to refuse, or modify, our primordial structured narrowness without
opting out of the human condition altogether. But he insists that
we can consent to this narrowness and hence succeed in converting,
within ourselves, the hostility of nature into the freedom of
necessity, therefore reconciling freedom with nature.

Ricoeur analyses the unconscious in very much the same
way, although 'meaning' there is far more complex and must be freed
from all dogmatism, be it idealism or realism. Ricoeur says:

> 'L'inconscient des psychanalystes appelle une
> critique semblable ... qui en quelque sorte
> récupère l'indice de première personne de cet
> inconscient en le libérant de la naïveté
> naturaliste.' (L'Unité, p. 17)

Realism highlights the fallacy of idealism, with its
principle of transparency and its claim to master consciousness
immediately and completely. But in turn the idea of an unconscious
meaningful thought hidden from consciousness is just as illusory
according to Ricoeur who stresses that:

> '... c'est toujours moi - conscient de moi - qui
> pense, et non point quelque inconscient en moi
> et sans moi ...' (V.I. p. 353)

Ricoeur argues very strongly that there is no latent meaning, no
repressed memories, no consciousness yet, in what constitutes the
unconscious at the source of all our decisions and actions. The
unconscious is only a hidden _dynamism_, made of impressions awaiting
meaning and definite form. Ricoeur argues that this is so because
meaning emerges only with consciousness and upon recollection and
recounting, once we awake and _give form to our thoughts_. There can
be no meaningful 'other' without me, without the 'same' who gives it
meaning, no matter how important that 'other' is to our psychic life.
And Ricoeur gives it its full importance when he says that the
analyst who mediates between the 'same' and the 'other', between I
and my unconscious is:

> '... l'accoucheur de la liberté, en aidant le
> malade à _former_ la pensée qui convient à son mal.'
> (V.I. p. 376)

As for the patient, what he recognizes in himself when he adopts
his analyst's interpretations is:

> '... quelque chose en lui qui était frappé
> d'interdit; mais _cela_ n'était pas déjà une
> pensée toute formée, à qui il manquait seulement
> la conscience ... c'est en devenant une pensée
> que _cela_ a cessé d'être un poids dans la conscience.'
> (V.I. p. 366)

Hence the cure does not simplistically shift meanings, but rather:

> '... elle conduit à _former_ un « souvenir » là où il y
> avait « quelque chose » qui opprimait la conscience,
> « quelque chose » qui était issu du passé mais qui
> restait un infra-souvenir ...' (VI. p. 367)

Ricoeur welcomes a psychoanalysis that extends the field of con-
sciousness by reintegrating traumatic memories, when dramas
erupt at the heart of consciousness which then loses control over
its decisions and actions. He makes it very clear that the philoso-
pher must listen to and learn from psychoanalysis with bearing in
mind that his task is to recover the _Cogito._ This is exactly what
Ricoeur himself will do fifteen years later in his 'Lecture de
Freud'. The concepts formulated here will then be investigated in

more depth, with the help of the hermeneutic method. And the
result of his detailed study will be not only a recovery of
subjectivity, but also a deepening of it, which will become a
'wounded' Cogito. So, what Ricoeur calls the diagnostic relation,
not yet a method but rather a reading grid, has succeeded in taking
him a long way beyond Husserl and Marcel: he has achieved greater
depth and clarity of understanding by exploring something of the
hidden side of nature, while remaining faithful to the 'I' who gives
it meaning. At the same time, he has also gone beyong Freud by
exploding Freudian determinism.

      Ricoeur reached the same conclusion as regards character:
we have no choice but to consent to the hidden, but in so doing we
regain some freedom over it. Ricoeur says:

> ... je dois consentir à produire toute signifi-
> cation sur un fond de non-sens. (V.I., p.384)

      Lastly, I must consent to the absolutely opaque in con-
sciousness, to biological life seen by Ricoeur as '... le comble de
la nature en moi ... ma situation vitale qui ne se révèle guère que
par la conscience sourde d'être en vie' (L'Unité, p.18). For the
biological sciences, life is held to be the indivisible unity of an
astonishing structure. Both structure and growth, destiny and
history, constitute it. In addition, Ricoeur insists upon the fact
that my biological history also depends upon by actions: it is my
responsibility, my destiny, to be fulfilled by me. Man has meaning
through his growth from childhood to old age. But man is also
meaning, in the phenomenological sense of the word. Therefore, to
what he describes as '... une explication de la volonté qui en
montre la genèse en fonction de la croissance du corps', Ricoeur
adds, thanks to the diagnostic relation, ' ... une description
de la volonté qui la rencontre comme une essence, c'est-à-dire
comme une signification en quelque sorte ingénérable et même

intemporelle de l'homme' (V.I., p. 400). Ricoeur, unlike
Sartre, believes in the existence of an essence of man within
the dynamism of change, of a self given to myself at birth. Birth
is seen as a '... commencement comme état', a fact always already
there, whereas freedom is a '... commencement comme acte'(V.I.,
p. 415). And the coming together of both fact and act points
to the 'I am', to the structural unity of nature and freedom,
when the will consents to the absolute involuntary and to
necessity.

At this stage of the relationship between freedom and
nature, between the 'same' and the 'other', we see for the third
time the signs of a structural unity through our incarnation of
which we consent. But, here again, the existential split
reappears. Ricoeur says, 'Si le consentement était possible,
l'unité de l'homme serait achevée.' (L'Unité, p. 10).

In reality, he argues, freedom cannot possibly say
'yes' all the way to those wounding aspects of character, the
unconscious and contingency, to ageing and death, and to the
impossibility of coincidence with oneself. These are experienced
as suffering, as a scandal at the source of existence.

Consequently, not only in the 'other' highlighted as a
fact of life whose necessity brings us into this world, and which
could not possibly be reduced to the 'same'; but, what is even more
interesting is that it seriously threatens the 'same', since it is
here placed at the root of suffering, at the origin of such a scan-
dalous state of affairs whereby every decision we take, every action
we perform, far from being transparent in it motives, and effortless,
implies opacity and hesitation, form and effort, refusal and

suffering . How are we to understand human suffering? Even Christ
did not justify it although he did <u>consent</u> to it. This question
will lead Ricoeur to write the next volume of the <u>Philosophy of</u>
<u>the Will</u>, and to reflect upon the concepts of fallibility and
evil that will become the new 'other' of freedom, its new
limitations.

Conclusion

> '... nous n'avons surmonté une forme de
> dualisme que pour en faire affleurer une
> autre, plus subtile et plus radicale.
> Nous avons en effet combattu sur tous
> les plans le dualisme de méthode, le
> dualisme qui oppose une conscience
> réflexive, faisant cercle avec elle-
> même, et d'autre part une vie involon-
> taire objectivée, repoussée parmi les
> choses ... Mais ce dualisme d'entendement
> est motivé à un plan plus radical: il
> est motivé par une dualité d'existence
> ... dualité « dramatique » ... (<u>L'Unité</u>,
> pp. 18-19)

At the end of <u>Le Volontaire et l'involontaire</u>, at a point where
Ricoeur thought he had achieved a satisfactory reconciliation
between the voluntary and the involuntary, we now discover a dramatic
duality slowly emerging in the categories of tension, conflict and
scandal. The <u>Cogito</u> is left broken up within itself, caught up in
the drama of existence where freedom and nature, the'same'and the
'other', appear incompatible. Ricoeur stresses this important
conclusion:

> 'Aussi l'unité de la personne ne peut être exprimée
> que dans un langage brisé: décision <u>et</u> motif;
> mouvoir <u>et</u> pouvoirs; consentement <u>et</u> situation.'
> (<u>Méthode</u>, p. 133)

The existential non-coincidence of man with himself could
not be bridged by a structural description, the 'other' and the
'same' <u>cannot really unite</u> in Ricoeur's thought. But they are not
alien either, as they were in the old dichotomy between consciousness

and the object-body. Their <u>reciprocity</u> has been proved beyond

doubt: we have seen how the will made the involuntary human. And,

as Ricoeur does, we have stressed that freedom is not a pure act of

consciousness, but a receptivity of values, capacities and nature.

Ricoeur says, '... notre liberté est <u>seulement</u> humaine' (<u>V.I.</u>,p.455),

it is a motivated, incarnate, and contingent freedom. This realiza-

tion marks the start of Ricoeur's shift away from Husserlian trans-

cendental idealism towards an ontological and hermeneutic phenomeno-

logy. He criticizes Husserl's claim that consciousness is primitive

in constituting the world, that it is an act of creation, by arguing

that:

> ... la phénoménologie de la volonté barre toute
> prétention à interpréter la conscience « donnante »
> comme « créatrice » ... la liberté humaine est une
> indépendance dépendante, une initiative réceptrice.
> L'idée de création est plutôt le contre-pôle de
> cette manière d'exister du vouloir humain.
> (<u>Méthode</u>, p. 133)

The idea of creation for Ricoeur implies a fundamental

<u>decentering</u> of the ego, it demands a <u>second Copernican revolution</u>.

Ricoeur explains how the:

> ... commencement de la philosophie est une
> révolution copernicienne qui centre le monde
> des objets sur le Cogito: l'objet est pour le
> sujet, l'involontaire est pour le volontaire ...
> (<u>V.I.</u>, p. 443)

And, in the same way, the 'other' is <u>for</u> the 'same' throughout this

book, while remaining an 'other' with its invaluable potential that

deepens the 'same'. But Ricoeur argues that we must not stop here,

since this deepening of subjectivity calls for '... une deuxième

révolution copernicienne, qui déplace le centre de référence de la

subjectivité à la Transcendance' (<u>V.I.</u>, p. 443).

Transcendence means the 'wholly other', not a limit

concept but a <u>presence</u> capable of dispossessing philosophy of its

Husserlian immediacy, so that it can open up and fulfil Ricoeur's ambition to attain a comprehensive understanding of man's being in the world.

Ricoeur's parting from Husserlian idealism seems to be a return, in more depth, to Marcel's concept of mystery and incarnate existence, by which the notion of a reconciliation of the voluntary and the involuntary points towards the vision of a Self that has deepened, as well as opened up to a 'call'. We would argue that it is important to understand this transcending aspect of Ricoeur's thought, if we are to appreciate fully the depth of his work. For him the 'other' and the 'same' belong to a hermeneutic circle that remains open to the 'Tout-Autre' that transcends it. It is not a closed circle, it is not a system at all, but a meditation on the 'yes' that includes an element of contemplation and admiration. Refusal is, of course, part of the human condition, but Ricoeur shows how, paradoxically, it is through our 'No' to necessity and to our human limitations that the 'Yes' of consent may be won, when we become aware that:

> 'Qui refuse ses limites refuse son fondement ...
> Qui refuse ses motifs et ses pouvoirs s'annule
> soi-même comme acte. Le non comme le oui ne peut
> être que total.' (V.I. p. 451)

This dialectics of the 'Yes' and the 'No', of consent and nature, always in tension with one another, adds density and intensity to our dialectics of the 'same' and the 'other', and keeps it constantly open to an 'Other' beyond itself.

In this chapter, we have focussed on Paul Ricoeur's structural phenomenology, and have sought to investigate the reciprocity of the voluntary and the involuntary, of the 'same' and the 'other', by means of a detailed study of the three moments that for Ricoeur constitute the process of willing. Our intention has

been to show how the concepts of identity and difference, that sustain Ricoeur's work and dialectics, were reciprocal within a structural dialectics, and how they remained separate and meaningful in terms of one another, when the structural opened to the existential despite Ricoeur's efforts to demonstrate their possible unity.

We have seen how, in deciding, our motives feed our decisions while our projects give motives their value; how reciprocal therefore the 'other' and the 'same' are, and yet how opaque the 'other' remained, despite the diagnostic relation, when the question of choice arose, bringing with it hesitation and tension.

We were surprised, at first, to discover that acting implied from the start a unity of the 'same' of action with its 'other', the body-organ source of bodily power, a union directed towards the work to be done by me. But we soon realized that this so-called essential unity of mind and body within an 'organ' was only 'ideal'. In actual life, effort saves difference and restores the dialectics of the 'same' and the 'other' when the organ becomes an obstacle. Conflict and tension enrich the whole process as well as make it a great deal more difficult.

The notion of consent to necessity transformed the 'other' into an absolutely 'other', into a fact contingent and source of suffering. But even there the act of freedom reached it through our consent to it. The 'same' appeared fragile and vulnerable in its temptation to say 'no' to its 'other'. But the awareness of the consequences of such refusal, which would imply a refusal of the self as incarnate, led Ricoeur to believe, despite the 'no', in our ultimate 'yes' to necessity. At the heart of this, the scandal of suffering emerged. It enriched the dialectics and also became for Ricoeur the puzzling source of a new challenge. The question now is

why is there such a <u>disproportion</u> between our <u>understanding</u> of
freedom and our <u>experience</u> of it through our limitations?

This new problematic will take us to our next chapter
and a step nearer the hermeneutic phenomenology already latent in
<u>Le Volontaire et l'involontaire</u>.

CHAPTER III

THE SYNTHETIC PHENOMENOLOGY OF THE WILL:

L'HOMME FAILLIBLE (1960)

> '... la réflexion est l'appro-
> priation de notre effort pour
> exister et de notre désir d'être,
> à travers les oeuvres qui
> témoignent de cet effort et de
> ce désir ...' (D.I. p. 54)

Introduction

The new 'dualité d'existence' revealed by the structural
method, that is to say man's non-coincidence with himself, would seem
to be the second challenge met by Ricoeur's philosophy. He explains
in his 'Response' to John Thompson's Hermeneutics and the human
sciences (1981) that:

> '... a gap appeared between the intended meaning of
> freedom of the will and the various limitations
> attested to by the involuntary...' (p. 32)

And to comprehend such a gap in man, a gap situated between a pole of
infinitude and a pole of finitude, Ricoeur turned towards the reflec-
tive philosophy of Jean Nabert while retaining the Husserlian
intentional analysis. He clarifies his method in the following
words:

> 'The description of the disproportion between the
> intended meaning of freedom and the experience of
> finitude could still be situated within the frame-
> work of a phenomenology which is, as it were,
> dramatised or polemicised, and which opens on to a
> meditation of a Pascalian kind applied to human
> fallibility. It is this type of existential
> phenomenology that one finds at work in Fallible
> Man.' (ibid. p. 33)

This existential phenomenology is an abstract synthetic phenomenology,
because it approaches the inner disproportion in man through a pure
reflection on unstable synthesis, in order to grasp those 'faulty'
aspects of ourselves that harbour the possibility of evil. Those
synthesès take place on three levels of consciousness, that develop

from the most abstract experience of <u>knowing</u>, through the experience of <u>acting</u>, towards the concrete phenomenon of <u>feeling</u>. And they unfold in a regressive manner so as to recover philosophically ' ... ce qui a déjà été compris sans être réfléchi' (<u>H.F.</u>, p. 24), which Ricoeur calls '... la précompréhension de l'homme par lui-même en tant que « misérable »' (<u>H.F.</u>, p. 25).

In other words, the task for Ricoeur is to carry on a step by step reflection on '... le pathétique de la « misère »' (<u>H.F.</u>, p. 24), in order to define 'le «lieu» humain du mal, son point d'insertion dans la réalité humaine' (<u>H.F.</u>, p. 11). The whole reflective exercise is very abstract indeed, and will first demand some clarification as regards the reflective philosophy of Jean Nabert, whose depth of thinking has often been praised by Ricoeur. This will constitute our first section. We further intend to reflect with Paul Ricoeur on man's non-coincidence with himself in order to grasp what Ricoeur means by 'fallibility'. Section two will focus on the <u>epistemological</u> level of knowing, and on the <u>practical</u> level of acting that both harbour the possibility of evil, while section three will deal with the <u>affective</u> level of feeling that represents the fragile moment <u>par excellence</u>. Section four will explain the concept of fallibility itself with its dialectics of affirmation and existential difference, of the 'same' and the 'other'. Although at each level of reflection, we will stress the fact that man is never either the 'same' nor the 'other', but rather a fragile synthesis of both, the meaning of this important statement will be fully exploited only in the fourth section, with the full realization that the <u>possibility</u> of evil is indeed due to this constitutional weakness in man. However, the concept of fallibility will not explain the <u>actuality</u> of evil, which is always already

there. Ricoeur stresses that to catch sight of it and of the leap between the possible and the actual, he will have to transform his method of analysis. This actually marks the 'hermeneutic turn' of Ricoeurian phenomenology. But it must be emphasized that both the synthetic and the symbolic phenomenologies are complementary, since together they constitute one volume entitled Finitude et culpabilité. Therefore, it is not by accident but indeed by necessity, that Ricoeur will turn to the symbolic language of the avowal of evil by religious consciousness and to:

> ... une exégèse du symbole qui appelle des règles
> de déchiffrement, c'est-à-dire une herméneutique.'
> (H.F., p. 10)

This new development will occur without the abandonment of the noematic reflection that characterizes phenomenological analysis. Both phenomenology and hermeneutics will be drawn together in the symbolic phenomenology of the will that prepares the way for the hermeneutic circle of difference and identity, already implicitly at work in structural phenomenology.

1 - The reflective philosophy of Jean Nabert

> '... il n'y a pas d'appréhension
> directe de soi par soi, pas d'
> aperception intérieure, d'appro-
> priation de mon désir d'exister
> sur la voie courte de la conscience,
> mais seulement par la voie longue
> de l'interprétation des signes.'
> (C.I., p. 169)

Paul Ricoeur was influenced by Nabert who first made him aware that reflection must be interpretation. He calls Nabert '... le philosophe de la réflexion' and to him he dedicated La Symbolique du mal. According to Ricoeur

Nabert tried to understand man from a standpoint that transcended both rationality and existence. His synthesis of those two concepts, of knowing and feeling, led him to dissociate concrete reflection from epistemological justification and from intuition. In other words, for Nabert, understanding is inseparable from self-understanding, and reflection is not a direct intuition of the self by the self: the Cogito must be mediated by the whole universe of signs. The source of meaning is, according to Nabert, concealed in the signs that express the act of existing, our effort to exist and our desire to be. Consequently, it becomes necessary to turn to signs in our quest for meaning. Nabert defined philosophical reflection as the recovery of our effort to exist and our desire to be, indirectly through symbols and signs, and in an act of intellectual intuition. It follows that philosophy is not the radical beginning. Rather it emerges from a nebula of meaning prior to reflection. Ricoeur agreed with Nabert's thought, to which he expressed his gratitude, in his preface to Finitude et culpabilité:

> '... je veux dire ma dette à l'égard de l'oeuvre
> de M. Jean Nabert: c'est dans cette oeuvre que
> j'ai trouvé le modèle d'une réflexion ...'
> (H.F. p. 15)

In his 'Préface' to Nabert's Eléments pour une éthique (1943), Ricoeur observes that:

> '... le philosophe de la réflexion ne cherche pas
> le point de départ radical; il a déjà commencé,
> mais sur le mode du sentiment; tout est déjà
> éprouvé, mais tout reste à comprendre, à
> ‹‹ ressaisir ›› ... en clarté et en rigueur.' (p. 5)

This is exactly the task Ricoeur set himself in L'Homme faillible in elucidating the structures of lived experience. In the same text, Ricoeur adds that the ambition of the reflective method is to:

> '... ressaisir des actes purs, au travers des
> signes où ils livrent leur signification.' (p. 12)

Ricoeur talks of 'pure' reflection in the same way in his own work.

Jean Nabert, in Eléments pour une éthique, clarifies his ethical goal, which is at once a search for self-understanding and a restoration of being. Self-understanding can be reached only through our interpretation of '... le monde sensible tout entier et tous les êtres avec qui nous avons commerce' (p. 98). And, even more important, Nabert compares this human world to '... un texte à déchiffrer' (p. 98). This statement points directly to Ricoeur's latest work, whereby his Interpretation Theory is directed towards a text to be deciphered in accordance with rules.

Self-understanding further leads, for Nabert, to a '... régénération intime de la conscience' (p. 27), to a rebirth of being. This is possible when our past, felt as '... un sentiment confus ... sentiment d'une séparation' is then reflectively recaptured and transformed into '... un sentiment instruit ... celui d'une participation' (p. 7).

In other words, the naive and solitary lived experience is recovered through reflection, and changed into a feeling of presence and participation in Transcendence, that paves the way towards a coincidence of the self with itself. But the 'other' is here in danger of becoming the 'same'. Ricoeur avoided this trap with his ingenious invention of the hermeneutic circle that retained Husserl's objective noematic reflection. For it must be emphasized that Nabert's attempt to recapture 'l'acte originaire' at its very origin is not phenomenology. For phenomenology, meaning is in the description itself for me today, it is already separated from the act as such.

Yet Ricoeur owes much to Nabert's concept of <u>concrete</u> reflection: both shared the belief that consciousness is not a <u>given</u>, but a <u>task</u>, that takes the long road of the interpretation of signs. In many ways Nabert changed Ricoeur's view of reflective philosophy: he led him towards hermeneutics. But it must also be stressed that Ricoeur's encounter with Freud deepened this changed view, with the realization that signs may first be deceptive and illusory, and therefore in need of a hermeneutics of suspicion.

2 - <u>Epistemology, action, and fallibility</u>

> '... ce qui était mélange et misère
> pour la compréhension pathétique
> de l'homme s'appelle maintenant
> ≪ synthèse ≫ dans l'objet ...'
> (H.F. p. 25)

On the <u>epistemological</u> and <u>practical</u> planes of knowing and acting man is seen by Ricoeur as a <u>mediator</u> of reality outside himself: he mediates it through his concepts of pure imagination and respect. On the other hand, on the affective plane of feeling, man himself becomes the fragile mediation as we shall see in the following section of this chapter.

The <u>hypothesis</u> of <u>L'homme faillible</u> is that man is a divided self with a non-coincidence within himself of the finite and the infinite, or in other words, that man is a flawed or '<u>faulted</u>' creature in the geological sense of the term (with, that is to say, a crack deep inside him), and also in an ethical sense, since this crack is the locus of evil. And the <u>purpose</u> of the book is to investigate this constitutional weakness and to discover that which in man allows this structural fault to become the <u>possibility</u> of evil. In his article 'The Antinomy of Human Reality and the Problem of Philosophical Anthropology', written in 1960 and published

in Charles Reagan and D. Stewart's The Philosophy of Paul Ricoeur,
(1978), Ricoeur states the problematic as follows:

> The problem is ... the intimate disproportion of
> man with himself or the antinomical structure of
> man, suspended between a pole of infinitude and
> a pole of finitude. (p. 20)

Ricoeur believes that the answer to his question: why is man
liable to err, why is the possibility of evil inherent in his
constitution , lies in this geological rift at the heart of man's
ontological constitution. He therefore sets out to elucidate it
by exploring first the theoretical and epistemological disproportion
within man. Ricoeur explains:

> ... la première «disproportion» susceptible
> d'investigation philosophique c'est celle que le
> pouvoir de connaître fait apparaître. (H.F.,
> p. 36)

On the theoretical level of knowing, Ricoeur separates that which
is seen from the finitude of our human perspective, '... le « ici
d'où » la chose est vue' (H.F., p. 39), from that which is understood,
from meaning grasped as a '... non-point de vue'(H.F., p. 54)
that transcends perception and leads to an infinitude of
signification. This scission conceptualized by Ricoeur offers a
new dialectics of seeing and saying, of finite perception and
infinite meaning.

It must be stressed that this new dialectics broadens
that of the voluntary and the involuntary: the previous investiga-
tion into the structures of the will is here enlarged into an
investigation of the structures of human reality, that points
towards the Ricoeurian ambition of a global understanding of man's
being in the world.

In this broader conceptual framework in which the 'other'
of freedom is man's finitude now understood in terms of ontological

fault - or fallibility, our dialectics of difference and identity
is preserved but stretched to its limits between finitude and infi-
nitude. In the context of knowing man appears as neither the 'same'
nor the 'other', but rather as the external <u>mediator</u> that <u>acknow-</u>
<u>ledges</u> the disproportion and <u>imagines</u> a synthesis between that
which comes from the object and that which comes from the subject.
Or in other words, the intermediate term of the dialectics is,
according to Ricoeur <u>pure imagination</u>. The abstract transcendental
synthesis, achieved by the synthetic act of imagination between the
two knowing selves of man, marks the birth of <u>consciousness in</u>
<u>general</u>, that is of a:

> '... simple et pur projet de l'objet.' (<u>H.F.</u>,p.63)

Ricoeur stresses that any mediation between the finite and infinite
poles of human reality must <u>at first</u> be carried out 'in the thing'
external to man, and not within the self-consciousness of the
person. Man first constitutes himself <u>intentionally</u> in the
objective synthesis of appearance and discourse. In brief, the
transcendental synthesis, made possible by the theoretical mediation
of pure imagination, is for Ricoeur the first condition of a trans-
position of our experience of sheer misery (due to the 'distentio'
of our two selves) into a philosophical discourse. It:

> '... outlines the empty framework within which we
> must now trace the figure of concrete man.'
> (<u>Antinomy</u>, p.27)

Ricoeur insists that without such a conceptual framework, all we
can encounter is a mere existential philosophy of finitude which
he totally rejects. So, for Ricoeur:

> '... the central concept of philosophical anthro-
> pology is ... the triad finitude - infinitude -
> intermediary.' (<u>Antinomy</u>, p.21)

The 'figure of the concrete man' not only acknowledges
but also <u>feels</u> the disproportion in man. It slowly emerges with
Ricoeur's leap from knowledge to <u>action</u>. On the <u>practical level</u>

of acting the pole of finitude is for Ricoeur conceptualized
in the notion of character. As we have learned from Le Volontaire
et l'involontaire, the body is not simply an organ in acting, not
just a pure mediation,but also an affective opacity which at times
seals up the intentional openness of our desire for the work to be
done by me. And when such a resistance appears our bodily spon-
taneity, which holds the power to act, switches attention back to
itself. Ricoeur views character in very much the same way, in its
affective and practical perspectives. It constitues our opaque
heredity, the limited openness of our field of motivation,and is
our mode of access to all human values and possibilities. And,
according to Ricoeur, it is oriented towards a pole of infinitude
he calls happiness, or beatitude. Happiness in this context must
be understood as the intellectual horizon of all our desires taken
as a whole (and not a sum),as our quest for totality beyond the
limitations of character, or in other words, as a transcendence
in dialectics with our human finitude. Although man is a limited
being, Ricoeur stresses that he can conceive the idea of a totality
which gives depth to his desires,and which makes the disproportion
between the 'narrow' and the 'immense' all the more extreme.
Despite this enlarged disproportion of those two human poles, our
dialectics of difference and identity ought to survive here also.
The 'same' now comes very close to the 'Tout-Autre' and the 'other'
to the Fault within the realm of human reality, as if there were
two dialectics in one, the 'same' and yet 'other', in the same
way there are for Derrida two texts in one, similar yet 'décalés'.
And once more man is here neither the 'same' nor the 'other', but for
Ricoeur the mediator that feels the disproportion,with its
dialectics,and tries to bridge it by means of another external
mediation,of an idea conceived this time as a task:

'La médiation «pratique» qui prolonge celle de
l'imagination transcendantale projetée dans
l'objet, c'est la constitution de la personne
dans le respect.' (H.F. p. 67)

The concept of respect conveys the idea of a total person at once

finite and infinite and conscious of itself, the idea of the person

we have the task to become for ourselves. Ricoeur makes it clear

that the acting person is not a given but a projected ideal: it

is the project of our humanity and the object of the practical

synthesis. And respect is the condition of the synthesis, it marks

the birth of self-consciousness projected in an idea. Ricoeur says:

'Le Soi est visé plutôt que vécu. J'oserais dire
que la personne n'est pas encore conscience de
Soi pour Soi; elle est seulement conscience de
soi dans la représentation de l'idéal de Soi.'
(H.F. p. 86)

Ricoeur's own ethical values are also projected in this concept of

respect, that prepares the way towards self-fulfilment through our

actions and understanding of the world and of ourselves. Ricoeur

states that:

'Respect is what makes possible the practical
representation of man taken as a person rich in
value and meaning.' (Antinomy, pp. 30-31)

But once again Ricoeur warns that this synthesis is uncertain and

fragile, it remains obscure and carries the risks of an ethical

dualism:

'... le respect est la synthèse fragile dans
laquelle se constitue la forme de la personne,
comme l'imagination transcendentale était la
synthèse cachée dans laquelle se constitue la
forme de la chose.' (H.F. p. 96)

The dialectics of difference and identity exteriorized in the object,

be it a thing or an idea, has to be internalized if man is to

become himself through it, and if we are to make sense of the

concepts of fault and fallibility. So far knowing and action have

only highlighted the gap in which fallibility dwells, but not the

concept itself. In addition the 'same' and the 'other' have lost

their reciprocal balance: the dialectics is leaning dangerously

towards the 'other', seen as a structure that must now be filled

with lived experience to become human.

3 - Feeling and the human needs of possession, power, and worth

> '... l'imagination est un mode indispensable d'investigation du possible ...' (H.F. p. 161)

In order to equal the prephilosophical understanding of

man grasped as a being in a milieu, fragile and fallible, or in

Pascalian terms 'misérable', Ricoeur completes his analysis of the

structural fault in man, at the source of human fallibility, with the

affective level of feeling. On this third level the disproportion

is felt and interiorized within the person, and not simply projected

on to the idea of a person. In other words, the mediator himself

now becomes, Ricoeur argues, the fragile mediation between finitude

and infinitude, between the pole of our desires, with their sensa-

tion of pleasure, and the pole of a spiritual happiness felt in our

heart - and no longer merely an intellectual horizon. Ricoeur

understands pleasure as a finite happiness, dwelling in the instant

where it fulfils perfectly our vital desires. But we have also

other desires, intellectual and spiritual, and those call on

happiness, the greatest of all pleasures, to be fulfilled. The

infinitude of happiness is reflected in our existential project

whereby our basic instincts are recast. But such recasting creates

tension, instability and anxiety within the 'felt-self' stretched

between two modes of fulfilment. Consequently Ricoeur shows how

man is not only himself the mediation between two poles, but also

the locus of an existential conflict inscribed in the very centre

of his nature:

'Il apparaît alors que le <u>conflit</u> tient à la consti-
tution la plus originaire de l'homme; l'objet est
synthèse, le moi est conflit; la dualité humaine
se dépasse intentionnellement dans la synthèse de
l'objet et s'intériorise affectivement dans le
conflit de la subjectivité.' (<u>H.F.</u>, p.148)

In other words the ultimate answer to what was first the
structural duality of freedom and human nature, and then the
existential duality of two poles of being synthesized externally
on the object of knowledge and action, actually lies in conflict,
because of our incapacity to coincide with ourselves. Ricoeur
states that:

'En lui-même et pour lui-même l'homme demeure
déchirement ... l'homme souffre distension.'
(<u>H.F.</u>, p.157)

Although the concept of feeling reveals an inwardness in
man, a vital depth torn by conflicts, Ricoeur claims that it can be
grasped only indirectly, through an objectification similar to
knowing yet different:

'... le sentir se dédouble <u>comme</u> le connaître,
proportionnellement au connaître, et pourtant
<u>autrement</u> qui le connaître, sur un mode non
objectif, sur le mode du conflit intérieur.'
(<u>H.F.</u>, p.107).

The Husserlian noetico-noematic analysis is needed to throw some
objective light upon non-objective affective inwardness, where our
internal conflicts develop. According to Ricoeur, we cannot
directly understand those conflicts which lie within our inner
disproportion, suspended between pleasure and happiness. Objective
correlatives operate the mediation as Ricoeur explains:

'... s'intériorisant dans le sentiment la
relation à l'objet va qualifier le rang des
tendances et différencier le sentiment dans
son intimité même ... En retour c'est dans le
sentiment que s'achève la prise de conscience
de cette disproportion qui s'abolissait dans
l'objet.' (<u>H.F.</u>, pp.107-108)

In other words it is thanks to the 'other' of the Husserlian 'epoche'
that man comes to understand himself on the affective level of the

disproportion which structures him. <u>Self-consciousness</u> is now
revealed to the full to the human being who experiences it
internally as the 'same'. But Ricoeur makes it very clear that
this experienced self-consciousness that transcends the idea of it
can only be attained through the 'other' of knowledge and objectivity,
through that which we first place at a distance from ourselves thanks
to the noetico-noematic reflection. Consequently, we here recover
our dialectics of difference and identity that make up the human
reality, in accordance with the Ricoeurian hermeneutic circle of
distanciation and appropriation. It is now clear that man is not
only a mediator, who is neither the 'same' nor the 'other' outside
himself, but also himself a mediation made up of finitude and
infinitude, of difference and identity in open conflict with one
another.

Ricoeur shows how this basic dialectics manifests itself
within each of the three fundamental human needs of possession,
power, and worth, which dominate the thematic of an economy, a
politics and a culture. In each one of these needs, the internal
conflict between pleasure and happiness is present.

Ricoeur's approach to '<u>having</u>' and possession is here quite
different from Gabriel Marcel's: he does not contrast 'having' and
'being'. In a very subtle analysis Ricoeur explains how the 'I'
constitutes itself from the 'mine', how 'being' is dependent upon
'having'. Accordingly appropriation is at first <u>constituting</u>,
before it becomes an alienating passion. Basically 'having' is for
Ricoeur a <u>quest for humanity</u>: through the appropriation of a desired
object made available to us, we first experience control over and
dependency upon this <u>otherness</u> which becomes ours. Interiorized
by our feelings, it affects us as beings and also our relation with

other beings. And it also leads towards the necessary <u>distance</u>
between 'I' and 'You', in the mutual <u>distinction</u> of mine and yours
already started with the body and continued with the mind. We here
cannot fail to see the <u>creative</u> aspect of the dialectics of the
'same'-mine, and the 'other' - an object, through which the 'same'
becomes itself. The difficulty lies at the dividing line, when the
constitutive primordial state deviates and leads to alienation, to
a second 'other' similar to the 'same' and yet not the 'same' - an
alienated 'same'. Ricoeur <u>imagines</u> this 'fall' as happening when our
possessions become unjust: at that ethical point the constitutive
aspect of 'having' becomes a limitation, because that which distin-
guishes now also <u>excludes</u> and dominates my fellow beings. The
values of justice and of communication through a sharing of our
possessions are clearly very important to Paul Ricoeur.

Human beings who distinguish between themselves through
their possessions also need to <u>differentiate</u> between themselves
through their socio-economic and political functions. Ricoeur
believes that <u>power</u> shares with appropriation the same constitutive
capacity of differentiation. Consequently the dialectics of
difference and identity appears once more very productive: it is
through our different yet <u>reciprocal</u> functions that we become our-
selves, that we find our own authentic identity. But there is a
serious difficulty here as well, since political power as we know it
appears non-reciprocal and often violent and corrupt. Yet Ricoeur
maintains that we see it in this way only because we can <u>imagine</u>
a non-violent power capable of educating the individual. Utopia
reveals the possibilities of such a power. An imaginative 'other'
in dialectics with the 'same' of ideology,, Ricoeur thinks that they
together lead man to himself and to identity.

It is however our longing for <u>worth</u>, for esteem and reciprocity that <u>constitutes</u> the true Self according to Ricoeur. We need the Other's recognition to transform our consciousness into a self-consciousness. And we also need the objectivity of cultural works that concretely reveal to us man's possibilities, that is, our possibilities and our humanity. Ricoeur believes that we discover self-esteem, vital to human growth, by interiorizing these valorizing 'others', be it 'un toi' or works of culture. And according to him they also lead man a step closer to self-identity and the 'same'. However vanity can creep in with its aberrant moral perversion that keeps man within an 'other', that is not the objective 'other' but an alienated 'same'. And here as well we need to <u>imagine</u> the dividing line between self-esteem and vanity, while the inner conflicts point to uncertainty.

We wish to stress the importance of the <u>creative imagination</u> in the work of Paul Ricoeur, here illustrated in its function of dividing line between the essential and the alienating in human beings. Ricoeur explains why he values imagination:

> '... en imaginant un autre fait, un autre régime,
> un autre règne, j'aperçois le possible et dans le
> possible l'essentiel ...' (H.F. p. 128)

Imagination introduces distance and difference within the 'same', exploding it into its essential possibilities, so as to let a more authentic 'same' emerge and change the old alienated one. Our dialectics of difference and identity could not possibly be without the power of imagination that transcends both terms in such a way that they are then brought together into the creative dialectics of the hermeneutic circle.

Ricoeur rightly insists in a Bachelardian way on this importance of imagination in philosophy:

'Cette imagination n'a rien de scandaleux pour
la philosophie; l'imagination est un mode
indispensable d'investigation du possible.'
(H.F. p. 161)

It is certainly Ricoeur's imagination that establishes
the link between man's _distensio_, experienced on the mode of
conflict, and _evil_. According to him, conflict is what makes the
possibility of evil inherent in our constitution. And he demon-
strates his idea from his observation of the deterioration in our
constitutive needs, when they become endless insatiable pursuits that
alienate the self, who then continually asks:

'When will I have enough? When will my authority
be _sufficiently_ established? When will I be
sufficiently appreciated? (_Antinomy_, p. 33)

Ricoeur understands man's passions as a shift, from our
desire for totality and happiness, to an object correlated with the
threefold demand that constitutes our Self. Then the object of
desire, originally a _symbol_ of happiness, becomes everything, it
becomes an _idol_. It is important to notice here the vulnerability
of symbols: they can easily become deviant and alienated when
changed into idols. (We shall return to discuss this idea in the
second part of this thesis). When that happens, when the finite is
changed into an infinite, the disproportion in man reaches its
dramatic culmination, leaving the self more fragile and vulnerable
than ever. Ricoeur pinpoints the locus of fault and fallibility at
the moment when man makes the mistake of trying to avoid the
inescapable existential conflict, and thus loses his balance.
We shall now investigate the concept of fallibility itself that has
so far remained in the background, like a hidden light, or in
Ricoeur's words as ' ... l'idée régulatrice' (H.F., p. 26).

4 - The concept of fallibility and freedom

'... la possibilité du mal moral
est inscrite dans la constitution
de l'homme.' (H.F., p. 149)

Ricoeur makes it very clear that, although the fault
enters man in a corporeal way through emotions, like an absolute
irrational accident, yet the fault happens to freedom. It remains
alien to the 'essential' structures of man described in Le Volontaire
et l'involontaire. This explains why the abstraction of fault and
transcendence was possible. Ricoeur explains that:

> ... la faute ne détruit pas les structures fonda-
> mentales; on dirait mieux que le volontaire et
> l'involontaire tombent tels qu'ils sont en eux-
> mêmes au pouvoir du Rien, comme un pays occupé
> livré intact à l'ennemi. (V.I., p. 28)

The fault introduces opacity into our lived experience,
intelligible for Ricoeur only within man's structures. It was
therefore important to describe firstly those neutral structures
abstracted from actual life and existential distortion. But it
is now important to remove all abstractions in order to understand
the distortion itself at work in passions. Under the sway of
passions we remain able to decide, to move and to consent, to
think, to act and to feel, but, says Ricoeur, this ability is
occupied by the enemy, it is freedom in bondage. Our true
being is lost, distorted by our endless chase. Yet Ricoeur
believes that deliverance is possible '... la Transcendance
est ce qui libère la liberté de la faute' (V.I., p. 31).
Transcendence is, for Ricoeur, Being par excellence, the 'Tout-
Autre' in a dialectical relationship with the fault, with '...
un non être spécifique, une déficience ontologique' (Méthode,p.134)
with 'Rien'. This dialectics of human reality is similar to our
dialectics of the 'same' and the 'other': it is similar yet slightly

'décalée', as Derrida would say. The 'other' of necessity is here replaced by the 'other' of fallibility, which is now the new limit to freedom.

The concept of fallibility is for Ricoeur the way towards:

'... un seuil d'intelligibilité où il est compré-
hensible que par l'homme le mal ait pu ⟨ entrer
dans le monde ⟩ ' (H.F. p. 11)

But how are we to understand such a concept? Ricoeur explains how it is directly linked to the idea of disproportion in man, stretched as we have seen between the poles of finitude and infinitude on three levels. In Ricoeur's analysis, this disproportion is constituted by three categories:

'... affirmation originaire, différence existen-
tielle, médiation humaine.' (H.F. p. 152)

Man first expresses himself in an 'originating affirmation' through meaningful language, through his conception of ideal happiness and finally through his own experience of happiness felt in his heart. But to become human this affirmation has to face its 'other', seen as an existential negation that denies the original affirmation, it has to face its finite pole constituted by our human perspective, character, and desires. It is this existential difference, already there between persons, that for Ricoeur explains man's non-coincidence with himself. Here, therefore, we discover at the heart of human reality our own dialectics of difference and identity. The depth of this dialectics shows that Paul Ricoeur's hermeneutic circle is, from the very beginning of his career, ontologically deep rooted in his thought.

Those two categories of affirmation and difference lead Ricoeur to the meaning of 'fallibility'. Their relationship is similar to that of infinitude and finitude. Ricoeur argues that:

'C'est ce rapport qui fait de la limitation humaine
le synonyme de la faillibilité.' (H.F. p. 150)

In other words, man is fallible because he is existentially limited despite his original freedom, because there is a gap, a difference. Man is and exists within this difference. His humanity lies here, in this fragile and unstable synthesis. He has now himself become the concrete mediation, a human mediation which leads Ricoeur to remark that:

> 'L'homme, c'est la Joie du Oui dans la tristesse
> du fini.' (H.F. p. 156)

We can therefore say that man is both the same of affirmation and freedom, and the 'other' of limitation and fallibility, that man cannot be just 'the same' as in Husserlian idealism, nor just the 'other' as some contemporary philosophers like to claim.

We would argue that the dialectics between the two belongs to the essential structures of human reality and cannot be disposed of without a grave conceptual loss, a loss we shall denounce in recent French nihilism.

Ricoeur does not conclude L'homme faillible with his conception of human fallibility. He further interprets the fragility of human mediation in terms of a structural weakness through which evil enters into man, and reaches the conclusion that fallibility is not only the occasion but also the actual origin of evil. This leads him to establish a link between evil and fallibility, on the basis of his previous analysis of the human needs of possession, power, and worth. He makes it clear that:

> '... c'est toujours « à travers » le déchu que
> l'originaire transparaît.' (H.F. p. 160)

It is therefore 'through' the fallen — through avarice, tyranny and vainglory, through lies and hate — that we come to imagine 'l'originaire' that constitutes men: having, power, worth, authentic meaning and respect. According to Ricoeur:

> 'Je ne peux penser le mal comme mal qu'« à partir »
> de ce dont il déchoit ... et c'est ce « à partir
> de » qui autorise à dire que la faillibilité est

le <u>condition</u> du mal, bien que le mal soit le
révélateur de la faillibilité.' (<u>H.F.</u> p.160)

And even more interesting, Ricoeur thinks that we can:

'... isoler cette représentation de l'originaire
... sur un mode <u>imaginaire</u>.' (<u>H.F.</u> p. 160)

We can therefore imagine a life of innocence, a life without any:

'... écart entre sa destination originaire et sa
manifestation historique.' (<u>H.F.</u> p. 161)

And this we find in <u>myths and symbols</u>, for they project:

'... un symbole de l'originaire qui trans-paraît
dans la déchéance et la dénonce comme déchéance.'
(<u>H.F.</u> p. 161)

But the recourse to myth demands another method rooted in interpre-

tation ,and beyond abstract and reflective phenomenology. It also

represents an important step from the <u>possibility</u> of fault and

innocence to their <u>actuality</u>, since myths tell us of the <u>avowal</u> of

fault as it is experienced by man in his painful existence.

    Ricoeur concludes the first volume of <u>Finitude et</u>

<u>culpabilité</u> on a paradox:

'Dire que l'homme est faillible, c'est dire que
la limitation propre à un être qui ne coïncide
pas avec lui-même est la faiblesse originaire
d'où le mal procède. Et pourtant le mal ne
<u>procède</u> de cette faiblesse que parce qu'il se
<u>pose</u>. Cet ultime paradoxe sera au centre de
la symbolique du mal.' (<u>H.F.</u> p. 162)

    Although human freedom is limited by nature and by

fallibility, it is also responsible for evil. This human capacity

for originating evil points to the riddle of:

'... un libre arbitre qui se lie et se trouve
déjà lié.' (<u>H.F.</u> p. 13)

Such a riddle,which shows man guilty as well as victim,will also

reveal that the ultimate limitation to freedom is evil. But this

discovery is beyond the scope of structural and synthetic-

existential phenomenology.

Conclusion

In this chapter we have shown how Paul Ricoeur was influenced by Jean Nabert's reflective thought. He expressed his gratitude to Nabert for stressing the importance of <u>signs</u> in philosophy, hence highlighting the fact that philosophy is not the radical beginning, and that consciousness is a task possible only through the long detour of an interpretation of signs. Nabert made the 'hermeneutic turn' inevitable for Paul Ricoeur.

We then tried to understand why man is a fallible being, by following Ricoeur's own explanations and arguments very closely. The task was not easy, given the high level of abstraction of the whole exercise. Our study revealed Ricoeur's conception of man as, at once, a <u>mediator</u> trying to synthesize objectively his two poles of finitude and infinitude on the levels of knowing and acting, and man as himself a <u>mediation</u> between pleasure and happiness on the level of feeling. At that internal level, the synthesis revealed itself to be on the mode of conflict, and it also disclosed a new dialectics of affirmation and difference, which at last explained what fallibility meant for Paul Ricoeur. The answer lay within the <u>distance</u> created by the dialectics, within this non-coincidence of man with himself because of his existential limitations.

Finally our dialectics of difference and identity revealed itself to be even more deep-rooted than we had first anticipated: indeed in Ricoeur's thought, it structures man in astonishing depth. Our task now will be to illustrate this depth with concrete examples from Ricoeur's hermeneutic phenomenology.

C O N C L U S I O N

The first 'coupe' of our reading of Paul Ricoeur is now completed. In that reading we have considered in depth both his structural phenomenology and his synthetic phenomenology, whose purpose was to investigate the structures of human nature and human reality. For Ricoeur those structures constitute the necessary framework within which we can now try to understand our lived experience, with all its coefficient of misery and suffering. And they also constitute the limitations of our freedom, its 'other' that must be taken into account by the will in its search for meaning and self-identity.

We have seen how the eidetic description coupled with the diagnostic relation have revealed in the work of Ricoeur the importance of '... une liberté qui est humaine et non pas divine' (V.I., p. 456), of freedom limited by the involuntary, by necessity. In other words, the Ricoeurian structural method that focussed on the structures of the will has stressed the reciprocity of the voluntary and the involuntary, of the 'same' and the 'other', in a way which transcended the traditional duality of mind and body. It was thanks to this creative dialectics of reciprocity initiated by Ricoeur that the involuntary was made accessible to description.

However, it was not possible for Ricoeur, despite his aim of achieving a 'unity' between the two, to unite the will and its 'other' in terms of the Marcellian concept of incarnation. It soon became obvious to him that another and more subtle existential duality was emerging, while the apparent structural duality was being bridged by an abstract reconciliation of the voluntary and the involuntary. Such a reconciliation preserved our dialectics of

difference and identity: both the 'other' of nature and the 'same' of the will appeared reciprocal, the 'other' needed the 'same' to remain an 'other', while it could not be reduced to the 'same'. In other words, human freedom is meaningful only if it is motivated, incarnate and contingent, only if it respects its 'other' as other, while the human body without its will becomes a thing and so loses its quality of 'other'. It must be stressed however that to achieve this reconciliation, Ricoeur had to distance himself from Husserlian idealism.

Confronted with the new existential duality Ricoeur chose a method of 'réflexion pure', in accordance with the reflective philosophy of Jean Nabert and with the Husserlian noematic reflection. The purpose of what turned out to be a very abstract exercise was to focus on the structures of human reality, that is on the non-coincidence of man with himself. This disproportion revealed an ontological fault, at once geological and ethical, and the possible locus of evil. This discovery led Ricoeur to his concept of fallibility, whereby man is stretched between a pole of infinitude and original affirmation, and a pole of finitude and existential difference. This conclusion to Ricoeur's synthetic and existential phenomenology reinforced our dialectics of difference and identity: caught between those two poles always in conflict with one another, man is neither the 'same' of affirmation nor the 'other' of difference, but an unstable synthesis of both, a human mediation. It is as if this dialectics is stretched, along with man, to its maximum to the point when it becomes another dialectics, the 'same' as this one yet different, 'décalée' — yet remains an authentic creative dialectics that foresees very much on the hermeneutic circle of distanciation and appropriation.

However, this dialectics that describes structurally the

place in man where the fault occurs and through which evil creeps into man, cannot explain the <u>actuality</u> of evil. The leap from the possibility to the actuality of evil is beyond Ricoeur's abstract phenomenology. In order to explore the existential reality of evil, an <u>interpretation</u> of its signs, of its avowal by the religious consciousness, now seems inevitable and marks, as we have suggested, the 'hermeneutic turn' in Ricoeur's phenomenology.

This turning point was already foreseen in Ricoeur's first major work, <u>Le volontaire et l'involontaire</u>, with the diagnostic relation and with his shift away from Husserlian idealism. And it was already present in <u>L'homme faillible</u>, as Ricoeur explains in his 'Avant-propos':

> 'Cette symbolique du mal occupe la partie médiane
> du présent ouvrage ... comme si la conscience de
> soi ne pouvait s'exprimer finalement qu'en énigme
> et requerrait à titre essentiel et non accidentel
> une herméneutique.' (<u>H.F.</u> p. 11)

On the other hand, the need for hermeneutics comes, according to Ricoeur, from <u>within phenomenology</u> seen as 'the' philosophy in search of meaning, of a meaning anterior to language, and whose method is already interpretative. Ricoeur sees in both phenomenology and hermeneutics a mutual affinity, which he will further develop in the hermeneutic phenomenology that now takes us a step nearer Paul Ricoeur's concrete philosophy.

P A R T   II

TOWARDS A CONCRETE PHENOMENOLOGY: THE 'HERMENEUTIC TURN' OF
LA SYMBOLIQUE DU MAL, (1960), DE L'INTERPRETATION:
ESSAI SUR FREUD, (1965) AND LE CONFLIT DES INTERPRETATIONS,(1969)

> 'Pour devenir concrète, c'est-à-dire
> égale à ses contenus les plus riches,
> la réflexion doit se faire hermé-
> neutique: mais il n'y a pas
> d'herméneutique générale ...'
> (D.I., pp. 62-63)

I N T R O D U C T I O N

In the second part of his 'Lecture de Freud', Ricoeur shows
how what he calls the first solipsistic, and therefore abstract,
Freudian 'topography' formed by the unconscious, the subconscious
and the consciousness becomes more concrete when it confronts itself
with its 'other', with culture. The roles of the personal ego, the
impersonal id and the supra personal super ego then replace the
unchanging system which in retrospect appears abstract yet remains
important. Ricoeur explains:

> '... l'application de la psychanalyse aux symboles esthé-
> tiques, aux idéaux et aux illusions, imposera, par choc
> en retour, la refonte du modèle initial ... cette refonte
> s'exprime dans la seconde topique (moi - ça - surmoi) qui
> s'ajoute à la première sans la supprimer ...' (D.I., p.70)

In the same way, we shall attempt to show in the
second part of this thesis, how the 'hermeneutic turn' in the
abstract phenomenology of Paul Ricoeur does indeed, in retrospect,
or as he says 'par choc en retour', add to the structural and
reflective phenomenologies, by filling up the empty structures
of the will and of human reality firstly with the actuality
of evil, secondly with the arche and telos of man (that is to
say with the archaic in man, the Freudian unconscious ever
prior, and with the spirit of man always ahead of himself in
the process of becoming conscious) and thirdly with conflicting

meanings and interpretations. It is important however to stress, as Ricoeur does, that just as 'le rêve sera un modèle à la fois dépassé et indépassable' (D.I. p. 70), so are man's fundamental possibilities and structures. Confronted with its 'other', with the actual life of our lived experience that calls for interpretation, the basic structural framework is not suppressed but rather enters into a concrete dialectics with it. And, through this dialectics, new relationships are revealed, which are, as Ricoeur stresses 'essentiellement de nouvelles relations à autrui, que seules peuvent faire apparaître des situations de culture et des oeuvres de culture.' (D.I. p. 70).

The symbols and myths, at the root of our Western culture, and the arche and telos of man, at the root of the individual self-consciousness, illustrate these works of culture because they are the outcome of relationships between persons, between the 'same' and the 'Other', and because they open up new possibilities and concrete ways in the understanding of being. Moreover these works call for interpretations that lead to conflicting hermeneutics.

This second part is divided into three chapters. In our first chapter we shall examine the emergence of Ricoeurian hermeneutics, grafted on to reflective philosophy and phenomenology. We shall reflect with Paul Ricoeur upon the development of the modern concept of hermeneutic reflection. And we shall see how La symbolique du mal, published in 1960, shows implicitly what we are to understand by hermeneutic reflection in the work of Ricoeur. We shall stress why Paul Ricoeur wrote a symbolics and a mythics of evil and what distinguishes him from others on that matter. His originality lies in his philosophical approach to symbols and in his belief that symbols give rise to thought, that we must

therefore <u>think</u> <u>from</u> and <u>beyond</u> them. A philosophy content to speculate behind symbols is in his view an abstraction. This choice of the <u>pre-reflective</u> in philosophy, of 'le plein du langage' (<u>S.M.</u> p. 324) marks the turning point in Ricoeur's phenomenology and transforms it into a hermeneutic phenomenology. However, even though we will perceive in a forceful way why phenomenology needs a hermeneutics to become <u>concrete reflection</u>, why the 'same' needs an 'other', Ricoeur's hermeneutic phenomenology will not be fully conceptualized until five years later. Hermeneutics will at this stage remain only a <u>route</u> to philosophy, an opening up and disclosure of possibility hidden in symbols.

The second chapter will complete the first by offering the example of a hermeneutics of <u>suspicion</u>. The interpretation of signs is not always straightforward as with the cultural and cosmic symbols of evil: they more often than not demand a <u>demystification</u>, before the hidden meaning can be deciphered, as the unconscious and oneiric symbols of the self will show. <u>De l'interprétation:</u> <u>essai sur Freud</u>, published in 1965, is a long debate with Freud, in which Ricoeur's hermeneutic of suspicion eventually leads him to construct a creative dialectics between Freud and Hegel, whereby the Freudian signs of desire reveal a structural <u>arche</u> in man, an archaeology that points to a <u>telos</u>, to a teleology. It is as if the self is now split: the <u>Cogito</u> is here neither exalted nor broken, it is a <u>split</u>, or <u>wounded</u> <u>Cogito</u>. Moreover the concept of an archaeology and of a teleology of the subject worked out reflectively by Ricoeur add to the <u>concrete</u> texture of symbols, to the extent of becoming the key not only to their complex symbolic constitutions, but also to the contradicting theories of interpretations.

Hence our third chapter will examine the problem of

conflicting hermeneutics exposed in Le Conflit des interprétations, published in 1969. We will stress with Paul Ricoeur that, despite the war between them, they all share a basic shift in meaning away from immediate consciousness, thanks to the lingual character of signs and symbols. Ricoeur's preoccupation with language as the medium of expression and of symbols that give rise to thought, will prepare him to confront and, in a way, to welcome the challenge of structuralism. This semiological challenge will in fact mark the second concrete turning point in Ricoeur's career with the concept of the text as the new guiding thread after that of symbols. Such a profound methodological revolution, offering a new definition of hermeneutics, will constitute in retrospect 'une refonte beaucoup plus radicale de la théorie ...' (D.I. p. 161), a change in the initial structural reading, and will be the subject matter of our third part. Before then, however, the hermeneutic reflection of this second reading, enlarged and deepened by the lingual character of symbols, will transform 'comme par choc en retour, le modèle lui-même' (D.I. p. 159) to become concrete reflective philosophy. The third chapter will make this theme explicit.

     With his investigation into the symbols and myths of evil, Ricoeur enters the hermeneutic circle of understanding and belief. This circle anticipates his philosophical circle of explanation and understanding, and brings us back to our dialectics of difference and identity. Ricoeur believes that 'Il faut comprendre pour croire, mais il faut croire pour comprendre' (S.M. p. 326). In other words, the 'other' of symbols and of understanding, of the understanding that symbols do have something to say and thus deserve that we listen to them, is the necessary step towards the 'same' of belief, of an enlightened belief which Ricoeur would call today an appropriation. This kind of

appropriation which constitutes the final stage of philosophical reflection goes <u>beyond</u> the symbol and <u>beyond</u> this first hermeneutic circle, itself only the route to philosophical hermeneutics. Ricoeur explains this 'same' of appropriation as follows:

> '... le mouvement qui m'entraîne vers le sens second m'<u>assimile</u> à ce qui est dit, me rend participant ... c'est une assimilation existentielle de mon être à l'être ...' (<u>D.I.</u>, p.40)

So, according to Ricoeur, we achieve self-identity only if we start thinking according to and beyond the 'other' of symbols. Symbolic thought is the path towards a deeper understanding of being, towards the 'same'. And this 'other' is further deepened by Ricoeur's hermeneutics of suspicion, whereby 'une <u>science</u> médiate du sens, irréductible à la <u>conscience</u> immédiate du sens' (<u>D.I.</u>, p.42) is then constituted, thanks to a 'démystification du discours' (<u>D.I.</u>, p.49). This new hermeneutic mediation, which paves the way to ontology, indeed anticipates the concepts of explanation and distanciation in Ricoeur's <u>Interpretation Theory</u>. We intend to show, in this second part, how Ricoeur's hermeneutic phenomenology prepares his concrete theory of language centred upon the philosophical and hermeneutic circle of distanciation and appropriation, of difference and identity, 'where the epistemology of the social sciences would rejoin the ontology of human reality' (<u>Response</u>, p.40).

C H A P T E R   I

THE EMERGENCE OF RICOEURIAN

HERMENEUTICS WITH <u>LA SYMBOLIQUE DU MAL</u> (1960)

> 'Je parie que je comprendrai
> mieux l'homme et le lien entre
> l'être de l'homme et l'être de
> tous les étants, si je suis
> l'<u>indication</u> de la pensée
> symbolique'. (<u>S.M.</u> p. 330)

<u>Introduction</u>

While <u>L'homme faillible</u> tried to comprehend the first

lacuna left by the volume I of Ricoeur's <u>Philosophie de la volonté</u>

in a reflective and phenomenological manner, the second lacuna

left by his analysis 'between the essential structures of the

volitional consciousness ... and the historical or empirical

condition of the human will, prisoner of the passions and prone to

evil' (<u>Response</u>, p. 33), forced Ricoeur to go beyond the bounds of

an essential analysis of phenomena, beyond the possibility of the

fault, and to explore instead its <u>actuality</u> through a re-enactment

of the confession of evil found in symbols and myths. He explains

his choice of a hermeneutics of symbols as follows:

> 'So the only practicable route was that of a detour
> via the symbols wherein the avowal of the fault
> was inscribed during the great cultures of which
> ours is the heir.' (<u>Response</u>, p. 33)

This choice of a detour of reflection on the self, via

its mediating <u>signs</u>, stresses the importance of <u>language</u> in

philosophy, and here particularly the importance of the fullness

and richness of language, which we interpret as the 'other' of the

self.

This chapter is divided into four sections. In the first

section we shall reflect with Paul Ricoeur upon the concept of

hermeneutics, and see how it was born and how its <u>epistemological</u>

concern to achieve scientific status - its 'other' in our terminology - must be, according to Ricoeur, subordinated to ontological concerns - to the 'same' - if understanding is to be not simply a mode of knowing but more important, a way of being. The 'same' and the 'other' will find themselves in a dialectics that points towards a 'self'.

In sections two and three we shall investigate what Ricoeur means, first by symbols, and then by myths in La Symbolique du mal. We will see how their three-dimensional structure unfolds our human self, and leads to the hermeneutic circle of understanding and belief. Also, we shall stress the purpose of Ricoeur's symbolics, which distinguishes him from many other philosophers, theologians and exegetes who have written with authority on myth and symbol. His approach is first of all philosophical, even though he acknowledges his own cultural roots and his faith in the Holy Spirit. It is a philosophical approach that recognizes and enhances the irreducible symbolic content of myth, to the extent of declaring that such a content constitutes the starting point of concrete philosophy. Ricoeur deeply believes that a philosophy that starts from speculative explanations behind symbols is doomed to abstraction. For him, concrete philosophy must start from symbols. And consequently, it needs a hermeneutics capable of deciphering and disclosing their hidden meaning, thus helping the philosopher to think beyond symbols.

The fourth section of this chapter will concentrate on Ricoeur's philosophical reflection, rooted in his interpretation of symbols and myths. His question at the end of La Symbolique du mal is how to come back to reflective philosophy and rationality after the methodological rupture that led him to symbolic language, and how to come back enriched with symbolic knowledge. In other words,

how is he to implement the task of philosophical reflection, which
is, he says;

> 'de <u>reprendre</u> les suggestions de cette symbolique
> du <u>mal</u>, de les prolonger dans tous les registres de
> la conscience de l'homme, depuis les sciences
> humaines jusqu'à la spéculation sur le serf-arbitre.'
> (<u>H.F</u>. p. 17)

How can the 'other' of interpretation and the 'other' of
symbols enter together into dialogue with the 'same' of reflective
phenomenology?

To that question <u>La Symbolique du mal</u> has no clear answer.
Ricoeur suggests a <u>wager</u>. He ventures to guess that reflective
understanding is dependant upon interpretation and upon a hermeneu-
tics of our symbolic heritage, if it is to be a <u>concrete</u> philosophy.
The validation of this guess will come five years later in
<u>De l'interprétation: essai sur Freud</u> (1965) and will demonstrate
Ricoeur's originality in a forceful way.

1 - <u>Paul Ricoeur's interpretation of the changing concept
     of hermeneutics</u>

> '... hermeneutics is the theory of
> the operations of understanding
> in their relation to the inter-
> pretation of texts.' (<u>The Task</u>,
> p. 43)

Although the art of interpretation is as old as culture,
the specific <u>problem of understanding</u> concerned with the elucidation
of rules in view of the interpretation of texts dates back only from
the early nineteenth century with the work of the German theologian
Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768-1834). According to Ricoeur in his
article 'Schleiermacher's Hermeneutics' (1977), the hermeneutic
problem for Schleiermacher sprang from a misunderstanding due to a
'tension between the intention of saying and the verbal vehicle'
(p. 184). This tension led to two forms of interpretation, one

grammatical and objective, which Ricoeur terms the 'linguistic frameworks distinct from the author' (p. 185), and the other psychological and subjective because, as he says, 'it reaches the act of thinking that produces discourse' (p. 186).

This difficulty of reconciling those two interpretations constituted the starting point in the late nineteenth century for Dilthey's problematic of the intelligibility of the historical as such, still posed in terms of an epistemological debate. But, says Ricoeur, the opposition Wilhelm Dilthey (1833-1911) made between the empirical explanation of nature and the understanding of history turned hermeneutics into a psychological discipline. Although understanding also stressed the scientific explanation of texts through their essential structures yet, Ricoeur insists that the task of comprehension of the memory of humanity through its signs, works and history remained a transference into another mental life. Ricoeur explains:

> 'If the enterprise remains fundamentally psychological, it is because it stipulates as the ultimate aim of interpretation, not what a text says, but who says it.' (The Task, p. 52)

Hence the 'other' of the text was reduced to a psychological 'other' without an ontological 'same'.

Ricoeur firmly believes that the aim of hermeneutics of 'la science de l'interprétation' (C.I. p. 311) which brings forward 'des règles de déchiffrement' (H.F. p. 12), is not to focus on the author of a text. On the contrary, it must highlight and unfold both the sense immanent in the text and the reference it opens up. This belief is central to the Ricoeurian theory of interpretation. We shall examine it in detail in the third part of this thesis.

Martin Heidegger (1889-1976), Husserl's student, exploded the whole epistemological enterprise by subordinating understanding

as a mode of knowing, as a psychological 'other', to its ontological roots, to the 'same', making it a way of being. According to Ricoeur, Heidegger operated the transition from epistemology to ontology because now 'instead of asking "how do we know?", it will be asked "what is the mode of being of that being who exists only in understanding?" ' (The Task, p. 54). We here witness a shift from a problem of method, where being the 'same', unaware of itself, is with Others in communication, to a problem of being, whereby the locus of reflection is now the same, a being-in-the-world, a being-there. This new situation de-psychologises understanding while at the same time, stressing the importance of feeling from which understanding arises, as Ricoeur explains:

> 'In knowledge, we posit objects in front of us; but
> our feeling of the situation precedes this vis-à-vis by
> placing us in a world.' (The Task, p. 56)

This intuitive grasp of ourselves as beings belonging to the world in which we have 'an ontological pre-understanding of being' (The Task, p. 54) demands a hermeneutic reflection in order to reveal the foundation on which the human sciences are constructed. In the triad situation-understanding-interpretation, the latter develops understanding seen as a process of orientation and projection of the possibilities of being-in-the-world. Interpretation highlights our power-to-be inherent in the structure of being and always ahead of itself in time where it has to become itself. Ricoeur insists on this fundamental concept of becoming:

> '... to understand a text ... is not to find a
> lifeless sense which is contained therein, but
> to unfold the possibility of being indicated in
> the text.' (The Task, p. 56)

We shall return to this central question later on.

Heidegger did not add much to the exegis of texts nor to linguistics. However his way of questioning is hermeneutical because it proceeds from an interpretation of man's situation in the

world - from an existential 'other' - towards an understanding

of the meaning of Being - towards the 'same'. In Le Conflit des

interpretations, Ricoeur describes it as 'une herméneutique du

≪je suis≫' (p. 222). Ricoeur explains, in terms very similar

to those of Gabriel Marcel, how the 'I am' is each one of us and

how it is so close to us that we cannot see it. In Marcel's words,

it belongs to the realm of 'mystery'. Consequently, it is ontolo-

gically the farthest, hidden and forgotten under the anonymous 'on'

of everyday life, and Ricoeur insists, in agreement with Heidegger,

that this 'I am' must be recovered by interpretation. The 'same'

is not given in immediate intuition:

> 'C'est parce que ce qui est le plus proche de
> soi-même ontiquement est aussi le plus éloigné
> ontologiquement que le ≪ je suis ≫ devient le
> thème d'une herméneutique, et non pas seulement
> d'une description intuitive.' (C.I. p. 229)

However, Ricoeur along with Heidegger, goes further than Marcel

and Husserl by adding the techniques of an interpretation to the

fundamental description of phenomena. What are then the differences

between Ricoeur and Heidegger? Ricoeur makes it clear that he does

not share Heidegger's approach to hermeneutics because, according

to him, Heidegger fails to return from ontology to the epistemo-

logical problems of method and objective analysis left behind.

In other words, he takes the short road that goes directly to the

'same', through its existential 'other', without the detour via the

epistemological 'other', without a proper dialectics between

epistemological difference and ontological identity. Ricoeur argues:

> 'With Heidegger's philosophy, we are always engaged
> in going back to the foundations, but we are left
> incapable of beginning the movement of return which
> would lead from the fundamental ontology to the
> properly epistemological question of the status of
> the human sciences.' (The Task, p. 59)

Heidegger's student, Hans-Georg Gadamer returned to the

human sciences, but, according to Ricoeur, centred his discussion upon the scandal of an ontological reality objectified, and thus alienated, by the naturalistic methods of those sciences. So, for Gadamer, there is indeed a proper 'other', and therefore a proper dialectics. But, as Ricoeur points out, it is between an 'alienating distanciation and the experience of belonging' (The Task, p. 60). The 'other' is only seen as negative, as 'a distancing, which in turn expresses the destruction of the primordial relation of belonging.' (The Task, p. 60). We are not far here from Michel Foucault's assertion that the rise of the human sciences meant the death of man and of subjectivity, of the 'same'. However, Ricoeur interprets Gadamer's conception as a positive dialectics of participation and distanciation because he sees in it some 'decisive suggestions which will become the point of departure for my own reflection.' (The Task, p. 61).

Firstly, Ricoeur says that Gadamer's theory of historical consciousness already contains a notion of distance and otherness within nearness since the process of understanding is itself a fusing of horizons, a belonging at a distance. Secondly, when in communication, two consciousnesses fuse their views, a tension is implied between the two distant horizons, or, as Ricoeur explains, 'the play of difference is included in the process of convergence.' (The Task, p. 62). Thirdly, the world seen as a historical phenomenon offers itself to interpretation by means of the 'other' of language, of signs, works and texts. Although for Gadamer, language is above all a medium through which the truth of being is communicated, Ricoeur stresses that such a mediation is possible only because 'the interlocutors fade away in face of the things said which, as it were, direct the dialogue.' (The Task, p. 62). And, according to Ricoeur, the most perfect 'fading' occurs through

the _text_ which belongs to neither its author nor to its reader but
to itself. It is the text which, for Ricoeur, opens up new
horizons, new selves, and which introduces a critical instance,
an 'otherness', in view of a positive interpretation of distan-
ciation within the consciousness of belonging. The problem of
the _matter of the text_ that 'enables us to communicate at a
distance' (The Task, p. 62) will lead to Ricoeur's circle of
appropriation and distanciation, of difference and identity, and to
Interpretation theory. Before discussing them in detail, we shall
first examine how the theory slowly emerges in _La Symbolique du mal_
with the gradual recognition of the linguistic dimension that will
be fully acknowledged only in _De l'interprétation: essai sur Freud_.

2 - _The symbols of evil: defilement, sin and guilt_

> 'C'est d'abord _sur_ le monde, _sur_ des
> éléments ou des aspects du monde, sur
> le ciel, sur le soleil et la lune,
> sur les eaux et la végétation que
> l'homme lit le sacré.' (S.M. p. 18)

Why write a symbolism of evil? Why give so much importance
to evil? Within the context of Ricoeur's _Philosophie de la volonté_,
evil appears as the _final and major limitation_ to freedom, after
that of our human nature and of our inner ontological disproportion.
Hence, this sovereign 'Other' could not have been brushed aside by
Ricoeur. And the fact that we speak of evil only indirectly by
means of metaphors like estrangement, exile, burden and bondage,
within what Ricoeur calls 'le langage de l'aveu' - through which
man avows his _actual_ fallen condition - left Ricoeur with no other
choice but a hermeneutical detour via this symbolic language. At
the same time, the confrontation with this metaphorical and indirect
language developed his awareness of the hermeneutic problem. It must
be stressed that Ricoeur's symbolics is only a _detour_, and not the

main objective, of his reflective phenomenology. Hence his approach
differs fundamentally from the phenomenology of religion with its com-
parative history of religions. His question is 'comment articuler la
réflexion philosophique sur l'herméneutique des symboles?' (C.I.p.283),
or in other words, how are we to think from symbols? How are we to
think evil and freedom together? In order to answer this question a
general theory of symbols was needed, that tried to conceive of the
invincible 'other' of freedom. La Symbolique du mal (1960) provides
the answer, and marks a shift away from abstract Husserlian phenomeno-
logy in its effort to discover the hiatus between the possibility of
evil conceptualized in terms of fallibility, and its actuality grasped
as fault. A concrete mythics replaced all the previous abstract
phenomenological 'brackets' essential to the epoche.

Ricoeur explains, '... le passage de l'innocence à la faute
n'est accessible à aucune description même empirique, mais à une
mythique concrète.' (H.F., p.10). This mythics was further expanded
to the dimensions of a symbolics, because myths are themselves the
secondary, coded language of what is a very primitive and symbolic
primary language. The symbolics initiates a radical renewal of
reflective philosophy. Ricoeur describes it in terms of a hermeneu-
tic reflection, but at the level of a phenomenology that remains
'extérieure à la réflexion pleinement assumée' (S.M., p.25). It is
like a propaedeutics to philosophy. This is because the concrete
symbolic language that deals with the existential reality of evil
cannot be inserted directly into philosophy. Indeed, symbols and
myths make sense only when reinserted within their own rich and
opaque religious discourse. This choice of a reinsertion is charac-
teristic of the modern approach to myths, as Mircea Eliade explains
in Aspects du mythe (1963):

> 'Depuis plus d'un demi-siècle, les savants occidentaux ont
> situé l'étude du mythe dans une perspective qui contras-
> tait sensiblement avec, disons, celle du XIXᵉ siècle. Au
> lieu de traiter, comme leurs prédécesseurs, le mythe ...
> en tant que «fable», «invention», «fiction», ils l'ont
> accepté tel qu'il était compris dans les sociétes archaïques,
> où le mythe désigne, au contraire, une «histoire vraie» et,
> qui plus est, hautement précieuse parce que sacrée, exemp-
> laire et significative.' (p. 9)

Eliade is a friend of Ricoeur. Ricoeur dedicated to him his 'Septième étude - Métaphore et référence in La Métaphore vive (1975).

Ricoeur shares Eliade's conception of myths and symbols and his descriptive method, typical of a phenomenology of religions. But, for obvious reasons, the purpose and perspective of his research are very different. His aim is a philosophy of language that starts from the fullness of language.

It is therefore within the realm of this kind of language that Ricoeur applies his hermeneutics of 'recollection' characterised by a willingness to respect and to listen to what is being revealed. He explains:

> '... comprendre ce langage de l'aveu, c'est mettre en oeuvre une exégèse du symbole qui appelle des règles de déchiffrement, c'est-à-dire une herméneutique.' (H.F. p. 10)

Those rules of deciphering remain faithful to the Husserlian noematic reflection. Ricoeur says:

> 'On décrit en dégageant la visée (noétique) et son corrélat (noématique): le quelque chose visé, l'objet implicite dans le rite, dans le mythe et dans la croyance.' (D.I. p. 37)

In other words, the literal sense of symbols, for instance the spot, the broken relationship, the burden, which constitute the noetic intention, opens up into the 'something' intended, into the noematic intentionality, here the symbolic sense of defilement, sin and guilt. Such an opening brings about a revelation of meaning, a restoration, and not a reduction, as would an explanation through causes.

And it also reveals the double intentionality of symbols. Ricoeur stresses that symbols are not only signs, they are also expressions of double meaning wherein the literal meaning refers analogically beyond itself to a second symbolic meaning, not given

directly but constituted in and by the literal meaning. He

explains:

> '... à l'opposé des signes techniques, parfaitement
> transparents, qui ne disent que ce qu'ils veulent
> dire en posant le signifié, les signes symboliques
> sont opaques parce que le sens premier, littéral,
> patent, vise lui-même analogiquement un sens
> second qui n'est pas donné autrement qu'en lui ...
> c'est en vivant dans le sens premier que je suis
> entraîné par lui au-delà de lui-même ...'
> (C.I. pp. 285-86)

The relation between the two meanings is one of fusion,
like the metaphor, whereby the literal 'other' leads to the
symbolic 'same' through a phenomenon of 'trans-parency' (and not
trans-lation as in allegories). However, this fusion does not
reduce the 'other' to the 'same': the dialectics between the two
meanings forbids such a reduction.

Husserlian intentional analysis not only discloses this
dual intentionality of symbols, but it also reveals in each symbol
a three-dimensional structure. The cosmic dimension, seen at its
best in religious symbolism, constitutes the objective aspect of
symbols read upon the world. The oneiric dimension is experienced
subjectively in the psyche of man. Both dimensions are so inter-
woven that Ricoeur says:

> 'Cosmos et Psyché sont les deux pôles de la même
> « expressivité »; je m'exprime en exprimant le
> monde.' (S.M. p. 20)

In other words, we become ourselves through a deciphering of both
our cosmic and oneiric archaisms. But it is the poetic dimension
that marks the emergence of the symbol as such by giving it form
in language. Ricoeur insists on the creativity of the poetic
imagination in a way similar to Gaston Bachelard who showed, in
La Poétique de l'espace (1957), how the poetic image makes us
that which it expresses, particularly when he writes:

> 'L'image poétique nous met à l'origine de l'être
> parlant ... Elle devient un être nouveau de notre

> langage, elle nous exprime en nous faisant ce
> qu'elle exprime ... Ici, l'expression crie de
> l'être.' (p. 7)

Ricoeur seems to share his view when he says that:

> '... le symbole poétique nous montre l'expressivité
> à l'état naissant; dans la poésie le symbole est
> surpris au moment où il est un surgissement du
> langage ...' (S.M. p. 21)

The primary symbols of stain, sin and guilt constitute, for Ricoeur, the most elemental and spontaneous expressions of evil in its mainly cosmic dimension. However, for each symbol, the evil first discovered in the external cosmos is also experienced psychologically and expressed in a poetic image. We shall see a gradual internalization from the 'other' to the 'same', as we progress with Ricoeur from stain to sin to guilt: each symbolism is preserved in the following one to culminate in the 'aporia' of what Ricoeur calls the 'serf-arbitre'. The concept of 'servile-will' is the opposite of the conception of 'libre-arbitre', of the freedom of choice, and it is a paradox or 'aporia' because it implies a bound will, a freedom that is at once free and not free to act as it chooses. It is used mainly in theology. St. Augustine reflected upon it in the context of moral determinism, and Luther wrote De Servo arbitrio. Ricoeur sees in it 'le thème ultime que le symbole donne à penser' (H.F. p.13). It transforms the previous reciprocity between the voluntary and the involuntary into a reciprocity between act and state, between that which we initiate and that which we receive. And it also enriches the dialectics of the 'same' of freedom and the 'other' of necessity thanks to its mythical depth. Within this dialectical framework of identity and difference, each of the three symbols of evil, chosen by Ricoeur as the basic invariants to subsequent mythical interpretations, also show the same dialectics in a process of growth. Each symbol, with

its double intentionality and its three-dimensional structure creates a Self that grows in depth and self-awareness, thanks each time to a more interiorized dialectics.

In Ricoeur's view, the symbolism of stain, or defilement is the most primitive moment of the consciousness of fault. He sees in it a fusion of the objective representation of stain with the subjective idea of the impure 'qui infecte comme une saleté' (S.M. p. 32), and this creates a fear experienced as an ethical terror. Ricoeur remarks that 'l'homme entre dans le monde éthique par la peur et non par l'amour' (S.M. p.35). Both the 'other' of stain and the 'same' of dread become symbolic, and therefore open up onto a self, when dialectically expressed in language and shaped by the poetic image. Yet the literal meaning of stain is retained (the 'other' is retained as 'other') while at the same time transformed into something like a stain, into a symbolic stain. Such transformation of the self explains the rituals of purification that are meant to rid man of both defilement and the dread that goes with it. According to Ricoeur it is precisely because defilement is the object of such rituals that it is a symbol of evil:

> '... la souillure, en tant qu'elle est «l'objet»
> de cette suppression rituelle, est elle-même
> symbole du mal.' (S.M. p. 41)

In this kind of context evil is understood as a something objective, as an 'other' (not a nothing) that comes to man from the outside (an unclean contact) to infect him in his self. Such an 'Other' seems to be the greatest limitation of all to our human freedom. Ricoeur highlights archaic language since it not only gives form to the symbol, but also educates those feelings of impurity in view of a progressive interiorization of evil:

'La constitution d'un vocabulaire du pur et de
l'impur ... est ainsi la première assise
linguistique et sémantique du « sentiment de
culpabilité » et d'abord de la « confession
des péchés » ' (S.M. p. 42)

Although this primitive symbolism of stain is narrow in its

intentionality of the quasi-material and in its ritual-poetic

expression of the pure and the impure, that is in its dialectics

of difference and identity, Ricoeur believes in its potential

basis for transformation in view of an ethics.

The symbolism of sin, in the work of Ricoeur, retains

the same basic themes but internalizes them in its progressive

movement towards ethics. The 'pure' becomes the 'holy', and the

impure a violation of holiness. It also adds an ontological moment

to fault with the new situation of man before God, before the God

of the Biblical prophets. The prophets have the task of making

man aware of this new situation. Ricoeur insists on this Biblical

dimension of sin:

'La phénoménologie philosophique qui veut répéter
le « devant Dieu » essentiel au péché doit
répéter ... « l'oracle » prophétique.' (S.M. p.57)

Philosophy cannot ignore this 'event' of a God who speaks to His

people through His prophets. The Covenant is the outcome of such

an encounter, in which God is experienced in terms of presence and

dialogue, and whereby an objective contract is made between God and

His people. Sin is then understood as the violation of this initial

bond. It is the painful realization of the absence and silence of

God experienced as a punishment. The Covenant constantly

oscillates between the finite commandment of the Law that makes

sinfulness explicit, and the infinite, formless demand on the part

of the Jewish prophet who warns against sin. Ricoeur stresses this

'dialectique du code et de l'exigence illimitée' that constitutes

'la structure foncière de l'Alliance' (S.M. p. 61). In other words,

man finds his self in the presence of God not only through a direct and ethical encounter with the 'same' of such presence, but also through the structural 'other' of the Law. Both aspects must be retained. The dread of the impure does not disappear with the new relationship, rather it becomes the terrible threat of 'la colère de Dieu'. Ricoeur says 'la peur et l'angoisse ... ont plutôt changé de qualité' (S.M. p. 66). Fear now transcends the individual to become a threat directed against the whole community of Israel, against the people of God. It is as if a new ethical dialectics gradually emerges behind the structural one, due to the ethical distance brought about by the warning of the wrath of God which shatters the historical complicity between the God of Israel and His people. Yet Ricoeur shows that this distance does not break but stretch and deepen the existing Covenant, to very slowly reveal what he calls 'le Seigneur de l'Histoire' with his promise of salvation. We are very much aware of the importance of difference, of an ethical and painful difference on the road towards identity and salvation.

The symbolism of sin is expressed in language by a revolution of dramatic images that echoes the revolution of meaning. Ricoeur stresses that 'ce changement dans l'intentionnalité du symbole, suscité par la nouvelle expérience du mal, est obtenu par un bouleversement au plan même des images de base' (S.M. p. 76).

The images of contact with a harmful, impure substance that infects, give way to the poetic images of deviation from order, of rebellion against the holy will, of missing the mark and straying from the path. They tell of a broken contract experienced as a turning away from the truth in the direction of false gods and evil ways. They emphasize the empty vanity of man and thus convey the idea of a negation, of a nothingness of sin. Yet Ricoeur

shows that the first images of defilement are retained: sin is
also experienced as a something, as a power that lays hold of man
and as a captivity in which man is caught. It is because of this
reality of evil that Ricoeur reminds us that 'l'homme captif du
péché est un homme à délivrer' (S.M. p. 94).

Liberation, rather than liberty, now appears to be the
basic problem of existence, since evil is not only the greatest
limitation to our freedom but worse, the occupying enemy. This
means, according to Ricoeur, that it is not really possible to
understand the symbolism of sin without its complementary symbolism
of redemption: to wandering in exile corresponds the return and
pardon from God. Or, in other words, and according to our
dialectics of difference and identity, it is through the 'Other' of
sin and exile, the 'Other' of fault, that we may find a liberated
self. As if evil is the adventure of being, the necessary path on
the way to freedom and reconciliation.

The symbol of guilt completes the movement of interioriza-
tion towards the 'same', by transforming the collective awareness
of sin, internal yet objective, into its radical individuation.
It constitutes the subjective moment of fault and, according to
Ricoeur, represents at once 'un mouvement de rupture et un mouve-
ment de reprise' (S.M. p. 99) as regards defilement and sin. Its
rupture with previous symbolisms gives way to the emergence of the
guilty man, and its re-enactment reveals 'le concept d'un homme
responsable et captif, mieux d'un homme responsable d'être captif'
(S.M. p. 100), it reveals the concept of the servile will.

Firstly, the guilty man, seen by Ricoeur as a revolution
in the human consciousness of evil. To sin experienced as an
external accusation, as 'la mesure absolue, figurée par le regard
de Dieu qui voit les péchés qui sont' (S.M. p. 103), there now

corresponds, in equilibrium with it, an internalization of the accusation, that is

> '... la mesure subjective, figurée par le tribunal de la conscience qui apprécie une culpabilité qui apparaît.' (S.M. p. 103)

With the emergence of this new responsible consciousness in relation to interdictions, Ricoeur shows how the emphasis is now on the 'I who ...' rather than on the consciousness of being 'before God'. To the image of a collective captivity ' « dans quoi » l'humanité est prise comme un collectif singulier' (S.M. p. 105) there now corresponds the loneliness of the guilty conscience aware of its evil use of freedom. Such an awareness is experienced as 'une diminution intime de la valeur du moi' (S.M. p. 101). And to regain his self-value, the sinner becomes his own tribunal that calls for punishment.

The feeling of guilt overwhelms everything. Yet Ricoeur keeps a dialectics thanks to the metaphor of the tribunal that points to the penal law of the City. He shows how, for the Greeks, guilt acquired objective degrees in the nascent ethico-juridical conceptualization of fault:

> 'C'est en mesurant la peine et pour la mesurer que la cité a mesuré la culpabilité elle-même' (S.M. p. 109)

Concern with penalty preceded personal meditation, and focussed on the 'sacred' character of the City to which the criminal was the evil threat. Ricoeur compares this ethico-religious consciousness of the law with that of the Pharisees, after the destruction of the State of Israel and the exile of its people, and highlights the difference between the Greek and the Jewish law. The Torah is first of all an event of conscience, a revelation that stresses the bond of obedience between men and God through Moses' instructions. Consequently, to do the will of God is to follow faithfully His

holy commandments. Happiness lies in this responsible choice.
But this original intention of practical holiness was soon over-
shadowed by the guilty conscience that developed among the Jews.
When, close to despair after the irrevocable and catastrophic
events foreseen by the prophets, they came to realize that if sin
was individual, if evil was an act that each one of us initiated,
then there was still meaning and hope for each man, they over-
multiplied their commandments with regards to purity, and over-
ritualized their moral life in their longing for salvation.
St. Paul accused the Law of being the source of sin because it
demands from man what he cannot possibly give and therefore leads
him to failure, increased guilt and despair.

Our own interpretation of Ricoeur's ideas is that the
Jewish experience lost its balance because difference, the 'other'
of the law in fact reduced identity and the 'same' to itself, thus
losing the creative dialectics of 'le même et l'autre'. We here
witness a danger opposite to that of idealism, and in many ways
similar to the over-emphasis by contemporary thinkers on difference,
that may lead to absurdity and intellectual despair. The guilty man
is therefore an _impasse_ in both the Pauline and Ricoeurian inter-
pretations. Ricoeur highlights this with his idea of a _rupture_
with the previous symbolism of stain and sin. Difference is not
rupture: the former is constructive while the latter proves here
to be self-destructive.

Ricoeur, however, stresses the positive aspects of guilt
and justification by the Law: in their time they played the role
of supreme pedagogy in the history of humanity. But the new event
of a justification by faith has made them redundant. Ricoeur says:

> 'C'est après coup que la conscience delivrée
> reconnaît, dans le stade éthique, vécu comme un
> esclavage , la voie tortueuse de sa libération'
> (S.M. p. 144)

As for the 'liberation' itself, the philosopher admits to the shocking side of a justice that comes to man from an Other. This unthinkable idea leads Ricoeur to the aporia of the servile will that re-enacts the symbolisms of stain and sin into that of guilt.

Secondly, therefore, the servile will is understood by Ricoeur as an autocaptivity, as a captive freedom that commits evil rather than the good it has chosen, that infects and enslaves itself by its own choice. Ricoeur's interpretation is here very close to St. Paul's. Ricoeur insists on the continuity and recapitulation of the three symbols within this servile will:

> '... le concept de serf-arbitre duquel s'approche
> l'expérience la plus différenciée, la plus fine,
> la plus intériorisée de la culpabilité, était
> déjà visé par la plus archaique de toutes, celle
> de la souillure. Le dernier symbole ne vise son
> concept limite qu'en reprenant en lui toute la
> richesse des symboles antérieurs.'(S.M. pp.145-46.)

He shows how this interrelation of symbols within a dynamic and circular movement enriches the whole imagery of the symbolism of evil, and highlights its poetic dimension. The metaphor of infection by the impure that comes from the outside like a seduction becomes, when transposed inward, 'une affection de soi par soi, une auto-infection, par quoi l'acte de se lier se mue en état d'être lié' (S.M. p. 149). And the metaphor of captivity of the chosen 'people', prisoner of its sins, becomes the metaphor of an indivi-dual caught up in the relation of the self to oneself within the event of freedom.

The riddle of the servile will, 'd'un libre arbitre qui se lie et se trouve toujours déjà lié' (H.F. p. 13), is the main theme of Paul Ricoeur's Philosophie de la volonté, and is a paradox: free-will and servitude cannot coincide in the same object. The idea of a bound will is simply 'insupportable pour

la pensée' (S.M. p. 146). This is why it had to be thought
indirectly through a symbolics.

Why is this paradox, this aporia, so important to
Ricoeur? He explains how his philosophical aim, 'une vision
éthique du monde' (H.F. p. 14), must be understood as 'l'effort
pour comprendre toujours plus étroitement liberté et mal l'un
par l'autre' (H.F. p. 14). He admits that this approach to freedom
is 'une décision grave' (H.F. p. 14), but he justifies it by the
very nature of the problem: evil, no matter its origin, is very
much part of man's humanity, and can be recognised only by a
freedom which admits responsibility. Ricoeur says:

> 'C'est cet aveu qui rattache le mal à l'homme, non
> seulement comme à son lieu de manifestation, mais
> comme à son auteur.' (H.F. p. 15)

In other words, we see once again in this avowal of fault, by means
of which evil and freedom enter into a dialectics, the dialectics
of difference and identity. The 'same' of freedom can attain its
own self only if it fully acknowledges the 'other' of evil. And
evil becomes a problem, an 'other' only if placed within the sphere
of freedom, of the same. Or, to put it another way, it is our
avowal of the 'Other' of evil that constitutes, for Ricoeur, the
condition of a Self, of a consciousness of freedom, although freedom
is the ground for evil. Ricoeur shared with Jean Nabert the idea
that 'une liberté qui prend en charge le mal, c'est une liberté qui
accède à une compréhension d'elle-même singulièrement lourde de
sens' (H.F. p. 15). Freedom had already been defined as a human
and a fallible freedom. But only now, when confronted with evil,
can it discover its most radical limitation: it is the victim of
an 'Other' which it at the same time posits. Ricoeur asserts that
'l'homme ... ne paraît pas moins victime que coupable' (H.F. p. 17).

The aporia provides an interrelated and close dialectics that anticipates Ricoeur's circle of distanciation and appropriation at its most ethical level. We believe that this is one important reason why it constituted, in the early works, one of Ricoeur's most powerful philosophical arguments and the final and major theme of his Philosophie de la volonté.

3 - The myths of the beginning and of the end of evil

> '... d'un côté le mal entre dans le monde en tout que l'homme le _pose_, mais l'homme ne le pose que parce qu'il _cède_ à l'investissement de l'Adversaire' (H.F. p. 17)

Much has been written about myth. Mircea Eliade in Aspects du mythe (1963) stresses that it is impossible to give a simple definition:

> 'Le mythe est une réalité culturelle extrêmement complexe, qui peut être abordée et interprétée dans des perspectives multiples et complémentaires.' (p. 14)

Ethnologists, sociologists and historians, linguists, philosophers and theologians have all researched into myth, each one from his or her own particular perspective. Hence three questions: where are we to start from? Where are we to place Paul Ricoeur within such a wide context? And from what point did he start?

Ricoeur himself provides an answer with his conception of an inverse relationship between diachrony and symchrony. In linguistics, synchrony focusses on structural arrangements and classifications, and diachrony on events inscribed within a historical tradition and subject to a hermeneutic comprehension. We know that the development of a society is both diachronic and symchronic, with its process of historical transformation and its structural institutions. Ricoeur in Richard Kearney's Dialogues with contemporary Continental Thinkers (1984), claims that myths

share this dual characteristic since they are the foundations of

society:

> '... on the one hand, they constitute a certain
> system of simultaneous symbols which can be
> approached through structuralist analysis; but,
> on the other hand, they have a history, because
> it is always through a process of interpretation
> and reinterpretation that they are kept alive.'
> (p. 38)

This reciprocal duality provides a chain of mythical types which

must be understood from both ends. Yet some ethnologists, like

Claude Lévi-Strauss, stress only one aspect of the spectrum, while

other theologians like the German Gerhard von Rad, highlight

the other aspect.

Claude Lévi-Strauss studied myth in a scientific manner,

in terms of the structural analogy between social phenomenon and

language. He observed a resemblance between myths throughout the

world, and set out to define this resemblance with patterns in

linguistics. A model inspired by linguistics directed his investiga-

tions, with its logic of oppositions and correlations, and led him

to the conception of 'savage thought'. In an interview entitled

'Claude Lévi-Strauss' with the 'Groupe philosophique' of Esprit,

in 1963, of which Paul Ricoeur was a member, Lévi-Strauss explains:

> '... sous le nom de pensée sauvage, je désigne
> le système des postulats et des axiomes requis
> pour fonder un code, permettant de traduire ...
> « l'autre » dans « le nôtre » et réciproquement,
> l'ensemble des conditions auxquelles nous pouvons
> le mieux nous comprendre.' (p. 634)

His structural conceptions of code and translation may prove useful

in our understanding of myth, but the nature of difference is

problematic. For Lévi-Strauss it is not 'dans les pensées elles-

mêmes', as it is for Ricoeur, but 'dans les situations variées où

l'observateur se trouve vis-à-vis de ces pensées' (ibid. p. 635).

And this is so because Lévi-Strauss gives more importance to

unconscious structures than to contents. He explains:

> '... le sens résulte toujours de la combinaison
> d'éléments qui ne sont pas eux-mêmes signifiants
> ... le sens n'est jamais un phénomène premier ...
> derrière tout sens il y a un non-sens ...'
> (ibid.,p. 637)

Or in other words, thought in this context orders but does not think itself. And the same applies to myth. Lévi-Strauss argues that myths 'forment le discours de cette societé, et un discours pour lequel il n'y a pas d'émetteur personnel: un discours, donc, qu'on recueille comme un linguiste qui s'en va étudier une langue mal connue, et dont il essaie de faire la grammaire, sans se soucier de savoir qui a dit ce qui a été dit.' (ibid, p. 640)

He makes it very clear that his purpose is not a restoration of meaning or a hermeneutics:

> '... la reprise de sens m'apparaît secondaire et
> dérivée, du point de vue de la méthode, par
> rapport au travail essentiel qui consiste à
> démonter le mécanisme d'une pensée objectivée.'
> (ibid., p. 110)

Lévi-Strauss represents one extreme of Ricoeur's chain of mythical types. At the other extreme, Ricoeur places Gerhard von Rad whose theological conception of myth centres upon founding events and upon the intellectual activity that led to the elaboration of myth. Von Rad's work is a historical interpretation of the historical or, to put it another way, a living reinterpretation that becomes a revival of myth within a confessional framework. And this is possible because of the surplus of meaning at work in mythic symbols.

Along the chain and close to Von Rad, we shall place Mircea Eliade who writes,in Aspects du mythe,that myth offers 'des modèles pour la conduite humaine et confère par là même signification et valeur à l'existence.' (p. 10).

Ricoeur shares the same conception of myth, although it

must be remembered that his philosophical programme is neither
theological nor historical. He clearly distances himself from a
comparative and descriptive phenomenology that understands symbols
through other symbols, as illustrated, according to him, by Eliade's
work. He explains why this is not enough for the philosopher:

> 'Mais il n'a pas été possible de se borner à cette
> intelligence du symbole dans le symbole. En
> effet la question de la vérité y est sans cesse
> éludée.' (S.M. p. 329)

The philosopher cannot remain a neutral observer, he has to ask
himself where he personally stands in relation to the symbolic
meaning he is explaining: he has to enter the hermeneutic circle.
Ricoeur accepts the importance of static description, but only as a
first stage, that of 'understanding'. A dynamics must follow which
adds belief to understanding, a belief capable of converting meaning
into meaning-for-me, through an appropriation. This hermeneutic
circle is, we believe, Ricoeur's originality. His hermeneutic task
is, therefore, much more than a textual interpretation that deciphers
the hidden meaning in the apparent meaning of symbols. It in fact
aims at a recovery of the intentionalities of the symbolic
expressions of evil in order to integrate them into his reflective
phenomenology. Within the context of the 'Philosophie de la
volonté, what matters is to understand 'le mal par la liberté'
(H.F. p. 14) since there is no evil without freedom, and even more
important 'l'aveu du mal est aussi la condition de la conscience de
la liberté (ibid., p. 16).

It is this philosophical aim that explains the importance
of myth in Ricoeur's thought. And in turn, the myth led him to his
philosophy of language, whose purpose is a re-creation of language,
as he clearly states in Richard Kearney's Dialogues with contempo-
rary Continental thinkers:

'... we need a third dimension of language, a
critical and creative dimension, which is directed
towards neither scientific verification nor
ordinary communication but towards the disclosure
of possible worlds.' (p. 45)

Both poetry and myths constitute such a disclosure of <u>possibility</u> that transcends the actual of our everyday existence. And not only do they open up new worlds, but, according to Ricoeur, they also provide philosophy, and our modern culture, with a starting point from within a language in which everything has already been said. As Eliade writes in <u>Aspects du mythe</u>, 'l'essentiel précède l'existence' (p. 116). There is no doubt that the 'symbol gives rise to thought', as Ricoeur often writes. It gives meaning, seen by Ricoeur as, 'the main dividing line between the structuralist analysis and phenomenological hermeneutics' (<u>ibid</u>., p. 45). And if we are to achieve a better understanding of being and of our-selves, this meaning must be thought reflectively.

Along Ricoeur's chain of mythical types, on which the meaning produced by the code is the dividing line, the conceptions of 'demythologization' and 'demythization' are important factors. We believe that demythologization, an interpretation that deconstructs the pseudo-rationality of myth, is common to all structural and hermeneutic analyses since they all approach myth critically. As Ricoeur says to Kearney - 'If we interpret myth literally, we misinterpret it. For myth is essentially <u>symbolic</u>.' (<u>ibid</u>., p. 41).

It seems obvious to us that myth does not give any historical or scientific explanation of the world: it cannot be taken at face value. And this is why it calls for a hermeneutics. Yet there is today a very important - and worrying - 'fundamen-talist' movement throughout the world, which represents an extreme approach to symbolic meaning since it refutes demythologization.

To this extreme there corresponds another extreme at work in the process of demythization, which is synonymous with the desymbolization totally rejected by Ricoeur. This process tends to ignore and to translate the symbolic meaning into something else, thus reducing its enigmatic 'other' into a 'same'. We have seen how Lévi-Strauss operates such a translation at a structural level. Ricoeur addresses the same criticism to the German theologian and exegete Rudolf Bultmann who, he believes, rightly demythologized myth in its literal meaning, but went too far because he confused the literal with the symbolic meaning 'lequel vise autre chose que ce qu'il dit' (C.I., p.383). To this second meaning demythologization cannot be applied for it would then, for Ricoeur, become demythization, that is an explicative and reductive way of thinking. We have placed Ricoeur close to those who search for the symbolic meaning of myth, yet still at a distance from them, firstly because he acknowledges the possibilities of deviance and perversion of myths that demand a critical demystification (his work on psychoanalysis is an illustration of demystification), secondly because he recognises the importance of structural analysis today, as 'l'intermédiaire nécessaire entre la naiveté symbolique et l'intelligence herméneutique' (C.I., p.62), and finally because his philosophical aim and hermeneutic circle transcend the chain of mythical types understood from both ends.

We shall now return to his own work on myth in La Symbolique du mal and shall ask again: where did he start from? He himself asked: 'Comment éviterons-nous de nous perdre, soit dans une vague phénoménologie de la conscience mythique ... soit dans une mythologie comparée indéfiniment diversifiée?' (p. 162). As we may half expect, he looked for an 'intermediary', for some kind of synthesis between those extremes, which he found in a

'typology' justified as follows:

> '... les << types >> qui nous proposons sont à la fois
> des a priori qui permettent d'aller à la rencontre
> de l'expérience avec une grille de lecture et de
> s'orienter dans le dédale des mythologies du mal et
> des a posteriori sans cesse corrigés et redressés
> au contact de l'expérience.' (p. 162)

He limited his work to the myths of the beginning and
of the end of evil, and considered four mythical types to which
he first applied a comparative and neutral analysis before
initiating a dynamics of myths.

But why write a mythics? His symbolics had led to the
paradox of the servile-will which did indeed explain freedom and
evil in terms of each other. Ricoeur felt the need for further
mediation, provided by what he calls 'les symboles du second degré
qui médiatisent les symboles primaires qui eux-mêmes médiatisent
l'expérience vive de la souillure, du péché, de la culpabilité.'
(S.M. p. 153). For Ricoeur, as well as other exegetes and theolo-
gians in search of heuristic meaning like Eliade or Von Rad, myths
are secondary symbols that retain the basic characteristics of
symbols, but add to the expressive value of the semantic level a
heuristic value capable of opening up and disclosing the primary
language, here the language of avowal. They are like a spontaneous
hermeneutics of primitive symbols, they create meaning thanks to

> 'le récit qui vient ajouter un nouvel étage de
> signification à celui des symboles primaires'
> (S.M. p. 157)

The narrative structure of myths is at once primitive and essential,
because their function is to disclose a cosmic drama that tells of
a plenitude not experienced, but imagined and aimed at through a
kind of combat, the combat of human existence. As in the case of
symbols, their meaningful discourse gives rise to thought because
it is 'irréductible à toute traduction d'un langage chiffré en un

langage clair ... il signifie ce qu'il dit' (S.M. p. 155). Here

Ricoeur dissociates myth from the gnosis that explains what it

says in a pseudo rational way.

Ricoeur defines the mythic function as three-fold, in

accordance with Eliade's phenomenology of religion. Firstly, its

purpose is to 'englober l'humanité' (S.M. p. 154) in one concrete

history, thus revealing the universality of man. Secondly, it

stretches history from the origin to the end of time, adding a

temporal orientation to universality. And thirdly, it reveals

that history is itself what Ricoeur calls an ontological exploration

of the discordance of man caught between an imagined original state

of innocence and his actual alienated existence, or in other words,

between two poles of finitude and infinitude. Ricoeur believes

that it is 'ce drame originel qui ouvre et découvre le sens caché

de l'expérience humaine' (S.M. p. 161). Can such a cosmic and

universal drama disclose the nature of the relationship between

evil and freedom? Can it add meaning to the aporia of the servile

will? Let us examine Ricoeur's 'types' of myth.

The fourth 'type', the Adamic myth, concentrates evil in

man through an act of conscious will, while the other three locate

the origin of evil mainly in a source prior to man.

Firstly, according to Ricoeur's interpretation of the

first 'type', the drama of creation, we see how it begins with the

divine struggle with chaos and brutality. The origin of evil is

in 'le « chaos » avec lequel lutte l'acte créateur du dieu' (S.M.

p. 163). Creation and man appear as the result of this violent

struggle, as Ricoeur explains:

'... le geste créateur, qui ... met en ordre, est
indiscernable du geste criminel qui met fin à la
vie des plus vieux dieux ... Et l'homme lui-même
naît d'un nouveau crime ... du sang d'un dieu
assassiné ...' (S.M. p. 171)

Since evil is identical to the original disorder in this drama, salvation is therefore creation itself, the establishment of order. Hence, the only hope for the elimination of evil lies in the repetition of the creative act through a <u>ritual re-enactment of creation</u>, in a <u>ritual vision</u> of the world. It works like some kind of magic, confused with religion, if we take the definition of magic given by J.G. Frazer in <u>The Golden Bough: A Study in Magic and Religion</u> (1922). He writes in a very rational manner:

> 'If we analyse the principles of thought on which magic is based, they will probably be found to resolve themselves into two: first, that like produces like, or that an effect resembles its cause; and, second, that things which have once been in contact with each other continue to act on each other at a distance after the physical contact has been severed.' (p. 14)

Both principles are, according to Frazer, a mistaken association of ideas. These two principles are often combined and are the outcome of a conception of science that believes in the cause-effect relationship. Consequently, in the dramatic vision of the world, the relationship between the 'same' of ritual salvation and freedom and the 'other' of evil is something like pure magic. Is it any different as regards the 'tragic myth'?

Secondly, the myths of Greek tragedy also reveal wicked Gods, but, says Ricoeur, here the Gods lead men to destruction because they are jealous of human greatness and heroism. Such a revelation is unbearable to men, scandalous and self-destructive for human thought. <u>Unthinkable</u>, it cannot be speculated upon but only shown in a <u>spectacle</u>. Evil is now synonymous with the gods who are responsible for human fate. And human action in the person of the hero comes up tragically against such blind and unjust evil predestination. Ricoeur points out that 'la tragédie demande ... une transcendance hostile ... et d'autre part le surgissement d'une liberté qui retarde l'accomplissement du destin

... pour enfin le faire éclater' (S.M., pp.207-208). Salvation is here bound to the spectacle: the poetic dramatization delivers man aesthetically through his feelings of compassion for other men. Ricoeur shows how this tragic deliverance is possible through 'une transposition esthétique de la crainte et de la pitié par la vertu du mythe tragique devenu poésie et par la grâce d'une extase de spectacle' (S.M., p.217). The only hope for man in this tragic vision of existence lies in what Ricoeur calls the understood necessity. Hence the nature of the relationship between the 'other', understood in terms of the evil of the Gods, and the 'same' of freedom achieved through a tragic understanding of necessity, now transcends magic. It is enriched with a poetic dimension.

Thirdly, the myth of the exiled soul, differs from the other two in that it separates soul and body and concentrates on 'la destinée même de l'âme venue d'ailleurs et égarée ici-bas' (S.M., p.164). For Ricoeur such an approach whereby man under- stands himself as the 'same' of his soul and 'other' than his body, leads to a serious dualism. He highlights the important role this dualistic myth has played in Western philosophy, which also illustrates the fact that the so-called 'modern' problem of 'le même' and 'l'autre' is actually very deep-rooted in our culture, although it would be fair to say that the emphasis of the problem has changed very substantially along with both the philosophical and religious landscape of our times. In the ancient myth, Ricoeur describes how the body - the 'other' - is not only a place of exile and punishment for an immortal soul that brings with it an anterior evil, but also a place of temptation that may corrupt further the immortal soul and thus lead to despair. In this context, evil is explained by Ricoeur in terms of heritage and also

in terms of choice. Salvation can be achieved both through the

awareness of this duality, 'dans cette connaissance du corps comme

désir et de soi-même comme pensée face au désir' (S.M. p. 280),

and also through a philosophical reflection aiming at a purifica-

tion of the soul in truth and spirit, so that it may free itself

from its bodily prison, from its 'other'. Consequently, this

myth adds a philosophical dimension to the poetic dimension of the

tragic myth and highlights an important intellectual growth when

compared to the magic of the drama of creation. It also deepens

the relationship between the 'other' of evil in body and soul,

and the 'same' of freedom.

Finally, the Adamic myth is, for Ricoeur, anthropological

par excellence since it situates the origin of evil in man's use

of freedom. The myth of the fall describes the actual deviation

of the will from innocence to sin. It is experienced as a cata-

strophe, as a radical and irrational event within an already

complete and good creation made by the word and holiness of God.

Ricoeur stresses that this myth clearly posits a beginning of evil

distinct from creation, historical and contingent, and for which

man is responsible. Adam is in the instant of fall at once good

and wicked, created for good and inclined towards evil. But the

serpent adds time and depth to this instant with his subtle tempta-

tion, in the person of Eve who symbolizes the weakness of our

finite humanity that makes evil possible. The serpent plays an

important role in all mythology. J.G. Frazer writes in The Golden

Bough, about snakes being respected and even worshipped. He

reports that a 'form of communion with the sacred snake is observed

by a Snake tribe in the Punjaub. Once a year in the month of

September the snake is worshipped by all castes and religions for

nine days' (p. 702). He does not say why those Indians have made

the snake a sacred animal, to the point of not killing it because 'its bite does not hurt them' (p. 703). Is it for love, or fear of the animal? Frazer also mentions another Sacred Serpent, this time in West Africa, but there, they have an annual killing of their guardian deity 'who can do them good or ill' (p. 658). This seems a way of coping with the fear, similar to that of the Indians of Carolina, who do not kill snakes, because they believe 'that if they were to kill a serpent the reptile's kindred would destroy some of their brethren, friends, or relations in return' (pp. 681-82). They fear vengeance from the snake's ghost.

Hence, the snake is experienced as a threat, and yet it also fascinates and attracts people: the rattle snake and the snake charmers are examples of that. In poetry and literature, snakes are recurrent themes as well. The psychocritic Charles Mauron in Des métaphores obsédantes au mythe personnel (1962), interprets the serpent in Paul Valéry's poetry as an image 'chargée d'angoisse: elle implique le souvenir, ou la prévision, de la morsure, de la ruine, de la mort.' (p. 97). The threat is obvious, yet we believe that there is more to it.

The human mind is fascinated by knowledge and self-consciousness that provide power and worth. And the serpent of the Adamic myth knows how to get those talents. It is a dangerous yet fascinating animal, and for us it represents consciousness. This seems to be the case as well for André Gide in L'immoraliste (1902). The narrator becomes aware of himself and of his homo-sexuality when, emptying a pond with Charles, they try to catch eels:

'Je l'appelai bientôt pour m'aider à cerner une
grosse anguille; nous unissions nos mains
pour la saisir ... Puis, après celle-là, ce
fut une autre ...' (p. 88)

Gilbert Durand, in his book Les structures anthropologiques de
l'imaginaire (1969), is convinced that 'Le serpent est un des
symboles les plus importants de l'imagination humaine ... un
véritable noeud -de-vipères archétypologique' (p. 363). In spite
of conflicting meanings, Durand distinguishes three categories of
symbolic signification:

> 'Le serpent est le triple symbole de la transforma-
> tion temporelle, de la fécondité, et enfin de la
> pérennité ancestrale.' (ibid., p. 364)

Representing at once, time, sexuality and death, the serpent holds
the key to knowledge, and therefore is 'à l'origine de tout pouvoir
magique' (ibid., p. 368).

Ricoeur sees in the serpent, itself a creature, a sub-
jective part of ourselves - the seduction of ourselves by our-
selves - which we usually do not recognize but rather project and
externalize in the seductive object, the 'Other' we then accuse in
order to justify ourselves. The serpent therefore stands for the
hidden 'other' within the self, the 'other' we refuse to know, an
'evil' we dislike and whose inner dialectics we suppress and
further replace by an objective argument between 'I' and 'You'.
However, the serpent is, for Ricoeur, more than just a part of
ourselves; always already there it also stands for an objective tra-
dition of evil and is perhaps the last evidence of cosmic chaos.
Ricoeur notes that this symbol of chaos in me, among us and outside
humanity is a limiting figure unknown in itself. It is an 'other'
that does indeed remain 'Other', different, although contained
within the self. Yet the self must acknowledge it as its radical
limitation if it is to find its own identity. The serpent illus-
trates best the aporia of evil with its conflict between interiority
and exteriority, between freedom and fate.

As for Salvation, Ricoeur believes that it lies in

another event, in the coming of the second Adam, that is to say,
in the eschatological vision of history as preached by St. Paul.
Ricoeur refers to an exact correspondence between fallen man
responsible for evil and risen man, the victim of evil who holds
the power to transform the abundance of sin into a super-abundance
of grace. Those two Adams reflect together Ricoeur's last words in
his 'Avant-propos' to Finitude et Culpabilité when he says 'l'homme
que cette symbolique révèle ne paraît pas moins victime que
coupable' (H.F. p. 17). The historical dimension of the Adamic
myth enlarges and deepens the nature of the relationship between the
'other' of evil and the 'same' of freedom. The 'other', although
still unknown in itself, is now essential to the 'same' as its radical
limit. This is so because the 'same' not only initiates the 'other'
but also receives it in the event of the fall. Act and state taken
together open up the magic, the poetic and the philosophical beyond
themselves with a new eschatological vision which brings hope in
the here and now of history. The conception of the servile-will is
contained in this myth.

It must be stressed that it is from the Adamic myth that
Ricoeur enters his hermeneutic circle of understanding and belief,
thus constructing a dynamics of myth that transcends the above
static analysis. Because Ricoeur believes that the Adamic myth
reaffirms, and puts into perspective the essential truths of other
myths within a circular movement similar to that of primary symbols,
he chooses it as the starting point of his dynamics. He justifies
such a view by stressing that 'nul n'interroge de nulle part. Il
faut être situé pour entendre et pour comprendre' (S.M. p. 285),
that is to say that the philosopher Paul Ricoeur admits to his
cultural contingency and to his Judeo-Christian roots. Therefore,
what has been so far a mere phenomenological re-enactment, a

'répétition en imagination et en sympathie' (S.M., p.11) of the confession of evil by religious consciousness, 'sur un mode neutralisé', whereby the philosopher believed with the believer, but 'sans poser absolument l'objet de sa croyance' (D.I., p.38), is now questioned. When entering the hermeneutic circle, this phenomenological neutrality is lost because there is, as Ricoeur explains, an existential assimilation of our being to being:

> '... le mouvement qui m'entraîne vers le sens
> second m'assimile à ce qui est dit, me rend
> participant à ce qui m'est annoncé.' (D.I.,p.40)

This phenomenon is an appropriation of meaning at the root of hermeneutic reflection. We must stress how important such reflection has been in the work of Ricoeur from its very beginning. Ricoeur enters his circle in an interesting way, with an acknowledgement of his own belief in the Holy Spirit:

> 'Le Saint - Esprit ... c'est un discernement ... ce
> discernement fait appel à une herméneutique capable
> de dégager la signification symbolique du mythe'
> (S.M., p.287)

We stress that this first hermeneutic circle is conceived by Ricoeur as only the route to philosophical reflection and to an understanding of being. Ricoeur explains it as follows. First, 'il faut croire pour comprendre' (S.M., p.326). We moderns obviously cannot go back to the primitive naïveté of belief at the root of our own culture, but we can nonetheless believe that our symbolic expressions still have something to say and therefore we can decide to listen to them. However, this is not enough since 'Il faut comprendre pour croire' (S.M.,p. 326), and for that we need a hermeneutics that includes a critical process of 'demythologization' of the quasi scientific and historic aspects of myths: myths are not materialistic explanations of the world. Hermeneutics is our chance to attain a second naïveté, an enlightened belief.

Let us see how Ricoeur uses such a circle in his understanding and appropriation of symbolic thought.

The <u>serpent</u> in the myth of Adam reaffirms the <u>priority</u> <u>of evil</u> found in other myths: invincible and already there, it represents the <u>tragic</u> side of the 'Other' that human freedom does not itself posit. Like the unthinkable <u>fate</u> of the tragic myth, it stands for 'le <u>non-posé</u> dans la position du mal' (S.M. p. 301).

The same fate re-appears according to Ricoeur with the Biblical story of Job, 'le Juste souffrant'. Within an <u>ethical</u> vision of God, Job's suffering is <u>scandalous</u>. His vision of God is that of a <u>tragic God</u> who does not give him any ethical justification. But when God invites him to <u>contemplate</u> His perfect and beautiful creation, the <u>spectacle</u> helps Job to convert 'liberté et nécessité en destin (<u>S.M.</u> p. 299). And Ricoeur notes:

> 'Comme dans la tragédie, la théophanie finale ne
> lui a rien expliqué, mais a changé son regard.'
> (<u>S.M.</u> p. 299)

In other words, the contemplation of God's creation in all its perfection is not an intellectual explanation of suffering, but the spectacle of the immensity of creation places my suffering into perspective. The Aesthetic Spectacle is itself an intuitive understanding of fate, possible even without any explanations. However, Ricoeur stresses that this <u>awareness</u> of a 'mal subi' through fate can only be reached through the avowal of 'le mal commis' (<u>S.M.</u> p. 301) for which man is responsible in the myth of Adam. He therefore concludes that:

> 'C'est le mythe adamique qui est l'endroit et le
> mythe tragique l'envers' (<u>S.M.</u> p. 301).

That is to say, together Adam and the tragic hero complete one another and, more important, point towards a third figure that transcends the contradiction of the ethical and the scandalous. The 'Serviteur souffrant' <u>brings meaning</u> to fate and suffering,

'il révèle une possibilité entièrement nouvelle: que la souffrance se donne un sens, par consentement volontaire, dans le non-sens du scandale.' (S.M., p.301).

The serpent, reminiscent of the tragic myth, is also, for Ricoeur, reminiscent of the 'chaos primordial' (S.M., p.307) of the drama of creation, but in a secondary way since it is now a finite creature. The same idea of a tragic fate 'invincible au niveau de l'homme' (S.M., p.304) is present in the myth, but because of the shift of the wickedness of the jealous Gods 'dans l'origine des choses' (S.M., p.304), evil becomes here thinkable in its anteriority.

Ricoeur highlights 'l'aspect d'extériorité apparente' (S.M., p.307) of evil that coincides with the body in the myth of the exiled soul. This idea of an externality of evil adds to those of fate and anteriority and recalls the symbols of captivity and of man's weakness in the person of Eve. It also reminds Ricoeur of the Pauline concept of 'the flesh' which stands for 'la scission de moi à moi-même et la projection en extériorité de ce moi aliéné de lui-même' (S.M., p.309). However, St. Paul transcended this dualism of the flesh and the soul, Ricoeur explains, thanks to 'son sens aigu de l'incarnation du Christ dans une chair semblable à la nôtre' and to his 'attente d'une rédemption de notre corps même' (S.M., p.310).

Ricoeur assesses the achievement of his first hermeneutics with an emphasis upon the limitations of an ethical vision of the world since 'les trois mythes de chaos, d'aveuglement divin et d'exil révèlent la dimension hyper-éthique du mythe de chute' (S.M., p.321). The myths have disclosed that the guilty man responsible for evil in Adam is also 'la victime d'une mystère d'iniquité qui le rend digne de Pitié autant que de Colère' (S.M., p.321).

How then are we to assess such an achievement in terms of

the dialectics of difference and identity? The circle of belief
and understanding anticipates the second philosophical circle of
distanciation and appropriation in the philosophy of Paul Ricoeur.
Belief can now be seen as a duplicated 'same'; a naive or immediate
self, prepared to listen and pay attention to the 'other' of symbols
and myths, and an enlightened self that appropriates meaning. And
understanding, dependant upon the rules of deciphering, appears
similar to what Ricoeur will later call explanation: it is
directed towards the 'other' of evil that is expressed in the
language of avowal, calling for a hermeneutics. Therefore, we have
a dialectics between belief and understanding, between the 'same' and
the 'other', whose purpose is to understand the self and being.
And within this dialectics in which both aspects are important and
are retained, in which difference is the route to identity attained
through belief, we find another similar dialectics between the
radical 'Other' of evil and the 'same' of freedom contained within
the concept of servile will. The 'Other' of evil, unknown in itself
but explained in terms of an unthinkable fate, a chaotic anteriority
and a bodily exteriority, all endured by man - an Otherness repre-
sented by the serpent - can be recognized as 'Other' only in its
dialectics with the 'same' of freedom, of Adam's freedom, which inter-
nally posits evil while simultaneously the victim of it. It is
clear that both terms of the dialectics, itself a paradox, are
important and cannot be reduced without serious consequences. The
serpent represents the invincible 'other', but human freedom cannot
give in, otherwise it would not be freedom any more. For example,
although St. Paul says, 'je ne fais pas le bien que je veux, et je
fais le mal que je ne veux pas' (Romains, 7-19), he goes on fighting
this 'Other' that so radically affects the will. But how can this
'Other' so far re-enacted through symbolic language and made an
aporia in its relation to the 'same' of freedom - '... en posant

le mal, la liberté est en proie à un Autre' (H.F., p.17) - be
thought at a philosophical level? This question is fundamental to
Ricoeur's philosophical programme, as we shall now see.

4 - From interpretation to philosophical reflection

> 'Ma conviction est qu'il faut penser non
> point derrière les symboles, mais à
> partir des symboles, selon les symboles,
> que leur substance est indestructible,
> qu'ils constituent le fond révélant de
> la parole qui habite parmi les hommes;
> bref, le symbole donne à penser.'
> (C.I., p. 295)

The sentence 'le symbole donne à penser', is the title of
Ricoeur's conclusion of Finitude et culpabilité and expresses his
wish to return to pure reflection and to the 'same', now enriched
with the 'other' of symbolic knowledge. But how is he to make the
transition back to reflection?

Ricoeur first proposes 'une interprétation créatrice de
sens'(S.M., p.324) that must not start from speculative explanations
behind symbols, but from the symbols themselves defined as 'le plein
du langage' (S.M., p.324), an archaic and oneiric language 'où tout
a déjà été dit en quelque façon' (S.M., p.324). It must be stressed
that a philosophy that remains at the level of speculative explana-
tions behind symbols cannot, in Ricoeur's view, be a concrete
philosophy. Concrete reflective thought starts from symbols and
goes beyond them thanks to a hermeneutics. This view distinguishes
Ricoeur from others and shows his originality.

David Rasmussen, in his book Mythic-Symbolic Language and
Philosophical Anthropology (1971) borrowed this idea and made it the
main thesis of his work, as he explains:

> 'A mythic-symbolic language is necessary for a full
> philosophical anthropology' (p. 85)

But there is a problem. Ricoeur asks how the philosopher can

respect a symbolic meaning that cannot be translated and yet forms

an autonomous and systematic way of thinking? 'Comment une pensée

peut-elle être à la fois liée et libre? (C.I., p.296).

The enterprise may prove difficult as Ricoeur remarks

'Heureuse et rare serait la rencontre, au sein d'une même

philosophie, entre l'abondance des signes et des énigmes retenues

et la rigueur d'un discours sans complaisance' (C.I., p.292).

Yet, Ricoeur believes that it is possible because symbols

are already 'dans l'élément de la parole' (S.M., p.325). They are

already the linguistic expressions of our basic human experiences

that call for a hermeneutics. Ricoeur stresses that 'il n'existe

nulle part de langage symbolique sans herméneutique; là où un

homme rêve et délire, un autre homme se lève qui interprète'

(S.M., p. 325). But how is he to go from hermeneutics to reflection?

Ricoeur makes a wager whose purpose is to transcend the hermeneutic

circle. He believes that the philosopher who leapt into the circle

through the dynamics of myths must now leap out, in the direction

of a proper philosophical hermeneutics, in order to reflect not

only on but also beyond the symbol. Then comes the wager:

'Je parie que je comprendrai mieux l'homme ... si
je suis l'indication de la pensée symbolique.
Ce pari devient alors la tâche de vérifier mon
pari ... en retour cette tâche transforme mon
pari: en pariant sur la signification du monde
symbolique, je parie en même temps que mon pari
me sera rendu en puissance de réflexion, dans
l'élément du discours cohérent' (S.M., p.330)

It may seem astonishing for a philosophy in quest of

clarity, necessity and scientific order to actually begin its

philosophical hermeneutics with a wager! But it shows how

important depth and a global understanding of man were to Ricoeur

to the point of risking clarity for depth. However, five years

later in <u>De l'interprétation: essai sur Freud</u>, Ricoeur came back
in a more systematic approach to this question. His 'exigence de
lucidité, de véracité, de rigueur' (<u>D.I.</u> p. 45) had by then led
him to the realization that symbols in their mythical form call
not only for interpretation, because of their semantic structure
of double meaning, but also for philosophical reflection, because
of the latent speculation of myths. He explains as follows:

> '... les symboles n'ont pas seulement une valeur
> expressive, comme au niveau simplement sémantique,
> mais une valeur heuristique, puisqu'ils confèrent
> universalité, temporalité et portée ontologique à
> la compréhension de nous-mêmes' (<u>D.I.</u> p. 47)

Therefore the interpretation that extricates the second meaning
is already philosophical. The wager is replaced by a statement
that turns it upside down when Ricoeur says 'c'est le recours de
la réflexion au symbole qui rend raison du recours du symbole à la
réflexion' (<u>D.I.</u> p. 50).

In other words, Ricoeur demonstrates very effectively
the inadequacies of non-mediated reflection: philosophical reflec-
tion remains shallow without 'le plein du langage' and without a
hermeneutics.

Ricoeur's philosophical programme was by the mid-sixties
sufficiently developed to be able to validate his previous guess,
or wager. What he did was to question, first of all, the meaning
of the self of self-reflection. He showed how this first and
immediate truth remains abstract and empty until it is <u>mediated</u> by
the concrete world of human action. The ego must be recaptured 'à
travers ses actes' (<u>D.I.</u> p. 51). Against Descartes, Ricoeur pro-
claimed that reflection is not intuition. And then, against Kant
and with Nabert, he stressed that reflection is not a mere critique
of knowledge. Epistemology is, for Ricoeur, only a part of the much
broader task of recovering the self. Ricoeur explains that 'la

réflexion est l'appropriation de notre effort pour exister et de notre désir d'être, à travers les oeuvres qui témoignent de cet effort et de ce désir' (D.I. p. 54). Effort and desire are, for Ricoeur, the two sides of the self, because desire can never be fully satisfied and always demands more effort. As for the works that bear witness to desire and effort, they remain obscure and doubtful without a hermeneutics. It is this realization that we cannot appropriate our self without a hermeneutics that led Ricoeur to the root of the problem. It lies in '... cette connexion primitive entre l'acte d'exister et les signes que nous déployons dans nos oeuvres; la réflexion doit devenir interprétation, parce que je ne peux saisir cet acte d'exister ailleurs que dans des signes épars dans le monde.' (D.I. p. 54).

Besides this, Ricoeur insisted that reflective philosophy must include all the epistemological sciences concerned with man if it is to gain access to and decipher in depth the signs of being lost in the world. Unlike Michel Foucault, Ricoeur considers the human sciences to be a necessary detour and the concrete foundation of philosophy.

Consequently, it now appears that the dialectics of difference and identity, found in both the first hermeneutic circle and in the concept of the servile will, is also active in a reflective philosophy understood as a way of thinking at once 'liée et libre' (S.M. p. 325), at once dependent upon the 'Other' of epistomology and explanation yet free in its understanding of this 'other', an understanding that provides the way to appropriation and identity.

Ricoeur has successfully made the transition from interpretation to philosophy in an original fashion, by showing that not only are symbols food for thought, but even more important, that a

concrete philosophical reflection depends upon a hermeneutics of
the pre-reflective, of that 'something' which reflection cannot
provide. In other words, philosophy not only needs to reflect
upon the symbolism of human action and human reality in which it
is rooted, but it also needs a method capable of 'explaining' it:
it needs a hermeneutics if it is to 'understand' it. This
implicitly anticipates the hermeneutic and philosophical circle
of explanation and understanding at the centre of Ricoeur's inter-
pretation theory.

It must be stressed that the pre-reflective has been
implicitly important throughout Ricoeur's work: the involuntary
mediated by the voluntary and the diagnostic relation offered such
a basis to reflection, the hypothesis behind the concept of falli-
bility (the non-coincidence of man with himself) also functioned
as a pre-reflective basis to thought, and the pre-reflective
symbols invited thought. Already, in Histoire et vérité, (published
in 1955), Ricoeur had in mind a pre-reflective 'detour' through
history in his search for the self (he has come back to this in
1983 with his new emphasis on the narrative aspect of historio-
graphy). He insisted, in Histoire et vérité, that because the
reflective philosophies were 'en quête de la véritable subjectivité,
du véritable acte de conscience', they had to become aware that
such 'identity' or self-consciousness 'passe par une certaine
méditation sur l'histoire' (p.36).

It must therefore be emphasized that from the very start
of his career Ricoeur has never been concerned with the immediacy of
a consciousness centred on the 'same' at the expense of the 'other'.
On the contrary, he has always stressed the factors of mediation
'épars dans les cultures où notre langage s'enracine' (D.I.,p.54).

Ricoeur was not only concerned with a return to philo-
sophical reflection after leaping out of it in La Symbolique du
mal, but also with the recovery of a Cogito capable of transcending
its self in order to share in the Being of the world. He explains
what is this second Copernican revolution, more or less equivalent
to the new enlightened belief of his first hermeneutic circle:

> 'Le symbole donne à penser que le Cogito est à
> l'intérieur de l'être et non l'inverse; la
> seconde naïveté serait ainsi une seconde
> révolution copernicienne: l'être que se pose
> lui-même dans le Cogito doit encore découvrir
> que l'acte même par lequel il s'arrache à la
> totalité ne cesse de participer à l'être qui
> l'interpelle en chaque symbole.' (S.M. p. 331)

This shows that his first hermeneutic circle is not a closed or
vicious circle: it opens on to the wider dialectics of evil and
salvation. To the 'other' of evil and fault now there corresponds
the Wholly Other of transcendence. Ricoeur sees a one-to-one
correspondence between the symbolisms of evil and salvation, of
the beginning and of the end. And he claims that, together, they
constitute a meaningful totality, perhaps a wider circle, or the
same circle but slightly 'décalé', that demands to be reflected
upon.

Ricoeur's project of a Poetics of the will, mentioned in
Le Volontaire et l'involontaire in 1950, was to initiate this
second revolution in the third volume of his Philosophie de la
volonté. The idea was to displace the subject from its own sterile
circle of the self's constant return to itself. This idea
illustrates once more Ricoeur's loathing for a small circle
centred around the 'same' without the creative detour of the 'other'.
Therefore, not only do we find in his work an authentic dialectics
between 'le même et l'autre', but even those two are themselves
duplicated, or in Derrida's words, 'décalés', thanks to the
invincible 'other' of evil and the infinite 'same' of Transcendence.

Conclusion

In this chapter, we have sought to follow very closely Ricoeur's exploration of the Greek and Judeo-Christian roots of European Western culture, that disclose our existential reality under the power of evil. Although the linguistic dimension of symbols was not yet made the object of a systematic treatment, symbols were described as 'le plein du langage', as the lingual expressions of human experience from and beyond which a concrete reflective philosophy must start. We have seen how this symbolic language is structured both at the semantic level of meaning, and at the heuristic level of reference that opens up new possible worlds. It was the dual intentionality of symbols at the semantic level that explained the need for interpretation. And in turn, interpretation led to the mythic disclosure of new possibilities.

We have examined the development of Ricoeur's method of interpretation, firstly, on the level of a comparative and noematic analysis in accordance with the Husserlian neutral epoche, and secondly, by entering the hermeneutic circle of understanding and belief. This leap into the circle, accompanied by a wager, marked the birth of the 'other' of phenomenology and the start of Ricoeurian hermeneutics. Yet this circle remained only the route to concrete philosophical reflection. Ricoeur's philosophical aim was to leap out of the circle in an effort to return to reflection enriched by previous experience. To that purpose he made his wager. However, he was not able to validate it until five years later with his work on Freud. By then, his philosophical programme was well developed, and he was able to demonstrate that philosophical reflection cannot be concrete without its 'other', without the heuristic value of our mythic-symbolic language. In other words, the phenomenological hermeneutics that emerged in La Symbolique du

mal was not yet fully conceptualized. The ideas of a creative interpretation and of a wager and the statement that 'le symbole donne à penser' were only a propaedeutics to hermeneutic philosophy.

Ricoeur's interpretation of the concept of hermeneutics provided a background and a brief exposition for the development of hermeneutics. It helped us to appreciate Ricoeur's own intellectual journey towards such a concept by placing it into perspective alongside Heidegger's and Gadamer's achievements.

Finally, as regards the dialectics of difference and identity, we have been able to demonstrate its deep-rooted dynamics. We have seen how the first hermeneutic circle was in fact a dialectics between the 'other' of symbols that called for an interpretation leading to understanding, and the 'same' of belief, a 'split' same, made up of a naive belief in need of critical interpretation and of a new, wiser self. Moreover, the aporia of the servile will revealed another dialectics contained within the hermeneutic circle, between the invincible 'other' of evil and the 'same' of freedom. We already knew that the 'same' was limited by human nature and fallibility. We have discovered its most radical limitation, an irreducible 'other' that in turn enlarged and enriched the 'same'. We have seen how this 'other', at once chosen and not chosen by the 'same', existed only in its relation to the 'same' and in dialectics with it. This explained why, for Ricoeur, it was important to understand evil and freedom together. Besides, we have insisted upon the openness of this dialectics, since the 'other' of evil has also a dialectical relationship with the 'Same' of Transcendence, with Being from where freedom comes. This shows that Ricoeur's hermeneutic circle of difference and identity is not a vicious circle,

but rather something like a _spiral_ that springs from 'le plein du langage', from difference, and keeps growing, thus continuously enriching the 'same'.

This growth will now be further illustrated by Ricoeur's hermeneutics of suspicion, which explodes any sterile vicious circle that centres on the self, without the necessary mediation of a demystifying 'other'. This will be the subject matter of our next chapter.

C H A P T E R   II

CONCRETE AND CREATIVE HERMENEUTIC REFLECTION IN
DIALOGUE WITH THE GUILEFUL CONSCIOUSNESS IN
DE L'INTERPRETATION: ESSAI SUR FREUD, (1965)

> '... je tiens la métapsychologie freudienne pour une extraordinaire discipline de la réflexion: comme la Phénoménologie de l'Esprit de Hegel, mais en sens inverse, elle opère un décentrement du foyer des significations, un déplacement du lieu de naissance du sens. Par ce déplacement, la conscience immédiate se trouve dessaisie ...' (D.I. p.410)

Introduction

While Ricoeur's work on the symbolism of evil stressed the cosmic aspects of symbols thanks to the introduction of a hermeneutic method capable of restoring the hidden meaning of symbols, his work on psychoanalysis five years later stressed their oneiric aspects with the same method now fully conceptualized. What was, in La Symbolique du mal, a guess or wager (whereby Ricoeur intuitively expressed his belief that reflective philosophy remains shallow without the depth of symbolic thought) became a concrete hermeneutic phenomenology in De l'interprétation: essai sur Freud. This book on Freud illustrates Ricoeur's hermeneutics by doing two things: firstly, it offers an analytical reading of Freud whereby Ricoeur shows that psychanalysis is a kind of hermeneutics; secondly, it initiates dialectical and philosophical interpretation of Freud that leads Ricoeur to herme- neutics properly speaking.

Ricoeur's reading of Freud reveals a mixed discourse in psychoanalysis, a discourse made up of force and meaning, that is to say, composed of an energetics and a hermeneutics. Furthermore, it provides the background against which a constructive debate between Ricoeur and Freud can take place. Ricoeur allows Freud into

philosophical discourse because Freud offers a dispossession of
immediate consciousness due to his suspicion as regards the content
and disguises of consciousness. Freud also provides through his
psychoanalysis the ground from which Ricoeur elaborates the concept
of an archaeology of the subject, of an archaic heritage, now
apparently lost. From this regressive synthesis, Ricoeur then moves
to a progressive one, to a teleology, in accordance with the Hegelian
figures of the mind that illustrate the Spirit of man, always ahead
of himself.

He insists that 'seul a une arché un sujet qui a un telos'
(D.I. p. 444). This complementarity initiates a very creative and
concrete dialectics between the two sides of a now split Cogito.
Paradoxically, this concept of a split Cogito saves the subject from
collapse altogether. And it also draws attention to the complexities
of symbols that point to both regression and progression in man and
to a conflict between interpretations when those interpretations
concentrate on only one of these two aspects in man.

This chapter is divided into three sections according to
Ricoeur's own definition of his problem, which clearly distinguishes
him from other writers on psychoanalysis. In his 'Avant-propos' he
states it as follows:

'Mon problème est celui de la consistance du discours
freudien. C'est un problème épistémologique, d'abord ...
C'est un problème de philosophie réflexive, ensuite ...
C'est un problème dialectique, encore ... Ces trois
questions sont le long détour par lequel je reprends à
nouveaux frais le problème laissé en suspens à la fin
de ma Symbolique du Mal, à savoir le rapport entre une
herméneutique des symboles et une philosophie de la
réflexion concrète.'

Consequently, in the first section we shall follow Paul
Ricoeur's 'Lecture de Freud', and reflect with him upon the structure
of psychoanalysis, composed of statements of force and statements of
meaning. The emergence of desire, by which the subject is no longer

regarded as the sole source of signification, is at the root of such a structure, and can be grasped only through the interpretation of the signs wherein that desire is expressed, that is through a psychoanalytical interpretation that comprises the rules of deciphering, the consciousness of the analyst and the language of transference. In addition, we shall apply the dialectics of difference and identity to this epistemological level. We shall see how the 'other' of force and energetics needs the 'same' of meaning and hermeneutics to become a psychical reality, while the 'same' without its invincible 'other' would only be a false 'same', an inauthentic consciousness.

In our second section we shall reflect upon Ricoeur's concept of an 'archaeology' of the subject, a concept formed by reflective thought. This concept is understood here in terms and context very different to those present in Michel Foucault's conception of an archaeology of Western knowledge. Yet the meaning of the word arche is similar. The idea of a structured archaic origin, that makes man what he is in the here and now of history, applies to both our cultural heritage, and our personal history and psychical inheritance. Ricoeur sees in the arche of man a destiny in reverse that throws new light on to the self. The same could be said of our traditions.

This unconscious arche is now the 'other' of conscious thought. It is, however, a relative 'other' since it can partially be translated into the 'same' thanks to the process of 'becoming conscious', made possible by the Freudian interpretation of the affective representatives of desire. However, the reappropriation of meaning that reveals our arche cannot reduce the quantitative 'other' to the qualitative self. What it does is enrich the ego in

its search for a self. And it also brings a change in reflective
thought itself: by incorporating into itself its own archaeology,
reflection becomes a more concrete and authentic reflection. In
other words, it seems to us that once more the dialectics of the
'same' and the 'other' is very alive and creative in Ricoeur's work,
since the 'prise de conscience', fundamental to any authentic
identity, depends upon an interpretation of the hidden and distorted
difference, of our archaic fate, and also because such a real and
forceful difference remains in itself unknown and meaningless
without the hermeneutics that translates it and reflects upon it.
However, having said this, we must add that Ricoeur could not be
satisfied with his reflective concept of an archaeology of the
subject: he accused it of remaining abstract without a dialectical
counterpart, without a teleology. This indeed draws attention to
the importance of dialectics in Ricoeur's thought, the importance of
an 'other', now duplicated, to the phenomenological self. Conse-
quently our third section will investigate the function of a
teleology grasped as an inverted image of the Freudian 'other'.
And we shall see how it can successfully enter into a dialectical
relationship with the arche, so that man may understand himself in
more depth, and achieve greater identity through both the progression
and the regression of his duplicated 'other'. Since a great number
of books have been written on Freud and psychoanalysis, it must be
made very clear that this reflective concept of an archaeology in
man in dialectics with its opposite, with a teleology, is to our
knowledge, very original and typical of Ricoeur's dialectical
thought.

   The conclusion of this chapter, which is a clear continua-
tion and complementarity of the preceding one, as regards the link
between symbolic and philosophical thought, will introduce us to the

theme of Le Conflit des interprétations, a central theme in the work

of Ricoeur and the subject matter of our third chapter in Part II.

1 - The Epistemological problematic raised by Psychoanalysis

> '... c'est dans le rêve que l'on peut
> surprendre le passage de la fonction
> «cosmique» à la fonction
> «psychique» des symbolismes les
> plus fondamentaux ...' (S.M. p. 19)

In the 1960's, Paul Ricoeur found himself confronted by a

critique of the whole reflective tradition. The contemporary procla-

mation of the death of metaphysics, with an end to the supremacy of

the subject, set his thoughts in motion. In a new way, he took up

the challenge in the belief that there can be no interpretation

without contestation, and he plunged into an interrogation of psycho-

analysis as illustrated by his Lecture de Freud, the second book of

De l'interprétation: essai sur Freud, published in 1965. The

purpose of his thorough and rigorous philosophical study of Freud's

works was to recover meaning and to conceptualize 'la nouvelle com-

préhension de l'homme introduite par Freud' (p. 8).

The central problem which confronted him from the very start

was the mixed discourse that structures psychoanalysis. Ricoeur

formulates this epistemological problem as follows:

> 'Comment est-il possible que l'explication économique
> passe par une interprétation portant sur des signi-
> fications et, en sens inverse, que l'interprétation
> soit un moment de l'explication économique?'
> (D.I. p. 76)

Or, in other words, what is the meaning of interpreting in psycho-

analysis? And how can a hermeneutics link up with an energetics?

Ricoeur found in dreams, as well as in the psychical

representatives, a convergence of both force and meaning. Dreams

show this coincidence at a conscious level thanks to their narrative

qualities and to their relationship with our desires. Ricoeur

states - 'Ainsi le rêve est-il, en tant qu'expression du désir,

à la flexion du sens et de la force' (D.I. p. 99). This privileged

position makes dreams the road to the unconscious. Through it,

they reveal the nocturnal and the oneiric in man.

The psychical representations are expressions of instincts

that constitute the reservoir of energy in the unconscious and that

remain unknown in themselves. Those representations bring about a

coincidence of force and meaning but at an unconscious level, and

therefore they need an interpretation capable of translating them

into meaning. Ricoeur explains that:

> 'Grâce à cette corrélation, au niveau des expressions
> psychiques, entre le travail du refoulement et le
> travail de l'analyse, tout ce que nous avons pu
> traiter sous le titre de ≪destin (énergétique) des
> pulsions≫ vient au langage comme destin de leurs.
> expressions psychiques. C'est donc bien dans cette
> notion d'expression psychique, de présentation
> psychique, que viennent coïncider l'économique et
> l'herméneutique ...' (D.I. p. 145)

And Ricoeur concludes that, although force is irreducible to meaning,

it remains within the representable and the sayable. In other words,

although the 'other' of energetics is invincible, because it is not

directly knowable, the 'same' of meaning and hermeneutics can give it

psychical reality through its psychical expressions. The link

between the two is vital and must not be broken. According to

Ricoeur, it constitutes the foundation upon which the psychoana-

lytical interpretation operates.

Ricoeur examines the epistemological status of psycho-

analysis with its validity and its limits by comparing it with both

scientific psychology and phenomenology. Firstly, Ricoeur insists

that this analytical experience is not a science of observation, but

an interpretation of the relationship of meaning and force between

substitute objects and the primordial lost instinctual objects.

Psychoanalysis speaks of <u>motives</u>, and not of causes, because it deals with a psychical reality. Moreover, the analysis unfolds in the <u>field of speech</u> within which another language gradually comes to light, the language of psychical expressions, and that enters into the meaningful in a distorted way. Ricoeur is very close to Jacques Lacan as regards the importance of language in psycho-analysis, against those who tend to reduce it to scientific behaviourism. Hence, the truth has to be <u>worked out</u>. The 'work of speech' between the patient and his analyst amounts to a reality-testing by which true meaning may be reached through fantasies. As in the case of history, this analysis is founded on a system of intellectual types, and therefore its validation cannot be a problem of natural science, but that of a <u>semantics of desire</u> situated within the field of hermeneutics.

Secondly, Ricoeur comes to the conclusion that both phenomenology and psychoanalysis <u>aim at the same thing</u>, 'à savoir la constitution du sujet, en tant qu'être de désir, dans un discours intersubjectif authentique' (<u>D.I.</u> p. 379). Their methods are also parallel: the <u>epoche</u> is reductive in exactly the same way that analysis is. Yet Ricoeur shows how the <u>gap</u> between the two stresses the specificity of Freudian concepts. Analytical technique is <u>not reflective</u>: it is like an archaeological excava-tion that suspends the control of consciousness itself in order to <u>transform energy into meaning</u>. The same epistemological problem is therefore once more emphasised when Ricoeur says:

> '... la coordination du language économique et du langage intentionnel est la grande question de cette épistémologie et ne peut être éludée par réduction à l'un ou à l'autre.' (<u>D.I.</u> p. 384)

Ricoeur accepts that the unconscious is structured <u>like a language</u> but he makes it clear that the linguistic interpretation is

not an alternative to the economic explanation. At this point,

Ricoeur argues against Lacan's emphasis on the linguistic aspect

of psychoanalysis, at the expense of the psychic forces underlying

it. The importance the <u>philosopher</u>, Paul Ricoeur, gives to

energetics in dialogue with hermeneutics *distinguishes*
from that of the Lacanian School.

Ricoeur's reading of Freud. He supports *it with the example of*

transference that demonstrates the <u>difference</u> between the economic

and the linguistic. We indeed find this argument most convincing.

Ricoeur shows how the discourse that comes to light through the

intersubjective language of psychoanalysis is constituted by rela-

tions of substitution and symbolization in the unconscious. It is

an economic process as well as a structured phenomenon because

desire is an appeal and a demand as language is: to the economic

process there corresponds a linguistic aspect. Yet the mechanisms

of the unconscious are para-linguistic, they are 'en deçà' and 'au-

delà du langage' (<u>D.I.</u> p. 394).

This is why Ricoeur maintains that there cannot be

meaning <u>in</u> the unconscious: meaning comes through a <u>work</u>, the

work of the analyst and of the patient, who struggle together

against the work of the neurosis with its resistances. Once again,

at the level of <u>praxis</u> we see the dialectics of the 'other' and the

'same' at work between force and meaning. Ricoeur stresses the

importance of <u>transference</u> in analytical technique: knowledge does

not overcome resistances if it is not incorporated within the work

of a 'prise de conscience'. And this work is an exploitation of

energies whereby the analyst plays on the patient's resistance and

on the pleasure-unpleasure principle without satisfying it, so as

to sustain the instinctual force impelling the patient towards

recovery.

Because Ricoeur emphasises that the unconscious is nothing

but _id_, 'rien que ça', an _id_ that cannot think, and more important,

that this _id_ calls for an interpretation, 'le ça donne à penser à

l'exégète' (D.I. p. 425), and because the philosopher, with whom we

agree, insists that the act of _thinking_ remains the privilege of

consciousness, we find it interesting and challenging to compare

this position with that of a renowned psychoanalyst. Françoise

Dolto describes, in Le Cas Dominique (1971), the cure, after only

twelve meetings, of a severely disturbed 14 year old boy. The

divergence between the philosopher and the analyst is striking: she

speaks as if there is an 'unconscious _meaning_' and a 'hidden _truth_:

> 'Dans la rencontre psychanalytique ... l'attention
> du psychanalyste est portée surtout ... sur la
> vérité cachée que transmet le fil des associations
> du langage parlé. Le psychanalyste ... est
> spécialement à l'écoute du sens inconscient,
> fondement véridique de ≪sujet≫ dont est
> porteur le discours conscient du patient ...'
> (p. 196)

It may be that by 'sens inconscient', Madame Dolto refers

to the meaning of psychical expressions __when brought__ to conscious-

ness. It may simply be a lingual divergence that stresses the

importance of the 'other' in psychoanalysis. Or, is it that, by

definition, the reflective philosopher and the Freudian analyst, are

bound to differ?

In the second part of his 'Reading of Freud', Ricoeur

opens up the epistemological problem with a reflection on the

Freudian interpretation of _culture_. He shows how, in his view, the

cultural phenomenon is reduced to a mere analogue of dreams and

interpreted in psychoanalytical terms. Once more dreams are given

a privileged role. They are compared to the work of art: both are,

for Freud, manifestations of an unsatisfied man who does not give

anything up but rather exchanges one thing for another by forming

substitutes. Ricoeur stresses that psychoanalysis is not concerned

with differences of values between the creative work of art and the sterile and fleeting dream, because its problem is set within the limitations of a problematic of desire. And within this problematic he shows how desire, the id, has its 'other', authority conceptualized in the super ego. Caught in this unconscious dialectics, the ego is more often than not dominated. Ricoeur sees in this Freudian topography a genesis of ethics that reveals the inauthenticity of conscience within an alienating morality, a wounding of desire, and an interdiction from outside reality. It also demonstrates that our entry into culture can only be in the mode of conflict. And it does something else: it deconstructs the illusory side of religion, it destroys our idols which are, in many ways, very similar to those of the neurotic. Ricoeur welcomes such a deconstruction seen as a purification and as the path to more authenticity and truer faith in a God that transcends the Freudian discourse.

This second part of Ricoeur's interpretation of Freud deepens our awareness of the importance of hermeneutics of suspicion: psychoanalysis does indeed prepare the way to more authenticity in our culture and in our ethical and religious values. And it does this, thanks to its mixed discourse of force and meaning. It may possibly reduce values too much, but this very limitation is precisely what justifies it, and that which makes the dialectics of the 'same' and the 'other' of psychoanalysis so fruitful.

Finally, in the third part of his 'Reading of Freud', Ricoeur takes Freud into the concrete mythological world. Here, the conflicts between the Greek tragic gods, between Eros, Thanatos and Ananke give to culture 'son sens à la fois radical et global' (D.I. p. 256). The introduction of Thanatos, the death instinct, bring about a recasting of the abstract theory of instincts.

Confronted with Thanatos, the life instinct that makes up the libido becomes _Eros_. Both the names of Eros and Thanatos are commonly used in psychoanalysis to describe those opposite instincts. Freud speaks of them, and also of the tragic _Ananke_ which he introduces into the principle of reality in his _Civilization and Its Discontents_, (1930). Robert Graves in The White Goddess, (1961), interprets 'Anagke (Necessity) the first syllable of which is probably _Ana_ or _Anan_' (p. 376) as a Goddess of Destiny 'the most powerful of all deities' (p. 376). In the Freudian world, she personifies the concept of necessity, in conflict with the pleasure principle. In her confrontation with Eros and Thanatos, Ananke unfolds a hierarchy of meanings which emphasizes, in a concrete way, the mythical aspect of both the self and culture. Ricoeur draws attention to the fact that:

> 'Ce n'est pas par hasard que Freud ... n'a trouvé
> chaque fois, pour dire l'essentiel, que le langage
> des mythes tragiques. OEdipe et Narcisse, Erôs,
> Ananké et Thanatos.' (_C.I._ p. 159).

Ricoeur believes that it is through pain and suffering, and thanks to the tragic knowledge drawn from the tradition of Greek tragedy, that we come to understanding. He adds 'C'est ce savoir tragique qu'il faudrait avoir assimilé pour atteindre le seuil d'une nouvelle éthique ...' (_ibid._, p. 159)

Freud's speculation on life and death introduces, in Ricoeur's view, a new connection between hermeneutics and economics. The first dialectics stressed the discipline of thought, characteristic of psychoanalysis. This goes further to make of it a world view, that is 'une sorte de philosophie mythologique.' (_D.I._ p. 71).

Within this grand Freudian vision, Ricoeur shows how Eros and Thanatos share world-dominion in an open war. _Force_ matters! Eros _resists_ death through the desire for an 'Other' while

Thanatos <u>threatens</u> life with the aggressive and anti-cultural instincts of man, as both sadism and masochism illustrate. And Ananke responds to those unconscious drives with a <u>pressure</u> on the ego to renounce the omnipotence of desire. A new interpretation of culture emerges. Culture now uses the sense of <u>guilt</u> (so far an internalized expression of the cruelty of the super ego to the ego) against externalized aggressiveness. Based on quotations from Freud, Ricoeur shows how, for Freud, the most serious problems of civilization come from this sense of guilt exploited by our culture through the implacable justice that is meant to be a protection against the death instinct. It seems that our culture 'se sert de ma propre violence à l'égard de moi-même pour mettre en échec ma violence à l'égard d'autrui.' (<u>D.I</u>. p. 301).

Although the 'same' has now acquired a mythical and dramatic meaning that overturns 'la forme mécaniste dans laquelle la topique a d'abord été énoncée.' (<u>D.I</u>. p. 71), it still remains within a dialectics of the 'same' and the 'other' by which force and meaning need one another. Ricoeur acknowledges 'la possibilité de <u>passer</u> de la force au langage, mais aussi l'impossibilité de <u>reprendre</u> entièrement la force dans le langage.' (<u>D.I</u>. p. 77).

In his attempt to think <u>beyond</u> Freud, Ricoeur ends his <u>Lecture de Freud</u> with a number of questions that emphasises both the potential of Freudian interpretation, and Ricoeur's creative thinking. Firstly, Ricoeur is convinced that the concept of <u>negativity</u> transcends the death instinct and points towards consciousness:

> 'la conscience implique la négation; elle l'implique
> dans la ≪prise de conscience≫ de sa propre richesse
> enfouie et elle l'implique dans la ≪reconnaissance≫
> du réel' (<u>D.I</u>. p. 311)

And Ricoeur wonders how the death instinct can be represented by 'une fonction aussi considérable qui n'a rien à voir avec la destructivité' (<u>D.I</u>. p. 311)? This question will lead him to Hegel

and to the concept of <u>telos</u>. Secondly, Ricoeur wonders why in the Freudian world 'l'homme est plus riche en capacité de souffrance qu'en puissance de jouir? (<u>D.I</u>. p. 317), a question that draws attention to Freud's own pessimism, thanks to which man seems to be unable to go from slavery to freedom. According to Ricoeur, Freud's emphasis is on man 'en tant qu'il <u>a été</u> et <u>reste Chose</u>' (<u>D.I</u>.p. 119). Perhaps this is why Ananke is above all a symbol of <u>disillusion</u> in a world without God, a world stripped of the father-figure. Yet, and thirdly, Ricoeur sees in Ananke 'le symbole d'une vision du monde ... une sagesse qui réplique à ... la dureté de la vie' (<u>D.I</u>. p. 321). It implies resignation to death, which is not a mere passive recognition of death, but far more important, an <u>acceptance</u> of it.

Ricoeur's questions transcend the epistemological and lead to a philosophical reflection that goes <u>beyond</u> the limitations of a problematic of desire. The task now is to understand that 'self' born of an enlightened ego.

Ricoeur explains the Freudian concept of sublimation as follows:

'... avec du désir, l'homme fait de l'idéal, du suprême, c'est-à-dire du sublime' (<u>D.I</u>. p. 178).

Indeed it is through desire and force, through the 'other' of an energetics that man finds his self.

2 - <u>The problematic of philosophical reflection</u>

'... le concept d'archéologie du sujet ... c'est un concept que je forme afin de me comprendre moi-même en lisant Freud.' (<u>D.I</u>.p.407)

Ricoeur justifies Freud's naturalism on the grounds of a need for a critique of immediate consciousness. The Freudian topographic and energetic theory provides such a critique with its

demystification of distorted meaning whereby the ego deceives itself. Freud's uses of the epoche is anti-phenomenological since the reduction to consciousness is reversed to become a reduction of consciousness, but Ricoeur believes that the anti-phenomenology must become a phase in reflection. Man has to be made aware that he is not the lord of his own mind until he has encountered the illusions of his narcissism: the 'know thyself' is achieved at that price. It implies a moment of dispossession of the ego as the only way to get to the language of desire made of meaning and force. Ricoeur praises psychoanalysis as a very liberating theory with respect to the illusions of consciousness. But he also finds it very disappointing in its inability to give meaning to the ego. The ego has only an economic function that leaves no place for the Cogito. Hence the task of the philosopher is all the more urgent and necessary.

Ricoeur first justifies the topographic point of view by its empirical realism. He stresses the mechanistic nature of the laws governing the unconscious system. The operations of interpretation, the rules of deciphering, the intersubjective situation of the analysis and the language of transference all testify in favour of such realism linked to the psychical representatives of instincts.

Secondly, Ricoeur justifies the energetic point of view by linking it to the archaeological moment of reflection. The underlying compatibility Ricoeur sees between the two transform the energetic model into 'une vision des choses et de l'homme'.

Ricoeur explains this important aspect as follows:

'Je vois pour ma part dans le freudisme une révélation
de l'archaïque, une manifestation du toujours antérieur
... le thème de l'antérieur est sa propre hantise'
(D.I. p. 426).

Ricoeur distinguishes in Freud's work, two concepts

of archaism, one restricted to dreams and neuroses, and the other

generalized to include the whole of our culture. The Freudian

thesis, according to Ricoeur, is that 'nul désir ... n'est

efficace s'il ne s'adjoint aux «désirs indestructibles» et

«pour ainsi dire immortels» de notre inconscient' (D.I. p. 428).

In other words, Ricoeur stresses the insurpassable character of

desire of which narcissism is the climax. And he emphasises the

Freudian theme of repetition by means of which there is a regres-

sive tendency in the history of mankind, a restoration of the old

in the features of the new, like a destiny in reverse that draws us

backwards. In such a culture where religion is no more than an

archaism, 'the return of the repressed', the ethical man is further

alienated by the 'other' within himself, by his hidden desires.

Ricoeur insists that this first stratum of archaic morality dis-

covered by Freud in his topography of the super ego must be explored

by the philosopher since our understanding of it is the way to

autonomy and ethical authenticity. It is via the 'other' of both

the id and the super ego that the false 'same' may be changed into

an authentic self, into a truer ethical being. But how can this

change occur? As we may expect, 'dans le cadre d'une philosophie

de la réflexion' (D.I. p. 438). And Ricoeur sets out to show,

beyond Freud, that an economics of desire is meaningful only if we

agree to recognize its presence at the root of our abstract concepts

of knowledge and representation. Ricoeur declares very forcefully:

> 'De même que la «déprise» de la conscience dans
> une topique ne se comprend que par la possibilité
> d'une «reprise» dans le devenir-conscient, de
> même une pure économique du désir ne se comprend
> que comme la possibilité de reconnaître la
> position du désir dans la suite de ses rejetons,
> dans l'épaisseur et à la frontière du signifiant.'
> (D.I. p. 439)

In other words, our representation of being remains
abstract until we acknowledge that it obeys laws of desire as well
as laws of intentionality: it has to be re-examined. Human desire
is at the root of speech: the non-spoken yet the wish-to-speak, it
is the limit-concept between the organic and the psychical. So
reflection has to integrate it in itself as its very origin, as
its 'other', if it is to be itself. And, in the same way, a
reductive hermeneutics that ignores theories of knowledge, so as to
concentrate solely on the manifestations of desire, is just as
incomplete, although, in the case of psychoanalysis, it has a
'valeur de protestation' against intellectual abstraction, as
Ricoeur explains:

> 'Cette réduction du connaître comme tel atteste la
> non-autonomie du connaître, son enracinement dans
> l'existence, entendue comme désir et comme effort.'
> (D.I. p. 442)

Enriched by this realization of the importance of desire now under-
stood as something that interferes with intentionality, Ricoeur
returns to the conclusions of Le Volontaire et l'involontaire.
He retains and even confirms the abstract eidetic work, but he now
adds to it another more concrete dimension: hermeneutic reflection.
He writes:

> 'Une méthode herméneutique, couplée à la réflexion,
> va beaucoup plus loin qu'une méthode eidétique ...
> la dépendance du Cogito à la position du désir n'est
> pas directement saisie sur l'expérience immédiate,
> mais interprétée par une autre conscience ... c'est
> une dépendance déchiffrée ...' (D.I. p. 443)

This statement directly confirms our interpretation of Paul Ricoeur's
work, moving from the abstract towards the concrete, but without
cancelling the first structural framework. The structure is at
once retained and transcended, thanks to a deeper truth: the
hermeneutic truth, now the new task of reflection, since this truth

can no longer be grasped directly in immediate experience.

We shall conclude this section with a reflection upon Ricoeur's question as regards Freudian interpretation:'quelle compréhension nouvelle de soi procède de cette interprétation, et quel soi vient ainsi à se comprendre?' (D.I. p. 8). Our self has learned that it is no longer the sole source of meaning: it shares the origin of meaning with its 'other', with desire - now clearly its arche - in a creative dialectics. And in this sharing the self has found itself at first dispossessed, in favour of its powerful 'other', by a technique of demystification of its narcissism seen by Ricoeur as a new and necessary step within the process of becoming conscious.

Moreover, the self has also become aware that it now depends upon another consciousness, another self, and upon inter-pretative techniques which will decipher it so that it may, in a second phase, repossess itself. In other words, the self has realized that it cannot be without its 'other', or else it is a false self. It cannot be without the 'other' of reductive herme-neutics, itself in conflict with the 'other' of desire. The dialectics of the 'same' and the 'other' is here further enhanced by the vital importance of the 'other' on which any authentic self-fulfilment depends.

Finally, our self has learned that it is alienated by the super ego, a cruel 'other' that generates guilt in the form of an internal unconscious violence against the 'same'. This alienation poses a real threat, not only to ethical man, but also to society at large, and so has to be uncovered. To that purpose, a dialectics between the 'other' of anti-phenomenological hermeneutics and the 'same' of reflective phenomenology duplicates the first dialectics

of the 'other' of desire and the self of consciousness. And through

both dialectics, Ricoeur comes a step closer to truth and to

concrete reflective thought. It must be stressed, however, that

the repossession and liberation of the self that follows the

dispossession of the ego is not a reduction of the 'other' of desire

to the 'same' of consciousness: desire is irreducible. It is

indeed a truly creative dialectics whereby the new self is always

in the process of becoming itself as life's opportunities come

along. In short, the recognition of a semantics of desire coupled

with a hermeneutics capable of deciphering in desire the archaeology

of self is, according to Ricoeur, the only path towards the authentic

self. Yet this is not enough for Ricoeur, it remains incomplete, as

our next section will suggest.

3 - The dialectical problematic of philosophical synthesis

> '... je ne prétends donc pas compléter
> Freud, mais le comprendre en me com-
> prenant. J'ose croire que j'avance
> dans cette double compréhension de
> Freud et de moi-même en révélant les
> aspects dialectiques et de la réfle-
> xion et du freudisme.' (D.I. p.445)

For Ricoeur, an archaeology of the subject without a

teleology remains an abstract concept. In other words, a concrete

philosophy must be dialectical. It is our future horizon, our telos

that gives full significance to our past history, to our arche, and

vice versa. Time, implicitly, plays an important part in this new

dialectics of arche and telos.

We shall develop, in the third part of this thesis, the

importance of the theme of time in Ricoeur's work.

By teleology, Ricoeur means another decentring:

> '... il n'y a de téléologie que par les figures de
> l'esprit, c'est-à-dire par un nouveau décentrement,

une nouvelle dépossession que j'appelle esprit,
comme j'avais appelé inconscient le lieu de cet
autre déplacement de l'origine du sens en arrière
de moi.' (<u>D.I.</u> p. 444)

Ricoeur explains how he sees in Freud's work at once an explicit
and thematized archaeology and an implicit and unthematized teleology.
And to justify this proposition he takes the example of Hegelian
phenomenology 'où <u>les mêmes problèmes se présentent dans un ordre
inverse.</u>' (<u>D.I.</u> p. 446). According to Ricoeur, who has so percep-
tibly recognised the inverted similarities, Hegel offers the model of
an explicit teleology of the 'becoming conscious' rooted in an
archaeology of life and <u>desire</u>. Both Hegel and Freud are described
by Ricoeur as whole separate 'continents' that show an inverted
image of each other and that meet on the theme of desire.

Let us see how Ricoeur describes these corresponding
images, and first what is meant by 'phenomenology' in the work of
Hegel. It is a phenomenology of the <u>Spirit</u>, and <u>not of consciousness</u>,
'une description des figures, des catégories ou des symboles qui
guident cette croissance selon l'ordre d'une synthèse progressive'
(<u>D.I.</u> p. 447).

Meaning does not come from consciousness: consciousness
is once more decentred. Before it becomes self-consciousness,
consciousness is simply, in the world, a reflection of the world.
Meaning comes from the Spirit, that is to say, from 'ce mouvement,
cette dialectique de figures, qui de la conscience fait une «cons-
cience de soi» ...' (<u>D.I.</u> p. 447).

Ricoeur explains this movement of progressive synthesis
as follows. Each figure - like the famous figure of the master
and slave in Hegel's phenomenology - receives its meaning from the
subsequent figure. Hence the truth of a given moment lies in the
following moment, or in other words, meaning proceeds retrogressively.

Thus, the later meaning is immanent in each of its anterior moments, and if the phenomenologist can say what appears it is because he sees it in the light of the later figures. This advance of the Spirit upon itself constitutes the truth, unknown to itself, of the anterior figures. And the key question in this dialectics is the emergence of the self of self-consciousness, which is 'inséparable de sa production par synthèse progressive' (D.I. p.449). It is interesting to see that it is within desire that the self moves towards itself. Ricoeur stresses that Hegel and Freud meet on this concept of desire. However, for Hegel, the restlessness of life is not due to an energetic impulse, but to the non-coincidence of man with himself, stretched between an immediate self in itself and a self that knows itself in reflection as a for itself. The Hegelian desire is desire of the for itself, but it can be fulfilled only through the desire of another self for oneself. Again, the importance of the 'Other', of another self, sustains the dialectics of difference and identity.

Sartre borrowed this theme from Hegel, and we have seen, in the first part of this thesis, how he reduced the 'Other' to an object – for-me, thus reducing the 'Other' to the 'same'. We have stressed how, for Sartre, there cannot be an 'Other' and a self in dialogue: they exist only in conflict and in terms of loser and winner.

By comparison, we have emphasized the importance of dialogue, of a dialectics of identity and difference, in both the works of Marcel and Ricoeur. This draws attention to Ricoeur's interpretation of Hegel, in a way contrary to Sartre. Ricoeur acknowledges as well the situation of conflict, but he speaks of a 'travail de la reconnaissance mutuelle' (D.I. p. 452), which takes

place in the work of Hegel. Hence the struggle between the self

and the essential 'Other' does not, in Ricoeur's view, reduce the

'Other' to the 'same'. In the figure of the master and the slave,

both hold to their own identity, while changing it thanks to the

'Other'. Thus, the 'Other' remains a difference, or, to say it in

a different way, in Ricoeur's words, 'le désir est le dépassé

indépassable' (D.I. p. 456). The following statement reinforces

even more, the importance of the 'Other' as difference:

> 'Et le terme même de soi ... annonce que l'identité
> à soi-même reste portée par cette différence à soi,
> par cette altérité sans cesse renaissante qui réside
> dans la vie. C'est la vie qui devient l'autre, sur
> lequel le soi ne cesse de se conquérir.' (D.I. p.456)

In other words, desire has become life itself in Ricoeur's interpre-

tation of Hegel, and is therefore an unsurpassable and invincible

'other' necessary to the 'same' in its search for a self. In brief,

the concept of desire, central to both the Freudian psychical repre-

sentatives, and the Hegelian spiritual process by which 'la conscience

de soi se pose comme désir' (D.I. p. 451), is the common denominator

that transcends the contrasts between the Spirit at work in the realm

of the 'not-yet' of history, and the unconscious at work in the realm

of the primordial. Besides, it sustains, in Ricoeur's work, the

dialectics of difference and identity, by bringing together the two

aspects of the Cogito, the arche and the telos. Those two 'others'

complete one another to make up the 'other' of life that holds the

key to the self, that is, to self-consciousness. Indeed, it is an

'Other', be it the psychoanalyst, when transference is taking place

between two unequal consciousnesses, or the Master of the Hegelian

figure, that holds in his hands, at least to start with, the patient's

or of the Hegelian slave's understanding of himself. But thanks to

the work and the struggle that take place throughout both relation-

ships, a self will be found that will make both patient and slave the

masters of their own ego.

     We shall conclude this section like the previous one with the same question: what has the 'Self' learned through this new dialectics between its <u>arche</u> and its <u>telos</u>?

     It has discovered that the <u>Cogito</u> is a difficult and complex <u>task</u>, that the 'I am' cannot be given in immediate experience. Rather it needs an analytical technique, together with a reflective philosophy capable not only of recovering the archaic heritage of man revealed by psychoanalysis, but also able to complement it by a telos, thanks to the dialectics between the two. Moreover, this new dialectics shows a <u>split Cogito</u>, a self stretched between a past and a future, between two 'others' that are complementary without coinciding. Those 'others' in man cannot be reduced to the 'same': they reveal it and enrich it, giving a self to the ego. The dialectics of difference and identity is here reaching its climax, as we come to understand that there cannot be identity without difference, and that difference without identity, without the Self of self-understanding, remains a 'compréhension «suffisante»..qui ne suffit pas au philosophe' because this thinking 'ne se comprend pas elle-même' (<u>D.I</u>. p. 407).

Conclusion

     In this chapter we have investigated and reflected upon Ricoeur's three-fold problematic in his debate with Freud. We have seen how his principal concern with the <u>structure</u> of psychoanalysis, a mixture of force <u>and</u> meaning, led him to the notion of a semantics of desire which situated psychoanalysis within the field of hermeneutics. We have also made clear that, for Ricoeur, psychoanalysis is not an observational science like behaviourism, but a hermeneutics concerned with the meaning of dreams and of 'psychical representatives'

in the field of language. Psychoanalysis could not, however, be reduced to a work of language in the Lacanian sense, to the 'same' of a hermeneutics that would disregard its energetic dimension, its 'other'. The epistemological dialectics between the 'same' and the 'other' has been essential to psychoanalysis.

This dialectics was further stressed by our growing awareness of the importance of desire in man, understood in terms of a driving force at the very root of all human actions and of life itself. We have seen how desire expresses itself indirectly to consciousness in the form of alienating disguises in need of demystification. To this Ricoeur had declared, 'A rusé, rusé et demi' (D.I. p. 42), as he tried to justify a hermeneutics of suspicion that deals with the guileful consciousness. It was this guileful consciousness which threatens the Cogito itself, that had, in the first place, led Ricoeur to his debate with psychoanalysis, thus allowing a reductive and anti-phenomenological hermeneutics into the realm of reflective philosophy. It then became gradually obvious that authenticity could be achieved only at that price, only via the detour through the 'other' of desire which had to be deciphered in all our concepts of knowledge and understanding. Desire appeared as the 'other' of self, at work in a concrete and creative dialectics, while the Freudian demystifying hermeneutics was the 'other' of reflective thinking. And to this dual dialectics Ricoeur added a third one with the concept of a telos in dialectics with the arche of man. In view of his search for a complete and concrete understanding of self, Ricoeur complemented the regressive analysis of Freudian hermeneutics with the progressive synthesis of the Hegelian figures of the Spirit.

This was achieved through a second decentring of consciousness that led to the realization of a split Cogito: man does not

coincide with himself. Ricoeur was able to respond to the Freudian challenge that called into question the primacy of the subject with the concept of a split subject, with a <u>Cogito</u> which could not be exalted any more by immediate reflection and idealism, but which was saved from destruction. A <u>wounded Cogito</u>, neither exalted nor broken, was Ricoeur's answer to the guileful of consciousness. And we have seen how such an answer was dependent upon Ricoeur's concrete hermeneutic phenomenology by now fully conceptualized.

Moreover, the concept of a wounded Cogito, of an <u>arche</u> and a <u>telos</u> in man now recalls the complex structure of symbols and may hold the key to the <u>conflict of hermeneutics</u>. Ricoeur writes:

'Si je comprends cette connexion, au coeur d'une philosophie du sujet, entre son archéologie et sa téléologie, c'est-à-dire entre deux dessaisissements de la conscience, je comprends en outre que la guerre des herméneutiques ... est sur le point de trouver une issue' (D.I. pp. 444-445)

C H A P T E R   III

THE DIALECTICAL HERMENEUTICS OF THE

CONFLICT OF INTERPRETATIONS

> '... le montrer-cacher du
> double sens est-il toujours
> dissimulation de ce que veut
> dire le désir, <u>ou bien</u> peut-il
> être quelquefois manifestation,
> révélation d'un sacré?'
> (<u>D.I.</u>, p. 17)

Introduction

The consequences of Paul Ricoeur's debate with Freud are twofold. Firstly, they lead Ricoeur to an <u>arbitration</u> of the war of interpretations, since we may guess that '... il n'y a pas d'herméneutique générale ... mais des théories séparées et opposées concernant les règles de l'interprétation. Le champ herméneutique, dont nous avons tracé le contour extérieur, est en lui-même brisé' (D.I.,p.35). This arbitration is done by replacing the antithesis resulting from those conflicting theories within a <u>dialectics</u> that interrelates them. Secondly, the debate helps Ricoeur to integrate interpretation within philosophical reflection in his search for a <u>concrete reflection</u>.

Ricoeur set out to show how <u>symbols</u> carry within themselves the possibility of various interpretations. On the one hand, they sustain interpretations like psychoanalysis that <u>reduce</u> symbols to their instinctual basis, and on the other hand, they support interpretations that <u>develop</u> their symbolic meanings. Hence their over-determined structure is the key to a dialectics between conflicting interpretations.

It is important, for Ricoeur, that we understand that both the 'progression et régression sont portées par les mêmes symboles'. If we can grasp this aspect of symbols, then he believes that 'Le

comprendre serait accéder à la réflexion concrète elle-même'
(D.I., p. 475).

Our two previous chapters have <u>implicitly</u> demonstrated
the need to graft hermeneutics on to a phenomenological methodology:
the recovering of the intentionalities of symbolic expressions
depended upon the <u>textual</u> analysis and exegesis of symbolic dis-
course, just as the repossession of our archaic <u>Cogito</u>, of our
<u>arche</u>, depended upon the interpretation of the <u>expressions</u> of the
patient within the world of language. The Freudian interpretation
actually moved its object of analysis from the text to the human
<u>subject</u>, who then became <u>like a text</u>, a symbolic text that called
for a work of deciphering. In other words, the notion of <u>text-self</u>
will now <u>explicitly</u> enlarge the concept of text by emphasizing its
extra-linguistic aim: it will lead Ricoeur to his concrete theory
of interpretation, and it will also stress the need for a hermeneutic
mediation in our understanding of the Cartesian <u>Cogito</u>.

In this chapter we shall examine the problems encountered
by Ricoeur in his effort to justify the introduction of a hermeneutics
in reflective philosophy. The question asked is - how can philoso-
phical <u>coherence</u> be subjected to conflicts between rival interpreta-
tion ? This constitutes an aporia and the subject matter of our
first section. We will closely follow how Ricoeur reaches a point
beyond the aporia from which it may be possible to arbitrate between
these conflicts. Our second section will further reflect upon the
philosophical task as Ricoeur sees it: how can the opposition
between those conflicting hermeneutics be integrated into a <u>concrete</u>
reflection?

Here we shall make explicit the need for a <u>methodological</u>
<u>dialectics</u>, between phenomenology and hermeneutics, between the
'same' and the 'other'.

1 - <u>Towards an arbitration of conflicting hermeneutics</u>

> '... l'herméneutique me paraît mue
> par cette double motivation:
> volonté de soupçon, volonté d'écoute;
> voeu de rigueur, voeu d'obéissance;
> nous sommes aujourd'hui ces hommes
> qui n'ont pas fini de faire mourir
> les <u>idoles</u> et qui commencent à peine
> d'entendre les <u>symboles</u>.' (D.I.,
> p. 36)

<u>Le Conflit des interprétations</u>, published in 1969, illus-
trates Ricoeur's problematic. A collection of twenty-two essays
under five headings that bring together the conflicting disciplines
of hermeneutics, structuralism, psychoanalysis, phenomenology and
religion, it draws attention to the extent of the difficulties
faced by a philosopher in search of coherence and self-understanding.

Yet, Ricoeur is convinced that all these contrasting
interpretations share a <u>common denominator</u>: they all shift the
origin of meaning away from immediate consciousness. Ricoeur
explains how 'le champ herméneutique' (<u>D.I.</u>, p. 61) is first of all
'... une constestation et une épreuve pour la réflexion dont le
premier mouvement est de s'identifier avec la conscience immédiate'
(<u>D.I.</u>, p. 62). Ricoeur believes that we must accept being <u>dis-
possessed</u> of our <u>ego</u>, and this is exactly what the hermeneutic
conflict does:

> 'Nous laisser déchirer par la contradiction des
> herméneutiques extrêmes, c'est nous livrer à
> l'étonnement qui met en mouvement la réflexion:
> sans doute nous faut-il être écartés de nous-
> mêmes, délogés du centre pour savoir enfin ce -
> que signifie: <u>Je pense, je suis</u>.'
> (<u>D.I.</u>, p. 62)

In other words, we must welcome the 'Other' of all hermeneutics if
we are to 'become ourselves' through reflective phenomenology. But
having said this, we must admit that the theme of a conflict of
interpretations, and the idea of a possible arbitration that takes

all interpretations into account, is not exactly a new idea. What then is _original_ in Ricoeur's thinking here? We would argue that his originality lies in the choice of his starting point, that is in the structure of the symbol in which he reads _complementary_ rather than conflicting views. In addition, the dialectical approach to the problem is typical of Ricoeur's thinking. He chooses two opposite poles of interpretation, with the greatest tension between them, in order to emphasize with maximum effect, his own original contribution to the problematic. At one end of the chain of hermeneutic types, he places a hermeneutics of _restoration_ of meaning, of a meaning addressed _to me_ by means of transcendental 'revelation', of a promise Ricoeur calls _kerygma_. Xavier Léon-Dufour in _Les évangiles et l'histoire de Jésus_ (1963), interprets this Greek word 'le «kérygme» (du mot grec qui signifie «proclamation», «prédication»)' in terms of Christ's command to his disciples 'd'annoncer sa présence vivante' (p.256). Ricoeur adopts this meaning of a proclamation of the good news. Phenomenology is the necessary method of recollection of such a meaning, which implies belief, as we have seen with Ricoeur's hermeneutic circle of belief and understanding. At the opposite end of the chain, Ricoeur suggests a hermeneutics of _suspicion_ and of demystification typical of psychoanalysis, and also, Ricoeur insists, of the 'three masters of suspicion': Marx, Nietzsche and Freud. They share the same opposition to a phenomenology of the Sacred, and the same vision of a false and doubtful consciousness. Yet because they were able, with and against the prejudices of their times, to work out 'un art d'interpréter' (_D.I._, p.42) that led to more authenticity, Ricoeur declares that 'loin d'être des détracteurs de la «conscience»' they all three 'visent à une extension de celle-ci' (_D.I._,p.43). Ricoeur accepts their attitude which, he thinks, is similar to that of the Greek tragic myths whereby we humans find ourselves enslaved, and yet can free ourselves if we manage to _understand_ our slavery with all its necessities. But Ricoeur also questions the narrowness of such an approach which stifles 'la grâce de l'imagination, le surgissement du possible ...' (_D.I._,p.44)

And to this reductive and one-sided vision of man, Ricoeur did not reply with another restricted and uncritical vision, but with his typical _dialectical_ approach. This was made possible by his new conception of an archaeology and of a teleology of man, which had developed from his interpretation of both Freud and Hegel. We have seen how each one became an inversion of the other in Ricoeur's philosophical synthesis of self-consciousness. Moreover, this internal dialectics in man between regression and progression was further interpreted by Ricoeur as a mere reflection of the complex structure of _symbols_. Ricoeur states '... le «mixte» _concret_ sur quoi nous lisons en surimpression archéologie et téléologie ... c'est le _symbole_' (D.I., p.476). So, the symbol, the 'Other' of thought, not only gives rise to thought, but is itself the _concrete moment_ of the dialectics between the two conflicting interpretations at both ends of the hermeneutic spectrum. Ricoeur makes it clear that: 'Il faut dialectiser le symbole, afin de penser selon le symbole' (D.I., p.477). This represents a post-critical return to the fullness of language. In retrospect, Ricoeur finds in symbols, both a repetition of our childhood, and an exploration of our adult life, by which both the interpretations of Hegel and Freud are realised '... c'est en plongeant dans notre enfance et en la faisant revivre sur le mode onirique qu'ils représentent la projection de nos possibilités propres sur le registre de l'imaginaire' (D.I., p. 478).

Ricoeur demonstrates this over-determination of symbols, which is due to their multiple meanings, by completing Freud's interpretation of Sophocles' Oedipus Rex. He adds to the drama of incest and parricide which took place, the drama of truth and self-recognition which emerges. He shows how the truth comes not from Oedipus, blinded by his pride and anger, but from the blind seer who speaks the truth of the mind.

Therefore, in Ricoeur's view, there are two ways of interpreting the tragedy. Although the drama of truth belongs to sexual tragedy, it also escapes it. It is a tragedy of self-knowledge, of a presumptuous consciousness guilty of vanity because it had assumed its innocence. This guilt is not sexual guilt, but ignorance which will be overcome through suffering. The core of the tragedy is described by Ricoeur as follows:

> Tirésias est le voyant, mais ce voyant est eveugle;
> Oedipe voit avec ses yeux, mais son entendement
> est aveugle; en perdant la vue, il reçoit la
> vision ... L'homme maudit est devenu, comme
> Tirésads, le voyant aveugle. (C.I., p. 118)

Ricoeur draws attention to the fact that both interpretations complement each other:

> ... l'une tournée vers l'émergence de symboles
> nouveaux, de figures ascendantes, aspirées comme
> dans la Phénoménologie de l'esprit par la
> dernière, laquelle n'est plus figure mais
> savoir - l'autre, tournée vers la résurgence
> des symboles archaïques. (C.I., p. 118)

Besides, Ricoeur insists that to this duality corresponds a similar duality in symbols, '... d'un côté, ils répètent notre enfance ... de l'autre, ils explorent notre vie adulte ... le symbole est prospectif' (C.I., p. 118). Yet this duality expresses the 'same'. The readings of Hegel and Freud 'recouvrent exactement le même champ' (C.I., p. 119). In other words, the two opposite interpretations coincide in the unity of the symbol. We recognize 'sur l'oeuvre même, l'unité profonde du déguisement et du dévoilement, scellée dans la structure même du symbole devenu objet culturel' (D.I., p. 499). Both the oneiric and the poetic make up this symbolic work of art that embodies the artist's conflicts as well as sketches their solution. Ricoeur strongly believes that because the work of art is not merely a projection of someone's problems,

the esthetic pleasure is 'le plaisir de participer au travail de la vérité qui s'accomplit à travers le héros' (D.I., p. 501).

So, the symbolic structure is indeed for Ricoeur the best route towards the 'same' of self-recognition and truth, since its over determination is capable of transcending the distance between the abstract concepts of regression and progression, and between two hermeneutics, one that unmasks our archaism, and one that reveals new intentions. This is why Ricoeur thinks that there is a point, beyond the aporia of rival interpretations in philosophy, where an arbitration of the war of hermeneutics may be possible. The complex constitution of symbols contains the key to such an arbitration. In other words, the 'other' of symbols gathers together in a concrete way all the conflicting hermeneutics, all the 'others' that lead to the 'same' of reflective philosophy. However, it must be said that Ricoeur's notion of arbitration does not provide a practical or technical solution to conflicts: Ricoeur does not offer techniques. His purpose remains purely philosophical. It is, above all, an attempt to change our vision and understanding of conflicting interpretations. Because each interpretation speaks of the whole man - and not of a mere part of him - but from different angles, that is either from a reductive analysis that stresses his unconscious fate, or from a synthesis that shows the historical development of consciousness, these interpretations are complementary and can be transcended through some kind of intellectual arbitration. Yet, such an arbitration that points towards an identity of meaning, does not solve conflicts: difference is not erased but rather enriched and valued as that which enlarges and deepens meaning.

Besides, in the process of this dialectical approach,

Ricoeur demythologizes both Freud and Hegel. For him, the Hegelian teleology that aims at absolute knowledge without transcendence is an impossible idealism because the symbolism of evil resists such reduction to rational knowledge, '... les symboles du mal ... déclarent l'échec des systèmes de pensée qui voudraient engloutir les symboles dans un savoir absolu' (D.I., p. 507). To reduce symbols to knowledge, be it absolute knowledge, is to lose them altogether, since their multiple meanings rooted in the cosmos escape translation and reason.

As for Freudian archaeology, it focusses too much on repetition, particularly as regards religion, at the expense of history, and without the necessary detour of the interpretation of texts in and through which men understand their beliefs. Ricoeur declares Freud's realism short-sighted, since 'il n'est pas possible de faire une psychanalyse de la croyance sans passer par l'interprétation et la compréhension des oeuvres de culture dans lesquelles l'objet de la croyance s'annonce' (D.I., p. 522).

Ricoeur takes the example of guilt to illustrate Freud's shortcomings. He accuses Freud of giving no history to guilt beyond the Oedipus complex which, at once, founds and explains guilt. Yet, for Ricoeur, man arrives at the consciousness of an ethical guilt only gradually, through an understanding of his personal as well as cultural history, inscribed in texts in the figures or heroes of our penitentiary literature. Each figure is a reinterpretation of the preceding one in accordance with Hegel's 'devenir - conscient' and with artistic creation.

Ricoeur also demythologizes religion, metaphysics and theology. They transform the presence of Transcendence, which ought to remain a horizon wholly Other, beyond any conceptualization, into an objectified 'Supreme Being', while the signs of the sacred,

that is, the symbols that tell of this transcendental reality,

become sacred objects and idols, in need of demystification.

And Ricoeur insists; 'il faut toujours que meure l'idole afin que

vive le symbole' (D.I., p. 510).

In conclusion, we shall stress the importance of

demythologization and demystification, that is, of authenticity,

in a philosophy that aims at a dialectical arbitration of hermeneu-

tics. But the original meaning Ricoeur gives to it must be

emphasized. He states:

> Mais je comprends cette démystification comme
> l'envers d'une restauration des signes du
> Sacré, qui sont la prophétie de la conscience.
> (C.I., p. 329)

Demystification is meaningful only in view of a positive recreation

of meaning, of a renewal of our understanding of the Sacred.

Besides, it is the dependence of the self on both the unconscious

arche and on the sacred telos, on its duplicated 'other' manifested

only in a symbolic mode, that justifies a demystifying hermeneutics.

Its purpose is creative: it opens up and clarifies a horizon

capable of disclosing new worlds and possibilities.

Ricoeur's arbitration is therefore one of complementarity

since the two symbolisms point to the 'same', yet the conflict

remains. The 'other' from below seen in the manifestations of the

unconscious cannot be reduced to the 'other' from above, to the

symbols of the Sacred, or vice versa. Ricoeur speaks of 'la

complémentarité des herméneutiques irréductibles et opposées'

(D.I., p. 445), and not of a reduction that would destroy the

creative conflict altogether.

We see in this conflict the necessary depth of a concrete

reflection concerned with existence and being. But how can

reflective coherence survive these conflicts?

2 -   Paul Ricoeur's concrete hermeneutic phenomenology

> '... le concret est la dernière
> conquête de la pensée.'
> (D.I., p. 335)

In La Symbolique du mal, Ricoeur's hermeneutic circle remained the route to philosophical reflection. The problem was then to justify the use of symbolic thought, that is of 'le plein du langage', in philosophy. This, Ricoeur was able to do in De l'interprétation: essai sur Freud with more rigour. He showed how not only symbols call for speculative thinking, but more important, how a philosophical reflection that ignores the heuristic value of mythic-symbolic language remains abstract and even shallow. We have already examined in detail Ricoeur's arguments for a concrete reflection, mediated by the works of culture that bear witness to man's existence, when we followed his attempt to return from inter-pretation to philosophical reflection, in the first chapter of this second part of our thesis.

We shall now return to the same question of a hermeneutic philosophy and enrich it with the conflict of hermeneutics. In 1981, Ricoeur spoke of an open circle, in Richard Kearney's Dialogues with contemporary Continental thinkers. He explains as follows:

> For me the philosophical task is not to close the
> circle, to centralize or totalize knowledge, but
> to keep open the irreducible plurality of dis-
> course. It is essential to show how the different
> discourses may interrelate or intersect but one
> must resist the temptation to make them identical,
> the same. (p. 27)

Hence, the idea of a wounded or split Cogito that does not reduce the 'other' to the 'same'.

Yet, in 1965, there were problems and objections, when Ricoeur tried to justify the need for a hermeneutics in philosophy.

The most serious was, of course, 'l'inconsistance interne de
l'herméneutique, déchirée par la contradiction' (D.I., p. 61).
And we have seen how Ricoeur found an answer, thanks to the rich
structure of symbols, thus turning the objection into an advantage,
particularly when he asks:

> N'est-ce pas d'un même mouvement que la
> réflexion peut devenir réflexion concrète ET
> que la rivalité des interprétations peut être
> comprise, au, double sens du mot: justifiée
> par la réflexion et incorporée à son oeuvre?
> (D.I., p. 63)

In other words, a concrete reflection is dependent upon those
contrasting interpretations, once understood and absorbed by
philosophy.

Another important objection was raised by the contingency
of cultures. We have seen how Ricoeur acknowledged his Greco-
Judaic heritage and confessed to his belief in the Christian 'Holy
Spirit'. Yet philosophy claims to possess a universality of
discourse. Ricoeur's reply to this objection was very practical:
'... seule la réflexion abstraite parle de nulle part. Pour
devenir concrète, la réflexion doit perdre sa prétention immédiate
à l'universalité ...' (D.I., p. 55). It is only through the here
and now of our contingent traditions and symbols that we may
eventually reach a universal and rational structure of thought.
Jean-Paul Sartre says very much the same thing when he speaks of our
'situation': man is situated in the world, he belongs somewhere.
This contingency of culture is, in our view, similar to the
contingency of our 'incarnation', through which we experience
freedom in the here and now of our body.

The last objection questioned the symbol itself, with
its opaque significations. How can philosophical rigour be
dependent upon a meaning not transparent to itself? Or, to put
it another way, how can hermeneutics compete with formal and

symbolic logic? As we know, Ricoeur had distanced himself from

the contemporary formalization of language by returning to its

richness:

> C'est à l'époque où notre langage se fait plus
> précis, plus univoque ... que nous voulons
> recharger notre langage, que nous voulons
> repartir du plein du langage. (S.M., p. 325)

Yet, he had to justify his choice of opacity, cultural contin-

gency and dependence on conflicting interpretations if he was to

be taken seriously by a philosophy whose ideals are clarity,

necessity and scientific order. Consequently, Ricoeur introduced

the conception of a 'logic of double meaning' in response to

formal logic, that is to say not a formal, but a transcendental

logic capable of establishing a priori the 'conditions de

possibilité d'un domaine d'objectivité en général' (D.I., p. 59).

We must here acknowledge the importance of the Kantian a priori,

and also accept its transcendental function in reflective philosophy.

Ricoeur argues that:

> ... s'il n'y a pas quelque chose comme le
> transcendantal, l'intolérance de la logique
> symbolique est sans réplique; mais si le
> transcendantal est une dimension authentique
> du discours, alors reprennent force les raisons
> que l'on peut opposer à la prétention du
> logicisme de mesurer tout discours à son traité
> des arguments ... (D.I., p. 60)

Therefore, Ricoeur was able to transform his hermeneutic

circle of belief and understanding into a dialectical hermeneutics,

thought out on the basis of phenomenology, thus preserving its

philosophical essence. And, in retrospect, phenomenology became

concrete through its new hermeneutical presupposition. Both the

'other' of hermeneutics, first grasped in La Symbolique du mal as

some kind of exegesis limited to a disclosure and an explanation

of the hidden meaning of symbols, and the 'same' of phenomenology

were transformed by the new dialectical process.

Besides, not only did reflection become concrete, but the new heuristic problematic of a showing-hiding dependent upon a hermeneutics also revealed the importance of language. The 'hermeneutic turn' in Ricoeur's work discloses the emergence of his philosophy of language. He makes it clear at the beginning of his debate with Freud that:

> Nous sommes aujourd'hui à la recherche d'une grande philosophie du langage qui rendrait compte des multiples fonctions du signifier humain et de leurs relations mutuelles. (D.I., p. 13)

De l'interprétation: essai sur Freud makes explicit a theory of language already implicit in the first systematic study of symbols, in which the problem of the symbol is also a problem of language:

> Il n'y a pas de symbolique avant l'homme qui parle, même si la puissance du symbole est enracinée plus bas, dans l'expressivité du cosmos, dans le vouloir-dire du désir, dans la variété imaginative des sujets. (D.I., p. 25)

Don Ihde, in Hermeneutic Phenomenology: The Philosophy of Paul Ricoeur, draws an interesting parallel between Husserl's and Ricoeur's phenomenological approaches. While Husserl's phenomenology tried to return to the fullness of experience to the 'things themselves', behind the symbol - and thus remained abstract - by means of his regressive epoche, so that he could 'arrive at a pretheoretical experience of the world' (p. 91), Ricoeur used the same, regressive method, but shifted the field of enquiry from direct and immediate experience to language. Don Ihde concludes his argument as follows:

> The search for the fullness of language must be seen to be the Ricoeurian parallel to the Husserlian search for the fullness of experience. (ibid., p. 92)

Don Ihde's assertion adds new insight to the dialectics of the 'other' of hermeneutics, wrestling with language, and the 'same' of phenomenology, searching for meaning. Their

complementarity is striking, and cannot be reduced without losses on either side. Both share the belief that meaning is essential and that its source is anterior to language. But, in their search for anteriority, one focusses on the immanent object-world, and the other on the transcendental language-world whose opacity demands the detour of an interpretation. Consequently, meaning is displaced from immediate consciousness to a consciousness embedded in language. Hence Ricoeur's question at the beginning of his work on Freud:

> ... le dessaisissement de la conscience au profit d'un autre foyer de sens peut-il être compris comme un acte de reflexion ...? (D.I., p. 62)

We have made great progress since this question was asked: we are now aware that this decentring of immediate con- sciousness is not only possible within the realm of philosophical reflection, but that it is the necessary step of a reflection in search of the concrete. This awareness is the result of Ricoeur's original contribution to a philosophy of language that starts from symbols.

Conclusion

The expression 'conflict of interpretations' sounds rather familiar, as if part of our daily, lived experience. And its connotations feel like something painful and negative. Yet we have seen in this chapter how this is not at all the case. Ricoeur has succeeded in drawing attention to the positive and creative aspect of this conflict by replacing the contrasting interpretations within a concrete dialectics, whereby conflict also meant comple- mentarity. He was able to do this because he recognized within the overdetermined structure of symbols the very origin of this conflict.

Symbols were shown to nurture an internal dialectics between an arche and a telos in man, a dialectics which in turn led to conflicting interpretations according to whether the interpretation focussed on regressive analysis or progressive synthesis. Hence the symbol became the concrete sign of a possible reconciliation between those interpretations. But we stress that reconciliation and arbitration did not mean reduction: the different discourses remained irreducible in their plurality. They interacted in a conflicting as well as a complementary way, thus enlarging and enriching one another. And, together, they made up the 'other' of hermeneutics, whose difference, in dialectics with the 'same' of phenomenology, gave a self to the ego. We have also emphasized that all those 'others' originating from symbols shifted meaning away from immediate consciousness, embedding it in a language whose double intentionality was clearly in need of interpretation. We have also insisted upon the heuristic purpose of Ricoeur's hermeneutics: either reductive of synthetic, its ultimate aim is a disclosure of human possibility. The 'same' is indeed deeply enriched by its 'other', while such an 'other' reveals its full potential only in a dialectics with the 'same' of phenomenology.

Hermeneutics needs phenomenology to transform meaning into meaning for me, and more important, to become a philosophy of interpretation, and not simply a methodology of exegesis and philology.

Finally, we discussed Ricoeur's attempt to justify the role of hermeneutics in reflective thought. He duly acknowledged the three main objections made to symbolic thought, that is, its opacity, its cultural contingency and its conflicting interpretations, only to go beyond them in a way typical of his thinking. He was therefore able to make considerable progress towards the

concrete reflection which was his aim. The link between this
progression and Ricoeur's philosophy of language was then made
explicit. We have seen it emerge with the 'hermeneutic turn' that
centred on a deciphering of <u>words</u>. We shall now examine how it
develops and is conceptualized, in the third part of this thesis,
in Ricoeur's concrete hermeneutic phenomenology.

C O N C L U S I O N

This second part of our thesis has focussed upon Ricoeur's search for <u>concrete</u> reflection, within the context of his <u>Philosophie de la volonté</u>. How did this search lead him to his 'hermeneutic turn' ? We have seen in our first part how, once the abstract structures of willing, understood as a necessary framework, were conceptualized and described, they needed to be filled with existential reality. This reality was, of course, already present in the question of the relationship between freedom and its limitations, that is to say, our involuntary nature and our inner disproportion that Ricoeur called fallibility. But this reality remained abstract: the concept of fallibility made evil only <u>possible</u>. A wide <u>difference</u> remained between such possibility and the <u>actuality</u> of evil and of lived existence. Ricoeur had to step into the actuality of experience if he was to achieve concrete thinking. But, why was the concept of evil so important in Ricoeur's early work? It appeared to him as the final and major limitation to freedom after nature and fallibility, as an irreducible 'other', a limit-idea deeply felt in our being. Therefore, it could not be ignored by a philosopher in search of truth and self-understanding. Ricoeur set out to explain freedom and evil in terms of each other. Yet, how do we know that there is such an 'other'? It cannot be grasped directly, philosophy cannot discuss or explain evil. How can it be shown to be our major limitation? This problem of not being able to integrate the concept of evil directly into philoso- phical discourse, while at the same time believing that our under- standing of evil was primordial to our understanding of freedom, led Ricoeur to his turning point in phenomenology. He had no choice but to turn to the study of the symbolic language of avowal by the

religious consciousness. The actuality of evil is expressed and embedded in that language. Hence the shift from structural to concrete phenomenology was in fact a <u>linguistic</u> shift: our direct experience of fault had to be recovered from the opacity and cultural contingency of a mythic-symbolic language. This was an enormous task which demanded a new method, a hermeneutics.

The emergency of Ricoeurian hermeneutics offered a tool able to describe the symbolism of evil, and to find meaning in the myths of the beginning and the end of evil in Western culture. But what distinguished Ricoeur from others in the field of mythology already saturated with a voluminous literature? Ricoeur was not content to simply describe the symbol in order to find truth within the symbolic text, he also had to find truth <u>for himself</u>, in the here and now of his own existence. This philosophical approach illustrated by his hermeneutic circle of understanding and belief, distinguished him from other phenomenologists and historians of religion like his friend Eliade. It also distinguished him from ethnologists and linguists like Levi-Strauss, whose purpose was not to search for a symbolic hidden meaning <u>for me</u>, but to explain mythical structures. Also, Ricoeur's openmindedness as well as appreciation of the structuralist analysis, and his position as a philosopher outside confessional frameworks, further distinguished him from theologians like Von Rad.We are convinced that Ricoeur stands out as quite unique and original as regards the aims and methods of his research.

Furthermore, his work on mythic-symbolic language led him to realize that a philosophy that does not make a detour via the symbols and signs in which it is rooted is doomed to abstraction. The depth and richness of what he called 'le plein du langage', and

of the written texts of our traditions and cultural heritage, could not possibly be ignored by a philosophy in search of the concrete. But then another problem arose: how was he to return to reflective thinking enriched with symbolic meaning? Or, in other words, how could hermeneutics be integrated in the field of reflective philosophy? His work on Freud brought the answer: not only do symbols and myths need a hermeneutics capable of revealing their hidden and heuristic meaning, but philosophy as well is dependent upon a hermeneutics that deciphers the pre-reflective. Philosophy also needs the density and fullness of symbolic thought, it needs a concrete starting point since it belongs somewhere. This realization marked the blossoming of Ricoeur's concrete reflection, with hermeneutics now justified and fully part of philosophical discourse.

Ricoeur's philosophical debate with Freud illustrated the maturity of his new method. Through his reading of Freud and psychoanalysis, seen as a demystifying hermeneutics, Ricoeur was able to regain a lost archaic heritage within man. This led him to the conception of an archaeology of the subject. And since he could not think of an _arche_ without a _telos_, he complemented the subject's archaeology with a teleology. To that purpose, he displaced his hermeneutic tool from Freud's regressive analysis to Hegel's progressive synthesis of the figures of the Spirit. And the result was the concept of a split _Cogito_. Hence, in a concrete way, he was able to show what he had first conceived, in a purely reflective manner in _L'homme faillible_, that is man's disproportion within himself. He had therefore achieved his aim of a concrete reflection.

How original is Ricoeur's reading of Freud? Where interpretations of Freud are concerned, the literature is also voluminous.

Against those who tried to reduce psychoanalysis to a natural or behaviourist science, Ricoeur proclaimed, along with Lacan, the importance of language: psychoanalysis is a hermeneutics. However, against Lacan and those who emphasized this linguistic aspect at the expense of the psychic instincts, Ricoeur then proclaimed the importance of an energetics in psychoanalysis. This emphasis of the <u>mixed</u> discourse of psychoanalysis and his interpretation of it in a purely philosophical way is, we believe, what is original in Ricoeur's thought.

Moreover, Ricoeur returned to the symbol enriched with his new conception of an archaeology and of a teleology in man, and established a parallel between this ontological structure in man and the over-determined structure of symbols. In turn, this link gave him the key to an original arbitration of the conflict of hermeneutics, seen as positive and complementary within a dialectics that neither reduced nor ignored any possible interpretation.

The dialectics of difference and identity has proved to be very deep-rooted in Ricoeur's hermeneutics. We have shown how important it was for the 'same' of phenomenology to be dialectically related to the 'other' of hermeneutics. And, within this assertion, we have drawn attention to the vital part the 'other' of symbols and of desire played in our search for a self. Belief was also dialectically connected to the 'other' of understanding within Ricoeur's first hermeneutic circle, and, in fact, pointed towards the second circle at the centre of our next study.

To the Freudian dialectics of hermeneutics and energetics, Ricoeur added his phenomenology, thus enriching the former with a 'same', transforming the first epistemological meaning into a meaning <u>for me</u>. And within that dialectics, another one emerged with the conceptions of an <u>arche</u> and a <u>telos</u>, of an 'other', itself

in dialectics, that gave depth and fullness to the self. In turn, the conflict of hermeneutics that made up the 'other' in dialogue with phenomenology, transformed phenomenology into a concrete and rich philosophy.

We shall now examine, in the third part of this thesis, how this dialectics of difference and identity opens up into Ricoeur's hermeneutic circle of explanation and understanding. The emergence of the linguistic shift has been mentioned with the recognition of the lingual character of symbols, but it has not yet been made the explicit object of thought. It will be at the centre of the new hermeneutic circle, since the concept of the text will be the new foundation of Ricoeur's concrete reflection. Indeed, we shall argue that, with this hermeneutic circle of explanation and understanding, the dialectics of difference and identity comes to its full fruition in Ricoeur's philosophy of language.

PART III

THE CONCRETE HERMENEUTIC PHENOMENOLOGY OF LANGUAGE AND NARRATIVITY :
INTERPRETATION THEORY (1976), LA METAPHORE VIVE (1975) AND
TEMPS ET RECIT (VOLUME I 1983, VOLUME II 1984 AND VOLUME III 1985).

> '... the text is the level at
> which structural explanation
> and hermeneutic understanding
> confront one another.'
> (Response, p. 35)

INTRODUCTION

The emergence of an operative concept of the text marked
the second turning point in Ricoeur's search for concrete, reflective
philosophy, after the 'hermeneutic turn'. It came in response to what
Ricoeur called the semiological challenge, which threatened the
primacy of the subject in philosophy. Ricoeur returned to the very
foundations of language, in order to rethink it, in a way similar to
his return to the origins of our culture through its primitive symbols,
and to the arche of consciousness through psychoanalysis.

He operated a second distanciation from the primacy of the
cogito, after that of psychoanalysis, by subordinating the subjective
intentions of the subject, either the author or the reader, to the
objective meaning of the text. This new shift reinforced the idea
that philosophical reflection speaks from somewhere, from a given
culture rooted in symbols, that is in linguistic creations in need of
interpretation. We have argued, in the second part of this thesis,
that such an interpretation, with its rules of deciphering, makes
philosophy concrete because it opens it to contemporary truth via the
detour of the human sciences, whose methods and explanatory approaches
can, in return, enlarge the ego and pave the way to an enriched self.
This new epistemological distanciation via language and narrative
connects language and experience. Indeed, and paradoxically,

distanciation is part of the experience of belonging, through the act of appropriation of the meaning manifested by the text. Together they constitute the hermeneutic circle that points towards ontology, that is towards the ultimate aim of Ricoeur's hermeneutics. This is possible in Ricoeur's philosophy of language because discourse is given priority over the system.

Ricoeur made it very clear that hermeneutics, unlike structuralism, is concerned with discourse and its surplus of meaning, and not with systems. Having chosen discourse as his starting point, he then stressed the dialectical link between the oral event that characterizes the act of speaking, and the written meaning that makes up the 'same'. He further drew attention to the text that embodies such a meaning: it is a work of language, a structured whole the intention of which is to say something about something. In Ricoeur's view, the immanent sense of a text points towards a transcendent reference, beyond all systems. The 'text-work' implied a distance, which Ricoeur called 'distanciation', and which in turn demanded an interpretation. It must be stressed that hermeneutics was now enlarged. It transcended the double inten-tionality of symbols to include 'the problem posed by the passage from the structure immanent in every text to its extra-linguistic aim' (Response, p. 35). Such an aim, or 'visée', is also called the 'matter', or the 'world' of the text. The hermeneutic circle of distanciation and appropriation illustrates this passage from immanence to transcendence. It connects the need of a structural explanation, now seen as a necessary step, towards an understanding of the 'matter' of the text, disclosed by the text. In other words, Ricoeur integrated the until now opposed attitudes of explanation and understanding within a dialectics of difference and identity. Explanation became the long route, like an abstract and objective

moment of which structural analysis was the best example, that led

to an understanding of 'the being brought to language by the text'

(Response, p. 35).

Ricoeur remains critical of any hermeneutics that does

not make such a 'detour' via the epistemological problems of method.

In his view both Heidegger's and Gadamer's hermeneutics are 'short

cuts', leading directly to identity and being, without the

necessary distance and difference of objective analysis and critique.

We would argue that Ricoeur's mediated and critical approach, in

search of new concepts which reinterpret the old ones in order to

develop a new humanism, resolves the problem pinpointed by Annette

Lavers in 1970, in her article 'Man, meaning and subject. A current

reappraisal'. Discussing the conflict between Structuralists and

Existentialists, she wrote:

> 'Yet if this is not to remain another quarrel of the
> Ancients and the Moderns, a more genuine basis must
> be found for the constitution of a thesis and an
> antithesis out of which a new synthesis might arise.
> This would of course be a new humanism ...' (p.44)

Ricoeur's hermeneutic circle offers such a synthesis.

Interpretation Theory, written in 1973 in the form of a series of

lectures delivered in Texas (and published in 1976), points towards

this humanism 'in the search for a way to live with some indispen-

sable concepts' (ibid., p.49).

Ricoeur was able to transcend the 'quarrel of the Ancients

and the Moderns' by transforming their conflict into a complementary

dialectics, in a way similar to his previous arbitration of the 'war'

of interpretations.

Moreover, Annette Lavers' definition of the structuralists'

aims, in her book, Roland Barthes. Structuralism and After (1982)

could easily apply to Ricoeur. She draws attention to the fact that

'for structuralists the relationship with the world is mediate' (p.16),

as opposed to the phenomenologists' direct apprehension of meaning. She explains how the structuralist rejects a direct comprehension of man and language in order to centre on explanation seen as 'the analytic method suited to the sciences of nature' (ibid., p.16).

Ricoeur does indeed mediate the world through an explanation of it but, unlike the structuralists, he does not reject comprehension. The world is still for me to understand and 'make my own'. There is still a subject - be it a split cogito - who thinks and speaks, and who appropriates the meaning of the world disclosed by the text. Yet, Ricoeur is not a phenomenologist in the original sense of the word, since he regards the immediate comprehension of meaning as a naïve understanding in need of critical interpretation. Distanciation and explanation have this function, and consequently they constitute the epistemological path towards understanding proper and an ontological appropriation. Together, distanciation and appropriation make up a dialectics of difference and identity which, we are convinced, is a new synthesis and the beginning of a modern enlightened humanism that opens up different realities and make old worlds new.

This third part of our thesis is divided into two chapters. In the first chapter we shall discuss Ricoeur's theory of interpretation and metaphor seen as the cornerstone of his hermeneutics of language. We shall ask what distinguishes it from other philosophies of language, and also why we give so much importance to it. We shall argue its value as regards our understanding of literature, since we see in it a possible arbitration of conflicting literary criticisms. And we shall emphasize the importance of the 'other' of the text: the 'same' of meaning is embodied in it.

Our interest in literature will be further developed in the second chapter with the question of creativity in narratives.

While Ricoeur's theory of metaphor focusses upon the linguistic mutations and creative transformations by which language recreates itself, his work on narrativity expands this inventive power of language to include the concept of _plot_. The plot unites within the same temporal and intelligible order a sequence of various heterogeneous events. It thus adds to the new metaphorical configuration of meaning a configuration of significant wholes, construed out of scattered happenings. Both configurations disclose new worlds thanks to the reference of language. But the referent of narrative discourse opens up the referent of poetic discourse onto human action, an action already symbolized over and over again, thus constantly reinterpreted and enriched by narration. Moreover, this human praxis unfolds in time, and its temporal values stress the temporal structures of narration. In Ricoeur's view, time experience, which is usually ignored by structuralists, is the ultimate referent of the narrative mode. Thus his task, as he says to Richard Kearney's in _Dialogues_, is 'to show how the narrative structures of history and of the story (i.e. of the novel or fiction) operate in a parallel fashion to create new forms of human time' (p.20). This draws attention to the fact that time becomes human time when it is shaped by narrative operations. The productive imagination, seen as the real link between metaphor and narrativity, provides poetic models for our shaping of time, which remains invisible in our ordinary experience of it. It also throws a new light upon the dialectics of identity and difference, since, according to Ricoeur, it is only through the story of a life that someone becomes who he is, and finds his identity : 'L'histoire racontée dit le qui de l'action'. (TR3, p.355). He becomes himself through a spiral movement made of differences, of all the scattered and conflicting events, and of all the stories he has told himself

throughout his life. In other words, the ego finds his self by way of its other in texts and narrative. The same dialectics of understanding and explanation, of appropriation and distanciation, sustain both Ricoeur's hermeneutics of language and of story-telling: we follow a story and we appropriate the meaning of a text only through an explanation of its narrative structures. In this part of our thesis we shall not require to investigate the many influences that shape the development of Ricoeur's thought: there is no need for such research on our part, since Ricoeur himself tells us at length where all his new ideas come from. His work on language, narrative and time has led him to a voluminous range of reading that touches on all human sciences. About five hundred authors have been quoted in La métaphore vive and Temps et récit, and their contributions have been openly acknowledged and critically analysed by Ricoeur. We would stress the importance of the concept of appropriation in Ricoeur's personal approach to other people's works, and not only in his hermeneutic circle. An appropriation that is not a taking away from others, in the sense of possession, but on the contrary a value: a dispossession of oneself, whereby we allow the other's ideas to fill us. In so doing, we welcome, listen to and respect the 'Other', and then make our own his ideas by means of our critical judgement. The other's ideas then add to the detour towards self-knowledge. This constitutes the fundamental value recurrent throughout Ricoeur's work: we cannot reach understanding directly and out of nothing. We are incarnate human beings rooted in culture with values and traditions. Concrete thinking starts from these values and from given perspectives, from them we can expand and create with originality. From all his many different and conflicting appropriations, Ricoeur has, in his latest work, reached a maturity of thought. Bringing together time, and

historical and fictional narratives within a threefold dialectics,
he has succeeded in resolving the aporias of time 'poétiquement',
and has therefore opened up the horizon of a new understanding of
being. He has shown how the self can understand itself more
deeply within the historical present, that is a present filled
with projects of action that also fulfil past projects. And he
has stressed that those projects make up the subject-matter of our
stories and histories, through which the self finally finds its
identity: a narrated identity. We would argue that both his values
of depth and clarity are thus fulfilled, as we shall now examine
in detail.

CHAPTER I

A HERMENEUTICS OF LANGUAGE : <u>INTERPRETATION THEORY</u> (1976)
AND <u>LA METAPHORE VIVE</u> (1975)

> '... if there are no rules for
> making good guesses, there
> are methods for validating
> those guesses we do make.'
> (<u>I.T.</u>, p.76)

INTRODUCTION

Despite the hermeneutic 'detour' via symbols and the
mediating signs of language, their linguistic dimension was not made
explicit until later, when Ricoeur took up the challenge of structu-
ralism and confronted it on its own battle ground. In 1973, Ricoeur
gave a series of lectures at the Christian University of Texas, under
the title 'Discourse and the Surplus of Meaning', today the subtitle
of his book <u>Interpretation Theory</u> published in English in 1976.
It was only then that Ricoeur's philosophy of language materialized.
It claimed to offer 'a systematic and comprehensive theory that
attempts to account for the unity of human language in view of the
diverse uses to which it is put' (<u>I.T.</u>, p.vii).

What distinguishes Ricoeur from others in this vast field
of linguistics? First of all, he is not a structuralist but a
'hermeneutist', that is to say, someone who starts from discourse
and not from systems. Secondly his aim is philosophical, it is
self-understanding, now further mediated by the text seen as a work
of language, that Ricoeur tries to comprehend. Ricoeur's basic
question now concerns how we are to interpret the worlds disclosed
by the text, how we are to make this new reality our own in such a
way that we may add a self to our ego. What is 'reality'? His
answer lies in an understanding of the inventive power of language
and in the explanation of its narrative operations. When Ricoeur

came to realize that the meaning of existence is ultimately narrative (that is embedded in stories), that our identity is revealed through narration, he had no other choice but to turn to this 'other' of language as the necessary route to the 'same' of meaning. Yet, his quest for an ontology shows his proximity to phenomenology as well as his distance from the structuralists, although we have already stressed that he is not a phenomenologist as such. In his view, the understanding of being has to be mediated by techniques and methods, and by epistemological explanations. He is convinced that 'expliquer, c'est comprendre mieux' (T.R. I.p.12). We have seen how the importance he gives to method distinguishes him from both Heidegger's and Gadamer's hermeneutics. In fact, Ricoeur's hermeneutics of language is as unique as was his study on psychoanalysis, and also his interpretation of evil through mythic-symbolic language. His originality is in his ability to choose from different and contrasting horizons the modern ingredients necessary to a reinterpretation of old concepts into new and stimulating ones. For example, he was able to break the existing opposition between the concepts of explanation and understanding, and to bring them together into his hermeneutic circle. Moreover, he transformed them into concepts of distanciation and appropriation, thus adding an existential value to the epistemological argument. Also, his attempt to transcend ordinary language, as well as the codes and systems laid out by the structuralists, shows his determination to open up existing concepts by revealing new possibilities and new ways of looking at them. To Richard Kearney, in Dialogues, Ricoeur says that his:

> '... philosophical project is to show how human
> language is inventive despite the objective limits
> and codes which govern it, to reveal the diversity
> and potentiality of language which the erosion of
> the everyday, conditioned by technocratic and
> political interests, never ceases to obscure.'(p.19)

This chapter is divided into three sections which follow closely the key concepts of Ricoeur's theory of language. In the first section, we shall stress that 'language stands as discourse', distinct from system. And since 'only written language fully displays the criteria of discourse' (I.T., p.xi), we shall further discuss Ricoeur's concept of the text, understood as a work of discourse. We shall see how the 'other' of event, and the 'same' of meaning disclosed by the second-order reference of the text, prepare the way to Ricoeur's dialectics of distanciation and appropriation. The second section will examine what we may call the power of metaphoricity of the work of language, with its metaphors and symbols whose structures create new meaning and thus enrich the self. La métaphore vive (1975) will add depth to Interpretation Theory (1976), and to our understanding of the creativity of language whose immanent sense refers to a transcendent reference. And finally, the third section will make explicit the hermeneutic circle of difference and identity, constituted by Ricoeur's dialectics of explanation and understanding. This circle is central to the theory, and we would argue that it is very important, not only in terms of its positive theoritical aspects, but also in terms of its practical function as regards a possible arbitration of contrasting literary criticisms.

We would also argue that our understanding of literature can be enriched by the hermeneutic concepts of distanciation and appropriation.

1 - Language as a 'work' of discourse

> 'For me, the distinction between semantics and semiotics is the key to the whole problem of language.' (I.T., p.8)

It is the distinction between discourse and system, made

by the French linguistician Emile Benveniste, that led Ricoeur to make the distinction between semantics and semiotics. Ricoeur declares that for him 'la sémantique du discours est irréductible à la sémiotique des entités lexicales' (M.V.,p.88). The latter dissociates language into its constituent parts while the former integrates it into larger wholes concerned with meaning. Emile Benveniste makes this distinction in Problèmes de linguistique générale, 1 (1966) by stressing the difference between signs and the sentence:

> '... avec la phrase on quitte le domaine de la
> langue comme système des signes, et l'on entre
> dans un autre univers, celui de la langue comme
> instrument de communication, dont l'expression
> est le discours. Ce sont là vraiment deux
> univers différents, bien qu'ils embrassent la
> même réalité, et ils donnent lieu à deux
> linguistiques différentes ...((p.130)

The sentence is not reducible to its parts because it belongs to a different level, that of discourse. Discourse is the field of the linguistic science of semantics, which provides the springboard for a hermeneutic philosophy. The hermeneutic model is distinct from the structural model, itself the product of the other linguistic science of the sign, semiotics, operating in a closed system and and providing an understanding of structures. The word assures a continuity between those two sciences, since it is at once part of the system of signs and also a meaningful sign of discourse. In Problèmes de linguistique générale, 2 (1974), Benveniste states the difference between the two linguistics as follows:

> 'Le sémiotique (le signe) doit être RECONNU; le
> sémantique (le discours) doit être COMPRIS'
> (pp. 64-65)

Ricoeur develops this difference further in accordance with Benveniste's conceptions of an 'instance' and an 'intended' of discourse. According to Ricoeur they lead to a dialectics of

event and meaning in discourse 'tout discours se produit comme un
événement, mais se laisse comprendre comme sens' (M.V.,p.92).
The 'other' of event, although it immediately vanishes, is funda-
mental throughout Ricoeur's theory of interpretation. The event
of speaking, of reading, of understanding has a temporal existence
that differentiates it from the latent system. Moreover, it points
towards the 'same'; 'the said as such' (I.T., p.9), that is,
towards meaning: there is no meaning without an event, no 'same'
without an 'other'. Meaning has two aspects, one subjective -
what the speaker means - and one objective - what the sentence
means. The objective dimension opens up a new and crucial dialectics,
that of sense and reference. Here, Ricoeur follows Gottlob Frege's
distinction between the 'what' and the 'about what' of discourse,
'the 'what' of discourse is its 'sense', the 'about what' is its
reference' (I.T.,p.19). The sense is immanent in the text,itself a
closed universe of signs, while the reference transcends it towards
an extra-linguistic world:

> 'Dans la langue, il n'y a pas de problème de
> référence: les signes renvoient à d'autres
> signes dans le même système. Avec la phrase, le
> langage sort de lui-même; la référence marque
> la transcendance du langage à lui-même.' (M.V.,p.97)

However, Ricoeur draws attention to the fact that although
the text is objective or, to put it another way, at a distance from
what he considers to be the event of a subjective spoken discourse,
yet it is not an authorless 'object' cut off from discourse. He
clearly disagrees with Derrida on that point:

> 'To hold, as Jacques Derrida does, that writing has
> a root distinct from speech and that this foundation
> has been misunderstood ... is to overlook the grounding
> of both modes of the actualization of discourse in the
> dialectical constitution of discourse.' (I.T.,p.26)

But, having said that, Ricoeur conceptualizes the
difference between speaking and writing by means of his concept of

<u>distanciation</u>. Yes indeed, the text is a work of discourse and communication, 'a discourse told by somebody, said by someone to someone else about something' (<u>I.T.</u>, p.30), but it is also a structured self-contained 'work' similar to a sculpture. In other words, distance is emphasized with the event now surpassed by the meaning inscribed in the text. Ricoeur explains in 'The model of the text' in <u>Social Research</u> (1971) why 'with written discourse, the author's intention and the meaning of the text cease to coincide ... What the text says now matters more than what the author meant to say ...' (p.534). Therefore psychological and textual meanings are dissociated. Moreover, this dissociation leads to another <u>distance</u> between the 'ostensive' reference present in a dialogue, that is a reference that can be shown because it relies on descriptions and shared situations of a 'here and now', and the 'non-ostensive' reference opened up by the text.

Although discourse is now limited by its material fixation, yet it is paradoxically universalized and freed from the narrowness of a given context. Ricoeur acknowledges that, in literature, the abolition of 'ostensive' and descriptive reference can legitimate two opposite attitudes. One is to reduce the text to a worldless entity, to a closed system of signs, an analogon of the code as opposed to the message. The structural literary critic reads the text in this way, which for Ricoeur means 'to prolong the suspension of the ostensive reference and to transfer oneself into the 'place' where the text stands, within the 'enclosure' of this worldless place'. (<u>I.T.</u>,p.81).

But Ricoeur is convinced that this explanatory reduction is incomplete and hence calls for the second attitude which, in his view, adds to the first by imaginatively actualizing the

'non-ostensive' references. These non-descriptive second-order references release other dimensions of our being in the world because of the suspension of the first-order referential intention. They enrich our existential horizon by projecting new ontological possibilities. Ricoeur argues that 'poetic texts speak about the world. But not in a descriptive way ... The effacement of the ostensive and descriptive reference liberates a power of reference to aspects of our being in the world that cannot be said in a direct descriptive way, but only alluded to, thanks to the referential values of metaphoric and, in general, symbolic expressions.' (I.T.,p.37).

This emancipation of the text from the limits of immediate descriptive reference led Ricoeur to Francois Dagognet's concept of 'iconic augmentation', that is to the idea of an increased symbolic meaning condensed within concrete images. Ricoeur explains why such a concept increases meaning: it does so 'by capturing it in the net-work of its abbreviated signs.' (I.T., p.41).

He agrees with Dagognet, and makes his own, the idea that the exteriorization of thought in a material medium augments reality because it condenses it. It is like seeing through a window, that is through a limited space, the vastness of a world. Moreover, Ricoeur takes this idea further by developing in his article 'The function of fiction in shaping reality' in Man and World (1979), the conception of a paradox of 'iconic augmentation', by means of which 'the more imagination deviates from that which is called reality in ordinary language and vision, the more it approaches the heart of the reality which is ... the world into which we have been thrown by birth and within which we try to orient ourselves by projecting our innermost possibilities upon it, in order that we dwell there' (p.139). In other words, Ricoeur argues that what the text discloses, what it

projects in front of it, is something of a different order from speech. The distance, brought about by the idea of an iconic image that increases meaning by concentrating it, adds to ordinary language and conversation something more real than what is normally called reality. It is a <u>productive distance</u> essential to human growth. Moreover, the more abstract the text, the greater the distance with its descriptive reference, and accordingly the greater also the metamorphosis of our immediate world. In turn this metamorphosis of our ordinary vision of the world enriches the self of self-identity. We would argue that the dialectics of difference and identity is itself enlarged and deepened through this process. The distance between the written and the spoken word, as well as between event (present in the act of reading and of understanding) and meaning, gives new depths to the 'same' of meaning in the written text. Indeed, it is now clear that the self cannot know itself without the distanciation brought about by the written word, and, last but not least, without the 'appropriation' that follows. For the act of reading implies an attempt to make our own, that is to appropriate, someone else's horizon, another vision of the world, that enlarges our own. In order to understand this new vision, we need a hermeneutics of the written work of discourse. This hermeneutics transcends the previous interpretation of the double-intentionality of symbols, and expands to the problem posed by the passage from sense to non-descriptive reference.

Such a hermeneutics is rooted in the concept of a hermeneutic circle which, Ricoeur insists, is not vicious, since it remains open. In this open circle, the scientific character of validation and distanciation works in dialectic with our subjective guesses and appropriation. Before examining how such a circle operates in Ricoeur's theory of interpretation, and how the endless

struggle between the 'otherness' of distance and the 'sameness' of self-understanding leads to a creation of meaning, we must first understand the linguistic structure of metaphors and symbols which pave the way to what Ricoeur sees as creativity in language.

2 - Metaphor and Symbol: the surplus of meaning

> '... voir le même dans le différent,
> c'est voir le semblable. Or c'est
> la métaphore qui révèle la structure
> logique du ≪semblable≫, parce que,
> dans l'énoncé métaphorique, le
> ≪semblable≫ est aperçu en dépit de
> la différence, malgré la contra-
> diction.' (M.V., p.249)

Ricoeur draws from I.A. Richards' The Philosophy of Rhetoric (1936) in his rejection of the traditional model of metaphor whereby it was simply a trope, this is to say a word used in place of another word. This substitution of a literal word by a metaphoric word, according to some similarities between the two, could not create meaning, since it only translated the same literal meaning with a figurative word. Hence, it was excluded from the semantics of the sentence. Ricoeur writes :

> '... si en effet le terme métaphorique est un terme
> substitué, l'information fournie par la métaphore
> est nulle, le terme absent pouvant être restitué
> s'il existe; et si l'information est nulle, la
> métaphore n'a qu'une valeur ornementale,
> décorative.' (M.V., p.30)

On the contrary, it is today widely accepted that a metaphor is the outcome of a tension produced within the sentence as a whole, by two incompatible ideas or words. The metaphoric inter- pretation reduces the tension thanks to the appearance of a similarity where ordinary vision does not perceive any relationship. A calculated error that violates the linguistic code, the metaphor twists words and literal interpretations, thus extending into metaphorical meaning. Resemblance plays a major part in the reduction of the tension,

because it brings together things which do not normally go
together. The whole phenomenon is a semantic innovation because
it creates new meaningful relationships. Moreover, this extension
of meaning is also an _event_ of language:

> '... la _torsion_ métaphorique est à la fois un
> événement _et_ une signification, un événement
> signifiant, une signification émergente créée
> par le langage.' (M.V., p.127)

It is within the dialectics of the 'other' of event and the 'same' of
meaning that we see emerge an 'is' and an 'is not' within the 'same'.
The 'is' is a metaphorical 'same', and the 'is not' is a literal
'other', since it is a negation of meaning, yet still meaning in a
'tense' metaphorical dialectics. If a metaphor ceases to tell us
something new about reality and the 'same', then it is no longer 'une
métaphore vive', but a dead metaphor that adds to the polysemy of the
linguistic system. The polysemy of words, whereby words have several
meanings, increases the surplus of meaning in language, and, in
Ricoeur's view, transcends the field of semiotics, because the
screening function necessary to a universal discourse depends on
contexts and sentences. In fact, polysemy points to interpretation
in its most primitive aspects: because all words are polysemic, they
need to be deciphered through an interpretation of their context.

Ricoeur's study on 'La Métaphore et la nouvelle rhétorique'
in La métaphore vive examines, within the framework of French
structuralism, the notions of 'rhetoric degree zero', of 'deviation',
and of 'reduction of deviation'. In his view, semiotics marks the
return to classical rhetoric, with the aim of renewing it. The
difference, however, is that now:

> '... la rhétorique nouvelle se propose explicitement
> de construire la notion de trope sur celle de figure,
> et non l'inverse, et d'édifier directement une
> rhétorique des figures. Le trope pourra donc rester
> ce qu'il était dans l'ancienne rhétorique, c'est-à-dire
> une figure de substitution au niveau du mot. Du moins
> sera-t-il encadré par un concept plus général, celui
> d'écart.' (M.V., p.176)

It would be useful to summarize Ricoeur's answers to the four following questions, in order to trace his own original development as regards the explanatory stage of his hermeneutics of language. Besides, it must be stressed once again that Ricoeur's appropriation of other people's ideas is done very openly and profusely within a dialogue that is extremely productive. It is always from a given contemporary landscape, with its particular arguments and challenges, that Ricoeur frames his own original ideas. His long and detailed study of language demonstrates his constant effort to acquire competence in fields other than philosophy. There is, for Ricoeur, a need to read more and more in order to be able to incorporate, within his hermeneutic circle, as much as possible at the objective explanatory level, and especially with regards to linguistic problems. The bibliography of authors cited in La Métaphore vive (we counted 215) reflects the vastness and depth of his research and stresses Ricoeur's desire to read everything.

The following summary is meant to be not only an explanation of Ricoeur's argument as regards what he calls the 'new rhetoric', but also an example of the way Ricoeur appropriates Others' ideas. Moreover, it demonstrates our assertion that there is no need for us to research into the influences of other people on Ricoeur's thought. He himself tells us at great length what those influences are, where they come from and why they are important to him. He himself provides his own intellectual background.

The four questions are: from what is there a deviation? What are we to understand by the word 'deviation'? Is not the reduction of deviation more important than deviation itself? And since the criterion of deviation belongs to the unconscious, how is meaning linked to such an infra-linguistic process?

Firstly, to the question regarding 'the deviation', understood in terms of what Ricoeur calls the degree zero of rhetoric.

It is an extremely important concept since everybody agrees that
'il n'y a langage figuré que si l'on peut l'opposer à un autre
langage qui ne l'est pas' (M.V.,p.178), Ricoeur proposes three
answers. He draws from Gérard Genette's Figures I (1966), the idea
of a deviation between 'real' and 'virtual' language, assessed by
the self awareness of the speaker. But this deviation implies that
each figure can be 'translated': the absent word can be restored.
And for Ricoeur 'ce langage virtuel n'est pas restituable par une
traduction au niveau des mots, mais par une interprétation au niveau
de la phrase' (M.V., p.180). Hence he remains critical. From Jean
Cohen's Structure du langage poétique (1966), Ricoeur retains the idea
of a relative degree zero in relation to scientific language, which can
be measured. But Ricoeur remarks that the measurement of deviations
does not replace the consciousness we have of them. Once again he is
critical.

And from the Groupe μ S (Centre d'études poétiques, Univer-
sité de Liège) Rhétorique générale (1970), Ricoeur gets the idea that
the degree zero is 'constructed' at an infra-linguistic level, and
therefore does not coincide with that which we experience in discourse.
Again, Ricoeur remains critical. He notes:

> 'La solution du problème de l'écart à un plan infra-
> linguistique ne se substitue ... pas à sa description
> au plan de manifestation du discours; à ce plan, la
> rhétorique a besoin de repérer un degré zéro pratique
> dans le langage lui-même.' (M.V., p.184)

We would argue that it is as if the 'other' of the unconscious code
has reduced to itself the 'same' of conscious meaning. Deviation
emphasizes difference at the expense of identity.

But then, what does 'deviation' mean? Ricoeur draws once
more from Genette's work, in order to answer this second question.
Both the ideas of distanciation within language, of a 'from ... to',
and of configuration that gives form and visibility to the virtual
system, are retained by Ricoeur. He accepts 'l'idée d'une opacité
du discours centré sur lui-même, l'idée que les figures rendent
visible le discours' (M.V., p.190). Put it another way, he
acknowledges the 'other' of discourse, but he also disagrees now

with the abolition of reference, of the 'same'. He explains as
follows:

> 'On pose ... que la suspension de la fonction référen-
> tielle, telle qu'elle est exercée dans le discours
> ordinaire, implique l'abolition de toute fonction
> référentielle; reste à la littérature de se
> signifier elle-même.' (M.V., p.190)

Such a decision, Ricoeur argues, transcends the field of linguistics
because it concerns the meaning of reality, itself a matter for
philosophy. We see in practice how Ricoeur's critical appropriation
of others' ideas works, as a 'yes' and 'no'.

The third question, which deals with the reduction of
deviation caused by what Ricoeur calls a 'transgression de règle'
(M.V., p.192), brings Ricoeur back to Jean Cohen's work. Ricoeur
takes up the idea that there is semantic deviation when words are
interpreted literally. Metaphor reduces this by producing another
deviation in the lexical code, when it changes the meaning of one
of the words. Those two complementary deviations belong to different
linguistic levels: the first is syntagmatic, that is on a level where
signs are side by side in succession, and the second that violates the
linguistic code is paradigmatic. On that level, signs form a reser-
voir of meaning within a system. Speech takes over language in order
to save meaning. But Ricoeur finds this analysis again incomplete,
because in it metaphor remains within the paradigmatic order of words:

> '... la théorie contient une grave omission, celle
> de la nouvelle pertinence, proprement syntagmatique,
> dont l'écart paradigmatique est seulement l'envers.'
> (M.V.,p.198)

Consequently, Ricoeur develops Cohen. He adds to Cohen's statement
that the poet works on the message in order to change the code, the
opposite assertion that 'le poète change la langue pour agir sur le
message' (M.V.,p.198). The idea is to stress meaning, the 'same',
rather than the 'other' of system.

Ricoeur is critical of this omission of the importance of
meaning in the sentence, since he sees in it a denial of the referen-
tial and heuristic values of metaphor, a denial of the 'same'. He is
convinced that 'la métaphore est une novation sémantique à la fois
d'ordre prédicatif, (nouvelle pertinence) et d'ordre lexical (écart

paradigmatique)' (M.V. p.201). In other words, metaphor creates meaning at the level of the whole sentence.

Hence the last question, which brings about the problems of the relationship between the theories of word-metaphor, of trope, and of statement-metaphor that operates within the sentence as a whole, Ricoeur investigates in depth the operations of the analysis of signs that govern meaning at the infra-linguistic level, and he succeeds in establishing that 'l'indéniable subtilité de la nouvelle rhétorique s'épuise entièrement dans un cadre théorique qui méconnaît la specificité de la métaphore-énoncé et se borne à confirmer le primat de la métaphore-mot' (M.V., p.9). Or, to put it another way, Ricoeur's interpretation shows how semiotics works within the realm of difference, of the 'other', without much concern for the 'same' of meaning.

From this previous analysis of Ricoeur's critical approach and subsequent appropriation of the structuralists' ideas, we shall draw attention to the importance of his dialectics of distanciation and appropriation. His investigation into the structural aspects of metaphor stresses in a forceful way the importance of distancia-tion, not only as a theory that fits within a hermeneutic circle, but also in practice, as a method typical of Ricoeur's own way of thinking. His critical analysis brings distance. Also, the linguistic approach is one of distance and difference, since it eliminates any reference to the speaking subject. The outcome is that the 'same' of meaning, of metaphorical and heuristic meaning, is made redundant. This phenomenon seems to be similar to the nihilist tendency in contemporary French philosophy: it overstresses difference to the point of reducing identity. Ricoeur is critical of both approaches and consequently solves the problem himself by the equilibrium of his dialectics of distanciation and appropriation, as we shall see in the following section of this chapter.

Symbols, with their surplus of meaning, add to metaphors by providing them with roots. We know from our previous study of La Symbolique du mal that symbols have an excess of signification, and are creative because they give rise to thought. But their linguistic dimension must be stressed, even though their semantic moment constantly refers back to the non-semantic which is bound to the cosmic, the psychic, and the poetic vision of pre-linguistic experience. Ricoeur sees in them the roots of metaphors, 'on the dividing line between bios and logos', while metaphors belong to 'the already purified universe of the logos' (I.T.,p.58). They have meaning according to a logic of correspondence springing from lived experience and expressed within the semantic structure of discourse. For example, the earth and sky point to the union of male and female, while the fecundity of the earth refers to the mother's womb, the sowing of grain to burial, the return of spring to birth and new life, and so on. They assimilate different things and in the process also assimilate us to what they signify. The 'same' and the 'other' here fuse in symbolic meaning.

This depth of symbolism constitutes what Ricoeur calls 'a reservoir of meaning whose metaphoric potential is yet to be spoken' (I.T.,p.65). This is why the metaphor 'brings to language the implicit semantics of the symbol' (I.T.,p.69), and in doing so it augments our vision of the world and our understanding of reality.

But how can metaphors actually extend meaning and redescribe reality? Or in other words, what is the concept at work in metaphors? And even more important, what is reality? As regards the metaphorical process that redescribes reality, Ricoeur demonstrates, in La Métaphore vive, how the emergence of metaphorical meaning is accompanied by the emergence of a new metaphorical, or

second degree, reference. Not only the literal meaning, but also the literal reference of ordinary language are left behind. This is to say that the suspension of a literal 'other' made of literal sense and descriptive reference gives way to a metaphorical 'same' with its metaphorical sense and its non-descriptive reference. Ricoeur explains:

> 'De même que l'énoncé métaphorique est celui qui conquiert son sens comme métaphorique sur les ruines du sens littéral, il est aussi celui qui acquiert sa référence sur les ruines de ce qu'on peut appeler, par symétrie, sa référence littérale.' (M.V.,p.278)

Moreover, Ricoeur extends this emergence of meaning at the level of the sentence to poetic discourse and literature, thus transforming the metaphor into a poem in miniature. Consequently he argues that 'la métaphore se présente alors comme une stratégie de discours qui, en préservant et développant la puissance créatrice du langage, préserve et développe le pouvoir heuristique déployé par la fiction.' (M.V.,p.10). In addition, Ricoeur makes use of Max Black's Models and Metaphors (1962), so as to extend further the emergence of metaphorical meaning to models. He declares that 'la métaphore est au langage poétique ce que le modèle est au langage scientifique quant à la relation au réel.' (M.V.,p.302). They both redescribe the world. This extension of the theory of metaphor to the explanatory function of models opposes any dichotomy between poetic and epistemological imagination. Both aim at seeing things in a different way. Theoretical models construe imaginary objects that can be described, and whose properties correspond to a reality too difficult to describe. To that purpose, language is changed. Or in other words, as Ricoeur explains, those models 'ne sont pas du tout des choses, ils introduisent plutôt un langage nouveau ... dans lequel l'original est décrit sans être construit.' (M.V.,p.304). And Ricoeur insists that this recourse to scientific imagination

is not a failure of reason, but rather a rational way of trying
out new possibilities on something that can be described. Imagi-
nation and reason work together by means of the rules of
correlation between the original reality and the model that is
described. The logic of discovery at work in the process leads
to new connections between the 'other' of models and the 'same' of
reality, it leads to a creation of new meaning. And in turn,
models provide metaphors with an account of the concept of the
productive reference. Because they are models for redescribing
reality at an epistemological level, they show through their
double movement of transference of heuristic fiction to reality
and of the redescription that follows, how fictions operate a
metamorphosis of reality, and not a mere copy of it. In turn this
reality becomes more real than appearances. Yet, what is reality?
Ricoeur argues that it is an experience in which 'inventer et
découvrir cessent de s'opposer et où créer et révéler coïncident'
(M.V.,p.310). And not only do metaphor, and model, contribute
towards this experience, but, in Ricoeur's view, also utopia, the
'not ... yet' of political history in dialectics with the 'already-
there' of our cultural ideologies. Ricoeur emphasizes the values
of utopia: it adds meaning, symbolic meaning directed towards the
future. Something like a telos, it completes in a positive way the
symbolic confirmation of the past, of our cultural arche, from where
we get a sense of identity and of social integration. Ricoeur
writes on utopia in his article 'Ideology and utopia as cultural
imagination' in Philosophic Exchange, 2 (1976):

> 'From this 'no-place', an exterior glance is cast on
> our reality, which suddenly looks strange, nothing
> more being taken for granted. The field of the
> possible is now opened beyond that of the actual, a
> field for alternative ways of living.' (p. 25)

In other words, the power of imagination at work beyond the given of political ideologies can liberate them from the dangers of static repetition and sterile glorification, in a way similar to the work of the living metaphor that recreates both language and meaning, or to the work of the heuristic model that opens up new realities. Which reality? How are we to grasp such a concept? The concept of 'vérité métaphorique, qui préserve le « n'est pas » dans le « est » ' (M.V., p.313) designates this reality. It implies the idea of tension between two interpretations, between identity and difference, and also within the verb 'to be' itself, which 'is' and 'is not'. Ricoeur insists that both the existential 'is not' - the 'other' - and the 'is' - the 'same' - must be retained in dialectical tension. If it is not, then the metaphor itself is lost, in the same way the symbol is lost if we 'translate' the first intentionality into the second. There is a non-translatability within the dual structure of symbols, metaphors and models. The metaphorical truth is therefore a paradox: because meaning is at once an 'is not' (an 'other'), and an 'is' (a 'same'), the literal reference is only in tension with the metaphorical reference. It follows that the notion of truth itself is 'tensive', since, according to Ricoeur, it is dependant upon reference, that is upon the conflicting dialectics inherent to the structure of the metaphor, a structure in which distance is preserved within identity while identity dwells within difference.

And because this tensive truth discloses reality, Ricoeur sets out to recover the philosophy implicit in the concept of metaphorical reference. It must be remembered that this is what distinguishes Ricoeur from linguists, literary critics, structuralists or logicians. He believes that metaphor, like symbol, gives rise to thought: 'le discours spéculatif a sa possibilité dans le dynamisme sémantique de l'énonciation métaphorique' (M.V.,p.375).

His question is how can the philosophical concept of reality be disclosed through such tension? Can we grasp it as a conceptual gain when it is so deeply rooted in conflict? The answer is no: the gain in meaning remains caught <u>within</u> the conflict of identity and difference. Ricoeur explains as follows:

> 'Or, en disant que ceci est (comme) cela ...
> l'assimilation n'atteint pas le niveau de l'identité
> de sens. Le << semblable >> reste en défaut par
> rapport au << même >>. Voir le semblable ... c'est
> appréhender le << même >> dans et malgré la << différence >>
> ... le gain en signification n'est pas porté au concept,
> dans la mesure où il demeure pris dans ce conflit du
> << même >> et du << différent >>, bien qu'il constitue l'ébauche
> et la demande d'une instruction par le concept.'
> (<u>M.V.</u>,p.376)

Consequently, Ricoeur emphasizes the irreducible <u>difference</u>, despite the complementarity, of the 'same' of semantics, an <u>epistemological</u> 'same' that sustains the metaphorical truth, and the <u>ontological</u> 'same' of hermeneutics and of reflective thought that tries to conceptualize meaning:

> 'le discours spéculatif a sa <u>nécessité</u> en lui-même,
> dans la mise en oeuvre des ressources d'articulation
> conceptuelle qui sans doute tiennent à l'esprit lui-
> même, qui sont l'esprit lui-même se réfléchissant.'
> (<u>M.V.</u>,p.375)

Within this new <u>ontological dialectics</u> the epistemological 'same', then an <u>explanatory</u> step towards the ontological, becomes an ontological 'other'. Hence semantics now becomes an 'other' in this new dialectics. Ricoeur further distinguishes between the 'similar' and the 'same'. The 'same' stands for the intellectual concept, for 'un sens << un et le même >> ' (<u>M.V.</u>, p.381), while the 'similar' characterizes the world of imagination.

> 'Si l'<u>imaginatio</u> est le règne du << semblable >>,
> l'<u>intellectio</u> est celui du << même >>. Dans l'horizon
> ouvert par le spéculatif, le << même >> fonde le
> << semblable >> et non l'inverse.' (<u>M.V.</u>,p.381).

The 'similar' already implies a dialectics of difference and identity. We have seen this dialectics at work throughout the

writings of Ricoeur: it illustrates the importance of distance

and _imagination_ in his thought. Moreover, Ricoeur thinks that our

understanding of the 'similar' is possible only because we have

an _intellectual_ conception of what is identity. This in turn

stresses a second dialectics between the 'similar' of imagination

and the 'same' of conceptualized meaning. In other words, the only

route towards the concept of reality is dialectical. It adds

distance to the experience of belonging and thus is in need of

interpretation. The 'similar', neither the 'same' nor the 'other'

but both in dialectics, refers to the hermeneutic circle of distan-

ciation and appropriation that leads towards the conceptual and

ontological 'same'. Hermeneutics itself rooted in the realm of the

'same', deals with the 'similar', trying to differentiate between

the 'same' and the 'other', between the ontological concept and

the epistemological metaphor. This is how Ricoeur now defines

hermeneutics:

> '... l'interprétation répond à la fois à la notion
> du concept et à celle de l'intention constituante
> de l'expérience qui cherche à se dire sur le mode
> métaphorique ... C'est donc un discours mixte ...
> D'un côté elle veut la clarté du concept - de
> l'autre ... le dynamisme de la signification que
> le concept arrête et fixe.' (M.V.,p.383)

This is why hermeneutics is creative and, indeed, vivifying, like

the 'métaphore vive'. Situated between the 'same' of concept and

the 'other' of metaphor (an epistemological 'same' that has become

an ontological 'other') in the new _ontological_ dialectics of

difference and identity, this philosophical method forces meta-

phor to _disclose more_, and reflective philosophy to _think more_.

Yet how does it clarify the concept of reality? Ricoeur writes,

'par une explicitation ontologique du postulat de la référence'

(M.V.,p.384), since the signification of reference, rooted in

the pre-reflective, is meaningful only in the discourse of being.
We have seen how the split reference offers a 'conception
≪ tensionnelle ≫ de la vérité' (M.V.,p.398) a tension between
identity and difference, between the 'is' and the 'is not'.
Reference therefore reveals beneath speculative questioning a
dialectics of <u>appropriation and distanciation</u> made explicit by
reflective hermeneutics. Ricoeur explains how the literary text, as a
work 'préfigure la distanciation que la pensée spéculative porte à
son plus haut degré de réflexion' (M.V.,p.399), while it also
expresses 'l'expérience d'<u>appartenance</u> qui inclut l'homme dans le
discours et le discours dans l'être' (M.V.,p.398). It must be
stressed that, in Ricoeur's view, only a hermeneutic philosophy
can decipher, within the metaphorical truth, itself 'tensive', such
a <u>dialectical and tensive concept of reality</u> that oscillates endlessly
between distance and appropriation. Moreover this reality, constantly
revealing itself and thus continuously enlarging our horizons,
cannot be fully conceptualized - absolute knowledge is not possible -
because of its conflicting structure. By definition, a dialectical
phenomenon is always in movement, always changing. And such a
<u>productive dynamism,</u> a value for Ricoeur since it is the equivalent
of life, cannot be fixed in a system. It follows that Ricoeur's
ontology can only attain to a fragmented and incomplete definition
of being and reality. The dialectics at the source of this philoso-
phical finitude will now constitute the subject matter of our third
section.

3 - <u>The hermeneutic circle of Explanation and Understanding</u>

> 'What decenters ourselves is also what
> brings us back to ourselves. So we see
> the paradox.' ('Ideology and Utopia as
> Cultural Imagination', p.27)

This paradox of human reality is once more rooted in the

dialectics of event and meaning. For Ricoeur, understanding a
literary 'work' is an event by which we try to comprehend the text
as a whole, as a structured totality. On the other hand, explana-
tion focusses on the meaning we need to 'ex-plicate', that is
objectify, so that we may unfold it. And because both understanding
and explanation belong to the same dialectics of event and meaning,
they themselves form a similar reciprocal dialectics that eludes,
in Ricoeur's view, the old dualistic conflict of previous hermeneutics.
Ricoeur explains how, in Romanticist hermeneutics, understanding was
seen as a subjective phenomenon which had to do with someone else's
psychic life, while explanation was simply expelled from the human
sciences. In more recent hermeneutics and particularly Gadamer's,
there is still an alternative between objective alienation and
participation, by which the truth of understanding is confronted to
the method of analytical explanations. For Ricoeur, both problems
of method and truth are important. Consequently he clearly distances
himself from these approaches. Ricoeur's aim is to counter what he
judges to be misleading theories by validating the abstract and
objective moment of interpretation. The text can, and must, be
submitted to explanatory operations. But Ricoeur draws attention to
the fact that explanation is not an end in itself. It works within
a wider conceptual framework whereby it is only a mediation in view
of a deeper understanding, and ultimately in view of an understanding
of self and being. We here stress Ricoeur's values as regards self-
understanding: it is not immediate and cannot be, since it requires
the detour of an epistemological explanation. And, on the other
hand, epistemological knowledge cannot, in itself, satisfy man.
More reflection as regards its value and its meaning-for-me is needed.
In other words concrete reflective philosophy, for Ricoeur the only
philosophy he really values, since the only one capable of answering

in some depth our human needs for self-understanding, is dialec-
tical: it includes difference, and with it all methods and
explanatory analyses we can have, and identity, whereby we under-
stand ourself as a self through our consciousness of the non-self,
the 'other'.

Ricoeur explains the dialectical process 'as a move from
understanding to explaining and ... from explanation to comprehen-
sion' (I.T.,p.74). We must emphasize Ricoeur's use of language, by
which he revalues our ordinary words as well as make up new ones,
in order to achieve better accuracy in the expression of his ideas.
This explains why his philosophy is often difficult to grasp at
first reading. Here we see the subtle difference between the idea
of immediate grasping of understanding, and the act of holding and
of making our own what we understand, that is of comprehending.

How do we pass from naive understanding to comprehension -
or understanding proper? It would be useful to summarize Ricoeur's
dialectics in terms of guessing and validation.

Firstly, understanding is seen by Ricoeur as a naive
guessing 'of the meaning of the text as a whole' (I.T.,p.74). It
becomes comprehension only when enriched and validated by the
mediation of 'explanatory procedures', which operate a distanciation,
vis-à-vis the objective 'work' of discourse. The text is objective,
and thus can be explained, thanks to four traits which Ricoeur
summarizes as follows in his article 'The model of the text' in
Social Research (1971), (1) the fixation of the meaning, (2) its
dissociation from the mental intention of the author, (3) the display
of non-ostensive references, and (4) the universal range of its
addressees' (p.546).

We make sense of this semantic autonomy first by guessing.
And Ricoeur notes that 'if there are no rules for making good

guesses, there are methods for validating those guesses we do make.'
(I.T.,p.76). What do we guess? In a purely subjective approach,
we grasp what is important for-me in the text as a whole. We also
note the singularity of the text, its genre and structure, and
finally we decipher the various layers of meaning conveyed by
metaphoric and symbolic references.

Secondly, what are the procedures of validation? Ricoeur
stresses that they follow a logic of qualitative probability, and
not of scientific verification. He understands validation to be
'an argumentative discipline comparable to the 'juridicial
procedures used in legal interpretation' (I.T.,p.78). Therefore
Ricoeur argues, in 'The Model of the Text', that 'the method of
conveyance of indices, typical of the logic of subjective probability,
gives a firm basis for a science of the individual' (p.549). This
method leads to a scientific knowledge of the text because the text
is seen as a 'quasi-individual'. Both a subjective and an objective
approach to the text, guess and validation, understanding and
explanation, enter, according to Ricoeur's values, into a circular
dialectics, that is into a hermeneutic circle which remains open
(it is not a vicious circle), since there is room for invalidation
and for conflicting interpretations, with some interpretations more
probable than others. Because not all interpretations are equal,
Ricoeur thinks that 'it is always possible to argue for or against
an interpretation, to confront interpretations, to arbitrate between
them and to seek agreement, even if this agreement remains beyond
our immediate reach.' (I.T.,p.79).

Once again, this shows Ricoeur's values, his open-
minded attitude that listens and pays great attention to conflicting
interpretations, a theme recurrent throughout his work. We stress
the importance of the conception of arbitration for literary

criticism. We shall argue that there are so many apparently
conflicting theories, all claiming to hold the truth in their
interpretation of literary texts, that it is important we arbitrate
between them, by challenging each one with opposite points of view,
and bearing in mind the possibility of appealing against previous
judgements. This polemical character of validation, another value
in Ricoeur's critical approach to other people's works, as well as in
his own thought, could be, we are convinced, extremely enriching
and creative for a fuller understanding of literature. This is so
because it is within the conflict of interpretations that we discover
the being of the text we are trying to understand. Indeed, just as
we understood the metaphorical reference and discovered the new
metaphorical being within the tension between the 'is' and the
'is not', we also find the reality of texts within tensive interpre-
tations, whereby it also becomes a tensive reality. However, we
draw attention to the fact that although Ricoeur favours the idea
of a process of argumentation - in which the intentions of the
author have no special part - yet he does not give, in any specific
detail, the techniques as to how we are to arbitrate. All he says
is that we are following a logic of probability similar to the one
used in legal interpretation. In other words, he lays down ideas
from a purely philosophical standpoint. It is then up to the critic
to take up those ideas and develop the relevant techniques
accordingly.

From the previous analysis, we stress the importance of
difference and of explanation in Ricoeur's hermeneutics. But the
question now is how to move back from the text, grasped in terms of
sense immanent in structure, to comprehension. Ricoeur firmly
believes that it is by following the movement of text 'from sense to

reference: from what it says, to what it talks about' (I.T.,p.88).

He takes the explanation of metaphor, grasped as a text in miniature,

as a guide towards comprehension. In his article 'Metaphor and the

problem of hermeneutics', in John Thompson's Paul Ricoeur, he

states, 'The explanation of metaphor, as a local event in the text,

contributes to the interpretation of the work as a whole' (p.180).

And in turn the interpretation of the text throws light upon the

interpretation of metaphor as the contextual meaning does on a

word: 'The interpretation of local metaphors is illuminated by the

interpretation of the text as a whole and by the clarification of

the kind of world which the work projects' (ibid.,p.180). Both text

and metaphor share the dialectics of sense and reference, since

both open up to semantic innovation. Metaphor does so when its

literal meaning, which points to a first order reference, is trans-

formed into the metaphorical sense that further discloses a non-

descriptive heuristic reference. The same process happens in the

text thanks to the analogy between text and metaphor. Yet Ricoeur

reminds us that, in literary work, 'a complete abstraction of the

surrounding reality' (I.T.,p.80) leads to a suspension of reference

altogether, and with it, to two possible ways of reading, as

mentioned earlier. One, the structural approach, is justified,

because of this disappearance of reference. But Ricoeur argues

that if metaphor, like the text, is the work of an imagination

capable of seeing the 'similar', then the text cannot simply be a

'bundle of relations'. As we know, Ricoeur is critical of Lévi-

Strauss' reductive approach to myths. He comments : 'we can indeed

say that we have explained the myth, but not that we have inter-

preted it' (I.T.,p.84). Of Roland Barthes' work on the narrative of

folklore, he adds, 'There is nothing beyond the three levels of

actions, actors and narration that falls within the semiological

approach' (I.T.,p.85)

This shows Ricoeur's values as regards narrative: a text ought to tell us something about ourselves, it must lead to self-understanding. It cannot simply be about explanation, about 'the construction of a network of interactions which constitutes the context as actual and unique'. Such construction is indeed important, it is 'the means by which all of the words taken together make sense' ('Metaphor and the problem of hermeneutics', ibid., p.174). But it is important only as a first step, in dialectics with understanding. Moreover, Ricoeur is convinced that structural analysis signifies only because it already presupposes an existential meaning. It might succeed in repressing this meaning, but it cannot suppress it. We would argue that Ricoeur is very much a 'post-structuralist', particularly when he declares, in 'The Model of the text': 'Structural analysis, far from getting rid of this radical questioning, restores it at a level of higher radicality' (p. 557). In other words, the structuralist approach leads interpretation from a 'surface-semantics' at the level of narration, to a 'depth-semantics' which discloses the ultimate non-ostensive reference of the text. Ricoeur declares:

> 'I really believe that if such were not
> the function of structural analysis,
> it would be reduced to a sterile game,
> a devisive algebra. If, on the con-
> trary, we consider structural
> analysis as a stage - and a necessary
> one - between a naive interpretation
> and a critical interpretation, between
> a surface-interpretation and a depth-
> interpretation, then it would be
> possible to locate explanation and
> understanding at two different stages
> of a unique hermeneutical arc.'
> (ibid., p.557).

Ricoeur's appropriation of semiotics, seen as a stage between understanding and comprehension, rather than a useless game, stresses once more how much he values those explanatory methods and

mediations: they pave the way towards his major philosophical aim, towards an ontology of human reality. Together with understanding they make up the hermeneutic circle. We would argue that this arc is, in fact, a _spiral_ which contains the apprehension of projected worlds as well as the progress of self-understanding in the presence of these new possibilities. It encompasses the dialectics of difference and identity in its most intense moment, with a _split_ centre: the split _cogito_, made of an _arche_ and a _telos_, and now enlarged with a split metaphorical truth, and with a reality which at once 'is' and 'is not' in a paradoxical way. This reality stresses the existential moment of the hermeneutic spiral, when understanding becomes _appropriation._ This moment is reached when, following the movement from structural explanation to depth-interpretation, we unfold the non-ostensive reference of the text disclosed in front of it - and not hidden behind in the author and his situation. This ontological reference reveals new possible worlds and therefore creates new modes of being, new ways of thinking and of seeing the world. Understanding becomes appropriation when the revelation is at the same time a self-creation and a self-understanding. The analogy between text and metaphor, and the construction of a metaphorical and symbolic network, provide a technical path towards such a disclosure. But we have argued again and again that techniques as such are not Ricoeur's problem, rather the critic's. Ricoeur is concerned with techniques only as a way towards values, towards an appropriation of the world that is self-fulfilling.

Indeed, these techniques belong to the explanation of sense immanent in the internal constitution of the text, and are only a mediation towards the recovery of meaning opened up by the text. As for the recovery, it transcends understanding, since it

is a recovery by someone who appropriates someone else's horizon, another vision of the world, and makes it his own. Appropriation is the existential counterpart of understanding, when we go from understanding to self-understanding, and make our own a reality which was previously foreign. In the same way, the dialectics of distanciation and appropriation constitutes the existential counter-part of the epistemological dialectics of explanation and under-standing. The concept of distanciation implies the idea of a distance that is not 'simply a fact, a given', not just a gap, but more important a dialectics, 'a struggle between the otherness that transforms all spatial and temporal distance into cultural estrangement and the ownness by which all understanding aims at the extension of self-understanding.' (I.T.,p.43). In other words, we would argue that distanciation is the tensive distance between the 'other' and the 'same' of being, between the 'is not' and the 'is'. And interpretation, understood in its philosophical dimension of concrete reflection, culminates in the act of appro-priation of this distanciation by means of which the different becomes a conceptualized 'same' that does not lose its difference. Hence we argue that interpretation is an attempt to make distance productive by creating 'a new proximity which suppresses and preserves the cultural distance and includes the otherness within the ownness' (I.T.,p.43).

Besides, because we have stressed, in the second section of this chapter, the difference between imagination, whose kingdom is the 'similar', and the intellect which deals with the 'same' of meaning, we shall now argue that an identical dialectics is recurring between interpretation and distanciation. Interpretation focusses on the objectivity of meaning that can be identified as one and the 'same', while distanciation operates between the 'other' of cultural

estrangement and the 'same' that tries to bridge such a distance.
Moreover, the act of appropriation transforms both interpretation,
grasped as an intellectual exercise, and distanciation, into an
existential event through the actualization of the meaning of the
text-for-me in the here and now. We stress that Ricoeur's aims
and values are fundamentally existential, they deal with the
being of man in culture and action, though his methods are highly
complex and basically dialectical. And appropriation is itself the
most important value in Ricoeur's hermeneutic circle. We have seen
how he makes use of it in his own work. It becomes a value rather
than just a concept because it is a self-creation, and above all
because this act of creation is basically a dispossession of the
self rather than a possession. Indeed, it demands from the reader
a 'letting go' so that he may become receptive to the disclosure
of new possibility offered by the text. Ricoeur explains this
idea of creative relinquishment in 'Appropriation', in John
Thompson's Paul Ricoeur:

> 'Relinquishment is a fundamental moment of appropria-
> tion and distinguishes it from any form of 'taking
> possession'. Appropriation is also and primarily a
> 'letting-go' ... How can this letting-go, this
> relinquishment, be incorporated into appropriation?
> Essentially by linking appropriation to the revelatory
> power of the text ... It is in allowing itself to be
> carried off towards the reference of the text that
> the ego divests itself of itself.' (p.191).

In doing so, in accepting to follow the 'arrows' of sense, and in
subordinating the subject to objective meaning, the narcissistic
ego actually finds a self. The immediate consciousness now
mediated by the text and the process of distanciation is on its
way to self-understanding. We remember from Ricoeur's debate with
Freud that consciousness is not a 'given', but a 'task'. In the
same way, the literary text is another necessary mediation to such

a task, itself a value since it leads to self-understanding. The disclosure by the text of new modes of being enlarges the ego, in its capacity of self-projection into that 'other' of text, by which he receives someone else's projected horizon. The fusion of horizons that follows is bound to widen the spiral made of difference and identity, and does indeed justify Ricoeur's definition of literature: 'literature is that use of discourse where several things are specified at the same time and where the reader is not required to choose among them. It is the positive and productive use of ambiguity.' (I.T.,p.47), it is par excellence distance made productive!

Conclusion

This chapter is central to the argument of this thesis. We have seen how, from the original dialectics of the 'other' of semiotics and the 'same' of semantics, Ricoeur developed a series of similar dialectics. Firstly, from the science of semantics, we stressed the emergence of the fundamental dialectics of the fleeting 'other' of event and the 'same' of meaning in discourse. Secondly, from the 'same' of meaning in its objective dimension, of the said as such, emerged another dialectics between the 'what' of discourse, the sense immanent in discourse, an 'other' within the epistemological 'same', and the 'about what', the extra-linguistic reference, the ontological 'same' of the 'same' of meaning. In other words, the epistemological dialectics of event and meaning disclosed an ontological dialectics between sense and ostensive reference in meaning. Thirdly, the dialectics of event and meaning, interpreted in terms of speaking and writing, focussed on the written meaning in the text. With the phenomenon of distanciation and the loss of the ostensive reference of the dialogical situation,

Ricoeur duplicated the ontological dialectics of sense and ostensive reference into a dialectics of sense and non-ostensive reference. To the 'other' of the text in which, according to the structural critic, sense is embedded in a closed, worldless system of signs, corresponded the 'same' of non-ostensive second-order reference, released by the suspension of first-order referential intentions. The intensity of this second ontological 'same' of the written message that comes out of the epistemological 'other' of code, was said to be increased by its condensation into the material medium of language. We drew attention to the fact that, paradoxically, the greater the distance between ostensive and non-ostensive references, the more intense and more real the disclosure of new possible worlds. Consequently we argued that the difference between ostensive and non-ostensive references was a productive distance which enriched the self. We, indeed, stress this important aspect of a productive and creative distance between difference and identity. It is central to the argument of this thesis and we shall come back to it. Diagram (1) - see page 279 - illustrates the development of the four dialectics that constitute Ricoeur's theory of language.

Ricoeur's theory of metaphor further enriched the dialectics of event and meaning which constitutes the framework of his theory of interpretation. We entered into the heart of the argument with a quotation from Ricoeur, which stated that to see the 'similar' is to see the 'same' within the 'other' despite the metaphorical tension. The semiotic approach typical of structural analysis was studied in conflict with the hermeneutic approach. We examined Ricoeur's interpretation of the structural concept of 'deviation' in its relation to meaning, and we emphasized the failure of semiotics to transcent the level of rhetoric and word

substitution, and thus to move from word-metaphor to the level of statement-metaphor where semantic innovation takes place. In our view, it became clear that difference had developed at the expense of identity. The 'other' of the unconscious and virtual code was deprived of a dialectics with the conscious 'same' that characterizes a speaking subject. This semiological choice drew attention to the importance of difference and distance at the epistemological level of the human sciences. We would argue that this state of affairs cannot explain the whole of human language: it only remains a limited though necessary step within a wider hermeneutic circle which includes a subject, even though this is a split and wounded cogito. On the other hand, Ricoeur's hermeneutics revealed a tensive metaphorical truth that led to the disclosure of a 'split' reality. We examined how the emergence of metaphorical meaning added a new dialectics between metaphorical sense and metaphorical reference, to the dialectics of literal sense and literal reference of ordinary language.

Consequently, the 'same' of metaphorical meaning revealed a tension between two existential interpretations, between the literal 'other' of metaphorical meaning, the 'is not', in dialectic with the metaphorical 'same' (now the new meaning), the 'is'. But, as in the case of symbols, whereby the literal 'other' and the symbolic 'same' fuse together in symbolic meaning without one being translated into the other, both the metaphorical 'is' and the literal 'is not' were understood together in a tensional metaphorical truth. In other words, difference was preserved within identity, and vice versa, between a literal and a metaphorical non-ostensive reference. Diagram (2) shows these two new dialectics that follow from diagram (1). They are ontological dialectics

between two kinds of reality, one immediate and the other not, and as before, the greater the <u>distance</u> between these realities, the more <u>productive</u> the meaning, and the more difficult the conceptualization of this meaning.

Indeed, Ricoeur admitted to the irreducible <u>difference</u> between the 'other' of semantics that sustains the metaphorical tension, and the 'same' of philosophy that conceptualizes meaning. And to illustrate this difference he distinguished between the realms of imagination and intellect. This added a seventh dialectics between the 'similar' typical of the world of imagination (it is thanks to imagination that we see similarities and correspondance), and the 'same' of conceptualized meaning. Here as well, both metaphorical and conceptual aspects of the dialectics were stressed as important: the reduction of one at the expense of the other would lead to an atrophy of human thought. Distance between them is not only irreducible, it is necessary and productive. The 'similar', perceived by imagination, implied the previous dialectics of the 'is' and the 'is not'. This is to say that it was equivalent to what we had called the metaphorical meaning. Diagram (3) summarizes these two dialectics which illustrate Ricoeur's theory of interpretation. We have argued about the importance of such a <u>productive dialectics</u> of concept and imagination in the work of Ricoeur. Moreover, this dialectics has brought out his values as regards depth and clarity. Indeed, Ricoeur constantly searches for depth, at work through endless subterranean similarities and differences, beneath the clarity necessary to his highly conceptualized thought. We would now argue that this fundamental dialectics of imagination and concept, of difference and identity, is in fact the <u>touchstone</u> of his whole work, since it characterizes Ricoeur's own way of thinking.

We argue that, because imagination means difference as well as identity, distance as well as synthesis, and because it is itself in dialectics with philosophy, the dialectics of the 'same' and the 'other' is a landmark of primordial importance in the thought of Ricoeur.

We placed hermeneutics at the heart of the dialectics of concept and imagination since it is at once the route towards a conceptualized thought (that can never become a closed system because absolute knowledge is impossible), and the only philosophical discipline capable of dealing with the metaphorical dynamism that discloses a tensive truth and being, a 'same' within the 'other', an appropriation within distanciation. Indeed, the tension and constant oscillation of a metaphorical reality that 'is not' what it was, and yet 'is' what it is not (at the level of the linguistic code), is in need of philosophical deciphering. But how? We have demonstrated that Ricoeur further developed his interpretation theory to include an eighth dialectics, that of explanation and understanding, which added to our understanding of conceptualized meaning. The key dialectics of event and meaning, with the event of understanding, served once more as a framework to the theory. Explanation was seen to be the epistemological mediation, the 'Other' between a split 'same', between a naive understanding, a mere guessing in need of validation and explanation, and a sophisticated enlightened understanding, itself the result of the dialectics of guessing and validation. It must be remembered that belief had been split in a similar way in the hermeneutic circle of understanding and belief. The same circle is thus reappearing, but changed. It has matured through Ricoeur's appropriation of the epistemological and structural modes of thinking and is now more critical and better conceptualized. The then 'other' of understanding is now the split 'same', while belief has disappeared.

Yet it remains implicit, since we still 'believe' that human reality is about to be revealed to us through the literary text. Within this more sophisticated circle where there was space for a conceptualized distance and for distanciation, that is for objectivity wihin subjectivity, interpretation was seen to follow a spiral movement from sense to reference (in accordance with the previous theory of language). Structural interpretation had been shown to be the explanatory moment of the spiral. Its semiotic analyses that focus on sense in the text constituted the 'other' of interpretation, and paved the way from the naive 'same' of surface-interpretation to the critical 'same' of depth-interpretation (both concerned with semantics and the deciphering of non-ostensive references). When understanding became an appropriation, through the dispossession of the ego and a fusion with those references of the text, we examined how this fusion of horizons gave an enriched self to the ego. This creative process actually transformed the dialectics of explanation and understanding into the final dialectics of distanciation and appropriation, and emphasized the major value of Ricoeur's hermeneutic phenomenology: self-understanding. In addition, we argued that the conception of a distanciation within appropriation drew attention to the importance of distance between the 'is not' and the 'is', within our experience of belonging. Such a dialectics in fact transcended all static philosophical systems and, therefore, could only be grasped, as Ricoeur rightly perceived, within a philosophical spiral always in movement, always changing, and therefore never complete: being and reality escape absolute formulations because they belong to the realm of the tensional and of the transcendental. This ontological structure explains why the cogito is itself split and wounded, stretched between an arche and a telos: it reigns over a split truth and a split reality, themselves stretched between identity and difference, between the 'is' and the 'is not', where productive

distance dwells and where imagination reigns.

Finally, we have demonstrated the importance of arbitration, at an epistemological level, of all conflicting explanations that claim to validate our guesses. We believe in the complementarity of all these contrasting perspectives, and we suspect that the being we seek to understand, which discloses itself before the literary text, also reveals itself within the conflict of interpretations. It is as if the 'same' of meaning is also embedded within the many conflicting literary criticisms, and not only within the literary text. Consequently, we would argue in favour of their arbitration, done according to a logic of probability. It would enrich the self, and with it the hermeneutic spiral, by increasing the difference, grasped as productive distance since it adds an epistemological conflict to the 'other' of the text. But we have argued that Ricoeur offers no techniques to sustain this conception of a fruitful arbitration that ought to include the whole field of literary criticism. This brings out his philosophical values: he is not a critic who remains at the level of epistemology, but a philosopher who uses epistemology only as a way towards the understanding of being. His task is not to 'work out' techniques but to throw ideas towards such a purpose.

We shall now conclude our study of Ricoeur's hermeneutics of language by stressing the productive tension that exists within our language, a tension at work through metaphors, understood as models for redescribing reality by breaking away from ordinary use of words, thus creating new meanings. Ricoeur further developed what we may call this living power of metaphoricity, in his recently published work on narrative, thus enlarging and deepening the hermeneutic circle of difference and identity.

Diagrams

(1)   Theory of Language.

OTHER

EPISTEMOLOGICAL
SAME

Semiotics
of System

Semantics of discourse

OTHER | SAME
event | meaning   (speaking)

}   Epistemological moment

OTHER | SAME
Sense | ostensive reference

PRODUCTIVE
DISTANCE

Hermeneutic (text)

Sense   non-ostensive reference
(Code) (message)

Ontological
moment

(2) Theory of
     Metaphor (in text)

                          EPISTEMOLOGICAL
OTHER   SAME

Metaphorical event   Metaphorical meaning (semantics and hermeneutics)

                    OTHER   SAME

                    'is   not'   'is'

                      ↓   ↓   ↓   ↓

                    OTHER   SAME   OTHER   SAME

                  Literal   Literal   Metaphorical   Metaphorical
                  Sense   non-   sense   non-ostensive
                            ostensive   reference
                            reference

                              ⟨ PRODUCTIVE DISTANCE ⟩
                                 DISTANCIATION

                         Tensive metaphorical truth

Diagrams

(3)   Theory of Interpretation   1

EPISTEMOLOGICAL   SAME   ⟶   OTHER   ONTOLOGICAL SAME

    Semantics   Philosophical reflection
       | |
    SIMILAR   SAME

    Imagination   Intellect
       | |
    Metaphorical   Conceptualized meaning
        meaning |
       |
    OTHER | SAME   SAME
    'is not'| 'is'   Concept
    literal | metaphorical
    meaning | meaning

              PRODUCTIVE DISTANCE AND
              THE REALM OF HERMENEUTICS

(4) <u>Theory of Interpretation</u> 2

OTHER | SAME

Event: the act of
understanding

Meaning

OTHER   ONTOLOGICAL SAME

Sense   Non-ostensive reference

(2)   (1)   (3)
<u>Explanation</u>   <u>Naive understaning</u>   <u>Critical</u>
                                              Understanding

VALIDATION   GUESSING

ARBITRATION →

Structural Interpretation   Hermeneutic   Hermeneutic
(Semiology)   interpretation   interpretation
                             (naive surface   (Critical
                             semantics)   depth
                                                  semantics)

<u>EGO</u> - Distanciation

OTHER   SAME

'is not' ←→ 'is'   Productive dialectics   SELF APPROPRIATION
                                ←→   (Conceptualise
(cultural   Productive (under-   meaning)
estrangement) distance standing)

C H A P T E R   II

A HERMENEUTICS OF STORY-TELLING :
TEMPS ET RECIT (1983, 1984, 1985)

> '... le temps devient temps
> humain dans la mesure où il
> est articulé sur un mode
> narratif, et le récit atteint
> sa signification plénière,
> quand il devient une condition
> de l'existence temporelle.'
> (T.R.1, p.85).

Introduction

Ricoeur's concern for reference in language led him to an investigation into narrative operations. He set out to show how the inventive power of narrativity brings to language our human temporal structures. Ricoeur maintains that time becomes human time only when expressed in stories and history. Otherwise it remains a natural time, chronological and mathematical. To demonstrate his argument he inaugurated a surprising circular debate between narrativity and temporality. The circle brought together the epistemology of narrative fiction and historiography, and the phenomenology of time experience. Together they make up his three-volume work, Temps et Récit, whose purpose was to develop the previous hermeneutics of language that had emphasized the inventive power of language. Besides, as Ricoeur makes it clear in 'The Human Experience of Time and Narrative' (1979), it also continues the debate with the structuralists in the field of history and fiction, that is with those anti-narrativist historians and literary critics who 'have overlooked the temporal complexity of the narrative matrix in both narrative classes' (p.22).

Ricoeur accuses them of being prejudiced because they do not want to see that narratives have a two-dimensional temporal structure. To the 'episodic dimension' typical of the chronological

order of events that make up a story, Ricoeur forcefully adds the non-chronological 'configurational dimension, according to which the plot construes significant wholes out of scattered events' (ibid., p.24). The concept of plot is chosen by Ricoeur as the best link between narrativity and temporality, because it belongs to the narrative; it 'makes events into a story' (ibid., p.24), yet the story it structures (common to both historical and fictional narratives) 'is made out of 'temporal events (ibid., p.24). In other words, the narrative plot has the capacity of 'shaping our temporal experience' (ibid., p.23), thus disclosing our temporal being.

The contemporary dichotomy that has developed between historical and fictional narratives as regards their reference, one claiming to be true and the other not, led Ricoeur to his second argument with the structuralists, after that of temporal structure. Continuing the same dialectics of explanation and understanding rooted in the distinction between sense and reference, Ricoeur sought to demonstrate that, at the level of sense, both share a common structure. He states in his article 'The Narrative function' in John Thompson's Paul Ricoeur, that both have 'a common way of ordering sentences on the properly discursive plane' (p. 274). He unfolds his argument against the anti-narrativist epistemologists who, in his view, have a poor conception of event and of story-telling. At the level of reference, he sees in the conception of historicity, understood as 'the fundamental and radical fact that we make history, that we are immersed in history, that we are historical beings' (ibid., p.274), what he calls the 'référence croisée' between both the empirical and fictional narratives. This concept of crossed reference is further regarded by Ricoeur as the key to our understanding of the narrative function. He shows that 'the 'true' histories of the past uncover the buried

temporality. Ricoeur explains in <u>Temps et récit I</u> that 'l'argument du livre consiste à construire la médiation entre temps et récit en démontrant le rôle médiateur de la mise en intrigue dans le procès mimétique' (p.87). Together they form the hermeneutic circle of story-telling, whose temporal framework is made explicit by the circle, seen as 'une spirale sans fin qui fait passer la méditation plusieurs fois par le même point, mais à une altitude différente' (<u>ibid</u>., p.111). Thus, the first circle of the stages of <u>mimesis</u> further expands to inscribe itself within 'le cercle plus vaste d'une poétique du récit et d'une aporétique du temps' (<u>ibid</u>., p.129).

Ricoeur brings together in dialogue, St. Augustine and Aristotle in Part I of <u>Temps et récit</u> in order to pave the way to this dialectics between narrative and temporality. Ricoeur sees in each author the inverted image of the other (we remember the same phenomenon occurring with Freud and Hegel in <u>De l'interprétation</u>, published in 1965). Such an unexpected confrontation draws attention to Ricoeur's own innovation, as he himself points out:

> 'Il va de soi que c'est moi, lecteur d'Augustin et
> d'Aristote, qui établis ce rapport entre une
> expérience vive où la discordance déchire la
> concordance et une activité éminemment verbale
> où la concordance répare la discordance.'
> (<u>ibid</u>., p.55)

His aim is to show through a hermeneutics of story-telling how the paradoxes of time, experienced as discordant, can achieve a poetic resolution: together the historical and fictional narratives shape time, which is in itself invisible and mute.

What distinguishes Ricoeur from others in his work on time and narrative is not so much his response to the challenge of semiotics, as regards narratives, as his creative answer to it. His original concept of a crossed reference that constitutes 'un des enjeux majeurs' (<u>ibid</u>., p.124) of Part IV of <u>Temps et récit</u>, opens onto human time and the temporality of human action. Moreover, his

dialectical approach to the problem is very typical of his creative

work. He himself acknowledges the novelty of the new dialectics

when he writes:

> 'La suite de cet ouvrage, de la seconde à la
> quatrième partie, ne sera qu'une longue et
> difficile conversation triangulaire entre
> l'historiographie, la critique littéraire et
> la philosophie phénoménologique. La dialectique
> du temps et du récit ne peut être que l'enjeu
> ultime de cette confrontation, sans précédent à
> mon sens, entre trois partenaires qui d'ordinaire
> s'ignorent mutuellement.' (ibid., p.125)

As regards the question of influences in Ricoeur's work on narrative

and time, we have counted 337 authors cited over the three volumes.

Again as in the previous chapter, there is no need for us to investi-

gate Ricoeur's use of others: he tells us quite explicitly and at

length where all the numerous ideas he appropriates come from.

And, once again, we must stress the importance of appropriation

within Ricoeur's own thought: it is through his appropriation of

other people's writings that his hermeneutic circle keeps growing

and developing. This might appear to suggest a lack of creativity

on his part, yet the quality of his numerous books and articles

goes against such a suggestion. Besides, he has made it very clear

again and again, that a concrete reflective philosophy does not

start from nowhere: it is through the work of others that we find

a new self. We grow in self-consciousness and in understanding only

through appropriation, itself not a possession, but a communication

and a fusion of horizons. This, in turn, demands more and more

effort as the need to read multiplies with the various human

sciences at stake. Any 'uncreative' mind would soon get lost under

the weight of the task, but not Paul Ricoeur. For him, every new

idea or concept is the occasion of a further detour, as 'des

chaînons intermédiaires' (T.R.III, p.350) in order to demonstrate

his own original hypothesis.

In this chapter, we shall not name Ricoeur's sources as regards his investigation of narratives, firstly because the question of influence is not under discussion, and secondly because they are so numerous that listing them would detract from and obscure Ricoeur's argument. Rather we shall concentrate on what Ricoeur makes out of all these various ideas, on how he appropriates them in view of his own personal aims.

Moreover we shall further develop the argument of this thesis within the new hermeneutic circle of narrativity and temporality. The spiral not only includes the aporias of time and the threefold _mimesis_, but it also presupposes the previous circle of distanciation and appropriation, itself the outcome of the eight dialectics deciphered in our last chapter. In our first section, we shall follow the reflective thought of Ricoeur as regards the problematic of time that makes up 'l'aporétique de la temporalité', the first section of _Temps et récit III_.

Not directly connected to narratives, this problematic is, according to Ricoeur, 'l'oeuvre d'une pensée réflexive et spéculative' (_T.R.III_, p.11), similar to the abstract reflective thought we encountered in _L'homme faillible_. We shall see how time is an aporia when immediately apprehended, and how it has no speculative resolution.

The second and third sections will then focus on the poetic resolution thought out by Ricoeur within the framework of his hermeneutics of narrativity. Section two will examine the _productive distance_ brought about by _mimesis_ in both historical and fictional narratives. This explanatory phase in the hermeneutics of story-telling will emphasize the importance of _difference_, of the epistemological configuration of time in narrative activity. Yet this difference cannot be thought outside the realm of a

subject 'constitué à la fois comme lecteur et comme scripteur de sa propre vie' (T.R.III, pp.355-56). Hence section three will transcend the text, that remains 'une transcendence dans l'immanence' (T.R.III, p.230), and open up onto the ontological refiguration of the 'other' of time, onto the 'same' of narrative identity. The capacity of plots to refigure our confused temporal experience is similar to the creative power of metaphorical reference. Plots are the privileged means to the 'same' of temporal appropriation. Yet, and here we come to the main difference between Ricoeur's work on metaphor and his work on narrative, the link previously established between 'le voir-comme' and 'l'être-comme' (T.R.III, p.230) must now be further mediated by a confrontation between the world of the text and the world of the reader. The reader has become the necessary mediation between mimesis 2 and mimesis 3, since it is he who appropriates the world deployed by the text. Consequently, 'si le problème de la refiguration du temps par le récit se noue dans le récit, il n'y trouve pas son dénouement' (T.R.III.,p.263). The dénouement is ultimately in the refiguration of the reader's past that opens up new meaning before him, thus helping him to rediscover what he is through the narrative identity of the text.

1 - The Problematic of the 'other' of time

> 'Notre poétique du récit a besoin de la complicité autant que du contraste entre la conscience interne du temps et la succession objective ...' (T.R.III, p.36)

In his first volume of Temps et récit, Ricoeur exposes the ambiguities and paradoxes of the experience of time according to St. Augustine's interpretation of it. He explains how Augustine

reflected upon time, and how he grasped it as an experience of distension and discordance that takes place within the human consciousness, in the here and now of the present. In other words, because both future and past are experienced as an actual now that does not coincide with the present, the <u>soul is distended</u>. Augustine's conception of a threefold present, of a present about the future, about the past and about the present leads to the idea of a being stretched between expectation and memory in the now of attention. However, Ricoeur explains how to this threefold extension of time corresponds, according to Augustine, a threefold <u>inten-tionality of consciousness</u>, that is a concordance that prevails when the mind holds together in the fleeting present, the whole of an action, with some part of it still ahead, and some already behind, in the now of the action. Hence the Augustinian dialectics of <u>intentio</u> and <u>distentio animi</u>, in which the extension of time is translated into a distension of the soul. Moreover, the greater the intention, the greater the time needed and with it the greater the distension. Ricoeur stresses the genius of St. Augustine in this ability to link 'cette distension à la faille qui ne cesse de s'insinuer au coeur du triple présent ... Ainsi voit-il la dis-cordance naître et renaître de la concordance même des visées de l'attente, de l'attention et de la mémoire' (<u>T.R.I</u>, p.41).

Ricoeur regards this discordance of time as an aporia because it escapes explanation. Yet, he finds in Aristotle's concept of <u>mimesis</u> a way to deal with it. The 'mise en intrigue' does not solve the enigma, but it 'la fait travailler ... poétiquement - en produisant une figure inversée de la discordance et de la concordance' (<u>T.R.I</u>, p.41). In other words, while for St. Augustine discordance constantly overwhelms our desire of concordance, for Aristotle 'emplotment' succeeds in establishing

the dominance of concordance over discordance. The dialectics of concordance and discordance, of _intentio_ and _distentio_ is once again a dialectics of identity and difference in which it appears that the only way we can achieve identity is through the phenomenon of story-telling. We shall return to this phenomenon with the concept of refiguration.

Ricoeur states that St. Augustine's failure to derive the measurement of time from the _distensio animi_ emphasizes the need for a complementary approach to this psychological conception of time, the need for 'une conception cosmologique' according to which 'le temps nous circonscrit, nous enveloppe et nous domine, sans que l'âme ait la puissance de l'engendrer' (_T.R._, III, p.19). He finds such an approach in Aristotle's conception of time, where the notion of 'instant' replaces that of the threefold present, and where the idea of a succession of time excludes the distension of the soul. This representation of time, whereby 'le temps est relatif au mouvement sans se confondre avec lui' (_T.R._,III,p.22), distinguishes between mathematical points and the intervals between them. The 'coupure de l'instant' (_T.R._ III, p.25) in the succession of _abstract_ 'nows' is then seen as the essence of time, sufficient to describe the time _when_ things happen, in his quantitative aspects linked with a linear representation of events. And Ricoeur comments, as regards both St. Augustine's and Aristotle's conceptions:

> 'C'est par un saut que l'on passe d'une conception
> où l'instant présent n'est qu'une variante, dans le
> langage ordinaire, de l'instant ... à une conception
> où le présent de l'attention réfère à titre primaire
> au passé de la mémoire et au futur de l'attente.'
> (_T.R._ III, p.35)

In other words, there is no direct dialectics between those two enigmas of time, yet _both_ are needed, they complete one another and must be thought together. They point to the chronological as well

as the non-chronological in time, and consequently, in narratives.

And they constitute the fundamental aporia of time:

> 'L'aporie de la temporalité, à laquelle répond de
> diverses manières l'opération narrative, consiste
> précisement dans la difficulté qu'il y a à tenir
> les deux bouts de la chaîne: le temps de l'âme
> et le temps du monde.' (T.R. III, p.22)

This aporia keeps deepening, as Ricoeur asks, 'qu'est-ce
que le temps?' (T.R. III, p.144). He turns to Husserl's phenomeno-
logy of internal time consciousness, which he contrasts with Kant's
conception of the invisibility of time, and then to Heidegger's
hermeneutic phenomenology of temporality and historicity. Ultima-
tely, his reflective method finds no speculative way of overcoming
the problematic: it remains unsolved and open. The 'other' of
time, be it an actual qualitative 'now', or a linear succession of
abstract quantitative 'nows', or in between, as Heidegger suggests, a
stretching along of being (a wholeness situated between birth and
death, as well as a distensio in which events occur in succession
yet in the 'now' of human activities), this 'other' is clearly in
need of a 'same'. And this is the crux of Ricoeur's argument in
Temps et récit, whose fundamental hypothesis is that 'la poétique
de la narrativité répond et correspond à l'aporétique de la tempo-
ralité.' (T.R. I, p.126). Ricoeur justifies his hypothesis by
demonstrating, against Husserl, that there is no pure phenomenology
of time since there can be no immediate and intuitive apprehension
of it. In other words, the concept of a human 'mortal' time belongs
to the aporetic realm because time cannot be directly observed: it
is invisible. Consequently, all efforts to make time appear are
bound to result in a new aporia. Even Heidegger's attempt to link
time with the being-in-the-world - a hermeneutic attempt that
transcends the subject-object dichotomy - adds, according to

Ricoeur, to this aporetic character. Heidegger conceived being as that which traverses three main levels of temporal experience, from the private mortal time of <u>temporality</u> when he is a being-towards death, through the everyday common time of <u>historicity</u> and 'becoming', essential to narratives, to the public time of <u>within-timeness</u> required by history. Ricoeur acknowledges the originality of this conception of time and being, but he also detects in it an aggravation of the paradox of time, which is in proportion to its claim of serving as a <u>foundation</u> for the epistemological sciences. Such a claim cancels all attempts at a dialectics between the epistemological and the ontological, between difference and identity. Ricoeur acknowledged, after his detour through Heidegger's phenomenology of time, how it became all the more difficult to initiate a dialectics of time and narrative. Yet he succeeded in showing that 'la temporalité ne se laisse pas dire dans le discours direct d'une phénoménologie, mais requiert la médiation du discours indirect de la narration' (<u>T.R. III</u>, p.349).

2 - <u>An Epistemological configuration of time:</u>
<u>the productive distance of historiography</u>
<u>and narrative fiction</u>

> 'Ce que le récit historique et le récit de fiction ont en commun, c'est de relever des mêmes opérations configurantes que nous avons placées sous le signe de <u>mimesis</u> II.' (<u>T.R. II</u>, p.12)

We have said in the introduction to this chapter that <u>mimesis</u> 2 opens up the world of the <u>as if</u>, of the narrative. Both Aristotle's concepts of 'emplotment' (<u>muthos</u>) understood as an 'organization of events', and of mimetic activity (mimesis) trans-lated by a 'representation of action' were chosen by Ricoeur as

the cornerstone of his work in response to the existential burden of Augustine's discordance. Together _muthos_ and _mimesis_, quasi-identified by Aristotle, lead to the triumph of concordance over discordance. It is on this priority of concordance over discordance that Ricoeur built his _theory of narrativity_, itself unfolding in the concept of the threefold _mimesis_.

The dynamic character of the concept of 'emplotment' offers a model of _concordance_ by means of which succession, the 'l'un _après_ l'autre', is transformed into a 'l'un _à cause_ de l'autre' through the power of ordering of the plot that makes events into a story. The plot, with its structural connections internal to the action, reveals 'l'intelligible de l'accidentel, l'universel du singulier, le nécessaire ou le vraisemblable de l'épisodique ' (T.R. I, p.70). Yet, Ricoeur shows how discordance is included within concordance in such a creative imitation. He identifies the discordant with emotions such as the fearful and the pitiful, with surprise, and with changes. Consequently, the model of discordant concordance offers an inverted image of the _distentio animi_.

Mimesis 2, the mimesis of creation, constitutes a break from any pre-existing reality, it opens up a space for stories and histories. Yet, according to Ricoeur, it has also a mediating function that transcends the text, and connects it with the real world of action. In a way similar to 'naive understanding' in the theory of language, the composition of a plot is the result of a pre-figuration we all have of the world of action, with its temporal aspects, its structures, and its symbolism. Indeed, Ricoeur stresses that 'la littérature serait à jamais incompréhensible si elle ne venait à configurer ce qui, dans l'action humaine, fait déjà figure' (T.R. I, p.100). What is already there

in mimesis 1 is our pre-understanding of the conceptual network of action and narrative discourse. Indeed it is this intuitive comprehension of the symbolic resources of action that opens on to narrative time. This prefiguration represents 'l'amont du texte' (T.R. I, p.77).

Furthermore, the composition of a plot acquires its full meaning only when restored to the time of action in mimesis 3. In other words, 'le texte ne devient oeuvre que dans l'interaction entre texte et récepteur.' (T.R. I, p.117). The reader is thus the operator who, thanks to the configuration of the text, refigurates the world of action. At the same time he initiates a communication that explodes the sense of the work to 'fuse' with its reference. We here recognize, in this disclosure of new horizons and possibility, the dialectics of sense and reference, and the hermeneutic circle of distanciation and appropriation. Mimesis 3 points to reference and identity in its refiguration of the world, and will thus constitute the subject matter of the last section of this chapter.

Mimesis 2, which is par excellence the realm of semiotics, provides the structure, which, Ricoeur is deeply convinced, is common to historiography and narrative fiction. It represents the moment of distanciation, of the 'other' of sense, that lends itself to semiotic analyses in the immanence of the text. We would argue that narrative 'difference' is a productive distance, since its configuration breaks away from the world of action and time, in order to recreate it in a way that will further enrich its possibility and augment its horizon.

Yet, some historians and literary critics solely interested in narrative models and codes will deny this ontological conception of productive distance, because reference and event (in both dialectics of sense-reference and more important, of event-meaning)

are stifled. Confronted with this semiological challenge, Ricoeur responded with his hermeneutics of narratives. In opposition firstly to those who claim that history is eventless and who exclude history writing from narrative forms, and secondly to those who submit these forms to a-temporal models in literature, Ricoeur set out to prove the reverse. He demonstrates in his work that the narrative component of a text is far more than the surface-grammar of the message: it has to do with the whole constitution of the text.

Yet Ricoeur did not dismiss them outright. Because distanciation is the counterpart of belonging to a tradition inscribed in texts, it justifies explanatory analyses. The mistake is to think that explanation in either history or fiction is an end in itself, thus failing to grasp its methodological framework, and with it the dialectics of explanation and understanding that constitutes the Ricoeurian hermeneutics. Understanding is more than the investigation of laws in history, and of narrative structures in literature, it is fundamentally our capacity to follow a story. Indeed there is a difference between those narratives which claim to be true and empirically verifiable, and those which are free from such a burden. But Ricoeur maintains that this difference resulting from the truth-claim of history can be bracketed in the explanatory stage of mimesis 2 , since it pertains to the reference of narratives, and not to their sense.

We shall now, at the level of sense, and of mimesis 2, explore in Ricoeur's work the connection between historiography and fictional narratives in Temps et récit (vols. I and II, published in 1983 and 1984). Firstly, let us consider historiography. Ricoeur is convinced that 'si l'histoire rompait tout lien avec la compétence de base que nous avons à suivre une histoire ... elle cesserait

d'être historique' (T.R. I, p.133). The question is, therefore, the nature of such a connection. Ricoeur's thesis is that 'l'histoire la plus éloignée de la forme narrative continue d'être reliée à la compréhension narrative par un lien de dérivation, que l'on peut reconstruire pas à pas, degré par degré, par une méthode appropriée' (T.R. I, p.133). However, this method is reflective, it is something like a second-order reflection able to transcend the historical science. In other words, only a hermeneutics of narrativity can reconstruct the connection between history and narratives, and therefore reveal 'l'intentionnalité de la pensée historienne par laquelle l'histoire continue de viser obliquement le champ de l'action humaine et sa temporalité de base' (T.R. I, p.134). This intentionality of history, able to refigurate time and human action, inscribes history within the mimetic circle and the narrative spiral. Ricoeur demonstrates the thesis of a dialectics between historical explanation and narrative understanding, by exposing the insufficiencies of both the causal scientific theories and the narrativist theories.

The scientific theories argue the eclipse of narrative, thanks to either a displacement of the object of history, from the individual to the social fact, or to a break away from narrative understanding, that is from our ability to follow a story. Ricoeur makes a long epistemological detour to analyse in depth the eclipse of event in French historiography, and the eclipse of understanding in Analytical Philosophy (due to its need to measure explanation in history against scientific models). In addition, he stresses the polysemy and dispersion of heterogeneous causes and of modes of explanation in history. He points out that such a scattering of causal explanations is in need of a guideline from the order of narrative understanding, from the order of the plot that takes as

a whole the concatenation of causes. And he explains how, to the recognition of this logical dispersion of explanation in history, and of its breaking up, there corresponds a re-evaluation of narrative understanding.

Consequently, Ricoeur pursues his epistemological detour further into the narrativists' theories that stood in defence of narrative. Yet, despite the reconquest of the concept of emplotment in history, they only partially answer the problem since they do not give a satisfactory historical explanation which is in dialectics with narrative understanding. What they do is to make explicit the prior mode of understanding on to which explanation is grafted. They draw attention to the fact that there is no fixed and determined past since the truth concerning an event can be known only after the fact has taken place, once it is put at a distance and in the light of future events. This distinguishes the properly narrative description of action from ordinary descriptions in the present. The narrativists further develop the notion of the 'followability' of a story. That is to say that to narrate is already to explain, and that explanation is only ancillary, it proceeds from understanding. Ideally 'tout récit s'explique par lui-même' (T.R. I p.218). Yet because 'tout récit historique est à la recherche de l'explication à interpoler, parce qu'il a échoué à s'expliquer par lui-même' (T.R. I, p.218), the function of explanation appears merely as corrective, it is to help us follow the story. Its structure is ignored. Furthermore, some narrativist arguments conceptualize courses of events in history, thus transforming them into courses of action, into highly organized wholes that require a specific act of understanding. Ricoeur is highly critical of this approach since it tends to abolish the temporal quality of the basic dialectics of contingency and order of discordance and concordance at the root of the

narrative structure. A contrary narrativist trend, however, claims that history is self-explanatory, not so much because we can follow its story, but thanks to the dynamic character of emplotment. The plot is seen as the transition between narrating and explaining, to the extent of blurring the difference between narrative, explanation, and understanding, thus denying history its scientific status. We would argue that explanation is more than a mere showing of 'le déroulement de l'intrigue' (T.R. I, p.242).

Those insufficiencies let Ricoeur to the idea that the connection between historical explanation and narrative understanding can only be indirect. But how are we to get to it? Ricoeur opted for a method of 'questionnement à rebours' that questions backwards from history towards narrative. It follows the order of 'la triple coupure épistémologique qui fait de l'histoire une recherche' (T.R. I, p.254). The three aspects of this break consist in the autonomy of explanatory procedures, of entities referred to, and of the time of history. They proceed from 'la coupure instaurée par l'opération configurante au plan de mimesis II' (T.R.I, p.254).

Firstly, Ricoeur sees in the question of explanatory procedures, a mediation between the explanation of the nomological theories and the understanding (or explanation by emplotment) of the narrativist theories This mediation leads him to the conception of a quasi-plot in the writing of history. How? By adopting the idea of a logic of causal imputation, which consists in imagining a different course of events, as well as the consequences of such a new course, and then in comparing it with the real course of events. This imaginary construction, resembling the creation of scientific models, is at once an emplotment, and also an explanation since the historian is a scientist who gives explanatory reasons for his guesses, by means of a detailed analysis of factors, of rules and of judgments

of objective possibility. Secondly, to the quasi-plot correspond quasi-characters, understood as entities that refer back to people, the concrete agents of real action. According to Ricoeur, history remains historical only if it keeps its links with people and their actions. These entities, constructed by the historian , mediate between anonymous explanatory concepts and narrative characters, and thus indirectly refer to narrative under-standing. Ricoeur shows how the connection between those characters of fiction that can be identified by their names, and the histo-rical entities that explain the changes in an anonymous fashion, lies in the intersection between the two. The 'societal' entities refer to a society made of individuals who carry on actions. This oblique reference to society and its individual members justifies, in Ricoeur's view, the conception of quasi-characters. Indeed 'c'est parce que chaque société est composée d'individus qu'elle se comporte sur la scène de l'histoire comme un grand individu' (T.R. I, p.278). But the historian does not speak directly of individuals and actions, he speaks of them indirectly by means of his narrative conception of characters, and according to his understanding of configurational techniques. In Ricoeur's words 'c'est parce que la technique du récit nous a appris à décrocher le personnage de l'individu, que le discours historique peut opérer ce transfert' (T.R. I, p.278), that history can construct the concept of quasi-characters from that of 'individuals'. Thirdly, Ricoeur argues that the time of history refers back to the temporality of narrative by means of the mediation of the historical event, interpreted as a quasi-event. He demonstrates how 'la notion même d'histoire de longue durée dérive de l'événement dramatique ... c'est-à-dire de l'événement-mis-en-intrigue' (T.R. I, p.289). Basically, it is so because historical events are similar to events framed by a plot:

they follow the denouement of the plot. Events, in themselves
singular, contingent, and deviant, when narrated become also
typical, expected, and dependent on paradigms. Consequently, an
event 'n'est pas nécessairement bref et nerveux à la façon d'une
explosion' (T.R. I, p.303). Ricoeur explains how, although dethroned,
events do not disappear from the history of the long time-spin.
Rather they infiltrate the sociological analyses thanks to the many
deviations of temporality that occur between the different levels of
objective situations and subjective representations. Fundamentally,
events are what distinguishes the historian from the sociologist.
This is so because, in history, events continually occur within
structures that indeed do change, and not at the same pace, and that
eventually break up after either a sudden or a slow deterioration.
Ricoeur stresses that if this were not the case, then the long time-
span 'risquerait d'arracher le temps historique à la dialectique
vivante entre le passé, le présent et le futur' (T.R. I, p.312).
It would only lead back from human to natural time. The time that
we are, is preserved through the analogy of growth, decline, and
death, between the time of both individuals and civilizations.
Ricoeur is convinced that 'tout changement entre dans le champ
historique comme quasi-événement' (T.R. I, p.313). But such a
quasi-event is not the brief event rejected by the historian of the
long time-span. It remains correlative to the quasi-plot and the
quasi-character, since it corresponds to the dramatic change of
fortune in the quasi-plot. Consequently, Ricoeur concludes force-
fully with the assertion that the historical time is not a break
away from narrative time, but on the contrary an expansion of it,
whereby the chronological order of events and their non-chronological
dimension are combined through a quasi-emplotment. We remember
that the plot construes significant wholes out of scattered events.

The historical event illustrates this quasi-emplotment by revealing 'à la fois l'indice de l'écart croissant du temps historique par rapport au temps du récit et au temps vécu, et l'indice du renvoi ineffable du temps historique au temps de l'action à travers le temps du récit' (T.R. I, p.256). We shall conclude from the above analysis of quasi-plot, quasi-characters, and quasi-events, that the essential distanciation inherent in any inscribed experience, in texts and narratives, to which is added the distance of the past, is clearly, in Ricoeur's work what we shall call a productive distance since it enriches and deepens our understanding of plot and narrative. Besides, to those historians moved by some strange resentment against time, to the point of making it disappear from their theories, Ricoeur's message is that something happens in history, that even the most stable structures eventually come to an end.

But this is not all. Ricoeur's long and detailed investigation into historiography discloses a new dialectics within this epistemological 'other'. It shows how the 'other' of historical explanation, because of the indirect connection of quasi-plot, quasi-characters and quasi-events, enlarges the 'same' of narrative understanding. Once again, difference is made productive, in dialectic with identity, at an epistemological level. And on the other hand, thanks to the analogy of plot, characters, and events, the 'same' saves the 'other' from losing its identity. The link is preserved between history and narrative, despite the realist intention of the theoreticians of history. Both histories and stories share a common way of ordering events into a coherent narrative: they share a common structure. However, this state of affairs still remains to be shown with an investigation into the other narrative mode at the level of mimesis II. This is to say that we shall now analyse

volume II of Temps et récit (1984).

Therefore, and secondly, let us consider the fictional narrative. Ricoeur's aim in this second volume was to test whether his theory of narrativity, rooted in the model of discordant concordance, and preserved in his examination of history, could also survive in the context of contemporary literature. In other words, he set out to discover what would happen today to the Aristotelian muthos, whose dynamic character configurates stories out of successive events. Can concordance still triumph over discordance in the modern novel? Or, in Ricoeur's words:

> 'L'intrigue n'est-elle pas en train de disparaître
> de l'horizon littéraire, en même temps que s'effacent
> les contours mêmes de la distinction la plus fonda-
> mentale, celle de la composition mimétique, parmi
> tous les modes de composition?' (T.R. II, pp.17-18)

To answer such a question it is important to understand what the mimesis of human action actually means. And for Ricoeur, an action is far more than the behaviour of characters that leads to external changes. It is also 'la transformation morale d'un personnage, sa croissance et son éducation', as well as 'des changements purement intérieurs, affectant le cours temporel lui-même des sensations, des émotions ...' (T.R. II, p.21). Are these changes present in a novel that is without plot and without characters? We would think so, but Ricoeur tends to think, against those who believe that this new expression 'est plus authentiquement fidèle à une expérience elle-même fragmentée et inconsistante' (T.R. II, p.26), that it is merely a return to realism. Mimesis, in this kind of literature, does not recreate reality, it simply reduplicates its chaos and discordance. We would argue that there is a turning point in modernist texts beyond which the concordance of the plot is lost, and without it, without order, it is the end of the narrative itself. Ricoeur's answer to the modern problematic of emplotment is basically

dialectical, as we would guess. The concept of muthos must be preserved, and with it our narrative identity. Yet, the muthos is in need of expansion, so as to let difference 'deepen' and enrich it. To put it another way, the Aristotelian muthos must be enlarged through metamorphoses, but it must be so without losing its identity. Ricoeur's concept of traditionality helps preserve, through its recollection of our past, the common experience and culture of our society, and with it its narrative identity. The multilayered sedimentations of language that make up our traditions provide the narrative continuity we need with our past and our memory. Ricoeur is convinced that without such historical and fictive roots, a society has no future. Of course there are breaks within continuity, but 'elles font partie, elles aussi, du phéno-mène de tradition et de son style cumulatif' (T.R. II, p.28). What characterizes the phenomenon of 'Traditionality' is its ordering power. This order is of a transhistorical nature because, Ricoeur explains, 'l'ordre qui peut se dégager de cette auto-structuration de la tradition ... traverse l'histoire sur un mode cumulatif plutôt que simplement additif' (T.R. II, p.28). Yet, this idea of order within 'traditionality' of a narrative identity, is possible only because of breaks and deviations:

> 'Il appartient à l'idée même de traditionalité -
> c'est-à-dire à la modalité épistémologique du
> "faire tradition" - que l'identité et la
> différence y soient inextricablement mêlées'
> (T.R. II, p.35)

Both the 'same' and the 'other' make up the past that bears our future. It is within this dialectics that the modern metamorphosis of emplotment is understood, by Ricoeur, as 'l'abandon du critère de complétude, et donc le propos délibéré de ne pas terminer l'oeuvre' (T.R. II, p.36), in contrast to the traditional notions

of a beginning, a middle, and an end that structure actions.
It is as if the end, like the Apocalyptic end of time, from
imminent, has become immanent, bringing with it a crisis similar
to Augustine's distentio, to his experience of a religious conver-
sion always put off to tomorrow.

Ricoeur states that 'la Crise a remplacé la fin ... est
devenue transition sans fin' (T.R. II, p.41). Yet, an 'immanent' end,
like the Apocalypse, is not the absence of an end: it remains an
end that is not 'une terminaison'. But what does an end without
ending mean? Ricoeur finds the answer to such a paradox in the
reader. One thinks of La Nausée (1938): will Roquentin write a
novel? Will he find a way to 'justify' his existence? We do not
know: 'Je n'ose pas prendre de décision' (p.247). And life goes
on, with those last words:

> 'La nuit tombe ... Au premier étage de l'hôtel
> Printania deux fenêtres viennent de s'éclairer.
> Le chantier de la Nouvelle Gare sent fortement
> le bois humide: demain il pleuvra sur Bouville'
> (p. 248)

The dull cycle of days and nights, of sleep and work, is not broken.
The crisis goes on, with, perhaps, a hope. It is up to the reader
to finish the story. In the modern novel, the reader becomes all
the more creative: he composes the text, according to an implicit
contract between author and reader. This is possible because all
texts are a call to order, to a liberating order beyond the
oppressive order of our daily existence. However, in modern texts,
the ordering task of creation becomes more complex, and for it to
be successful 'il faut que l'auteur, loin d'abolir toute convention
de composition, introduise de nouvelles conventions plus complexes,
plus subtiles, plus dissimulées, plus rusées que celles du roman
traditionnel.' (T.R. II, p.43). We would argue that the dissolu-
tion of the plot is similar to the dissolution of the literal

meaning of metaphor: it leads to a change that opens up new meanings. Hence it is heuristic, or, in other words, enriching and creative. And once more, the increased distance, or deviation, from traditions, is productive and innovative. Ricoeur is aware of the risks of a schism, if the deviation goes too far towards discordance, but he remains hopeful:

> 'Rien donc n'exclut que la métamorphose de l'intrigue rencontre quelque part une borne au-delà de laquelle on ne peut plus reconnaître le principe formel de configuration temporelle qui fait de l'histoire racontée une histoire une et complète... Et pourtant ... Et pourtant. Peut-être faut-il, malgré tout, faire confiance à la demande de concordance qui structure aujourd'hui encore l'attente des lecteurs et croire que de nouvelles formes narratives, que nous ne savons pas encore nommer, sont déjà en train de naître ...' (T.R. II, p.48)

In other words, although fictional narratives require, like historio-graphy, that we extract a configuration from a succession, so that we may follow a story, they are also open to changes.

Ricoeur further demonstrates this connection between the two narrative types, by defending the specific character of plot against structural analysis. He makes it clear that it is:

> '... au même niveau de rationalité que peuvent être assignés l'explication nomologique ... et le discernement, en sémiotique narrative, de structures profondes du récit' (T.R. II, p.13)

He sets out to show how semiotics of narrative reduces the plot to a secondary level of manifestation in relation to the level of deep grammar that deals with the underlying logical structures and their transformations. This tendency, focussing on explanation at the expense of understanding, is even more drastic than the eclipse of narrative in historiography, because the primacy of the plot is completely dismissed. The chronological sequence of the narrative is now limited to a surface structure, while the deep fundamental structure becomes a logical a-temporal formula. Hence, Ricoeur's

aim is to re-establish the primacy of plot over structure, by
underlining the irreducibly temporal elements of narrative. He
argues that episodic dimensions of narrative, with its delays, its
suspense, and its changes of fortune, creates the surprise
essential to all stories, while the configurational dimension
translates this succesion of events into a whole. And together they
constitute, in his view, a temporal reading irreducible to a mere
surface manifestation. His question is whether 'la grammaire dite
de surface n'est pas plus riche en potentialités narratives que la
grammaire fondamentale', and also whether 'cet enrichissement
croissant du modèle tout au long du parcours sémiotique ne procède
pas de notre compétence à suivre une histoire et de notre familia-
rité acquise avec la tradition narrative' (T.R. II, p.85). In other
words, our narrative understanding, of which 'la rationalité sémio-
tique cherche à donner un équivalent, ou mieux une simulation' (T.R.
II, p.81), precedes all logical reconstructions of it. We therefore
ask what is the purpose of a semiotics of narrative? Ricoeur does
not dismiss it any more than the nomological and the narrative
theories of historiography, because it enriches narrative under-
standing through its depth-explanatory models. Hence, despite his
doubts and criticism, he writes:

> '... ce doute ne disqualifie en aucune façon l'entre-
> prise. Il met en question l'autonomie présumée des
> démarches sémiotiques ... par rapport à la compétence
> narrative.' (T.R. II, p.86).

In other words, explanation must be brought back within a dialectical
framework of distanciation and appropriation if it is to be meaning-
ful.

In addition, within this hermeneutic circle, semiotics
enhances what Ricoeur calls 'les jeux avec le temps'(T.R. II, p.92)
whereby he distinguishes the 'temps de l'acte de raconter' from the
'temps des choses racontées' (T.R. II, p.14). This was made possible

thanks to the structural analysis that led to 'un tel déplacement de l'attention de l'énoncé narratif sur l'énonciation' (T.R. II, p.92). The dialectics of the 'told' of fiction, that corresponds to the 'énoncé', and of the act of telling by the narrator within the text, equivalent to the 'énonciation', provides the framework for those 'games with time'. Ricoeur's purpose in analyzing them in great detail, and with a profusion of references, is to work out the relationship between the fictional time of mimesis II and the time of lived experience of both the levels of mimesis I and III. The 'jeux avec le temps' take place thanks to the different levels in the act of configurations. Firstly, the tenses of verbs, within 'énonciation', illustrate the complexity of the time of fiction and of lived experience. Ricoeur stresses the complex relations between those times, in spite of the autonomy of the system of verbs, because mimesis II depends upon and returns to the time of action and lived experience. He writes:

> 'La nécessité de disjoindre le système des temps du verbe de l'expérience vive du temps et l'impossibilité de l'en séparer complètement me paraissent illustrer à merveille le statut des configurations narratives, à la fois autonomes par rapport à l'expérience quotidienne et médiatrices entre l'amont et l'aval du récit.'
> (T.R. II, p.94)

The correlation between the two is indirect and enriching, since the epistemological configuration draws from and adds to our consciousness of time. We would argue that mimesis II enriches time according to the creative dialectics of difference and identity, of the 'other' of 'énonciation' within the immanent world of fiction, and of the 'same' of lived experience. The second aspect of these 'games with time' shows how, according to Ricoeur, the dialectics of 'énoncé' and 'énonciation' adds new depths to fictional time, by distinguishing between the action of telling a story, the 'temps du raconter' and the object told, the 'temps raconté'. While telling a story is

chronological, since it follows the succession of events, the 'told' included within the story is not chronological, and thus it adds another temporal dimension by either slowing down or speeding up the story. It makes up intervals that bring quality to quantity:

> 'Les effets de lenteur ou de vitesse, de brièveté ou d'étalement, sont à la frontière du quantitatif et du qualitatif' (T.R. II, p.118)

However, in Ricoeur's view, the narrative theories of literary criticism tend to reduce this temporal vision of a text to its style, and therefore, he thinks it important to 'renverser ce renversement', in order to 'subordonner la technique narrative à la visée qui porte le texte au-delà de lui-même, vers une expérience, feinte sans doute, mais néanmoins irréductible à un simple jeu avec le temps' (T.R. II, p.130).

In other words, we would argue that there is, once more, a need for the dialectics of the 'same' and the 'other', of explanation and understanding, if any explanatory theories are to be meaningful. The explanation of narrated time, with its own dialectics of 'énoncé' and 'énonciation' must itself enter into dialectics with the time of lived experience. Finally, the third aspect of these 'games with time' stresses the difference between the world 'told' (the 'énoncé') which, Ricoeur explains, is a world of characters, and the narrator's 'voice' telling it, 'la voix narrative'. The 'énonciation' is done by this voice. This is to say that 'le récit se constitue en discours d'un narrateur racontant le discours de ses personnages' (T.R. II, p.132).

How does this come about? By a series of techniques like self-narration and narrated monologues, and by the various perspectives of characters and their points of view on several levels within the text. The conception of 'point of view', which directs the 'regard du narrateur vers ses personnages et des personnages les uns

vers les autres' (T.R. II, p.140) is primordial in the configuration

of texts, along with the narrator's voice, understood as the 'pro-

jection fictive de l'auteur réel dans le texte lui-même' (T.R. II,

p.143). Both are indistinguishable, yet the voice transcends the

configuration of texts to speak to a reader, thus leading once again

the dialectics of narrated time - now itself a dialectical rela-

tionship between the narrator's voice and the characters' perspec-

tive - towards the other dialectics, that of the temporal world

of the text and of the lived experience of the reader. This new

dialogue integrates the explanation of narrative into understanding,

thus revalueing the plot that 'grasps together' successive events

into meaningful wholes.

These 'games with time' open up to the fictional experience

of time within the world of the text defined by Ricoeur as 'une

transcendence dans l'immanence ... en excès par rapport à la

structure, en attente de lecture' (T.R. III, p.230). This fictional

world of configuration discloses a fictional experience of time

within the world of the text. Time, in itself invisible, can only

be seen in a story in which we witness the changes that occur within

characters and situations. Yet, this world of the text remains 'en

attente':

> 'C'est seulement dans la lecture que le dynamisme
> de configuration achève son parcours. Et c'est
> au-delà de la lecture, dans l'action effective,
> instruite par les oeuvres reçues, que la configu-
> ration du texte se transmute en refiguration.'
> (T.R. III, p.230)

This is to say that the world of the text, in itself a dialectics

made of sense and reference, is now an epistemological 'other' in

dialectics with the world of the reader, an ontological 'same'.

It is a configuration that points to a refiguration. We know how

much importance Ricoeur gave to this epistemological 'other', and

to the structures that led to the long detour of explanation of
both history and fiction. This detour was, as always in Ricoeur's
thought, an explanatory mediation which Ricoeur found enriching,
as he makes clear in his conclusion:

> 'On a pu mesurer les enrichissements que la notion
> cardinale de mise en intrigue a reçus dans les deux
> cas, lorsque l'explication historique ou la rationalité
> narratologique se sont superposées aux configurations
> narratives de base.' (T.R. III, p.350)

It was enriching because the initial model of emplotment, with the
primacy of order over succession and of concordance over discordance,
was not only verified but also expanded to include a quasi-plot with
quasi-characters and quasi-events in history, and novels without
endings. Yet Ricoeur's aim throughout remained 'un plaidoyer pour
la préséance de l'intelligence narrative sur la rationalité
narratologique' (T.R. II, p.231), in other words a plea for the
primacy of narrative understanding over explanation at the level of
the epistemological configuration of time.

     We would wish to argue that Ricoeur's long and thorough
analysis of the problematic of narrated time is not a mere distancia-
tion, but more explicitly a _productive distance_ able to elucidate
between explanation and understanding, and thus to demonstrate that
history is in the last instance narrative in character, and that
fiction has an irreducible chronological dimension. Moreover, it is
productive because it is a preparation in view of the ontological
refiguration of time, in accordance with the hermeneutic circle of
difference and identity, in which epistemological distance is the
necessary path towards the final ontological project.

     It is this ontological project that we shall now examine.

3 - The Ontological refiguration of time by Narrative:
Narrative identity

> 'Le rejeton fragile issu de
> l'union de l'histoire et de la
> fiction, c'est l'assignation
> à un individu ou à une commu-
> nauté d'une ... identité
> narrative' (T.R. III, p.355)

Ricoeur's search for an ontological solution to the

epistemological questions raised by historiography and fictional

narrative as regards narrative and time, is typical of his hermeneu-

tics. His answer lies in the reference to both historical and

fictional narratives. He calls it a 'crossed reference' that

reveals our historicity , or in other words, the fact that we are

historical beings. There is an asymmetry between the two referential

modes, since only history can claim to be true, thanks to the traces

left by the events that have actually occurred, even if reached only

in the present of the past. Documents and archives are witness that

those events did happen. Fiction does not have this burden of traces

and proof: its character and events are imaginary. Yet, is not

fiction written as though it had taken place? The use of past tenses

of verbs emphasizes this 'reality' of the unreal. And on the other

hand, our past is indeed reconstructed by the imagination, as we have

seen with Ricoeur's conception of a quasi-plot. Hence, we see a

reciprocity between the two, which leads Ricoeur to his conception

of a 'référence croisée' of a reference that connects our historicity

with the temporality of human action, since it is human time that

both historical and fictional narratives refigure. This concept of

'crossed' reference is, in the third volume of Temps et récit,

l'enjeu majeur ... de la refiguration du temps par le récit' (p.13).

Ricoeur's aim is to reduce very gradually 'l'écart entre les visées

ontologiques respectives de l'histoire et de la fiction' (ibid.,p.13)

in order to unite them in a 'fusion intime' (ibid., p.13). Does
that mean that we lose the dialectics of difference and identity?
Not at all. The concept of 'crossed reference', of a reference so
far understood as the 'same', in dialectics with the 'other' of
sense, now enters into dialectics with the concept of refiguration.
While, in Le métaphore vive, Ricoeur interpreted the text as that
which redescribes the world through its reference, in Temps et
récit I, he understands narrative as that which resignifies the
world in its temporal dimension by refiguring the action already
prefigured at the level of mimesis I. Moreover, in Temps et récit
III, he subordinates 'la dimension épistémologique de la référence
à la dimension herméneutique de la refiguration' (T.R. III, p.12).
This change from reference to refiguration is due to the action
implied: a 'remaking' done by the reader', now given the important
task of mediation between the metaphorical 'voir-comme', transcen-
dant only within the immanence of a text, and the ontological 'être-
comme'. Ricoeur explains how:

> '... le passage de la configuration à la refiguration
> exigeait la confrontation entre deux mondes, le monde
> fictif du texte et le monde réel du lecteur.'
> (T.R. III, p.231)

This change of emphasis from the immanent world of the text to the
transcendent world of the reader actually leads Ricoeur to the
concept of 'refiguration croisée' pour dire les effets conjoints de
l'histoire et de la fiction au plan de l'agir et du pâtir humain'
(T.R. III, p.150). Ricoeur demonstrates at length how the initial
dichotomy between the referential claims, the 'visées' of both
historical and fictional narratives can be overcome as regards their
relationship to the concept of reality. At that level, Ricoeur
succeeds in transforming the dichotomy into a complementarity, and
to show how, on this ontological plane, they actually cross, thus
paving the way to a refiguration of time and action. Ricoeur's

argument can be analysed as follows. Firstly, from the point of view of history. It relates to reality through documents and archives, that is through traces understood as the epistemological proof necessary to historigraphy. It is the role of the historian to constitute these traces by working out what the past was really like, in accordance with the signs that bear witness to it. Yet, Ricoeur points out that traces are enigmatic, because what they signify transcends history as such to become an ontological question. Hence:

> '... c'est à une herméneutique qu'il appartient
> d'interpréter le sens de cette visée <u>ontologique</u>,
> par laquelle l'historien, en se fondant sur des
> documents, cherche à atteindre ce qui fut mais
> n'est plus (<u>T.R. III</u>, p.12).

The conception of a past that has been, that was once there, and that is no more, of a 'passé réel' thought in the present, is regarded by Ricoeur to be a paradox. A good illustration of Ricoeur's point is, we suggest, found in Roland Barthes' <u>La Chambre claire</u>, (1980). For Barthes, photographs touch us when we really think and feel that 'Ça a été' (p.180). In this case the <u>difference</u> between the past and the present stresses 'la folie qui menace sans cesse d'exploser au visage de qui la regarde' (<u>ibid</u>., p.180). Why this risk of madness? Because it makes <u>time visible</u> in a forceful, iconic way. And Barthes formulates this paradoxical idea of a present of the past in these words:

> 'Folle ou sage? La Photographie peut-être l'un ou
> l'autre: sage si son réalisme reste relatif, tempéré
> par des habitudes esthétiques ... folle, si ce
> réalisme est absolu ... faisant revenir à la conscience
> amoureuse et effrayée la lettre même du Temps: mouvement
> proprement révulsif, qui retourne le cours de la chose,
> et que j'appellerai pour finir <u>l'extase</u> photographique'
> (<u>ibid</u>., p.183)

We wish to argue that it is because of the <u>difference</u> between 'Cela a été', between a reality of the past, and 'C'est ça!' (<u>ibid</u>.,p.176),

the truth of the present (a difference mediated by the photograph in which both reality and truth coincide), that for Barthes we come close to madness, to 'la vérité folle' (ibid., p.176), that transcends our civilised illusions and common places in its search for 'l'intraitable réalité' (ibid., p.184). It is indeed the 'other' that leads to this reality and to our ontological self also expressed in 'le regard'. Barthes does not in fact say this, but what else are we to make of the following statement:

> 'Or, le regard, s'il insiste (à plus forte raison
> s'il dure, traverse, avec la photographie, le
> Temps), le regard est toujours virtuellement fou
> ... quiconque regarde droit dans les yeux est
> fou ...' (ibid., p.175)

We would argue that it is mad because it discloses a self-identity made all the more real by the distant photograph, and by the distance and difference between people. How is it made so real? How can the reality of a 'this once was' be real for me today? Imagination is fundamental in our ontological understanding, or better, in our appropriation of traces which are, like photographs, 'un reste et un signe de ce qui fut et n'est plus' (T.R. III, p.12). It is because of his imagination that the historian can claim to reconstruct what has been once real, even if in an abstract fashion, cut off from the future.

Ricoeur questions the naive concept of 'realité' in history, and of 'irréalité' in fiction. Both intersect in imagination He stresses that traces remain enigmatic because we cannot observe what they refer to:

> 'Dire que tel événement rapporté par l'historien a
> pu être observé par des témoins du passé ne résout
> rien: l'énigme de la passéité est tout simplement
> déplacée de l'événement rapporté au témoignage qui
> le rapporte. L'avoir-été fait problème dans la
> mesure exacte où il n'est pas observable ... mais
> mémorable.' (T.R. III, p.228)

Hence the historian has still to reconstruct, and not simply to refer to, or to re-describe, a past which is at once the 'same', the 'other' and the 'similar' of what actually happened. This explains why reference can neither apply to the 'reality' of the past, nor to the 'unreality' of fiction.

This conception of the 'unreal' takes us back to the second aspect of Ricoeur's argument, to fiction. Free from the proofs and traces of a chronological past, fiction can endlessly explore the aporias of time and cross distances, bringing together distant events and apparently unconnected instants. And although its characters, events, and plots are unreal, yet it has the capacity to question our existence and to challenge our world of action. Indeed literary language is dangerous: it has the power of shattering our illusions, of exploding our belief in the immediacy of the real. And it can do so because it brings distance and difference into our life. How? Through, Ricoeur argues, 'le monde fictif du texte et le monde effectif du lecteur' (T.R. III, p.149). We have noted many times that, for Ricoeur, the text opens up onto its 'other', on to a world that discloses new possibilities to a latent reader. This is to say that it calls for a reader who, through the mediation of his act of reading, transforms the 'unreal' of the text into a reality which is 'révélante et transformante' (T.R. III, p.229). The world of the text has the power of revealing ourselves to ourselves, and in so doing it changes our life. Hence the notion of reference, and of redescription of the world, is transcended by that of creation and refiguration of our temporal experience. The act of reading not only finishes the configuration of mimesis II, it also marks the entry into the field of communication of mimesis III, and thus completes the hermeneutic circle of the threefold mimesis that progresses from an ontological

prefiguration of the world of action, through an epistemological configuration of it, to an ontological refiguration of time, invisible in itself. To these three moments of <u>mimesis</u> corresponds in the act of reading 'la stratégie de persuasion'(<u>T.R. III</u>, p.231) that comes from the author, directed towards the reader, to which the reader responds, even to the point of having himself to carry the burden of emplotment when, in the modern novel, the author has deliberately left holes and zones of indetermination. In turn, the reader's appropriation of the 'unreal' of the text changes him when he returns to the world of action. Ricoeur interprets this act of reading as both 'une <u>interruption</u> dans le cours de l'action et ... une <u>relance</u> vers l'action' (<u>T.R. III</u>, p.262).

It is a break from the action of <u>mimesis</u> I because the reader first dispossesses himself of himself in order to enter into the unreal world of the text. And in so doing he becomes himself <u>unreal</u>:

> 'En tant que le lecteur soumet ses attentes à celles que le texte développe, il s'irréalise lui-même à la mesure de l'irréalité du monde fictif vers lequel il émigre; la lecture devient alors un lieu lui-même irréel où la réflexion fait une pause.' (<u>T.R. III</u>, p. 262)

Yet it leads also to a <u>revival</u> of human acting, if the reader really <u>appropriates</u> the new vision of the world of the text. We must indeed stress that this positive attitude of the reader is very much Ricoeur's own way of reading texts: he constantly appropriates other people's ideas and visions in order to enrich his own thinking and writings. If, according to this interpretation of reading, the more we read, the richer we become and the <u>more creative</u> we are in our active life, then, given the number of cited texts Ricoeur acknowledges in his work, we begin to understand what lies behind so voluminous a work and so productive a writer. We would argue that the underlying values of Ricoeur's work comes from this

concept of appropriation that keeps enlarging and developing the mind. Moreover, this concept becomes creative at the intersection of the two worlds of the text and of the reader, at the 'fusion sans confusion' (T.R. III, p.263) of the 'other' of the text and the 'same' of the reader, when the two together lead to a refiguration of the world of action and of human time. And once again, the greater distance between the 'other' and the 'same', the more productive the refiguration. Indeed it is 'la peinture la moins figurative qui a le plus de chance de changer notre vision du monde' (T.R. III, p.263).

The third aspect of Ricoeur's argument brings together history and fiction, with the conception of their 'crossed' refiguration. Ricoeur makes it very clear that:

> 'la clé du problème de la refiguration réside dans la manière dont l'histoire et la fiction, prises conjointement, offrent aux apories du temps portées au jour par la phénoménologie la réplique d'une poétique du récit.' (T.R. III, p.147)

This major hypothesis constitutes the axis of the wider spiral of time and narrative which contains the hermeneutic circle of the threefold mimesis.

We have seen how in Ricoeur's work history and fiction share a common structure at the epistemological level of narrative. We now note that, despite their very real differences, they also intersect in their refiguration of the world. How does this come about? Both have a common interest in communication and, in some way, both also share the same intentionalities directed towards man, grasped as a historical and temporal being living in society. The past communicates what is memorable in the estimation of the historian that is mainly the values of those who lived at that time. These values add to our cultural heritage and identity communication is possible because their 'otherness' is preserved within the

'sameness' of the present. On the other hand, we have seen how communication between the world of the text and the world of the reader, in fictional narratives, leads to a refiguration of human acting. Furthermore, Ricoeur shows how 'l'imagination s'incorpore à la visée de l'avoir-été, sans en affaiblir la visée "réaliste" (T.R. III, p.266) by focussing on the conception of 'trace'. We have already insisted in this chapter upon the importance of imagination in the historian's interpretation of what has once been. He has to 'figure out' what was 'le monde qui, aujourd'hui, manque ... autour de la relique' (T.R. III, p.269). Consequently, history is 'quasi-fictive'. And, by the same token, fiction is 'quasi-historique' (T.R. III, p.276), because to tell a story is 'le raconter comme s'il s'était passé' (T.R. III, p.275). The narrative voice shares with the reader 'ce qui, pour elle, a eu lieu' (T.R. III, p.276). It shares in the past what, according to that voice, did actually happen.

Consequently, there is indeed an 'entrecroisement' between history and fiction, and Ricoeur's main thesis is that it is from this intertwining that 'la refiguration du temps par l'histoire et la fiction se concrétise'. Or, in other words, it is from 'ces échanges intimes entre historicisation du récit de fiction et fictionalisation du récit historique' that the human time becomes visible: it becomes 'le temps raconté' (T.R. III, p.150).

Ricoeur shows how man is entangled in stories and histories, and how he emerges when those stories are told, when they become known to him thanks to the process of narration. Or, to put it another way, man grows into a historical being when he comes out of his 'condition historique', when he breaks away from the lived experience from where the story that is told also comes. This happens thanks to the refiguration of his human condition,

done by such stories. Refiguration has the power to transform the initial historical condition into a 'conscience historique' (T.R. III, p.151), into self-consciousness. How is this new consciousness linked to the 'temps raconté'? Ricoeur argues that it is by means of a hermeneutics of this historical consciousness, 'c'est-à-dire d'une interprétation du rapport que le récit historique et le récit de fiction pris ensemble entretiennent avec l'appartenance de chacun de nous à l'histoire effective, à titre d'agent et de patient' (T.R. III, p.151), that he can demonstrate the birth of human time, refigured by narrative. He does so by starting not from the past, made of 'perspectives brisées' but from the future. Ricoeur faces the problem from its other end with the project of a history still to come, with the 'projet de l'histoire ... à faire' that opens up 'un réseau de perspectives croisées' (T.R. III, p.300) between future, past and present. This means that to the creative distance between the 'other' of past and the 'same' of present, Ricoeur adds a second no less creative distance between the 'other' of the future and the 'same' of what he now calls 'le présent historique'.

Here once again, we would argue, we recognize the same dialectics already at work in his debate with Freud, that between the archaeology and the teleology of the subject in the here and now of the 'becoming conscious', although the context has changed. This shows, despite its variety and its apparent discontinuity a subterranean continuity in the thought of Ricoeur.

The idea of a historical present is fruitful because it adds another dimension to the concept of 'presence', it adds the dimension of human action. Indeed, instead of being a mere instant, a break without existence, or an existential present filled with the imminence of a future and the memory of a past, the historical

present now combines the two together, and becomes 'le temps de
l'initiative, c'est-à-dire le temps où le poids de l'histoire
déjà faite est déposé, suspendu, interrompu, et où le rêve de
l'histoire encore à faire est transposé en décision responsable'
(T.R. III, p.301). This is to say that the present is grasped as
a beginning and as a promise that implies an ethical continuation,
a 'from now on'. Yet it is also understood as an unfinished past
still to be fulfilled. A balance has to be preserved between the
risks of an utopia that has no definite rational steps towards its
realization, that lacks an 'ancrage dans l'expérience en cours'
(T.R. III, p.312), and the risks of a 'rétrécissement de l'espace
d'expérience' (T.R. III, p.313) in which our traditions become a
dead heritage. The task of what Ricoeur calls 'l'initiative' is
indeed to avoid a schism between these two poles of our historicity
by bridging our utopian expectations with 'une action stratégique
soucieuse des premiers pas à faire en direction du souhaitable
et du raisonnable' (T.R. III, p.339) and by keeping our past
'ouvert'. In other words, 'il faut rendre nos attentes plus
déterminées et notre expérience plus indéterminée' (T.R. III,p.313).
But how are we to achieve this? How are we to attain this histori-
cal consciousness? The hermeneutic circle of time and narrative,
that includes the threefold mimesis, and that confirms the basic
project of Ricoeur's long work - it consists of some thousand
pages - which 'revient ainsi à tenir le récit pour le gardien du
temps, dans la mesure où il ne serait de temps pensé que raconté'
(T.R. III,p.349), is the dialectical way towards historical con-
sciousness. The idea of a historical present (at the centre of
the circle) grasped as an initiative of human action, and pregnant
with both future and past, becomes real only when refigured by
narrative. It then becomes 'temps raconté', which is indeed

Ricoeur's answer to the aporias of time. Moreover, it is this narrated time of action, refigured by the configurational act that gives human beings their identity. Or, to put it another way, as regards the dialectics of difference and identity, it is only when narrated that the 'same' acquires its full ontological meaning. In Ricoeur's view, the 'who' of an action, understood as the 'same' throughout the action, is meaningful only when distanced from lived experience, when told in a story: 'L'histoire racontée dit le qui de l'action' (T.R. III, p.355). For otherwise, Ricoeur asks, what is a 'same', what is 'un sujet identique à lui-même dans la diversité de ses états' (T.R. III, p.355). Is the self not changing all the time, constantly creating itself thanks to the many distanciations which it encounters and then appropriates? And if it is changing, can we call it a 'same'? We have already referred to the idea of a self decentred by its 'other', yet not destroyed, or, in Ricoeur's words, to a split cogito. Ricoeur now offers a far richer conception of 'same', when he asserts that 'l'identité du qui n'est donc elle-même qu'une identité narrative' (T.R. III, p.355). In other words, there is no 'same' outside stories: man is only through his stories.

This way of looking at the 'same' distinguishes between an abstract identity that excludes change and the narrative identity which includes change within the wholeness of a subject. Difference then becomes the difference between a formal concept of 'same' and a 'self' revealed in a story. Ricoeur points out that this conception of narrative identity emphasizes his conviction that the self of self-knowledge is not the immediate ego of the ego cogito, but 'le fruit d'une vie examinée ... épurée, clarifiée, par les effets cathartiques des récits tant historiques que fictif véhiculés par notre culture'. It is 'un soi instruit par les oeuvres de la culture qu'il s'est appliquées à lui-même' (T.R.III, p.356).

This conclusion of Ricoeur's latest book gives his work the appearance of a circularity, of an ontological continuity and growth within the circle of difference and identity, a circle continuously enlarged by new ideas and new appropriations. Culture, traditions, symbols, language at work in myths and in psychoanalysis, all fulfil their function of distanciation in view of self-understanding. And to them Ricoeur finally adds in a more general sense all stories: man is indeed a being entangled in stories and it is only when he distances himself from them in order to tell them that he finds a self, the self of consciousness and understanding, a self always ahead of himself, yet always already there in his meaningful past. Ricoeur expresses this idea to Richard Kearney, in Dialogues, as follows:

> 'The structure of narrativity demonstrates that it is by trying to put order in our past, by retelling and recounting what has been, that we acquire an identity.' (p.21).

And in so doing, in repeating the past, we also 'recollect our horizon of possibilities' (pp.21-22). In other words, we find an identity, that is a narrative identity.

Conclusion

> '... it belongs to a hermeneutics of story-telling to initiate the return from the abstract representation of time as linear to the existential interpretation of temporality.' ('The Human Experience of Time and Narrative' (1979) in Research in Phenomenology, vol. 9, p.26)

This last chapter of our thesis has further developed the hermeneutic circle of distanciation and appropriation to include in it a theory of story-telling as well as the aporia of time. The spiral has grown in depth and width, through a transformation of

both the existential present and the instant, into a <u>historical</u> <u>present</u>, that is a present filled with the stories of our past and of our future: a narrated present. In <u>Temps et récit</u>, Ricoeur took an important step towards the understanding of human reality, a step that stresses all the more the essential importance of <u>literature</u> and history in view of self-consciousness and self-identity. Without them, that is in 'a society where narrative is dead', there can be no communication, since in such a society, 'men are no longer capable of exchanging their experiences, of sharing a common experience.' (Richard Kearney's <u>Dialogues</u>, p.28)

In this chapter, we have sought to understand what we called the 'other' of time, an 'other' because it presented itself as an aporia. We came to realize that time can be grasped as a 'same' only when embodied in language, when it becomes a narrated time. We have seen how the 'other' of public time, a time made of an objective succession of instants, completed the 'other' of the <u>distensio-intensio</u>, an existential time constituted by the <u>distensio</u> of the threefold present in dialectics with the <u>intensio</u> of consciousness. Together, those two complementary aspects of the 'other' of time enter into dialectics with the 'same' of narrated time. Diagram (1) on page 326 illustrates this first dialectics of time. It draws attention to the fact that time can be grasped only indirectly, when it is told in a story or in history. Otherwise it remains an aporia.

This examination of the aporias of time further led to a study of the 'other' of <u>mimesis</u> II, of the epistemological configuration of human action in narrative. Both historiography and fictional narrative were considered in some depth as regards Ricoeur's interpretation of them. We first followed his demonstration of the indirect connection between the 'other' of historical

explanation and the 'same' of narrative <u>understanding</u>, in accordance
with the previous dialectics of explanation and understanding
applied to historiography. The conceptions of a quasi-plot in
history, with quasi-characters and quasi-events were the outcome
of this productive dialectics which proved historiography to be a
narrative. ·The ideas of deviations of temporality and of a
difference between past and present, which had to be both main-
tained and bridged, gave depth to this quasi-plot. We have
insisted upon this historical difference, arguing that it is a
<u>productive distance</u>, since it enriches our understanding of the
plot at an epistemological level. · Diagram (2) makes this
dialectics explicit. The same productive distance was also present
in fictional narrative, though in a different way. It dealt with
the deviation of modern emplotment versus the Aristotelian <u>muthos</u>.
How wide could such a deviation become without the loss of
<u>narrative identity</u>? The concept of 'traditionality' provided the
epistemological framework of the 'same' and the 'other' of modern
plots. We argued that the greater the distance from traditions,
the more enriching the novel would be, provided that order and
concordance still kept the upper hand over chaos and discordance.
Diagram (3) shows this dialectics. Against the reduction of the
plot by semiotics, in favour of logical structure and narrative
<u>explanation</u>, we stressed how Ricoeur contributed to the idea of a
temporal plot directly connected with events in narrative <u>under-
standing</u>. Diagram (4) illustrates this dialectics of explanation
and understanding in fictional narrative.

Still within the epistemology of the act of configuration,
we finally examined the dialectics of the objective 'énoncé' and
the act of 'énonciation' in texts. It distinguishes between the
'same' of meaning told by the story, and the 'other' of the act of

telling, the 'other' of event, in accordance with the dialectics
of event and meaning. But here, this dialectics is included
within the concept of the narrated time of mimesis II, itself
in dialectics with the time of lived experience. Diagram (5)
shows this rather more complex dialectics. It first (a) illustrates
the dialectics of the tenses of verbs, within the act of telling
by a narrator, with the time of action and lived experience.
The distance between those two times is seen as creative. Secondly,
within the narrated time, it makes explicit the dialectics between
the times of the act of telling and of the meaning 'told'. Both
together make up the plot, and not simply the action made of a
succession of events, as some literary critics would tend to think.
Thirdly (c), diagram (5) shows, still within the dialectics of
narrated time, a dialectics between the voice of a narrator who
tells about the world of characters, about their perspective and
points of view. Together, they make up the immanent text. Yet
the voice transcends this immanence of narrated time, reaching out
to the reader and to his world of transcendence. The conception of
the world of the reader opened up a new dialectics with the world of
the text. The 'other' of the text, and of mimesis II, acquired its
full meaning only when mediated by the act of reading. When the
text, itself a dialectics made of sense and reference, of structure
and of possible worlds, entered into dialectics with the 'same' of
a reader, it refigurated his temporal world. The text was
then grasped as an epistemological 'other' in dialectics with the
ontological 'same'. It was thanks to the crossed reference of
history and fiction that time and action could be refigurated by
a reader who appropriated the world of the text. We argued that the
greater the distance between those two worlds, the more creative the
crossed refiguration of time. Diagram (6) makes explicit this

dialectics of an epistemological difference and an ontological identity. The difference has been for Ricoeur the occasion of a long and enriching detour, of a long productive distanciation via historiography and fictional narrative. It shows how narrated time leads to narrative identity thanks to its refiguration by a reader. Moreover, we have stressed the importance of Ricoeur's own original creation, that is his idea of a hermeneutics of historical consciousness capable of bringing together past, present and future within a narrated historical present. In doing so, Ricoeur was able to close the hermeneutic circle of time and narrative. Or, in other words, he gave a proper axis to his hermeneutic spiral directed towards authentic self-understanding. Diagram (7) illustrates this circle. At the centre we place the threefold mimesis. Mimesis II mediates between the three with its power of configuration and concordance, able to win over discordance. It makes up the epistemological difference of narrative, and is par excellence the field of semiotics. To this distanciation there corresponds the ontological 'other' of mimesis I, a prefiguration of the world of action, and the realm of discordance, nurtured by the aporias of time. Seen as 'l'amont du texte', it constitutes the world of any potential reader, a world of pre-understanding in many ways similar to the naive understanding of Ricoeur's theory of interpretation. To it responds 'l'aval du texte'. Enriched by the text, mimesis III, the ontological 'same', is the world of refiguration of action and time, thanks to the reader who, through this process of concordance extended to his own world of action, finds his own identity: a narrative identity. This dialectics of the threefold mimesis corresponds in some ways to the dialectics of distanciation and appropriation, but now developed further.

The hermeneutic circle of _mimesis_ provided the axis to the spiral formed by time and narrative. We have seen how the conception of a 'présent historique' led to further productive _distance_ through a dialectics between the present and both the past and the future, not so much in terms of presence, but rather in terms of action. Yet our human initiatives in the present could only be refigured in a story.

Consequently, it became obvious that our ontological identity is rooted in time, in a historical present that bears our action and projects. And this action becomes a human act only when told in a story, in narrative. In turn, this conclusion on the nature of human identity led to the realization that the concept of identity, when applied to the continuously changing self, cannot be a mere 'same' identical to itself. It transcends the concept of a _split_ cogito to become very precisely a _narrated self_.

Diagrams

(1)   Ontological 'OTHER' _____   Epistemological 'SAME'

               Aporias of time (discordance)   Narrated (concordance)
                  Public time   Existential time   time

             Abstract 'nows'   Qualitative now

      (objective succession   (Distensio -intensio)
          of instants)
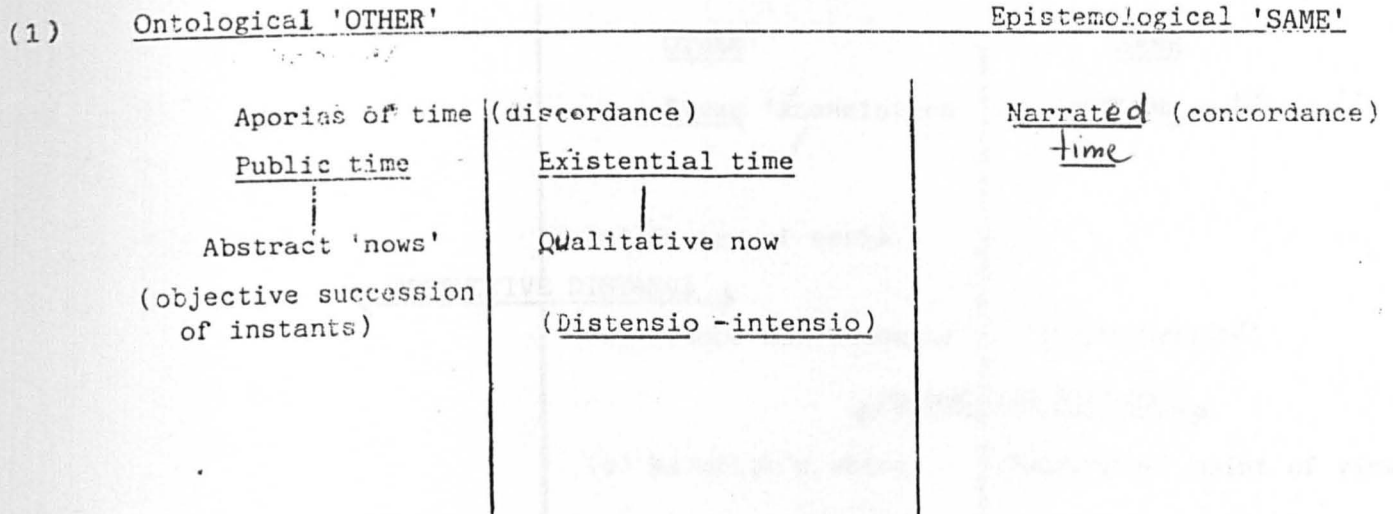
(2)   Historiography (Epistemological Dialectics)

          OTHER   SAME

    Historical explanation   Narrative understanding

        Past   <Productive Distance>   Present

             Quasi - plot
             Quasi - characters
             Quasi - events
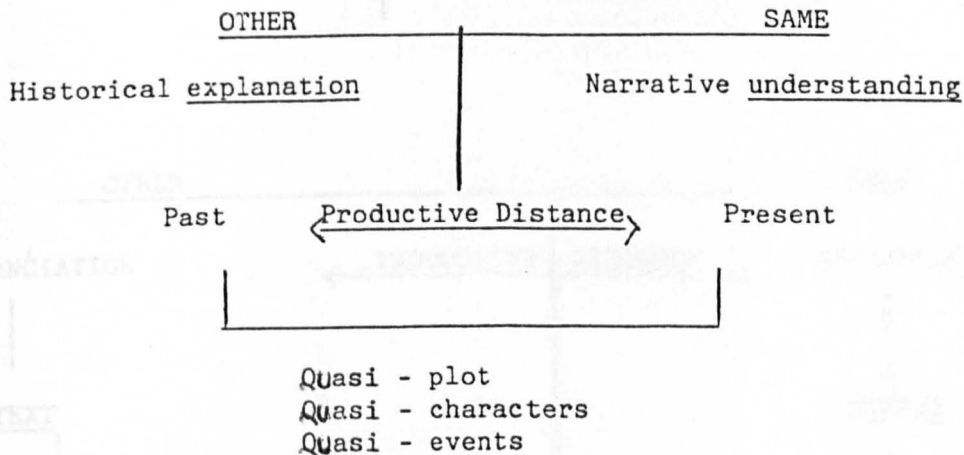
          Fictional Narrative (Epistemological Dialectics)

(3)   Concept of 'traditionality'   (4)

OTHER	SAME
Deviation from muthos	Concordance within modern novel

       <Productive Distance>

OTHER	SAME
Narrative explanation	Narrative understanding
Logical structure	Temporal plot (events)
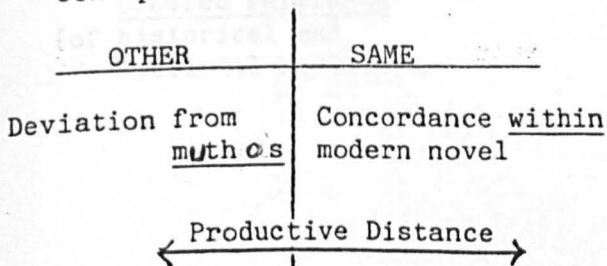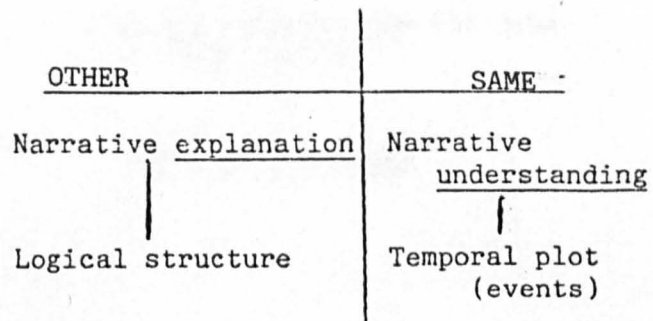
(5)

ONTOLOGICAL 'OTHER'

Time of lived experience

EPISTEMOLOGICAL 'SAME'

Narrated time of mimesis II

OTHER

Event 'énonciation'

SAME

MEANING - 'énoncé'

(a) Tenses of verbs

← PRODUCTIVE DISTANCE →

(b) 'Temps du raconter'   'temps raconté'

← PRODUCTIVE DISTANCE →

(c) Narrator's voice   characters' point of view

← PRODUCTIVE DISTANCE →

(6)

OTHER   SAME

DISTANCIATION   ← PRODUCTIVE DISTANCE →   APPROPRIATION

TEXT   READER

OTHER
Sense
Structure

SAME
Reference
Narrated time
(within text)

Crossed reference
(of historical and
fictional narrative)

Crossed refiguration (of time
and human action)

Narrative identity

(7)   Hermeneutic circle of time - Mimesis - narrative

'OTHER' - ONTOLOGICAL 'OTHER' - EPISTEMOLOGICAL 'SAME' - ONTOLOGICAL 'SAME' - 'SAME'

TIME	Mimesis I	Mimesis II	Mimesis III	NARRATIVE
	Prefiguration	Configuration	Refiguration	
		Concordance	Concordance	
	Discordance	Semiotics		
	Aporias of time	Distanciation	Appropriation	
	Potential reader	Text	Reader	
Historical present				Narrative identit

C O N C L U S I O N

This final part of our thesis has developed beyond our initial expectations   the   hermeneutic circle of difference and identity in the thought of Ricoeur. We have seen in the first chapter how Ricoeur came to his theory of interpretation through no less than nine dialectics, all of them dialectics of difference and identity. Ricoeur seems to have worked his way _dialectically_ through structuralist as well as phenomenological theories of language, thus taking into account all aspects of the linguistic spectrum. His own method of distanciation led him to a critical analysis of all those theories he found enriching and thought-provoking. Under the grid of his attentive mind, he found in most of them something to be preserved, which was further appropriated and rethought within a new framework, that of his hermeneutic circle. We are now in a position, through Ricoeur's concept of distanciation and appropriation, to assess Ricoeur's originality, which is, as we have suggested, closely bound to values. For Ricoeur, a _concrete_ philosophy, that is an _authentic_ reflective thought, must start from somewhere: from the objective structures of culture and society, expressed in language and narrative. This stresses the value of dialogue, of a dialogue with all contemporary human sciences. It is through it that the ego is metamorphosed into a self far richer than the self of pure, immediate self-reflection. We have seen how the text is the privileged place from which such a dialogue can emerge. Indeed, it is from the interpretation of our written language that phenomenology breaks away from idealism, thus revealing its affinity with hermeneutics. Both share the idea that meaning is primary and anterior to language, yet expressed in language. Hence the need for a concrete hermeneutic phenomenology of language that can make sense of it.

In this final part of our work, is it now possible to say with certainty that Ricoeur's latest work on texts and narrative, on time and stories, has really succeeded in its effort to achieve a <u>concrete</u> reflective philosophy? We have seen how he moved from the abstraction of eidetic analyses to concrete symbols and myths. Have language and stories really added to this development towards the concrete? In the first chapter of this third part, we have focussed upon the concrete interpretation theory that led to the hermeneutic circle of explanation and understanding. We have stressed the importance of <u>difference</u>, and have understood it mainly in terms of a structural analysis, which offered a concrete scientific basis for the highest value of all for Ricoeur: self-understanding and self-consciousness. We have also stressed the importance of distanciation via the 'work' of language, and have insisted upon its value as <u>productive distance</u>, as a distance made concrete and productive because it enriched the 'same' of meaning.

On the other hand, we have also stressed the 'arrows' of the text that point towards identity and appropriation, thanks to the phenomenon of <u>semantic innovation</u>. We have seen how this innovation consisted, in the case of metaphor, in 'la production d'une nouvelle pertinence sémantique par le moyen d'une attribution impertinente' (T.R. I, p.11), and in the case of narratives, in 'l'invention d'une intrigue' (T.R. I, p.11). We have argued that the concept of appropriation is not in Ricoeur's view a possession of someone else's ideas, but more fundamentally the outcome of a dialogue whereby the self welcomes the Other's ideas with attention and respect, as well as with a critical mind, and eventually makes them his own through the communication that has taken place. Appropriation was seen as a supreme existential act of communication, and was made possible only because of its relationship with

distanciation and difference. This indeed clearly and incontrovertibly supports the argument of this thesis, namely that there can be no identity without a genuine dialogue with difference and distance. And in turn, a difference that does not refer in some way to the being of man, remains meaningless at a deep existential and philosophical level, meaningless not in itself, but because it is incomplete and abortive.

Furthermore, we have argued in the second chapter that the being of man cannot be known unless it expresses itself in stories and histories. We have examined Ricoeur's work on time and narrative very closely, and his conclusion seems to us both valid and of great importance in the context of contemporary French philosophy: identity is a _narrated identity_; it is through language, and even more important, through narrative and texts that man comes to know himself. And when he does so, man also becomes aware of time and of living in a _historical present_, a present filled with initiative and action, that is with projects being fulfilled or about to be fulfilled in the future. The concept of _mimesis_, and even more important, of Ricoeur's threefold _mimesis_ appeared as the very concrete guiding thread throughout his research into time and narrative. It acted as a mediation between the discordance of time and fleeting events, and the concordance of a structured story. We argued that they indeed constitute a hermeneutic circle, that is in fact a spiral endlessly enlarging itself through all the knowledge made available by the human sciences.

Can we therefore, in conclusion, say that Ricoeur's hermeneutic phenomenology has expanded, throughout the years, towards one of his earliest aims and values, a _concrete_ philosophy in line with that of Gabriel Marcel? The _hermeneutic circle_ speaks for itself: yes, it is a concrete way of conceiving what reality

is like, a reality with an axis rather than a centre, and with
endless resources for expansion and growth. But this kind of
growth can only be in terms of a method that is, and must remain,
dialectical. Ricoeur's philosophy has both developed towards the
concrete - and this despite the ever-increasing abstract language
needed to tackle the abstract epistemological problems - and
towards the dialectical. More fundamentally, we would argue that
Ricoeur makes it very clear there can be no concrete reflective
thought unless it is rooted in a dialogue, in a communication
between the 'same' and the 'other'.

CONCLUSION

FROM EPISTEMOLOGY TO ONTOLOGY : THE HERMENEUTIC CIRCLE
OF DIFFERENCE AND IDENTITY IN THE THOUGHT OF PAUL RICOEUR

> '... on ne vit que ce qu'on
> imagine'
> (front page of this thesis)

Ricoeur is now, inevitably at the age of 73, approaching the climax of life's experience: what then can we say about the productive imagination that, he himself suggests, informs his life and his work? It stands out against the background of the hermeneutic circle of explanation and appropriation, in the form of a semantic innovation at work not only in metaphor and plot, but also at all cultural levels, and it keeps opening the spiral, giving it direction as well as form and depth. We have argued that imagination is the explorer of our human becoming: it discloses new possible worlds and new ways of being in the world. But it can do so only because it first opens up a distance at the heart of lived experience. In other words, the concept of imagination works like an 'iconic augmentation': it condenses within itself the dialectics of difference and identity. Implying at once the 'same', the similar and the 'other', it leads the hermeneutic spiral through the human sciences towards Ricoeur's ultimate philosophical goal, 'the ontology of human reality' (Response, p.40).

And without a doubt, imagination has guided Ricoeur throughout his prolific work by providing the quality of vision that transformed distance and difference into the productive distance necessary to knowledge and self-understanding. What was this Ricoeurian vision and how is it linked to the argument of this thesis? Ricoeur's work began with the question of freedom and with an original approach that sought to combine the depth of Gabriel

Marcel's existential vision, with the clarity of Husserl's method.
It was against_ the inadequacies of existentialism that Ricoeur

(inserted above: what he considered to be)

imaginatively chose as his tools these values of depth and clarity.

Using them, he set out to investigate the <u>structures of human</u>

<u>nature</u> and built up a solid framework within which he then placed

his existential concepts and values. His aim was to demonstrate

the <u>unity</u> of freedom and nature, of mind and body, in contrast with

the old dichotomy with which we are familiar. He very nearly

succeeded in his demonstrations, were it not for another deeper

duality that slowly emerged despite the obvious reciprocity between

the voluntary and the involuntary. The existential difference

forced Ricoeur out of pure Husserlian phenomenology and into herme-

neutics. The move changed both his method and values, and illustrates

the power of what we call his intellectual imagination, when faced

with the insoluble problem of the non-coincidence of man with

himself. Yes, indeed, freedom had been proved to be only a human

freedom limited by all our contingencies, physical and psychological.

But what about this non-coincidence of a man now torn between his

desire for the infinite and the realities of his finite incarnation?

How could freedom fit within such an existential dilemma. Ricoeur

retained both his ontological vision and his method of pure reflec-

tion, and with imaginativeness he redirected his enquiry towards

the <u>structures of human reality</u>. This change of emphasis enriched

in retrospect his first eidetic work, and thus makes the <u>existential</u>

<u>distance</u> between freedom and nature appear <u>productive</u>. His questions

on knowing, acting, and the affective forms of the will led to

unstable syntheses, and more important, to the awareness of 'faulty'

aspects in man. Moreover, when Ricoeur pursued his enquiry,

challenged by this geological and ethical fault, he came, perhaps

surprisingly, to evil, that is to say to the absolute 'other' of human freedom. Ricoeur first visualized in the geological disproportion of man with himself the possibility of evil. But when linked to the problem of freedom, this ontological fault turned out to be ethical. Consequently, a new ethical distance appeared within man. This distance we shall also call productive, because it led Ricoeur's vision towards the symbolism of evil, and to the roots of our religious culture. In addition, this second distance was the springboard for Ricoeur's hermeneutics, and consequently for a more concrete way of thinking, which constitutes one of Ricoeur's main goals. Yet, how did this come about?

What we have called the 'hermeneutic turn' was marked by the appearance of a concern with language in Ricoeur's work, even though it remained largely unexplored. His new awareness of the importance of symbol and myth as 'le plein du langage', from which concrete philosophy was now to start, drew attention to the linguistic aspect of his work. His imaginative vision was further enhanced by the conception of a hermeneutic circle that also involved the philosopher. Indeed the concept of appropriation was latent within the idea of a belief necessarily implicit in any act of understanding. This stresses in Ricoeur's work, the phenomenological value of the world - for-me: the philosopher is more than a scientist (who is content to explain the world), he also makes it his own so as to dwell in it.

His work on symbols, as well as the first hermeneutic circle seen as only a route towards concrete reflection, further challenged Ricoeur's intellectual imagination: how was he to bridge the distance, again a productive distance, between symbolics and philosophy? We have seen how his vision slowly enlarged by moving from the conception of a wager to that of hermeneutic phenomenology.

The distance remained, but became productive, thanks to the idea of a dialectics between the two: symbols indeed give rise to thought, but more important, concrete thought cannot be without roots, without a past made of symbolic and contingent traditions, without a culture. This distance further developed the importance and value of mediation in Ricoeur's philosophy: the self cannot know itself immediately. Ricoeur placed much emphasis on the value of mediation: he built on it his hermeneutic circle, with the concept of distanciation and explanation.

Ricoeur's work on psychoanalysis was a further challenge to his imagination. It enriched his vision and added originality to his work. In addition, it led to the problematic of the conflict of interpretations, grasped in terms of a telos and an arche in man. His intellectual imagination had by then sufficient width and depth to bring together in dialectics both Hegel and Freud. The distance between them, each being seen as the reverse image of the other, stressed complementarity rather than conflict, thus leading Ricoeur to the idea of a possible arbitration of those aspects of man that normally tend to conflict. It must be said that Ricoeur always searches for identity in his detours through difference. Hence, the value of 'arbitration' in his thought, that is of a critical approach that may lead to unity. But he is realistic enough to know that this hope can only be a horizon. He said to Richard Kearney in Dialogues:

> 'If there is an ultimate unity, it resides else-
> where, in a sort of eschatological hope. But
> this is my 'secret', if you wish, my personal
> wager, and not something that can be translated
> into a centralizing philosophical discourse.'
> (pp. 27-28)

This, of course, highlights in a forceful way to Ricoeur's values as regards the transcendental 'Other', a God that

counterbalances evil with his promise of reconciliation: the greater the evil, the greater, for Ricoeur, the love of God. Ricoeur spoke of the 'sentinelles de l'horizon' (D.I., p.509) to describe the signs of such a promise, and although he acknowledged the fragility of a rationality that transcends our reflections, he also argued that philosophy has a duty to greet it 'comme ce qui vient à elle sur des pattes d'oiseaux' (D.I. p.508).

We would here draw attention to Ricoeur's language which tends to be metaphorical as well as highly abstract. The above metaphor stresses the fragility and the unexpectedness of the symbolism of reconciliation: it comes from the horizon to dwell within our limited human reflection. In his work on the voluntary and the involuntary, Ricoeur refers to the psychoanalyst as a 'midwife of freedom', an expression we find particularly revealing. His expression of 'rubbing' concepts together, surprising as it may sound, is also very effective. When Ricoeur speaks of the 'war' of interpretations, the fight is real, it is almost a physical confrontation in which concepts exchange, yet do not lose their identity. We read in De l'interprétation:

> 'Il s'agit bien au contraire de se battre ... de frotter l'une contre l'autre l'herméneutique d'Eliade ... et l'herméneutique freudienne, afin de construire sans complaisance le oui et le non ...' (p.511)

The 'yes' and 'no' refers to the critical approach that leads to an arbitration of hermeneutics.

Many examples of this language could be given, but a last one will suffice here, expressing the idea of concepts that have become outgrown. Ricoeur writes:

> '... les images de l'ancien système ne peuvent plus survivre que comme des fleurs coupées' (S.M. p.191)

They have lost, as it were, their life support, their meaning.

In his recent work, Ricoeur seems to have become more abstract in his language, in contrast to his progress towards concrete philosophy. This is an interesting phenomenon. What lies behind such a new wave of difficult words can be explained as follows. Ricoeur has entered more and more deeply into the epistemological world of the human sciences, and hence had no choice but to adopt their specialized language in order not to lose all their meaningful subtleties. Ricoeur also clearly delights in the use of Greek words, and of old words that have lost their meaning in the contemporary French language. For example the word 'utopia' usually understood in its negative connotation, as something illusory that is cut off from human action and reality. Ricoeur re-values it by stressing its importance in dialectics with ideology. Both complete one another in the same way that imagination adds to our ordinary way of life. We need utopia to counterbalance what may become fixed in our society: to the symbolic confirmation of the past corresponds the symbolic opening towards the future.

Returning to Ricoeur's values as regards Transcendence and the 'Wholly Other', we would stress the value of testimony in some of Ricoeur's articles. He has from time to time preached both in France and in the United States, and was the preacher at an ecumenical service held during the students' and workers' insurrection in 1968. A committed Christian, he is close to biblical scholars and theologians. Yet he is not a theologian but above all a philosopher, a philosopher who keeps an attentive eye on the 'sentinelles de l'horizon'. And this also demands vision and imagination.

Ricoeur's recent work on metaphor, text, narrative and time has opened and deepened even further his intellectual imagination. He himself linked his work to the problem of creativity in

language, with the hope of a recreation of language whereby the old structures would be filled anew. This was the purpose of his interpretation theory: to explain the mecanisms of a text in such a way as to recover its _spirit_, that is its capacity to open up new worlds. There can be no doubt that such a task demanded great depth of vision on the part of the philosopher. This was made possible by Ricoeur's almost intuitive understanding of metaphor and symbol, an intuition close to that of writers.

Gabriel Marcel saw a convergence between the writer and the authentic philosopher. In his _Essai de philosophie concrète_, he emphasized that both try to 'dégager des structures', and even more important that they share 'un certain étonnement' (p.100) because neither really becomes used to the 'fait d'exister'. They both remain 'en proie au réel' (p.100). In this sense, Ricoeur is an authentic philosopher: he is someone who can make distance, and structure, productive, by exploding their _meaning_. The proof lies in his hermeneutic circle of distanciation and appropriation that seeks the existential fulfilment of a being enriched with the epistemology of all our human sciences. Their tension and conflict fill the distance between the 'is' and the 'is not' of the human reality, making it dialectical, and therefore productive.

We have stressed the importance and value of this dialectical approach to reality that springs from the semantic innovation of metaphor. This was further developed by Ricoeur in his work on time and narrative. Here as well several dialectics were needed, and most of them disclosed a productive distance. They enriched the hermeneutic circle of the theory of interpretation by adding to it a circle of prefiguration, configuration and

refiguration of human action. Again, Ricoeur brought, with

imagination and vision, two unexpected philosophers together

in dialogues: St. Augustin and Aristotle, seeing in each one

the reverse image of the other. And most important for our

argument, the dialectics revealed that identity can only be a

narrated identity that unfolds in the 'présent historique', that

is in an existential present filled with our past and future

projects and initiatives. This present could be retained by our

stories, because it had first been lost in its immediacy, and

further recreated by the work of language. Ricoeur drew attention

to the importance of distanciation as regards time:

> 'L'impression, pour être retrouvée, doit d'abord
> être perdue en tant que jouissance immédiate,
> prisonnière de son objet extérieur.'
> (T.R. II, p.221)

This emphasizes once again the productive distance at work in both

time and narrative. And we would argue that it is the same distance

already at work in the Husserlian epoche, which Ricoeur also calls

'l'imagination productrice' in 'L'imagination dans le discours et

dans l'action' (1976) when he states that: '... l'imagination est

l'instrument même de la critique du réel. La réduction transcen-

dentale husserlienne, en tant que neutralisation de l'existence,

en est l'illustration la plus complète' (p.210). Imagination is

distance made productive. It is thanks to our imaginary power that

we can recognise the values of both past and future, through their

differences from those of the present, and that we can therefore

open up the real towards the possible. And this is precisely what

Ricoeur has done throughout his writing career. His philosophy

remains open, it welcomes all disciplines that deal with man and

being in an effort to be continuously informed as regards the

intellectual landscape. This is so even to the extent of wanting

to read everything. Ricoeur has jokingly said - in the course
of a private discussion with us -· that his son, a psychoanalyst,
thinks he is a psychotic, because of this need to be informed in
the most minute detail. We have certainly noticed this in his
later work, especially through his voluminous reading and
references, and we must admire the breadth of his knowledge.
This means of course that he has indeed drawn on other people's
ideas to a considerable extent, but as we have already argued, with
creativity and originality, in other words, with imagination.

However, despite the progress of his thinking continuously
enlarged and enriched by Others, we detect a subterranean continuity
as regards his values. The constantly postponed project of a
'Poétique de la volonté' was to be, already in 1950, a philosophy
of the creative imagination, this is to say, a philosophy that
makes me a human being by adding a self to my ego. Unlike many
contemporary philosophers, Ricoeur has not been actively involved
in politics, but, as we have already mentioned, he has taken up
his responsibilities as a Christian, with great seriousness, and
has spoken up, in a very critical way, for a better society with
more justice and less exploitation. Dialogue has been, for Ricoeur,
the guiding thread of his work, and this means some form of dialec-
tics between the 'same' and the 'other'. He has retained, and
deepened, the dynamic movement present in the phenomenological
intentionality of his early work, and directed towards what is
'other', and he has done so with imagination and insight always
moving ahead to a new challenge. This is well illustrated by his
many articles which can be regarded as some kind of 'coupe transversa-
le dans une recherche en progrès' (T.R. II, p.81), thus adding to
the depth of his work. Indeed the dialectics of communication is
so central to Ricoeur's thought, that it is as if his own life has

become a dialectics, split between the need to read and continually increase his epistemological knowledge, and the need to write and recover the self disclosed by all those readings, so as to understand himself always a little better. The language 'at work' in symbol, text and narrative, has been, for him, the privileged tool in making such an understanding a reality. It is through the 'other' of the works of language that we find meaning: we cannot create meaning, we inherit it and further recreate it by our re-interpretations of it, by our stories and histories. This is perhaps the fundamental lesson of Ricoeur's hermeneutics, as he told Richard Kearney in Dialogues:

> 'It is by an understanding of the worlds, actual and
> possible, opened by language that we may arrive at a
> better understanding of ourselves.' (p.45)

In doing so, we would argue that we increase the axis of the spiral, and perhaps, that Ricoeur's hermeneutic circle starts to resemble a little Gaston Bachelard's image of the being of man to which Mary McAllester has drawn attention in the conclusion of her article 'Bachelard twenty years on: an assessment' (1984). Bachelard writes in La poétique de l'espace:

> 'Et quelle spirale que l'être de l'homme! ... Ainsi,
> l'être spiralé, qui se désigne extérieurement comme
> un centre bien investi, jamais n'atteindra son
> centre ... Dans le règne de l'imagination, à peine
> une expression a été avancée, que l'être a besoin
> d'une autre expression ...' (p.193)

Yet this centre, that always escapes man, can be found in stories, thanks to which we move towards identity, even if we cannot reach it. In a world of mutation and change man needs to hold on to some meaningful identity. Yet, on the other hand, identity without distance would be sterile, it would, as Sartre has demonstrated, transform man into a 'thing'. We would argue, as we conclude this thesis, that Ricoeur has found the answer: yes indeed, the self is

continually decentred by its 'other', but this endless decentring
and growth is itself a narrative identity, 'issue de la
rectification sans fin d'un récit antérieur par un récit
ultérieur, et de la chaîne de refigurations qui en résulte' (T.R.
III, pp.357-358). In other words, the hermeneutic circle of
difference and identity in the thought of Paul Ricoeur succeeds
in paving the way from epistemology to ontology, from the 'other'
to the 'same' thanks to the power of intellectual imagination.
It has found a poetic and dynamic way of displacing the problem.
We shall leave to Ricoeur the last word as regards this resolution
of the dialectics of identity and difference:

> 'En un mot, l'identité narrative est la résolution
> poétique du cercle herméneutique.' (T.R. III, p.358)

A P P E N D I X

(a) Biography of Paul Ricoeur

1913	Born in Valence
1915	Orphaned and brought up in Rennes
1933	Took a B.A. in Philosophy
1934 - 35	Student at the Sorbonne. Also became a student of Gabriel Marcel.
1935	Gained second place in the 'Agrégation'.
	He married (and subsequently had five children)
1936	Teacher in Colmar
1937 - 38	Did his Military service
1939 - 45	Was called up to the war, and was imprisoned in Germany until 1945. In captivity he read Husserl and Jaspers, and taught philosophy to his fellow prisoners.
1945 - 48	Taught at the Collège Cévenol and began to publish his books on Marcel and Jaspers.
1948 - 56	Was elected to a Chair in the History of Philosophy at the University of Strasbourg.
1956 - 66	Was appointed to a Chair in General Philosophy at the Sorbonne.
1960 - present	Holds a part-time professorship at the University of Chicago.
	Directorship of the 'Centre d'études phénoménologiques et herméneutiques' in Paris.
1966 - 70	Moved from the Sorbonne to lecture at Nanterre (Paris).
1969	Became Dean of the Faculty
1970	Resigned from Nanterre, following the student occupation of the University.
1970 - 73	Moved to a professorial post at the University of Louvain.
1973 - 80	Returned to Nanterre.

(b) Meetings between Danielle Piovano and Paul Ricoeur

January 1980

Ricoeur gave the Sarum lectures at the University of Oxford: 'Narrative in Religious Discourse'. After an exchange of letters we met in Oxford on the occasion of these lectures.

February 1986

He gave the Gifford lectures at the University of Edinburgh: 'On Selfhood: the Question of Personal Identity'.

<u>26 February 1986</u>

On my initiative, Ricoeur was invited by the Departments of English Studies and Modern Languages to give a special lecture at the University of Strathclyde: 'Time and the Poetics of Narrative'. At that time we had the opportunity to discuss this work.

On the following page two items have been reproduced:

(i) A card received from Ricoeur before his visit to Scotland in February 1986 indicating his willingness to meet me and discuss his work.

(ii) Ricoeur's autograph on the inside cover of <u>Temps et récit</u>.

le 10 février 1986

Chère Madame

Ce mot pour vous dire que je serai tout disposé à vous rencontrer le jour de ma visite à Glasgow, le 25 février. Je serai heureux de parler à loisir de votre travail. Soyez assuré de

mon attention et de mon intérêt.

Recevez, je vous prie, chère Madame, l'expression de mes pensées les plus cordiales   Paul Ricoeur

Pour Danielle Chakrabarti

Hommage très cordial

Paul Ricoeur

TEMPS
ET RÉCIT

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All books are published in Paris, unless stated otherwise. Ricoeur's books and articles are listed according to the order in which they first appeared. Translations are not given, though it must be said that Ricoeur has been translated into English, German, Spanish, Italian, Polish, Portuguese, Danish and Dutch.

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II. SECONDARY LITERATURE : STUDIES ON PAUL RICOEUR

The following list is selective, it deals mainly with books written on Ricoeur's work. For a more complete list, see François H. Lapointe's essay in Studies in the Philosophy of Paul Ricoeur, edited by Charles E. Reagan, pp. 164-77, Athens, Ohio University Press, 1979. Entitled 'Paul Ricoeur and his Critics : A Bibliographic Essay', Lapointe's article gives an accurate picture of books, dissertations and articles up to January, 1977.

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