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**The Imagination and Creative Interpretation:
a Study of *The Symbolism of Evil* by Paul Ricoeur**

Jennifer Eileen Harris

**A Thesis
in
The Department
of
Philosophy**

**Presented in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Master of Arts at
Concordia University
Montreal, Quebec, Canada**

March 1992

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ABSTRACT

The Imagination and Creative Interpretation: A Study of *The Symbolism of Evil* by Paul Ricoeur

Jennifer Eileen Harris,
Concordia University, 1992.

For Paul Ricoeur, the goal of philosophical reflection is the elaboration of existential structures in a rational ontology. Philosophical reflection on existence always means a reflection on oneself, a reflection which will yield self-knowledge. Since, for Ricoeur, human being is at the same time cultural and historical being, such reflection is never accomplished in solipsistic isolation but is to be achieved through a hermeneutic of the various expressions of human being, understood as symbol, myth, dream, and written text. The interpretation of the symbols and myths of evil which articulate the fundamental fallibility of human being constitutes the initial phase of Ricoeur's hermeneutic philosophy. The scope of this thesis will be limited to an exploration of this early project which he undertook in *The Symbolism of Evil*.

By reasserting the priority of being over the thinking ego, Ricoeur hopes to overcome the separation of subjectivity and objectivity which is the outcome of Kantian and neo-Kantian transcendental philosophy. The thesis takes language as the central theme around which to focus the discussion of the symbolic-mythic expression of human fault. The crucial role and function of the imagination is also explored. It is the imagination at work in a genuinely philosophical hermeneutics which inspires and facilitates the drive towards unity.

Ricoeur situates his hermeneutic endeavour at the intersection between imagination and reflection, giving rise to the aphorism "the symbol gives rise to thought." The potential incompatibility of reason and imagination is overcome through the reconciling, regenerative work of creative hermeneutics.

There is another faculty, whose seat is the intermediate cavity among the cavities of the brain; it is called the active Imagination. At the place where it resides, there is a channel in the shape of an arch, as it were tracing a long vault. The part of the brain that lies here resembles a worm; hence in Arabic it is called *duda* (worm.) Sometimes it shortens, sometimes it lengthens, as a worm does when it contracts and stretches out. The active Imagination has the right to inspect the treasury of forms and the treasury of significances ...

Avicenna

Quoted by A.L. Levi in *Literature, Philosophy and the Imagination*

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INTRODUCTION

For Paul Ricoeur, the goal of philosophical reflection is a rational ontology, the elaboration of "existential concepts - ... not only structures of reflection but structures of existence, insofar as existence is the being of man." (SE 356,357)¹ This reflection is never accomplished in solipsistic isolation, for, as he himself states "reflection is the effort to regain the *ego* of the *ego Cogito* in the mirror of its objects, its works, and finally its acts." (CI 327) Thus, although philosophical reflection on existence always means a reflection on oneself which will yield self-knowledge, Ricoeur believes that human being is at the same time cultural and historical being and that self-knowledge is knowledge of our humanity in its cultural and religious expressions. Hence, any rational ontology is to be achieved through a hermeneutic of the various expressions of human being, understood here by Ricoeur as symbol and myth, and later as dream (*Freud and Philosophy*) and written text (*The Rule of Metaphor, Time and Narrative.*)

The interpretation of the symbols and myths which articulate the fundamental weakness or fallibility of human being constitutes the initial phase of Ricoeur's hermeneutic philosophy, and the scope of this thesis will be limited to an exploration of this early project which he undertook in *The Symbolism of Evil*, which was first published in French as *La symbolique du mal*, (Paris: Aubier, 1960.) It constitutes the second part of the second volume of Paul Ricoeur's early project, the *Philosophie de la volonté: finitude et culpabilité*. The first part of the second volume was also published in 1960

¹ In the interests of appearance and to facilitate the reading of this thesis, wherever more than one reference from the same page(s) of the original source occur together, I have cited those references only once, at the end of the paragraph or section in which they appear.

and was called *L'homme faillible*, (*Fallible Man*.) The first volume had been published in 1950 as *Le volontaire et l'involontaire*.

This thesis recognizes four main tasks. First, to provide a general survey of the composition and content of *The Symbolism of Evil*. Second, the need to determine a unifying theme around which to organize the abundance of literary, historical and religious detail which Ricoeur supplies in the text. Third, to explore Ricoeur's use of the imagination as a key to hermeneutic endeavour. Fourth and finally to attempt an evaluation of Ricoeur's proposed reconciliation of philosophical reflection and imagination summed up in his aphorism "the symbol gives rise to thought."

Chapters One and Two assume the first two tasks. Chapter One provides an outline and general analysis of the structure and development of ideas in *The Symbolism of Evil*, and Chapter Two examines the main points of Ricoeur's hermeneutics of the symbols and myths of evil. True to his hermeneutic conviction that any honest philosopher will not only 'confess' to his or her presuppositions but also "wager" on them as beliefs (see below pp. 23, 25, 103-104,) Ricoeur's careful and detailed exposition of the symbolic-mythic testimony of human fault draws on the vast reservoir of Babylonian, Judaic, and Greek literature which supports and informs his own Western, Judaeo-Christian perspective.

In this chapter, I have chosen to focus this wealth of information (through which Ricoeur exposes his own ontological roots) around the central theme of language, since for Ricoeur our "living experience of fault gives itself a language ..." (SE 8) This language expresses the fundamental 'brokenness' of our being, the fact that we experience ourselves as "torn." (FM 216) By undertaking a detailed phenomenology of

the language of confession Ricoeur has sought to bridge the gap between the capacity for fault and its experience. His search for the basic unity of experience focuses on the language of that experience, the fullness of the language of symbols, which are "already in the element of speech." (SE 350) He states that the symbol occurs when "language produces signs of composite degree in which the meaning, not satisfied with designating some one thing, designates another meaning attainable only in and through the first intentionality." (FP 16) It is the locus of an "excess" or "overdetermination" of meaning, which "puts interpretation in motion," (FP 19) or "gives rise to thought." (SE 347) To understand human being and to elaborate structures of human existence, the philosopher must therefore first listen and respond to the voices of essential human discord.

Ricoeur maintains that thinking and discourse are always oriented by cultural and geographical immersion in a particular philosophy, which, for those of us in the West, is Greek and predominantly concerned with the question of being. (SE 20) In line with this, it seemed to me that two major 'sub-themes' emerge from his consideration of the language of symbols which amplify our understanding of the way in which language expresses our humanity, and which are both related to the wider question of being. First, our drive towards language and our need to express ourselves seem to be rooted in an even deeper drive towards being. Language seems to witness to our desire for being or for the "cosmic whole," as Ricoeur terms it. In this sense, language gives evidence of a longing for a relatedness to being, for participation within the unity, infinite "plenitude" or "totality of meaning" which we fail to experience otherwise than in our invocations and intentions, our symbols and myths. (SE 168-171)

Second, it would seem that the human imagination has a crucial role and function in this movement towards completeness. The imagination is uniquely competent to envision and summon up the cosmic unity, engendering a unifying language of symbol and myth as it seeks to mediate and reconcile our existence as finite beings within an infinite whole. Ricoeur thus situates his hermeneutic endeavour at the intersection between imagination and reflection, giving rise to the aphorism "the symbol gives rise to thought."

Chapter Three addresses the apparent paradox and potential conflict in a hermeneutic which seeks to combine the analytic power of reflection and the synthetic approach of imagination and attempts a fuller investigation of the imagination as crucial to Ricoeur's hermeneutics. In this chapter, I also explore the relation between human being and imagination, and between being and language which is both the "saying-of-being" and the condition of our interpretation of being. This language is essentially metaphorical, and it is in the metaphor where the intuitive "seeing as" of the imagination and the discursivity of reflection are joined. Chapter Three concludes with a brief discussion of the relation between philosophy and imagination.

The role of reason in posing and pursuing the question of being has been examined preeminently perhaps by Martin Heidegger. He argues that since the time of Socrates, philosophy itself has corrupted reason's legitimate pursuit of being by steadily reducing it to a mere preoccupation with the appearance of things, with the observing and ordering of the external environment to the neglect of its ground, or being itself. Indeed, since the time of Galileo, Newton and Descartes, a separation and distinction between the so-called subjective and objective spheres of experience has been deeply set into the

Western consciousness. These mathematicians and scientists succeeded in theorizing and ordering the elements of experience into a mathematical construct, and in severing the mind from the natural world, *res cogitans* from *res extensa*. Philosophy now assumes a "one track" mode of thinking, a basically technological approach which does not think what it ought to think. Reason no longer recognizes or comprehends being. (CT 26)

I want to agree here with Heidegger that Western philosophy, and hence our own thinking and perception, is incompetent to relate itself in any way to 'is "whole," incapable of identifying itself with being. According to Ricoeur, it is the mythical consciousness which relates itself to being, or to the "whole of things." (SE 166) I want to suggest that the imagination is the specific faculty which houses and animates the mythical consciousness, which expresses that consciousness in the language of symbol and myth, and which manipulates and understands the data of mundane experience in terms of its own specific *telos* and motivating power - unity. In terms of the Heideggerian complaint, the imagination would in fact be the faculty which 'thinks' what it ought, which 'thinks' being.

It is the imagination which is operative in phenomenological intentionality, which attempts to reunite the two spheres of subjectivity and objectivity, affirming the connection between human desire, concern and value and their objectified works and expressions. It re-collects, co-ordinates and projects the various components of experience. Without imagination, both memory and the cognitive capacities are powerless. More than this, in Ricoeur's hermeneutic phenomenology it is the "metaphorical imagination" which creates as well as discloses meaning. At this point the question arises of the truth of metaphoric intuition and of the reality to which it refers.

The question is resolved by discriminating between metaphoric and speculative discourse and by arguing for an "interanimation" of the two levels of discourse. This would be achieved in the discipline of philosophical hermeneutics which operates at the crossroads of the two.

The Conclusion to this thesis will contain a short survey of the main points I have covered. Further, I hope to address the problem of the viability of Ricoeur's original ambition to integrate the phenomenology of confession into philosophical reflection, thereby raising the symbolism of evil to the level of speculation. The question demands an answer which either reconciles imagination and reason, demonstrating how and why they may be integrated, or else establishes their incompatibility. Ricoeur himself seems to have been aware of just such a need. He states in the Preface to *Freud and Philosophy* that one of the problems he hopes to take up in this work is one left unresolved in *The Symbolism of Evil*, namely "the relationship between a hermeneutics of symbols and a philosophy of concrete reflection." (FP xii)

Strictly speaking, my interest in the role of imagination in Ricoeur's hermeneutics transgresses the bounds of my original aim, which was to remain within *The Symbolism of Evil*. It now appears impossible to confine Ricoeur in this way. His thought seems to constantly "give rise to thought," to generate so many questions and other lines of enquiry that any response or dialogue necessarily expands and extends one's horizon. Since it was impossible for me to undertake a thorough critical examination of Ricoeur's theory of metaphor and text from primary sources, I have relied heavily and gratefully on John Van Den Hengel's study *The Home of Meaning*. This provides a careful account of Ricoeur's hermeneutics of the subject and, in terms of my own concern, a discussion

of the subject "at home" in the "realm of the inexpressible" (HM xviii) which is reached by metaphor and the creativity of poetic language. Van Den Hengel's exploration of the wider field of contemporary hermeneutics, especially his review of the contribution of Martin Heidegger, was also very useful.

I should also mention here my indebtedness to Mary Schaldenbrand's notion of "metaphoric imagination" which is found in her essay called "Metaphoric Imagination: Kinship through Conflict," published in Charles Reagan's compilation *Studies in the Philosophy of Paul Ricoeur*, and to Richard Kearney's general introduction to Ricoeur's hermeneutic imagination which appears in the collection of articles brought together under the title *The Narrative Path*. These articles first appeared in 1988 in *Philosophy and Social Criticism*: 14.

CHAPTER ONE:
A GENERAL ANALYSIS OF THE STRUCTURE AND CONTENT OF
THE SYMBOLISM OF EVIL

The Symbolism of Evil constitutes the second part of the second volume of Ricoeur's philosophy of the will, and continues his investigation of the "servile will" which he began in *Fallible Man*. The move from fallibility to fault, or from the possibility of evil to its reality, is accomplished by a "sympathetic re-enactment in imagination" of the confession of evil. (SE 3) The confession is symbolic in that it speaks of sin and guilt in an indirect, figurative way which then requires interpretation. Ricoeur's interest is thus confined to the symbols and myths that speak of the beginning and end of evil and is concerned with the restoration and "creative interpretation" of the meaning of those symbols. (SE 348)

In his next work, *Freud and Philosophy: An Essay on Interpretation*, the 'truthfulness' of the symbol is questioned and subjected to a hermeneutic of "suspicion." Later, he developed a theory of language - of metaphor and semantics - which formed the basis of his more recent theory of the text, understood both as written discourse and as "any object of hermeneutical enquiry, even human existence." (HM 111) For Ricoeur, the text has replaced the symbol as the object of interpretation. In being addressed and confronted by the text, the reader (or interpreter) experiences a fundamental, ontological change. The hermeneutics of the text thus continues and refines Ricoeur's interest in the ontology of the self.

Fallible Man was Ricoeur's investigation into the conditions of the possibility of fault, a phenomenology of fallibility. His method was one of "transcendental" reflection, an attempt to make a

progressive recovery of the initial *pathétique* of 'misery' by pure reflection ... [and to] take the reflective style to its utmost point: from the disproportion of knowing to that of acting and from that of acting to that of feeling. (FM 11)

In this first volume, Ricoeur affirms that "in himself and for himself man remains torn ... [is] primordial conflict ... disunion ... discord." (FM 216) The being of human being is "essential fallibility" which is grounded in its nature and activity as mediation between the finite and the infinite. (FM xx) It is this fallibility or weakness which, in a number of ways, is the "possibility" of evil.

First, human fallibility is the "occasion" for evil. Mankind, the mediating point between the finite and the infinite, is the "weak link of the real," the point through which evil may enter. (FM 217) Human disproportion is also the possibility of evil in the sense of "origin." Ricoeur contends that "every defection of man remains within the line of his perfection," and that all evils are thus born through a "kind of *pseudo* genesis." (FM 219-220) The primordial perfection is always grasped "through" the present evil constitution of humanity; it is apprehended as the starting point, the pure origin from which everything fell away and was corrupted, an integrity or unity which is aimed at intentionally. (FM 221) In *The Symbolism of Evil* Ricoeur refers to this starting point as the "cosmic whole" which is not given, but which is aimed at in symbolic ritual and the narrations of myth. (SE 167) Only in imagination is it possible to ascertain the primordial purity separated from the condition of evil through which it is sought. The

imagination portrays the original state of innocence. As Ricoeur states, "My innocence is my primordial constitution projected in a fanciful history." (FM 222)

Lastly, fallibility enables evil in the sense of "capacity," (FM 224) for human weakness is a "*power* to fail ... it makes man *capable* of failing." (FM 223) In this sense, human beings suffer failure and imperfection; they simply *are* deficient. However, evil is also the mystery of a "welling up in the Instant ... [and] at the same time ... an intruding and progressing in Duration. It is posited, and it moves ahead," (FM 223) and Ricoeur concludes that

[i]t is this transition from innocence to fault, discovered in the very positing of evil, which gives the concept of fallibility all its equivocal profundity. Fragility is not merely the 'locus,' the point of insertion of evil, nor even the 'origin' starting from which man falls; it is the 'capacity' for evil. To say that man is fallible is to say that the limitation peculiar to a being who does not coincide with himself is the primordial weakness from which evil arises. And yet evil *arises* from this weakness only because it is *posited*. This last paradox will be the center of the symbolics of evil. (FM 224)

This tension of freedom in bondage, the tension between the human positing of evil and the confronting and enduring of evil already immanent in the order of things, is the paradox of what Ricoeur later terms the "servile will." (SE 151)

The problem then arises of the move from the passive state of fallibility to the activity of fault, for "between [the] possibility and the reality of evil, there is a gap, a leap: it is the whole riddle of fault." (FM 217) The "leap" is invisible to the pure reflection of the phenomenology of fallibility, but may be glimpsed by making another jump, to a new kind of methodology, a reflection upon the "avowal" or "confession" of evil, and upon the language of that avowal, the symbols themselves of evil. There is, then, the need for a "long detour" of the symbolics of evil, after which Ricoeur hopes

that it may be possible to "resume the interrupted discourse and reintegrate the findings of that symbolics into a truly *philosophical* anthropology." (FM 219)

The Symbolism of Evil undertakes this detour, constituting the second phase of Ricoeur's archaeology of the will. It assumes and builds upon the foundations of a pure phenomenological reflection, bringing to the level of conscious articulation the pre-reflective, inarticulate condition of fallibility. As Ricoeur states, "By means of the concept of fallibility, philosophical anthropology comes, as it were, to the encounter of the symbolics of evil ..." (FM xix) The infirmity at the heart of the human condition, which is somehow both suffered and chosen, is now revealed in human word and speech - the language of frailty, the symbolism of evil.

The Symbolism of Evil is divided into two parts, each comprising an Introduction, a number of chapters with several sub-sections, and a Conclusion. The structure of the text reflects Ricoeur's assertion that language is a multi-layered architecture of meaning. Each section builds upon, presupposes and contains the previous one, opening the way into the subsequent section. For Ricoeur, meaning is always both contained within and hidden beneath language itself, where it is to be uncovered or dis-covered, and the arrangement of the themes and ideas in *The Symbolism of Evil* corresponds to this understanding of meaning as derived from the internal, immanent order of language. As a whole, the text, along with *Fallible Man*, mediates the middle ground in Ricoeur's comprehensive philosophy of the will, following as it does the eidetics of the will contained in *The Voluntary and the Involuntary*, and anticipating the as yet unpublished

conclusion which was to construct a rational ontology based on the hermeneutics of symbol and myth.

Ricoeur has organized *The Symbolism of Evil* into two main sections, each consisting of an introduction, a number of chapters, and a conclusion. The Introduction to the first part is titled, "Phenomenology of 'Confession,'" (SE 3-24) and comprises three segments: "Speculation, Myth and Symbol," "Criteriology of Symbols," and "The Philosophical 'Re-enactment' of Confession."

The gap between the earlier discussion of fallibility and the experience itself of fault is bridged by this Introduction to the first part of *The Symbolism of Evil*. Here Ricoeur explains that he hopes to "surprise" the "transition" from potential to actuality by a "sympathetic re-enactment in imagination" of the language of fault, which is the language of confession. As stated above, the symbolics of evil itself represents the middle phase of Ricoeur's philosophical analysis of the will, coming between the pure reflective phenomenology of the will and the anticipated speculative conclusion. The imaginative re-enactment is also an intermediate development. It does not claim to be either the genuine religious experience of which it is an expression, nor does it yet belong to the field of speculative philosophy of which it forms the basis. Although such an exercise falls, then, between religion and philosophy and seems to lack its own definitive status, Ricoeur maintains that confession, as a mode of self-expression, must not be ignored by a philosophy of the will, for "every utterance can and must be taken up into the element of philosophic discourse." (SE 3,4)

Part One is called "The Primary Symbols: Defilement, Sin, Guilt." (SE 3-157)

Here, Ricoeur explains that the blind and mute experience of fault - of defilement, sin and guilt - finds expression in the symbolic language of stain, infection, deviation, rebellion, sickness, hardness of heart, captivity, bondage, etc. These are designated as the primary symbols.

Ricoeur discusses the indirectness of the confession of sin and offers an exposition of the primary symbols of fault. The language of fault that is seemingly the most compatible with philosophy is one that has been developed by theologies and theories of religion to define the various doctrines of "original sin." These doctrines take the philosophical problem of fault and clothe it in an "appearance of rationality," a rationality whose claim to philosophical priority is, however, deceptive and illegitimate. The lived experience of fault or sin is always fundamental, preceding all attempts to reduce that experience to any concept or theoretical elaboration. Also, the specific explanation of that experience as original sin remains but one of several different Christian interpretations. Lastly, the concept is itself corrupted by "pseudo-philosophy," it belongs to an era of gnostic speculation whose aim was to penetrate the mysteries of God with special saving knowledge. The doctrine of original sin ventured to "know" the experience of evil in the same way as gnosis professed its intimate knowledge of the secrets of the universe. (SE 4-5)

Ricoeur therefore resolves to return from the more refined and 'learned' representations of fault to its more basic and inarticulate expressions, from "the 'speculative' ... to the 'spontaneous' ones." (SE 4,5)

These more primitive articulations are myth. Ricoeur defines myth

not [as] a false explanation by means of images and fables, but [as] a traditional narration which relates to events that happened at the beginning of time and which has the purpose of providing grounds for the ritual actions of men of today and, in a general manner, establishing all the forms of action and thought by which man understands himself in his world. (SE 5)

The so-called demythologization of myth, the process of depriving myth of any pretension to *logos* or rational, explicative content, disconnects myth both from historical time and from geographical space and divests it of any etiological value. Myth nevertheless compensates for a lack of explanatory importance by its

exploratory significance ... its contribution to understanding, ... its symbolic function ... its power of discovering and revealing the bond between man and what he considers sacred ... [and] when it is ... elevated to the dignity of a symbol, [myth] is a dimension of modern thought. (SE 5)

This regression to the spontaneous expressions of faith discloses the elementary language of myth which although "indirect and based on imagery," is nevertheless more accessible to a direct encounter with philosophy than the language of speculation. As a result, Ricoeur declares it to be "astonishing" that the "consciousness of self seems to constitute itself at its lowest level by means of symbolism and to work out an abstract language only subsequently, by means of a spontaneous hermeneutics of its primary symbols." The language of confession is one of elementary or primary symbolism, which in turn is amplified and clarified in the secondary symbolism of myth and tertiary symbolism of speculation. It is this "whole circle" which must be understood, beginning with the primary symbols of confession: defilement, sin and guilt. (SE 9)

Ricoeur supplies his own "criteriology" of symbols, a discussion of the sign value of symbols, of the distinctions between analogy, allegory, myth and symbol, and of the difference between the 'formal' symbols of logic and the rich, full-language symbols

which evil invokes. (SE 10-18) Although there is as yet no answer to the problem of how to integrate the phenomenology of confession into philosophical reflection, nevertheless, the very presence of the symbols undermines the idea of 'pure' philosophical reflection. The fact of symbols "introduces a radical contingency into our discourse." (SE 19)

Ricoeur completes Part One with a Conclusion, the "Recapitulation of the Symbolism of Evil in the Concept of the Servile Will." (SE 151-157) Gnosis and its Christian speculative counterpart detach the experience of fault from its most primitive presentations. Although, as Ricoeur points out, the "living experience" of fault is "never immediate" but only expressible by means of the primary symbolism, and always "abstract because ... separated from the totality of meaning," (SE 10) it is true to say that both gnosis and Christian doctrine ignore the deeper levels of this experience altogether. The ideas of a fall and of original sin have become fundamental for the contemporary consciousness of fault, which is therefore both limited and distorted. Whereas the pseudo-philosophical consciousness of evil begins with theoretical constructs, the genuinely philosophical interpretation, based on reason rather than on its gnostic counterfeit, begins with the original expressions of fault which are ultimately resolved into a single concept, that of the "servile will." Thus, for philosophy, there will be an inversion of the traditional speculative order. (SE 4,5)

Ricoeur demonstrates the unity of the primary symbols in terms of their intentional horizon and mutual signification, how those symbols gather together and reiterate the possibility and condition of evil inherent in the concept of fallibility. He has

already designated the teleological horizon as the "concept of the servile will," an idea in itself a paradox "insupportable for thought," since the notions of captivity or servitude, and of the will which is rooted in freedom, disable or cancel each other out. (SE 151,152) Thus the idea of the "servile will" is not interchangeable with the concept of fallibility, for

we should have to be able to think of free will and servitude as coinciding in the same existent ... That is why the concept of the servile will must remain an indirect concept, which gets all its meaning from the symbolism that we have run through and which tries to raise that symbolism to the level of *speculation* ... [the concept] can be viewed only as the ... intentional *telos* of the whole symbolism of evil. Moreover, we shall not be able to get closer to it except through the mediation of the second-order symbols supplied by the myths of evil. (SE 151,152)

Ricoeur also points out the interdependence of the primary symbols, their mutuality and inclusiveness, "... there is a *circular* relation among all the symbols: the last bring out the meaning of the preceding ones, but the first lend to the last all their power of symbolization." (SE 152) Again, the 'shape' of the symbolic interaction and direction reflects Ricoeur's understanding of symbols as basic linguistic elements, and of language itself as a dense accretion of meanings.

The concept of the "servile will" is represented by and contained within all the various cross-cultural symbols of "self-enslavement," confirming a universal if indirect knowledge of the imprisoned state of freedom itself. The symbols of sin, defilement and guilt all express themselves in terms of "captivity" and "infection," terms whose non-literal nature only becomes apparent when they are used to "denote a dimension of freedom itself ... when ... they reveal a situation that is centred in the relation of oneself to oneself." (SE 152)

According to Ricoeur, the symbol of defilement contributes a "triple 'schematism'" to the concept of the "servile will." (SE 155) First the schema of "positiveness" suggests that evil is not a nothingness or lack of being, but a posited "power of darkness." The second schema is "externality," which means that the individual suffers evil as the "'outside' of freedom." Evil is the 'already present' which corrupts and seduces. Lastly, there is the schema of "infection," indicating that not only is evil an external temptation but it is also an "infection of the self by the self, an auto-infection." (SE 155-6)

Further, the symbol of infection demonstrates that evil is, in a sense, an addendum, that evil is always secondary or subordinate to good. In *Fallible Man*, Ricoeur has already suggested that evil is produced through a "pseudo-genesis," that every human "degeneration" is only ever built upon a "'generation into existence'," (FM 220) and now he confirms that

The symbol here points toward the relation of radical evil to the very being of man, to the primordial destination of man; it suggests that evil, however positive, however seductive, however affective and infective it may be, cannot make a man something other than a man; infection cannot be a defection, in the sense that the dispositions and functions that make the humanity of man might be unmade, undone, to the point where a reality other than human reality would be produced. (SE 156)

Thus, the ultimate *telos* of the schema of infection, the "existential superimposition of radical evil on primordial good," is revealed. (SE 157) This final intention is only exposed when the expressiveness of the symbol of defilement has eventually developed into the language of the "servile will." The pure reflection of the phenomenology of fallibility cannot tolerate the mystery of the "servile will," which is nevertheless deeply rooted in the religious consciousness and which can only be spoken of in the symbolic

language of fault. It remains for myth and speculation to complete the revelation. (SE 157)

The Introduction to Part Two is called "The Symbolic Function of Myths." (SE 161-174) Its three segments are: "From the Primary Symbols to Myths," "Myth and Gnosis: The Symbolic Function of the Narration," and "Toward a 'Typology' of the Myths of the Beginning and the End of Evil." Part Two addresses the second-level symbols, the myths or narrative symbols of evil, which have so far been bracketed. The two characteristics of myth which must be accounted for are "that it is an expression in language and that in it the symbol takes the form of narration." (SE 166) Ricoeur ascribes the revelatory power of "myth as myth" to its "triple function of concrete universality, temporal orientation, and ... ontological exploration," (SE 163) and it is the path from the pre-reflective consciousness of fault to its mythic narration which holds the "enigma of the symbolic function of myths." (SE 166) Myth is emphatically not "explanation" but is rather "an opening up and a disclosure," which makes the need to dissociate myth from gnosis or speculation paramount. (SE 165)

As discussed above, the most primitive experience of fault is inaccessible except through the indirect language and imagery of the elementary symbols. The symbols conclude in the concept of the "servile will," itself indirect, and paradoxical also, comprising as it does the tension between freedom and captivity. This tension is the paradox at the heart of the symbolics of evil which Ricoeur referred to in *Fallible Man*. (FM 224) This core concept can also only be approached through the intervention of a symbolic order, that of myth. (SE 152) Myth has already been specified by Ricoeur as

a secondary or second-degree symbol. (SE 9) The symbols of defilement, sin and guilt are primary, i.e. they are "analogical meanings which are spontaneously formed and immediately significant ... on the same level as the most primitive hierophanies ... more radical than myths." Myth, on the other hand, is always an evolution of this primary form into the "thickness" or density of a narration. (SE 18)

Nowadays, in a culture which upholds scientific knowledge as paradigmatic, myth is often relegated to the level of folk-lore and fantasy, dismissed as a legitimate source of anthropological information. Myth cannot offer any 'scientifically' verifiable data, its details of time and space being unconformable to the method and project of standard historical investigation. However, this denial of scientific validity, rather than excluding myth from the field of anthropological interest, has liberated its true significance. The power of myth to 'tell' the human condition has been enhanced by the purifying process of demythologization, the purging of myth from *logos* or from any explicative pretensions. As Ricoeur explains

... when we lose the myth as immediate logos, we rediscover it as myth. Only at the price and by the roundabout way of philosophical exegesis and understanding, can the myth create a new *peripeteia* of the logos.

This conquest of myth as myth is only one aspect of the recognition of symbols and their power to reveal. To understand the myth as myth is to understand what the myth, with its time, its space, its events, its personages, its drama, adds to the revelatory function of the primary symbols ... (SE 162)

Ricoeur thus proposes that only a properly philosophical methodology will provide the necessary and sufficient analysis of myth, such that its true nature and function will be disclosed.

For Ricoeur, the demythologization of myth, the process of dissociating myth from its so-called "'etiological' function," is

fundamental for a philosophical handling of the myth; for the principal objection that philosophy addresses to myth is that the mythical explanation is incompatible with the rationality discovered or invented by the Pre-Socratics; from that time on, it represents the simulacrum of rationality (SE 164)

He contends that this imitation of rationality is gnosis, and that it is gnosis, not myth, which will ultimately be defeated by a genuinely critical approach. Such a critique is essential in order to establish the "truly *philosophical* anthropology" which Ricoeur anticipates after the completion of the symbolics of evil. (FM 219)

The two essential conditions for the philosophical or critical understanding of myth as myth are that myth must never be confused with gnosis and myth must never be confused with allegory. An allegory is a self-supporting translation of another, original text. As the 'real meaning' of the original text it is a direct, yet derived discourse. Myth, on the other hand, is "autonomous and immediate; it means what it says." (SE 162-3)

Gnosis is a pseudo-philosophy which usurps the role of reason in its bid to be "knowledge." In order to save the myth for genuine philosophy, however, it must be grasped while still in the "nakedness and poverty of a symbol that is not an explanation but an opening up and a disclosure." (SE 165) The symbol opens up and discloses otherwise concealed areas of human experience, and myth also, as a secondary symbol, will be found to reveal rather than explain human being in its own specific way. Ricoeur claims that it is "the *narration* that adds a new stage of meaning to the primary symbols," and that it remains to ask how the narration can "*mean* in a symbolic and non-etiological mode?" (SE 165-6)

This philosophical investigation of the myths of evil will proceed in the form of a "working hypothesis" comprising three main points. First, that the myths "embrace mankind as a whole in one ideal history." The mythical man is a 'type' or "concrete universal" and myth can thereby "say man, existence, human being." The universal archetype enables the translation of human experience into "existential structures." This is possible because mythical time is representative of all times. (SE 162-3)

Second, the narrative form of myth bestows a "movement ... an orientation, a character, a tension..." on evil. The instant of evil is expanded to encompass the passage of time, there is a "Beginning" and an "End" of fault. Myth supplies an "essential history of the perdition and salvation of man." (SE 163)

Lastly, and most importantly, myth tries to comprehend the "enigma of human existence, namely, the discordance between the fundamental reality ... and the actual modality of man ...," between creaturely, innocent essence and sinful, guilty existence. It is precisely the non-deductive form of myth as narration which is able to portray this separation between the ontological state and the historical or existential situation of humanity. Ricoeur sums up, "the myth [thus] makes the experience of fault the center of a whole, the center of a world: the world of fault." (SE 163)

In order to avoid a possibly endless exploration of the mythical consciousness, and also to organise a diverse and confusing mythology, Ricoeur proposes a "typology" of myths, (SE 171) a kind of "morphology of the principal images." (SE 172) The typology condenses an otherwise infinite mythical consciousness and reduces the vast store of myths to a more accessible series. The typology provides a sense of direction within the

maze of mythologies and enables the interpretation of experience, as well as being used as a corrective tool applied to the mythologies themselves. (SE 172)

There are four "types" of myth concerning the beginning and end of evil. In the first, called the "drama of creation," the origin of evil is identical with the beginning of all things, it is the "chaos with which the creative act of the god struggles." This myth is set out in the first chapter, titled "The Drama of Creation and the 'Ritual' Vision of the World." (SE 175-210) Another type of myth separates the initial event of evil from the act of creation. The "fall" of a primeval man marks the intervention of evil into a hitherto perfect creation, and is discussed in Chapter Three, "The 'Adamic' Myth and the 'Eschatological' Vision of History." (SE 232-278) Chapter Two is called "The Wicked God and the 'Tragic' Vision of Existence," (SE 211-231) and details the myth of the intermediate type, the "tragic hero." This myth identifies fault with the existence itself of the "tragic hero." Here, it is not the action of the tragic hero which is at fault, rather he simply *is* guilty. Lastly, there is the myth of the "exiled soul" which hinges on the idea of the separation of body and soul, and which deems earthly existence a great misfortune. The soul, having strayed from its rightful abode, is considered as a perpetually unhappy exile in the body. The fourth chapter in Part Two explores this myth and is called "The Myth of the Exiled Soul and Salvation through Knowledge." (SE 279-305)

The fact of a multiplicity of myths, even though confined within a workable typology, eventually raises the questions of application and appropriation. In Chapter Five, "The Cycle of the Myths," (SE 306-346) Ricoeur asks whether it is possible to

"live in all [the] mythical universes at the same time?" (SE 306) To answer this question, he employs the notion of the "dynamics" of the myths. He warns against the "classification" of the typology of myths, against their fixation into a "statics," rather than allowing them to move within a "dynamics" whose task is to discover the "latent life of the myths and the play of their secret affinities," and which will provide the ground for the "philosophic recapture of the myth." (SE 174)

The problem of the appropriation of the myths is also a question of their status which takes the form of a choice between the one and the many. Is one myth to be preferred to the exclusion of the many, in which case what is the status of the many? Or, should all the myths be granted equal status and appropriated indiscriminately? The solution, as Ricoeur sees it, lies in the power of choice itself. The necessity to decide between alternatives is overcome in the freedom to choose a particular myth, which makes the myth one's own. (SE 306) This establishes the so-called "dynamics," and Ricoeur explains that

By ... putting all the other myths into perspective with relation to a dominant myth, we bring to light a circularity among the myths and we make possible the substitution of a dynamics for a statics of the myths; in place of a static view of myths regarded as having equal rights, the dynamic view makes manifest the struggle among the myths. (SE 309)

The freedom to choose among the myths always implies the kind of commitment that Ricoeur expresses as a "wager," (SE 308,355) an existential involvement which alone makes appropriation possible. Ricoeur insists that

... nobody asks questions from nowhere. One must be in a position to hear and to understand. It is a great illusion to think that one could make himself a pure spectator, without weight, without memory, without perspective, and regard everything with equal sympathy. Such indifference, in the strict sense of the word, destroys the possibility of appropriation. (SE 306)

Ricoeur himself opts for the myth of the fall, or the Adamic myth, as the one which best communicates the collective teachings of the myths. His reasons for this preference stem from his own affinity with the Christian belief system in which this myth is rooted. (SE 306-7) First, the Christian faith does not accord priority to evil or to original sin, but to salvation and to the Pauline doctrine of "justification." The interpretation of sin is always in terms of a "prolegomena of the faith," and not as a part of the initial "deposit of the faith." The Christian doctrine of salvation is able to 'look back' at the mythical fall and corruption of the first Adam and there detect the anthropological basis for the justification and redemption of mankind wrought by Christ, or the "second Adam." Thus, there is a "bond of suitability" which joins the Adamic myth to the "'Christological' nucleus of the faith," and to understand that bond is "already to give a reason for the belief accorded to the Biblical *symbolization* of human evil." (SE 307) This is a purely theological method of defending the choice of the Adamic myth, one that is only interested in its points of comparison with Christology. (SE 309)

Second, even when disconnected from its place in salvation history, the myth of the fall recommends itself because of its power to reveal its meaning in the double sense of a second degree symbol, as an "etiological fable demythologized by history and a revealing symbol liberated by the very process of demythologization." This second way is the philosophical method of justification rather than the theological, and Ricoeur points out that it is the crucial "line of force" of the entire project. (SE 309)

For Ricoeur, the "revelation" of the Adamic myth is its "power to challenge." As a Christian believer, he has recourse here to faith, faith in the Holy Spirit whose discriminating power is responsible for the "discerning of spirits," and therefore for "the

election of the best, [and] recognition of ... the most revealing myth." (SE 308) Such insight is far from irrational, however, but brings into play the experience of a "verification" which resembles a kind of 'sympathy' with what is revealed. (SE 352) Ricoeur has already referred to the idea of such a verification in his discussion of the symbolic function of the myth, where he says that

We shall propose a type of "interpretation" [of myth] that is not a "translation"; let us say ... that the very process of discovery of the field of experience *opened up* by the myth can constitute an *existential verification* comparable to the transcendental deduction of the categories of the understanding. (SE 164, note)

He is convinced that such an interpretation does not by-pass the critical faculties. On the contrary, it involves the intelligent exercise of faith, a *crede ut intelligas* which must underlie any truly philosophical hermeneutics able to disclose the symbolic meaning of myth. Such an interpretation is the "wager" of one's belief, a wager which may be won or lost by "putting the revealing power of the symbol to the test of self-understanding." Ricoeur thus proposes to accomplish the verification through "integral experience," i.e. achievement of a better self-understanding, which will make the revealing power of the myth apparent. (SE 308)

Finally, choosing the Adamic myth as dominant does not mean having to dispose of the other myths. Instead, they receive a new vitality from their relation to the truth of the central myth which "reaffirms *in varying degrees* [their own] essential truths." The various relations of antagonism and attraction which constitute the dynamics of the myths, and which attach the other myths to the myth of the fall, demonstrate a "struggle for appropriation" which itself vindicates the prominence of this myth. This final

vindication of the Adamic myth is the one that most naturally succeeds the mythical analysis of fault. (SE 309)

Having discussed the dynamic interplay of the myths, Ricoeur does, however, admit the ultimate inadequacy of this approach. The undifferentiated mythical consciousness has erupted in a profusion of mythologies concerning the origin and end of evil. The attempt to order and encompass this multiplicity within a typology and to understand the dynamic relations between the myths nevertheless fails to compensate for the 'brokenness' of the mythical world. It is impossible to unite the mythical world on the basis of a dominant myth. This being so, "imaginative and sympathetic understanding, without personal appropriation, often remains as the thinker's only resource." Such a failure also challenges philosophy. The hermeneutics of myth cannot replace a systematic philosophy, and the demand thus arises for a philosophical methodology which would "learn from the symbols and yet be fully rational." (SE 345-6)

The concluding chapter, "The Symbol Gives Rise to Thought" (SE 347-357) attempts to outline this methodology. It is the pivotal point between Ricoeur's previous exploration of a philosophy of the will and the proposed third volume of study, whose stated *telos* is the concept of the "servile will" and the attempt to raise the symbolism of evil to the level of speculation. (SE 151-2) The apparent incompatibility of symbolism and criticality which this methodology implies is contradicted in the aphorism "the symbol gives rise to thought," which Ricoeur expounds as the basis of a renewed reflection on the fallibility of human being. The conclusion is itself based on Ricoeur's understanding of the experience of evil as being always already in the sphere of

language, and therefore on his insistence that the symbols and myths of evil are also always already expressions of language. He has also observed that the re-enactment of the symbolism of evil in sympathetic imagination is never "reduced to the ineffable," but always "moves in the element of language." (SE 9) Before any attempt to analyze Ricoeur's theory of the association between thought and symbol, the importance of language in his theory of the symbolism of evil and the consequent exposition of the hermeneutics of symbol and myth must therefore be explored.

CHAPTER TWO:

THE EXPERIENCE OF EVIL IS ALWAYS ALREADY IN THE REALM OF LANGUAGE AND OPEN TO INTERPRETATION

A. The Language of Fault

Ricoeur's stated focus is the symbolic-mythical articulation of the beginning and end of evil. The peculiar advantage of this limited field of investigation is its sensitivity as an indicator of human being, since evil is the "crisis" of the "bond between man and what he considers sacred," (SE 5) and since all the symbols and myths of evil "speak of the situation of the being of man in the being of the world." (SE 356) Ricoeur contends that the concept of original sin is only ever a refined and distancing meditation on the experience itself of sin, an experience which was first spoken forth in the primitive confession of sin and later explicitated in myth. The myth as narrative expands the dimension of symbol within its own mythical time and houses the symbol within its own mythical space. Thus, the account of the fall incorporates within its specifically mythical history the symbolic figures of Adam and Eve and of the serpent, but also relies on the Jewish cultic experience of the confession of sins to provide the myth with its foundation and contours of meaning. (SE 6)

Ricoeur has already referred to the need to "surprise" the transition from the possibility of evil to its reality by "sympathetically 're-enacting' in ourselves the confession that the religious consciousness makes of it." (SE 3) In order to regain the symbol which lies at the level of the confession, he repeats that the philosopher must adopt the sympathetic re-enactment in imagination in order to enter into that same

confessional experience spoken of by the myth. (SE 6,7) While the re-enactment of confession cannot be classified either as an actual religious experience or as pure speculation, (SE 3,4) Ricoeur now reveals its philosophical "locus" as a propaedeutic.

He explains,

What we are now seeking is not yet the philosophy of fault; it can only be a propaedeutic. Myth is already logos, but it has still to be taken up into *philosophic* discourse. This propaedeutic remains at the level of a purely descriptive phenomenology that permits the believing soul to speak. The philosopher adopts provisionally the motivations and intentions of the believing soul. He does not "feel" them in their first naïveté; he "re-feels" them in a neutralized mode, in the mode of "as if." It is in this sense that phenomenology is a re-enactment in sympathetic imagination. (SE 19)

Ricoeur is emphatic that the only way that this re-enactment is possible is because a language exists even beneath the layers of gnosis and myth, the "language of *confession*," which is an "objectification in discourse," of the otherwise blind and mute experience of fault. The experience of fault is constituted as "blindness, equivocalness, [and] scandalousness," which is matched by the language of confession. The blindness of the experience of sin, its being enmeshed in an emotional confusion of 'fear and trembling' is overcome by language as the "light of the emotions." Language externalizes what would otherwise remain locked inside as an "impression in the soul." He explains that, through confession, "... the consciousness of fault is brought into the light of speech; [and] man remains speech, even in the experience of his own absurdity, suffering and anguish." (SE 7)

The experience of fault is also equivocal. It is a complex experience, consisting of the different facets of defilement, sin and guilt, and full of a variety of different meanings. Language is necessary to clarify these complexities. (SE 7,8) Finally, the

experience of fault is the experience of "alienation from oneself," and, as such, it is "astonishing, disconcerting and scandalous," thus motivating a significant amount of self-questioning. The apprehension of existential estrangement "communicates with the need to understand" and "gets transcribed immediately on the plane of language in the mode of interrogation." (SE 8)

Ricoeur concludes that the simple understanding of language which accrues from the vocabulary of fault is itself already a hermeneutic preceding the hermeneutics of myth, for

the most primitive and least mythical language is already a symbolic language ... the "re-enactment" in sympathetic imagination always moves in the element of language as reflection reverts from gnosis to myth and from myth to the primary symbolic expressions brought into play in the confession of fault. This reversion to the primary symbols permits us henceforth to consider myths and gnosis as secondary and tertiary symbols, the interpretation of which rests on the interpretation of the primary symbols. (SE 9)

1) Symbolic Expression: Words of Fault

Even the living experience of sin is "never immediate" and can only be expressed in terms of a primary symbolism. (SE 10) The experience has been severed from the "totality of meaning" to encapsulate it for the understanding. (SE 10) Nevertheless, for Ricoeur, the fact that the confession of sin is always a symbolic expression indicates that there is no such thing as a 'pure,' abstract language of experience and that hermeneutics will always confront a conditional discourse. As he states, "By beginning with a symbolism already there we give ourselves something to think about; but at the same time we introduce a radical contingency into our discourse. First *there are* symbols, I encounter them, I find them ..." (SE 19) This radical contingency is further qualified

by a "cultural contingency," by questions of specificity and definition. Further, hermeneutics is limited by the orientation of the interpreter and of the origins of the inquiry itself. (SE 20)

The contingency of language, the restrictions due to its always being historically, geographically and intellectually situated, leads Ricoeur to assert that it is necessary to "renounce the chimera of a philosophy without presuppositions and begin from a *full* language." (SE 19) He describes the fullness of language in terms of the spatial metaphors of relations of "proximity" and "distance," adopting the Judaeo-Greek culture as central to Western philosophy, as the nucleus around which we situate other cultures as either near or far. These two cultures form the "first stratum" of our "philosophical memory," and so every influence, in terms of our cultural and spiritual beginnings, can be represented as consistent with these various relations of proximity and distance towards these two founding civilizations. (SE 20)

First of all, there are "relations in depth." Our cultural memory is layered or "stratified," and our encounter with the consciousness of fault is always with an accretion, the "thickness" of a sedimented residue which places us at a distance from the foundations of that memory. If the science of ethnology can determine objective similarities between other cultures and our own past, then such information can be used to illuminate our own past, a past which may be so deeply submerged as to be inaccessible in any other way. (SE 21)

There are also "lateral" or "breadth" relations. Other cultures, that of the Middle East for instance, reproduce and revise the basic themes of our own Jewish-Hellenic heritage. Such cross-referencing occurs by "direct borrowing, by reference to common

sources, or in virtue of the parallelism of material and cultural conditions ..." It is necessary to understand these parallel cultures in order to properly understand our own. (SE 21)

Finally, there are "retroactive relations." The content of cultural memory is continually being changed by the addition of new discoveries, by "returns to the sources, reforms and renaissances ..." which make up what Ricoeur calls a "neo-past." In other words, "our past never stops changing its meaning." (SE 21, 22)

There are two forms of the "neo-past" which merit special attention. The constitution of memory is as much one of lacunae as it is of actual content. Whenever these gaps are bridged, as with the finding of the Dead Sea Scrolls, our memory is reconstituted and traditions are refashioned. This is the "restoration of lost intermediaries." The temporary, fluctuating composition of our memory is due also to "later modifications of the 'distance' between the sources of our consciousness." Certain intellectual disciplines arbitrarily unite cultures which have remained historically distant from each other. This mental unification is insufficient to cement the cultures in such a way as to exert any influence on our cultural memory, to change our cultural heritage. (SE 22)

Our culture is limited by its contingency. The Judaeo-Greek orientation of our memory cannot comprehend or absorb the cultural bequest of the Far East, for example, cannot "do justice" to the experiences which founded that particular civilization. Although Ricoeur maintains that all cultures are of equal worth, he nevertheless believes that

... the point of view from which this equality of value can be seen does not yet exist, and it will exist eventually only when a universal human

culture has brought all cultures together in a whole. In the meantime, neither the history of religions nor philosophy can be a concrete universal capable of embracing all human experience. On the one hand, the objectivity of science, without a point of view and without situation, does not equalize cultures except by neutralizing their value; it cannot think the positive reasons for their equal value. On the other hand, philosophy ... will remain unequal to this concrete universal as long as no serious encounter and no mutual clarification have brought these civilizations into the field of our experience and at the same time removed its limitation. (SE 22, 23)

Such coming together and such understanding are not, in fact, the general rule, occurring only occasionally and only for those few who are in some way devoted to such a rapprochement. Phenomenologically, the equivalence of cultures remains sporadic and our culture remains distant from that of the Far East. (SE 23)

All these factors taken together constitute the 'fullness' of language. Ricoeur is certain that contingency is the "inescapable infirmity" of philosophic discourse, of any dialogue between philosophy and its "other;" it is something that is inherent to the history of philosophy itself. Thinkers and their thoughts are always the creatures and creations of a contingent universe. (SE 23,24) He therefore dismisses the idea of pure objectivity implicit in the search for the elusive 'view from nowhere,' and resolves that

Anyone who wished to ... stand apart from the game in the name of a non-situated "objectivity" would at the most know everything, but would understand nothing. In truth, he would seek nothing, not being motivated by concern about any question. (SE 24)

Ricoeur's exposition of the language of confession as a significant language of human being has characterized that language as essentially symbolic. If philosophy is to include the confession of fault within its understanding of human being, it is necessary, first of all, to clearly define the notion of symbol. Ricoeur therefore

delineates his "criteriology" of symbols before undertaking an intentional analysis of the symbols themselves. Furthermore, he maintains that any subsequent reflection on the symbolism of human being must incorporate the three functions of any genuine symbol, the "cosmic, oneiric, and the poetic," if it is to be at all intelligible. (SE 10)

The first feature of symbolism is the cosmic, for, as Ricoeur states, "man first reads the sacred ... *on* some elements or aspects of the world ... " (SE 10) In the beginning, it is the "cosmic realities - that are symbols." The spoken symbolism of the self is always an elaboration of a previous hierophany or cosmic manifestation of the sacred. The cosmos is replete with such meanings, with such indications of the sacred. This is not to say, however, that the cosmic symbolism either precedes or is alien to language. (SE 11) On the contrary,

For these realities to be a symbol is to gather together at one point a mass of significations which, before giving rise to thought, give rise to speech. The symbolic *manifestation* as a *thing* is a matrix of symbolic meanings as words ... The manifestation through the thing is like the condensation of an infinite discourse ... the symbol-thing is the potentiality of innumerable spoken symbols ... (SE 11)

According to Ricoeur, the "hierophanies, as a sphere of reality, ... first engender the 'ontological regime' characteristic of the defiled ..." Thus, the imperilled state of the soul later symbolized by defilement, is initially experienced as a danger in the presence of forbidden things, the threat of the taboo. (SE 11,12)

The second dimension of the symbol is the oneiric, the dimension of the dream, for it is there that "one can catch sight of the most fundamental and stable symbolisms of humanity passing from the 'cosmic' function to the 'psychic' function." (SE 12) He affirms that only by admitting the complementarity of the hierophany and the dream is it possible to "comprehend how symbols can signify the bond between the being of man

and total being," for "to manifest the 'sacred' *on* the 'cosmos' and to manifest it *in* the 'psyche' are the same thing." (SE 12) The inward or psychic aspect of the symbol operates specifically in terms of a guide to "becoming oneself," while the outward or cosmic presentation of the symbol must also be understood as an "expressivity," since it is true that "I express myself in expressing the world; I explore my own sacrality in deciphering that of the world." (SE 13)

The final character of the symbol which Ricoeur discusses is that brought into play by the "poetic imagination." In poetry, the symbol as word is apprehended at the moment of its birth, it is "expressivity in its nascent state." He quotes Georges Bachelard's description of the poetic image as putting us at the "origin of the speaking being ... it becomes a new being of our language, it expresses us in making us that which it expresses." Ricoeur is careful to point out his understanding of imagination as having nothing to do with the concept of image, where "image is understood [as] a function of absence, the annulment of the real in an imaginary unreal." It has nothing to do with the notion of image as an impression or likeness, or with the theory of an 'after-image' or physical imprint in the brain, but is "much closer to a word than to a portrait." (SE 13,14)

Ricoeur has now argued that all three dimensions of the symbol - the cosmic, the oneiric and the poetic - are already in the form of language, and he completes his explanation of these three aspects by upholding their interconnectedness, "the structure of the poetic image is also the structure of the dream ... and the structure of the hierophanies." There is, therefore, only one, albeit multi-faceted, symbolic structure. This unified structure is accessible to phenomenological reflection only in terms of an

intentional analysis which involves "*distinguishing* the symbol from what is not a symbol." In this way, it will be possible to achieve, by a "more or less intuitive grasp," a partial disclosure of the essence of a symbol, of its "identical nucleus of meaning." Ricoeur therefore proposes his own six-point criteriology of symbols, which will increasingly approach the *eidos* of a symbol. (SE 14)

The first point he establishes is the *sine qua non* of the symbol, that of speech: "symbols are signs ... expressions that communicate a meaning ... declared in an intention of signifying which has speech as its vehicle." The cosmos assumes symbolic significance when its realities are taken up in the language of consecration and prayer; the content of dreams can always be verbally articulated, and poetic images are, in themselves, words. (SE 14)

Next, Ricoeur distinguishes between the sign and the symbol. (SE 15) A sign refers to some other thing which it also represents. Signs possess a "literal intentionality" and remain at the level of conventional meaning, a meaning which bears no resemblance to the thing signified. In addition to this, the symbol has another, hidden, level of meaning, a "double intentionality." This second level is built upon the first, conventional meaning, but transcends it and betokens something which resembles the literal meaning. The symbol of defilement aims through material uncleanness towards a state of human being in relation to the sacred, a state of spiritual impurity. The symbol is thus defined as distinct from the sign, because

... contrary to perfectly transparent technical signs, which say only what they want to say in positing that which they signify, symbolic signs are opaque, because the first, literal, obvious meaning itself points analogically to a second meaning which is not given otherwise than in it ... This opacity constitutes the depth of the symbol, which ... is inexhaustible. (SE 15)

Thirdly, then, it is important to understand how the literal and symbolic meanings are analogically linked. (SE 15) In analogy, there is a relation based upon some objective likeness between two things. Analogy relies upon the identification of similar features on which a comparison may be based. In the symbol, by contrast, there are no outward, objective data from which to draw an analogy. Rather, Ricoeur asserts that

it is by living in the first meaning that I am led by it beyond itself; ... unlike a comparison that we *consider* from the outside, the symbol is the movement of the primary meaning which makes us participate in the latent meaning and thus assimilates us to that which is symbolized without our being able to master the similitude intellectually. It is in this sense that the symbol is donative ... because it is a primary intentionality that gives the second meaning analogically. (SE 16)

The fourth point in the criteriology highlights the distinction between allegory and symbol in terms of their different uses of literal and symbolic meanings. (SE 16) In an allegory, there is what Ricoeur calls a "relation of translation" between the two meanings, where the primary or literal meaning translates the symbolic meaning, which is "external enough to be directly accessible." In fact, allegory has more often been used as a hermeneutic tool, a way of entering into the real meaning of myth by dealing with it as allegory, as a "disguised philosophy." Interpretation would simply be a matter of removing or piercing the disguise, which can then be disposed of. In contrasting symbol and allegory, Ricoeur therefore concludes that

It would be better ... to speak of allegorizing interpretation rather than allegory. Symbol and allegory, then, are not on the same footing: symbols precede hermeneutics; allegories are already hermeneutic. This is so because the symbol presents its meaning transparently in an entirely different way than by translation ... it evokes its meaning or suggests it ... It presents its meaning in the opaque transparency of an enigma and not by translation. Hence, I oppose the *donation of meaning in transparency* in symbols to the interpretation by *trans-lation* of allegories. (SE 16)

It is necessary, further, to differentiate between the symbols of symbolic logic and the nature of the ontological symbol. (SE 17) The various signs of formal logic, with their multifarious denotations, replace 'terms' which are still rooted in ordinary linguistic expression. The "characters ... or elements of a calculus" of symbolic logic, however, no longer operate within the element of discourse or within the constraints of reasoning. By contrast, Ricoeur declares that the diverse symbols of evil constitute a "symbolic language essentially *bound*, bound to its content and, through its primary content, to its secondary content." That the symbol is put to such disparate uses is, perhaps, explained by the "structure of signification," which is a function both of absence and of presence. Signs signify "vacuously," they "say things without the things." As well, they signify "'something' and finally the world." In sum, Ricoeur states that

Signification, by its very structure, makes possible at the same time both total formalization - ... the reduction of signs to "characters" and finally to elements of a calculus - *and* the restoration of a full language, heavy with implicit intentionalities and analogical references to something else, which it presents enigmatically. (SE 17,18)

The sixth and final point is the distinction between myth and symbol. (SE 18) In the fourth part of his criteriology, Ricoeur has alluded to the difference between symbol and allegory. Here, he repeats that symbols are sometimes merely understood as a form of hermeneutic of myth, in contradistinction to the allegorical mode of interpretation. However, symbols are also understood by Ricoeur in a more elementary sense as "analogical meanings which are spontaneously formed and immediately significant." In relation to myth, then, symbols are more fundamental. He defines myth as

a species of symbols, as symbols developed in the form of narrations and articulated in a time and a space that cannot be co-ordinated with the time and space of history and geography according to the critical method ... [This] thickness of the narrative is essential to myth. (SE 18)

For example, the events recited in the story of the expulsion of Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden, told against a backdrop of "fabulous personages, places and times," comprise a mythical narration. Exile is a first level symbol and not a myth, because it is an actual event in history which analogically signifies human alienation. That alienation creates the myth, or "fanciful history," of the exile from Eden, a history set within its own specific context and time-frame. (SE 18)

2) The Symbols

The three primary symbols of fault are defilement, sin and guilt. The fear of defilement is the most basic element in our experience of fault. This "dread of the impure" and the actions to which it gives rise in the rites of purification ground all our feelings and practices relating to fault. It is a kind of fear which obstructs thoughtfulness in general, and certainly impedes any approach of philosophical reflection which tries to understand the affective foundations and the praxis of fault. (SE 25)

As Ricoeur explains, defilement is barely a "representation," and it frustrates thought because it contains

the idea of a quasi-material something that infects as a sort of filth, that harms by invisible properties, that nevertheless works in the manner of a force in the field of our undividedly psychic and corporeal existence. We no longer understand what the substance-force of evil ... could be. (SE 26)

In terms of a sympathetic re-enactment of defilement, it is impossible for the philosopher to adopt a direct approach, the sense of defilement being grounded in irrationality and anachronism. An indirect investigation will reveal, however, that although defilement appears to us now as "a moment of consciousness that we have left behind," it is also

sufficiently rich in symbolic potential that a crucial symbolic 'essence' may be discerned which has persisted and endured through time and numerous outward modifications. (SE 26)

From an objective perspective, what was once considered as defilement is remote from our own consciousness. According to Ricoeur, the primitive order of defilement measures impurity "not by imputation to a responsible agent but by the objective violation of an interdict," a system which undermines our own ethical education steeped in the religious and humanistic values of Jewish and Greek origin. The association of evil-doing and suffering proliferates within the realm of defilement, thus cementing the ethical and the cosmological, so that, as Ricoeur states, "the division between the pure and the impure ignores any distinction between the physical and the ethical and follows a distribution of the sacred and profane which has become irrational for us." (SE 27)

Furthermore, we no longer consider certain behaviours with the same degree of fear or exact the same degree of recrimination for certain violations. This is especially true in the case of defilement due to the transgression of any sexual prohibition. There was a profusion of pre-ethical interdictions concerning sexuality which arose from the "archaic belief in the maleficent virtues of shed blood," a belief which rested in the idea of the materiality of the impure, of an infinitely contagious 'something.' This idea is then taken up in the rites of purification, such as those of marriage which contain and cleanse sexuality, and the rites following childbirth which purify both mother and child. (SE 28,29) For Ricoeur, the objective aspect of defilement, where defilement is characterized as an infection or pollution from outside, concludes in the identity of purity and virginity, where

virginity and spotlessness are as closely bound together as sexuality and contamination. This double assonance is in the background of all our ethics, where it constitutes the archaism that is most resistant to criticism. So true is this that it is not from meditation on sexuality that a refinement of the consciousness of fault will be able to proceed, but from the non-sexual sphere of existence: from the human relations created by work, appropriation, politics. It is there that an ethics of relations to others will be formed, an ethics of justice and love, capable of turning back toward sexuality, of re-evaluating and transvaluating it. (SE 29)

The subjective pole of the experience of defilement is the feeling of dread, a feeling which is rooted in the connection between defilement and vengeance. (SE 30)

This dread is the primitive intuition of a necessary suffering, the suffering exacted by purity to satisfy its need for revenge. The terror in the face of inevitable suffering, the vengeance wrought by an "anonymous wrath," (SE 32) preceded any decree, rule, code, or even any specific understanding of an avenging god, and was expressed in the "language of retribution." (SE 31) Thus, defilement again speaks of a world which knew no distinction between the ethical and the physical, where "Ethics is mingled with the physics of suffering, while suffering is surcharged with ethical meanings." (SE 31) This rationalization of suffering as the just vengeance of purity, was finally undermined in the Hebrew and Babylonian scriptures by the story of Job, the story of a just man suffering unjustly. It was this story which severed the connection between suffering and defilement, introducing the language of fault in place of the language of defilement, along with the profound anxiety which accompanies the paradox of personal responsibility for a yet inexplicable suffering. (SE 32)

In the end, from the subjective point of view, Ricoeur affirms that "the sacred reveals itself as superhuman destruction of man," (SE 33) and that

in fearing defilement, man fears the negativity of the transcendent ... It is from this ... wrath and ... terror, this deadly power of retribution, that

the sacred gets its character of separateness. It cannot be touched ... that is to say, violated - [or else] its death-dealing power is unleashed. (SE 33)

These objective and the subjective facets of defilement can only be grasped as obsolete, outmoded instances of evil. What has remained of defilement, however, is not only the occasional recovery of rituals and images associated with it, but also a much deeper reality. For Ricoeur, defilement "furnishes the imaginative model on the basis of which the fundamental ideas of *philosophical purification* are constructed." (SE 34) Defilement has, in fact, outlived its original "magical and ritual" connotations, a survival which demonstrates its power as a symbol. (SE 35)

The symbolism of defilement is ambiguous, neither representational nor conceptual, never a literal blemish nor a judgment of unworthiness, deriving as it does from the "half-physical, half-ethical fear" that is attached to the impure. Ricoeur explains that it is a symbolism which is, rather, experienced intentionally and "acted out." Because the ritual of purification is symbolic, there are a variety of actual rites of purification, all of which can be said to produce the same cleansing effect. (SE 35) He elaborates

They are acts which stand for a total action addressed to the person taken as an undivided whole.

Hence, defilement, insofar as it is the "object" of this ritual suppression, is itself a *symbol* of evil. Defilement is to stain or spot what lustration is to washing. Defilement is not a stain, but like a stain; it is a symbolic stain. Thus, it is the symbolism of the rites of suppression that reveals in practice the implicit symbolism contained in the representation of infection. (SE 35,36)

What is more important than this, however, is the fact that "defilement enters into the universe of man through speech, or the word, (*parole*)," even though the gestures and

actions of the rituals are always silent. (SE 36) Ricoeur insists that the anguish of defilement is

communicated through speech; before being communicated it is determined and defined through speech; the opposition of the pure and the impure is spoken; and the words which express it institute the opposition. A stain is a stain because it is there, mute; the impure is taught in the words that institute the taboo. (SE 36)

Rites are always accompanied by, or are based on, words which define the defilement, dispose the ritual activities within a context of meaning, and sanctify the actual working of the rite. Thus, the "feeling of impurity" is "educated," and the pure and the impure form a "symbolic language capable of transmitting the emotion aroused by the sacred." This vocabulary is the linguistic and semantic basis of the "feeling of guilt" and the "confession of sins." (SE 36,37)

Those of us in the West are the inheritors of the Greek language of defilement, which, Ricoeur maintains, depends on an "imaginary experience connected with imaginary examples. It is a veritable cultural creation ... " (SE 37) The literary language of the orators, historians, and poets of the classical Greek era has contributed a distinctive gift to the discourse on evil. In the Greek grammar of defilement, the notion of "Καθαρός ... expresses very well the ambiguity of *purity*, which oscillates between the physical and ethical. Its central intention is to express *exemption* from the impure." (SE 37) This concept underpins the connection between purity and philosophy, for, as Ricoeur then describes,

Κάθαρσις ... can express physical cleansing ... but this purgation in its turn can symbolize a ritual purification and then a wholly moral purity. The group Καθαρός-Κάθαρσις thus comes to express intellectual limpidity, clarity of style, orderliness, absence of ambiguity in the oracle, and finally absence of moral blemish or stigma. Thus the word lends

itself to the change in meaning which will come to express the essential purification, that of wisdom and philosophy. (SE 38)

Defilement is only one side of a cultural triangle which also includes purification and philosophy. Because of its incorporation within this triangle, perhaps as its very base, defilement cannot be said to have either simply survived or been lost, but must be understood as part of a "matrix of meaning." This is why a purely sociological interpretation of the contribution of Greek literature, history and politics to the subject of evil can only provide a partial insight, a limited view which ignores the infinite possibility for the symbolization and exchange of the three parts of the triangle. (SE 39)

Ricoeur emphasizes that "it is precisely the connection of defilement with words that define it which brings to light the primordially symbolic character of the representation of the pure and the impure." (SE 39) Following from this is the fact that defilement is only ever felt and understood to be such within a human context, a human environment. It is the 'look' of the other which inspires shame, it is the categorical judgement which condemns or approves. (SE 40)

Not only does the sense of defilement find expression in the defining word of the prohibition, in the language used to discriminate between purity and impurity, it is also given voice in the language of confession. As stated above, the subjective experience of defilement is that of dread. Language transforms that experience from mute terror in the face of a nameless Avenger into a state of questioning self-consciousness. There is born, as Ricoeur reveals, a profound suspicion of the self in the light of an apparently unavoidable personal failure. (SE 41) He pictures the process whereby

Consciousness, crushed by the interdict and by fear of the interdict, opens itself to others and to itself; not only does it begin to communicate but it discovers the unlimited perspective of self-interrogation. Man asks

himself: since I experience this failure, this sickness, this evil, what sin have I committed? ... the appearance of acts is called in question; a trial of veracity is begun; the project of a total confession, totally revealing the hidden meaning of one's acts, if not yet of one's intentions, appears at the heart of the humblest "confession of sins." (SE 41)

Not only is this confession a "cry," an outburst which expels evil, it is also the beginning of an admission of responsibility and a clarification of the felt level of defilement. It is, Ricoeur suggests, an "avowal," and therefore, "by being refracted in words ... dread reveals an ethical rather than a physical aim." (SE 42) This aim is constituted by a triple-layered intentionality.

First, the mere fact of the fear of revenge conceals a demand for justice, the lawfulness of a fitting retribution. This desire itself contains a further expectation, that, beyond the actuality of suffering and the destruction which it brings, awaits the renewal and re-establishment of order. This is an affirmation of the longing for a 'reasonable' suffering, suffering with some kind of discernible direction. (SE 42,43)

The re-institution of order, which imbues vengeance against impurity with a cosmic meaningfulness, also affects the sense of personal order. Ricoeur refers to the notion of "expiation" to define the operation whereby the punishment by revenge removes defilement. It follows, he contends, that when order is reaffirmed "outside" the condemned person it is "reaffirmed within him too," thus "amendment ... the restoration of the personal worth of the guilty person." is the aim of just punishment, of vengeance and expiation. (SE 43,44)

The fact that the call for a just punishment is related to the anticipation of a reassertion of order indicates, Ricoeur believes, that there is "the *hope* that fear itself will disappear from the life of conscience, as a result of its sublimation." (SE 44) However,

this hope perhaps looks too far ahead to the only condition under which human experience can be without fear, that of the reign of a "perfect love [which] casts out fear." (SE 45) There has to be an intermediate order, within which fear may be reconstituted in a new affective realm. This is the dispensation of the Covenant as understood by the Hebrew consciousness. Ricoeur contends that fear cannot be dispensed with in human conduct and commerce, for

[i]t is not the *immediate* abolition but the *mediate* sublimation of fear, with a view to its *final* extenuation, which is the soul of true education ... [I]t is possible that ... the *public* part [of human existence] cannot raise itself above the fear of punishment and that this fear is the indispensable means by which man advances toward a different order, hyperethical in a way, where fear would be entirely confounded with love.

Hence, the abolition of fear could only be the *horizon*, and, so to speak, the eschatological *future* of human morality. (SE 45)

He concludes that the nucleus or essence of defilement can only be discerned, its meaning made clear, as its triple intentionality or "progress of conscience," is marked through its various symbolizations. (SE 45,46)

The second symbol of fault that Ricoeur investigates is that of sin. Since he holds that the differences between defilement and sin may only be interpreted phenomenologically, and not in terms of divergent historical backgrounds, sin is explored in its "purest formulation," and in terms of "types." (SE 47,50) More or less constant changes from one form of fault to another have occurred amongst the various religious cultures. It is impossible to clearly differentiate defilement from sin in terms of an occasion of time or place, and there is always a danger of "confounding the specific intentions of impurity and sin, [indicating] that the confusion is inscribed in the very reality of the feelings and representations." (SE 47,48) Ricoeur has referred to the idea

of "binding," (the literal import of the term 'religion,') as having been the dominant theme in the symbol of defilement. He states that this idea "expresses seizure, possession, enslavement, rather than contagion and contamination." (SE 48) Accordingly, he maintains that the transition from defilement to sin always has to do with a new sense of self-involvement and a relationship to divinity, and that it is the "personal relation to a god that determines the spiritual space where sin is distinguished from defilement." (SE 48)

Thus, there is a basic "category" to the notion of sin, that of "before God." (SE 50) Although this category is decisive in the definition of sin, its scope should be clearly specified in order to avoid too restrictive an application. First, before God should not be taken as equivalent to the Hegelian interpretation of the "unhappy consciousness," the meaningless situation of a vacuous human consciousness vis à vis the Absolute, the "Wholly Other." (SE 50) Rather, Ricoeur designates the Jewish Covenant as the "initial moment," for

[i]t is in a preliminary dimension of encounter and dialogue that there can appear such a thing as the absence and silence of God, corresponding to the hollow existence of man ... It is the prior establishment of the bond of the Covenant that is important for the consciousness of sin; it is this that makes sin a violation of the Covenant. (SE 50-51)

As ascertained above, the irrational experience of defilement entered the human world through speech and became accessible to philosophical reflection through its conversion into the language of prohibition and confession. (SE 36) Similarly, Ricoeur points out that "the Covenant as word penetrates into the same space of reflection." (SE 51) The event of a divine initiative, the impetus of a god that speaks, that turns towards and interacts with humankind, resists reason. This irrationality is represented in the Old

Testament by the term *ruah*, or Spirit. Ricoeur refers here to the work of A. Néher in *L'Essence du prophétisme*, who equates *ruah* with *davar* or 'word,' which has been rendered in turn by the Greek *logos*. (SE 51) According to Ricoeur, this translation, imprecise though it may have been, nevertheless signified an important cultural phenomenon. In it, the conviction was upheld

first, that all languages are translatable into one another, and that all cultures belong to a *single* humanity; and then that we must seek the least bad equivalent for the calling of man by God in the *logos*, in which the Greeks recognized the unity of *ratio* and *oratio*. (SE 51)

The dialogue of "vocation and invocation," the communication between God and mankind, contains the entire experience of sin. (SE 52) As Ricoeur declares,

... The projection of ... *davar* upon ... *logos* ... marked ... the recognition of this fact: the initial situation of man as God's prey can enter into the universe of discourse because it is itself analyzable into an utterance of God and an utterance of man, into the reciprocity of a vocation and an invocation. Thus, the initial situation which plunges into the darkness of the power and violence of the Spirit, also emerges into the light of the Word. (SE 51,52)

The second way of restricting the condition of being "before God" reduces the relation to one of legalism. Here, the divine utterance is interpreted as the mere legislation of a moral code. This legislative action, is, however, a withdrawal from a relation of dialogue, since "the ethical character of the word of command is already an abstraction." Law introduces the notion of independent, impersonal value, which is self-validating and which does not rely on the legislator for its force. Law remains in the realm of the ethical, since it is concerned solely with the violation of an abstract rule or value. Sin, on the other hand is the breaching of a personal bond, and is, therefore, a religious experience and expression. This is why Ricoeur considers that "the deepening

of the sense of sin will be linked with the deepening of the meaning of the primordial relationship which is Spirit and Word." (SE 52)

The priority of divine presence over ethical essence is expressed in the diverse language of relation, which cannot be confined to the books of law. There is a richness in the relationship between God and people which exceeds the narrowness of the Jewish "codes," and is communicated through the chronicles or histories, the hymns, oracles and sayings. Furthermore, the word of God and the response of humankind are greater than mere "speculation." There is here no thinking in the Greek sense of the word, no scrupulous and systematic search for definitions. There are, by contrast, the cries, threats, orders, groans and exultations of the prophet. (SE 53) Hence, Ricoeur affirms that

A philosophical phenomenology that wishes to re-enact the "before God" which is essential to sin must re-enact the form of the "word" most foreign to the word of Greek speculation from which philosophy was born, namely, the prophetic "oracle" - a "word" foreign to the Greek *logos*, but a word, nevertheless, that came to the Gentiles in the Greek translation of *logos*. (SE 54)

In his analysis of sin, Ricoeur follows the same route from the "'objective' to the 'subjective' pole" as he did in his exploration of defilement. Starting from the "ethical moment" in sin, he proposes to move to the "new kind of dread" associated with sin, and thence to try to discover the symbolism which is characteristic of sin. (SE 55) First, then, Ricoeur declares that the objective facet or "'ethical' moment of prophecy," comprises "the revelation in an infinite measure of the demand that God addresses to man." (SE 55) There is a "tension between an infinite demand and a finite commandment" which is typical of Old Testament ethics. (SE 55,56) This opposition

emerges through the warnings and exhortations of some of the Hebrew prophets, through Amos, Hosea, and Isaiah, who each stress a different aspect of God's infinite call and the specific responses which this summons required. (SE 56,57)

Sin's potential of establishing an unbridgeable distance and essential difference between God and humanity, is overcome in the Covenant which harmonizes the holiness of God and the impurity and corruption of the people. Indeed, the ethical structure of the Covenant is built on the awareness of sin, which, while it extends beyond the idea of fault as such to the fundamentally evil constitution of the human heart, simultaneously condemns fault through the manifold prescriptions and proscriptions of the law. Thus, Ricoeur establishes that there is a dialectic between prophetism and legalism, of which The Ten Commandments are the "central witness." (SE 58) Ricoeur has already pointed out that the feeling of defilement is "educated" by the words of the taboo, so now he also insists that

This tension between the absolute, but formless, demand and the finite law, which breaks the demand into crumbs, is essential to the consciousness of sin: one cannot just feel oneself guilty in general; the law is a 'pedagogue' which helps the penitent to determine how he is a sinner ... (SE 59)

In sum, the "ethical tension" of the Covenant remained intact from the time of Amos to that of the politically nihilistic warnings of Jeremiah and Ezekiel, (SE 62) and Ricoeur emphasizes that

If this dialectic is broken, the God of the infinite demand withdraws into the distance and the absence of the Wholly Other; or the legislator of the commandments becomes indistinguishable for the finite moral consciousness and is confounded with the witness that the Just One bears to himself. In this double manner the paradox of distance and presence which constitutes the "before God" is abolished at the heart of the consciousness of sin. (SE 62)

The subjective aspect of the apprehension of sin is the "new quality of anguish," which is another form of the dread and terror which is the subjective pole of defilement. In order to understand the "sense" of this kind of anguish Ricoeur proposes to place it within the context of the "before God" and the "infinite demand" of the Covenant, and to "see therein a dramatization of the dialogal relation that is constitutive of the Covenant." (SE 63)

Human sinfulness in the face of a holy God is experienced as terror, a terror which is the "truth of a relation without truth." The truthful response of a holy God to a sinful people is "Wrath," not, as Ricoeur upholds, that "God is wicked, but that Wrath is the countenance of Holiness for sinful man." (SE 63) Specifically, he explains that

This symbol of the Wrath of God ... directly concerns the political fate of the community of Israel. This point ... dominates to a great extent the distinction between sin and guilt that will be introduced later. Guilt represents an internalization and a personalization of the consciousness of sin. This double operation will encounter the resistance of the historical and communal interpretation of sin which found in the theme of the Wrath of God ... its most powerful symbol. (SE 64)

The prophets admonished the nation of Israel as an entire community before God, and it was the people as a whole who either enjoyed God's blessing or suffered his wrath. Denunciation was therefore proclaimed in terms of the national future, and "historical failure [was] thus erected into a symbol of condemnation." (SE 64) The essence of prophecy is the attribution of specific spiritual meanings to diverse historical events in the future, meanings which are directly related to the ethical conduct of the nation. (SE 67) It is, Ricoeur believes, a hermeneutic itself, for, the "Day of Yahweh" as the time of God's anger, is not only an event within history, it is also "an interpretation of history. If history ... is revealed as chastisement only through the

ministration of the prophecy that interprets it in this way, the bare occurrence can be prophesied as irrevocable and its meaning as revocable." (SE 68)

Joined to the predictions of disaster there is also the promise of deliverance. There is a "dialectic" of "catastrophe and salvation" which is not reflected upon at the level of speculation but which is a "dialectic in imagination and experience ... modeled after the symbolism of the Covenant." (SE 68) There is, therefore, in the symbol of the Wrath of God, an implicit perception of God as both near and far, an alternating sense which is made explicit and clarified in the Psalms. There, absence from God is understood as the disruption of a relation with God. King David, denounced by the prophet Nathan for his adulterous seduction of Bathsheba and for his part in the death of her husband, cries out that he has sinned "against God." This is a cry which issues from the depth of a relationship to God, a God upon whom David has called before in all manner of situations. (SE 69) Ricoeur observes,

The vocative - O God - which expresses the invocation of the petitioner, puts the moment of rupture back within the bond of participation; if God were the Wholly Other, he would no longer be invoked. And if the sinner were only the object of the prophetic accusation, he would no longer be invoking. In the movement of invocation the sinner becomes fully the subject of sin, at the same time as the terrible God of destruction becomes the supreme Thou. (SE 69)

The distance between sinful humanity and the holy God, resulting in the anguish of the sinner or the subjective experience of sin, does not render God completely Other. It is always contained within the "dialogal relation" of the Covenant, where the "Wrath of Holiness" might also be called the "Wrath of Love." (SE 69,70)

As noted above, purity was characterized as an absence of "moral blemish or stigma," and defilement was symbolized as the actual presence of a contaminating stain. Sin has now been characterized as the breakdown of relationship, and would therefore seem to be incompatible with any implication of a positive presence or force. From defilement to sin the symbolism changes from a positive to a negative one, a transformation which can be charted in the "vocabulary of sin." (SE 70) Ricoeur insists that just as the experience of defilement did not remain silent or mute, but was given voice in the *parole*, so neither is sin speechless. It is expressed in "the summons of the prophet, [and] the confession of the sinner," and the "impact of the experience of sin on discourse" was evident in the "diverse modalities of prophetic accusation: injustice ... adultery ... arrogance ... lack of faith, etc." (SE 70)

The experience of sin may also, however, be characterized as a "something," as a "reality" which "lays hold of man." (SE 70) Just as the symbolic essence of defilement persisted despite its being an obsolete "moment of consciousness," so, too, there is an element of defilement which endured under the government of an entirely new symbolism. Further, just as the symbol of defilement did not function alone but was bound to and understood in terms of the idea of purification, so, too, the symbol of sin is completed by the symbol of redemption. Ricoeur explains that "the establishment, the negation, and the reaffirmation of the Covenant form a coherent symbolic whole." (SE 71) Where the symbolism of sin signifies the fracture of a union between God and humankind, a union to which the Covenant gives shape, content and witness, the symbol of redemption manifests the "return" to the bond of the Covenant, the restoration of an "ontological ground." (SE 71)

There are a number of "concrete" Hebrew terms listed by Ricoeur as representing sin, each of which acquired a Greek counterpart when the Bible was translated into that language. He stresses the cultural significance of this fact, since it forever joined Greek and Hebrew and founded a "Helleno-Hebraic schematization and conceptualization," which cannot now be transcended. (SE 71,72) The symbols comprise first of all a series which begins with the ideas of "missing the target" and of a "tortuous road," ideas which convey a sense of "error or going astray. Then, there is the idea of "rebellion ... revolt, stiff-neckedness," which mean the "against God" of the sinful human will. Finally, there is the symbol of "having gone astray, of being lost," which communicates a sense of the state of the whole person in relation to God, and is a forerunner of the nineteenth and twentieth century insignia of existential malaise. (SE 72,73) This first series of symbols demonstrates how different sin is from defilement, a difference which Ricoeur summarizes as consisting in

a change in the intentionality of the symbol, arising from the new experience of evil, [which] is reached through an upheaval on the level of the basic images themselves: for relations of contact in space, relations of orientation are substituted; the way, the straight line, straying, like the metaphor of a journey, are analogies of the movement of existence considered as a whole. At the same time, the symbol passes over from space to time; the "way" is the spatial projection of a movement that is the evolution of a destiny. Thus the revolution in the images prepares the way for the revolution in the meanings themselves. (SE 74)

This "symbolism of negativity" then leads into an even more insubstantial image of the 'nothingness' of sin, that of the ephemeral "breath of air" and of the unreality of the "idol." Human life is characterized as "abandoned" and inconsequential, it is "vanity and pursuit of the wind." The image of the idol is that of a "real non-being ... [or]

Pseudo-Something for man," and anyone who worships idols must, again, become as nothing, must become vanity. (SE 74,75)

Vanity spreads the nothingness of sin everywhere, even as far as God himself, who becomes for sinful humanity another negation, the "No" of the interdict that "forbids and destroys." (SE 77) In this way, God does indeed become the Wholly Other, and the bond of the Covenant is breached.

For the symbolism of sin to be "complete and concrete," it should be taken together with that of "pardon." (SE 77) Setting aside any theological interpretation, Ricoeur maintains that "At the level where the concepts come to birth in images (or schemata) that have the potency of symbols, it is the whole, 'pardon-return,' that is full of meaning and that signifies as a whole the restoration of the Covenant." (SE 78) The symbol of pardon is equivalent to that of God's repentance, a turning away of the Wrath of God toward humanity, which is forgiven instead of condemned. According to Ricoeur, it follows that "'pardon' is return; for return, *a parte Dei*, is nothing else than the taking away of blame, the suppression of the charge of sin ..." (SE 78,79)

The imagery of return underlies that of repentance, which, as well as being a "turning from the evil way," is also a "renewal of the primitive bond, a restoration." Thus, an ambiguity emerges which results from the "return" as simultaneously dependent on God and on the activity of his people. (SE 80) As with the experience of accountability in the face of unjust suffering, this would seem to be another paradox crucial to the symbolics of evil as outlined by Ricoeur, another indication of a personal responsibility operative within a vaster scheme of reality over which the individual has no control. This is the paradox of the "servile will" here contained in the symbolism of

pardon and return, a paradox which informs all the theological contradictions implicit in the doctrines of grace, free will and predestination, and in the face of which speculation is impotent. (SE 81)

As well as its negative connotations, sin also has a positivity or reality which secures a phenomenological coherence between the symbolisms of sin and defilement, and which accounts for the re-institution of the symbol of defilement in the symbol of sin, although this reality will not be fully discerned until related to guilt as the self-consciousness of fault. (SE 86,81) In spite of this internal consciousness of sin, its 'objective' reality is attested to in the accusations of the prophets. Thus, Ricoeur confirms the actuality of sin which

is not measured by the sinner's consciousness of it. This is why the "reality" of sin - one might almost even say the ontological dimension of sin - must be contrasted with the "subjectivity" of the consciousness of guilt. It is the "heart" of man that is evil - that is to say, his very existence, whatever his consciousness of it may be. (SE 82)

The fact of sin introduces a broad existential perspective into the confession of sin, a perspective which enables the repentant sinner to take into account a past of unremembered or ignorant sinfulness. The Covenant then answers the reality of sin with the Law, which is its "ethico-juridical expression," replacing the prohibition of the taboo and its automatic vengeance, and providing a "hypersubjective reference" for sin. (SE 82,83) This impossibility of defining sin in terms of a subjectivity means also that sin is both "primordially personal *and* communal." (SE 83) Ricoeur thus relegates the doctrine of original sin, of "the transmission of a sin issuing from the first man," to the level of a "pseudo-concept ... only a rationalization ... through the Adamic myth, of that

enigmatic bond which is acknowledged rather than understood in the 'we' of the confession of sins." (SE 84)

Furthermore, the "hypersubjective" reality of sin means that it falls under the "absolute sight (*regard*) of God," who is the "for-itself" of sin, rather than the individual consciousness. (SE 84) The divine "seeing ... constitute[s] the *truth* of my situation," giving rise to "self-awareness ... [and the] desire to know myself as I am known." (SE 85) Confidence in the truth and fairness of this "Seeing (*Regard*)" guarantees the reality of personal existence and of sin beyond one's own consciousness of either. There is thus an objectivity to what nevertheless remains an internal reality, the reality of sin. (SE 85,86)

Continuity is further assured by the fact that the nebulousness and enfeeblement of "vanity" is also a "potency," a positive force, a "power of sin that binds the sinner." In its earliest representations, it is associated with the power of evil gods or demons which actually live in the sinner. At this stage, there is no distinction between "sickness and sin," a distinction which is only made when there is an awareness of guilt. By the time of the prophets, who always minimized references to evil spirits, the binding power of sin has nevertheless become most severe. This is the theme of "radical evil" or the "theology of wickedness," which discerns a "fascinating, binding, frenetic force" within the sinful human heart. (SE 87,88)

These are the seeds of a "tragic" anthropology, the inevitability of condemnation because both "God and man conspire to produce evil." (SE 88,89) The "hardness of heart" of the sinner is a "*state* indistinguishable from the very existence of the sinner and, it seems, a state for which he is not responsible." (SE 89) Here again Ricoeur

presents the contradictory constitution of the "servile will," as "the experience of a *passivity*, of an alteration, of an alienation, paradoxically blended with the experience of a voluntary deviation, and hence of an *activity*, an evil initiative." (SE 89) The superimposition of the later teaching on original sin is partly based on this experience of alienation, which lent itself to "pseudo-biological rationalizations," to the idea of the passivity of sin being due to its hereditary nature. Supporting this was the renewal of the idea of sin as unclean contact, a contamination which could occur in sexual contact or at the moment of birth, as well as in dealings with 'heathen' peoples. (SE 88-90)

It follows, as Ricoeur observes, that the need for redemption or for salvation from the binding power of sin translates into the "fundamental problem of existence" and is less a matter of personal choice between alternatives than of "liberation," for "the man held captive by sin is a man to be delivered." (SE 93) The underlying motifs of the symbolism of redemption complete the symbolism of pardon, and ensure that the symbolism of "purification" will be included in the symbolism of pardon. (SE 91) Where the symbolism of pardon was built around the theme of return, that of redemption focuses on "buying back." Deliverance is portrayed in terms of 'buying off' the power which captivates humankind, of a "ransom which must be given in exchange." (SE 91) The symbolism pictures God as the *goel*, the avenger or protector, and includes the idea of effacement or covering up of sin. Ricoeur refers to the Exodus as the most important symbol of deliverance in the history of Israel. He states that "the Exodus did not display its power of ethical symbolism until it passed through the gate of the symbolism of 'buying back'; the Exodus is a buying back ..." (SE 92) The Exodus delivers Israel

from its captivity and oppression under Egypt which becomes, in turn, the symbol of bondage itself. In conclusion

the sinner is "in" the sin as the Hebrew was "in" bondage, and sin is thus an evil "in which" man is caught. That is why it can be at the same time personal and communal, transcending consciousness, known to God alone in its reality and its truth; ... why it is a power that binds man, hardens him, and holds him captive; and it is this experience of the impotence of captivity that makes possible a taking over of the theme of defilement. However "internal" to the heart of man the principle of this bondage may be, the bondage in fact constitutes an enveloping situation, like a snare in which man is caught; and so something of unclean contact is retained in this idea of the captivity of sin. (SE 93)

Ricoeur explains that the key to the otherwise incomprehensible religious rituals of expiation lies in the desire to ward off the death-dealing wrath of God. This desire stemmed from an awareness of sin as akin to defilement, which, although given a more spiritual interpretation by the prophets, still produced the same fear of divine retribution. (SE 94-96) As for the sacrifice itself, which was the crux of ritual *praxis*, Ricoeur indicates that it is "the *symbolism of blood* [which] constitutes the bond between the rite of expiation and the faith in pardon ..." (SE 97) Blood is a gift, an offering made to God as expiation for sin in place of the soul. When it is God who specifies the blood as the means of expiation, there is a renewed sense of the initiative of God in pardoning the sinner. (SE 96-98)

Guilt is the final symbol of evil that Ricoeur explores, and he immediately insists that "guilt is not synonymous with fault." (SE 100) Reflection on guilt is multi-faceted - "ethico-juridical," dealing with the relation of punishment to responsibility; "ethico-religious," considering the "scrupulous conscience," and "psycho-theological," examining the "hell of an accused and condemned conscience." (SE 100) The internal dynamics of

guilt, which is constituted by the interplay of these three conflicting features, may not be understood by direct analysis. It is only accessible when included within the overall schema of fault, along with defilement and sin. According to Ricoeur, "guilt is *understood* through a double movement, starting from the two other stages of fault: a movement of rupture and a movement of resumption." This will bring out a new phase, that of the "*guilty* man," and will take up the earlier symbolisms, so that the "paradox ... of a man who is responsible for being captive" may again be expressed. (SE 100,101)

Ricoeur generalizes his definition of guilt by reiterating that

guilt designates the *subjective* moment in fault as sin is its *ontological* moment. Sin designates the real situation of man before God, whatever consciousness he may have of it ... Guilt is the awareness of this real situation, and, if one may say so, the "for itself" of this kind of "in itself." (SE 101)

Where the anticipation of punishment for defilement was experienced as dread or terror, guilt is experienced as the "anticipated chastisement itself, internalized and already weighing upon consciousness." (SE 101) The sense of responsibility which accompanied defilement was only an "appendage" to the anticipated punishment, and did not arise from a knowledge of any personal responsibility as "being the *author of* ..." In guilt, however, there is a new apprehension of "the evil use of liberty, felt as an internal diminution of the value of the self," a deterioration which requires punishment as a "healing and amendment." (SE 102)

The connection between sin and guilt involves a "crisis" which introduces a new perspective into sin. To begin with, there is an identity between the feeling of guilt and the feeling of sin which Ricoeur clarifies, "guiltiness is the burden of sin: it is the [felt] loss of the bond with the origin, ... the achieved internality of sin." (SE 103) The

consciousness of sin has become deeper, more 'internal' as the demands of God have become more probing, and the "interdiction" of the taboo and the efficacy of ritual praxes have been superseded by a subjective sense of responsibility. Moreover, the prohibition itself changes into a demand for "perfection," a demand which exceeds the boundaries of specific conduct, being a call to a "*possible* existence." This summons uncovers not only the fact of individual responsibility but also the nature of underlying motives. Further, it reduces all possible existence to the choice between "God or Nothing." (SE 103) A truly 'dialogal' relation results, as Ricoeur remarks

This call to a radical choice raises up .. a subjective pole, a respondent, no longer in the sense of a bearer of punishment, but ... an existent capable of embracing his whole life and considering it as one undivided destiny, hanging upon a simple alternative. Thus the prophetic call transformed the Covenant from a simple juridical contract between Yahweh and his people into a personal accusation and adjuration. There is henceforth an "I," because there is a "thou" to whom the Prophet addresses himself in the name of God. (SE 103)

This has far reaching consequences in terms of the language of fault, for a new focus is acquired in the confession of sins which looks away from the "before God" of the sinner to the "it is I who ..." of the guilty conscience. (SE 103,104) Ricoeur concludes that

"conscience" ... now becomes the *measure* of evil in a completely solitary experience ... The "realism" of sin ... [is] ... replaced by the "phenomenalism" of guilt, with its play of illusions and masks. This end is attained only at the price of the liquidation of the religious sense of sin. This man is guilty as he feels himself guilty; guilt in the pure state has become a modality of man the *measure*. (SE 104)

Thus, guilt replaces the perspective of the absolute view of God which belongs to the "hypersubjective" reality of sin with the narrow insight of "man the measure," a replacement which embodies an irrevocable "double advance." (SE 104) First, the

communal confession of sin is fragmented into the individual instances of the guilty conscience, which dissipates the power of an overarching 'fate' by introducing the power of individual will into the arena of fault. Second, whereas the indictment of sin is all-inclusive and condemns all as equally sinful, the assessment of guilt admits of degrees and finds a person more or less guilty. At the edges of this assessment lie the two extremes, the characters of the "wicked" and the "just." A relative system of justice is established which depends on evaluation, on comparison with the pattern of a "just man," rather than on approximation to a standard of absolute perfection. (SE 105-108)

In terms of the symbolism of this stage of fault, Ricoeur believes that the "penal experience of the Greeks" is fundamental to the conscience of Western culture. (SE 109) Biblical concepts of sin were translated into their Greek counterparts and Ricoeur maintains that, at the "ethico-religious" level, Western symbolism is inseparably Greek and Jewish. For the Greeks, the laws and conduct of the Greek *polis* superseded the bond of the Covenant as the locus and criterion of ethical responsibility, and reasonable reflection took the place of a suffering conscience. The Greek "tribunal" revised the religious consciousness of sin and provided the basic symbol or metaphor which pervaded the consciousness of guilt. (SE 108-110)

In the Greek schema of fault, there is, according to Ricoeur, a continual and inextricable interplay between the themes of purity, holiness and justice, so that the "purely moral" notion of evil as injustice took over from the malevolent workings of impurity. He states that Greek rationality "consisted essentially in a division between Cosmos and City," a separation which distinguished the human from the divine Whole, and which was "produced by the decision-making action of the city." There was a

distinction drawn between the public crimes of "sacrilege" and "treason," and private transgressions, harmful only to individual and demanding a "defined and measured reparation." (SE 110-111) Ricoeur points out that this requirement

was exercised on the penalty itself, and it was by measuring the penalty and in order to measure it that the city measured the guilt itself. Thus the notion of *degree* of guilt, which among the Jews is rather a conquest of personal meditation in the midst of communal confession, is correlative among the Greeks with an evolution in punishment. (SE 111)

Thus, "δίκη" no longer refers to an impersonal cosmic system but to the executions of the tribunal. (SE 112)

Following the distinctions in punishment, guilt was also rationalized and differentiated, one of the first differences being made between "voluntary" and "involuntary." The basis for this was purely *a priori*, an imposition for the sake of institutional efficiency. Any "psychology" involved was always indirect, poetic and imaginative, and succeeded the operation of the tribunal. (SE 112) Ricoeur concludes that "conceptual analysis [always] comes second; the conceptual distinctions are regulated by the degrees of public indignation and reprobation, and the education of judgment is effected by the work of legal proceedings and by the disputes of lawyers." (SE 113,114)

As a result of this judgment, the concepts of "ἀμαρτία" and of "ὑβρις" which previously carried a strong religious significance, were also redefined. (SE 114-117) In the "tragic" understanding, ἀμαρτία meant "the fatal error, the going astray, of the great crimes," and was later modified to mean an "excusable fault, ... [or] psychological involuntariness." Tragic ὑβρις, which first denoted the "presumption that propels the hero beyond the limits of his station," came to mean "active transgression," a penal mutation that released its "psychological component ... the evil root of wicked

premeditation ... the guilty will in its pure state." Furthermore, there was a need for punishment to encounter a so-called "mystery of iniquity" as the 'other' by which the judge is both offended and vindicated. It is the "evil will of the delinquent which confirms the good conscience of the tribunal." (SE 117)

Thus, Ricoeur highlights the role of Greek city tribunals in measuring justice and injustice. The status of the city equalled that of a "holy" place. The efficiency and fitness of the city was considered as justice, the maintenance of which was committed to the tribunals as a sacred trust. Under this regime, injustice was still equivalent to impiety, and it is this that allows Greek reflection on punishment and responsibility to be compared to Jewish ideas on godliness. (SE 110,117,118)

The second area of reflection on guilt is designated as the "ethico-religious," comprising an examination of the "scrupulous conscience," and pinpointing "Pharisaism ... as [its] birthplace ... and ... summit of its perfection." (SE 118) The Pharisee is a particularly clear representation of "an irreducible *type* of moral experience" and offers universal recognition of a basic human trait. (SE 122) The religion of Israel was an ethical as well as a historical monotheism, and what separated the Israelites from other tribes was their historically dictated moral and religious Law. The Pharisees were men dedicated to the Law of Israel, to its execution and application in the daily life of the people. They were devoted more specifically to the *Torah*, which means "instruction, teaching," for the Law, rather than being a fixed and finished datum, was only binding because of its vital link to the living God. Ricoeur explains that "The law of the Torah is both *religious* and *ethical*: ethical because it demands, commands; religious because it is a transparent deliverance of the will of God with regard to men." (SE 123)

In pursuit of this, Pharisaism distinguishes between the written Scriptures or *Torah*, and an oral tradition or unwritten *Torah*. Since the Pharisee's desire is to discover how the will of God may be truly done here and now, each situation demands a new interpretation of the Law, an interpretation and judgment which is then added to the store of oral tradition. Thus, the revelation of the Law given by the Lord on Mount Sinai at one moment in time is continually complemented and augmented by an accumulated oral interpretation. (SE 125-127) As Ricoeur remarks, "the bond between man and God is a bond of obedience to instruction." (SE 127) All the qualities of scrupulousness and of the awareness of guilt characteristic of scrupulousness stem from this mutuality between the *Torah* as revelation and revelation as *Torah*. There is, moreover, a happiness in the conscience of the scrupulous individual which derives from its non-alienating heteronomy, the voluntary abdication of its own will in favour of the will of God, which is necessarily "holy, right, and good." (SE 127,128)

Scrupulousness brings to fruition the themes of individual guilt and responsibility and of the distance between the wicked and the just. By extending the Law into any and every part and phase of human conduct, pharisaism underscored the pragmatism of the just and holy life. Since justice and righteousness were attainable for everyone, each individual then became worthy or unworthy of reward. According to Ricoeur, "merit is the imprint of the just act ... a modification of the good will ... an increase in the worth of a man, issuing from the worth of his acts." (SE 129) In terms of the consciousness of fault, the significance of this is that the experience of guilt is the antithesis of merit, or the "loss of a degree of worth ... *perdition* itself," a subtraction from life itself. (SE 130)

Ricoeur asserts that the philosophy which supports these ideas is one of a freedom "entirely responsible and always at its own disposal." (SE 130) This is what constitutes the "greatness of scrupulousness" and enables its denial of radical evil, presenting the ever open possibility of repentance and return to God. Evil is a temptation which may be resisted, from which there is no immediate deliverance but only a progressive salvation. (SE 131,132) The "limitation" of this type of conscience lies in its principle of heteronomy. Even though the principle does not violate the will, which is always freely surrendered, it emphasizes a specific relation between God and humankind to the detriment and loss of all others. Ricoeur contends that the paramount importance of rendering correct judgements leads to a casuistic religion which reduces the "God-man relation to a relation of instruction ... of a will that commands to a will that obeys. This is the very essence of a 'practical' religion," a practicality which puts in question the very heart of the dialogal bond of the Covenant. (SE 133,134) The weakness of the scrupulous conscience is epitomized in what Ricoeur calls the "Mosaic fantasy," which subsumes all other facets of the religious experience of the Covenant under the "figure of *the* legislator and into the *single* event of the giving of the Law." (SE 134) On the other hand, the greatness of the scrupulous conscience lies in its devoted love towards this original act of divine instruction and towards its prophet. (SE 134,135)

Ricoeur lists certain features which enhance any understanding of scrupulousness. (SE 135-139) Apart from the "juridicization" of the scrupulous conscience in the Mosaic fantasy, that same conscience also witnesses to its piety in a variety of ritual observances. There is a practical requirement of holiness which introduces the danger of attending to the form or the letter of the observance rather than to its content or spirit. Furthermore,

there is an accretion of commands and rituals which leads to what Ricoeur terms a "manifold and sedimented conscience," as opposed to the "simplicity and sobriety of the command to love God and men." The temptation then becomes one of being burdened and trapped by the infinitesimal details of the multiplying interpretations. Finally, scrupulousness implies separation, the separation of the pure from the impure, of the righteous from the unrighteous, a distinction which can lead to "fanaticism or encystment." Ricoeur summarizes scrupulousness as "the advanced point of the experience of fault, the recapitulation, in the subtle and delicate conscience, of defilement, sin, and guilt." (SE 138) Here, though, the peculiar delinquency of Pharisaism becomes apparent. Hypocrisy is the degeneration which comes about when the living desire to know and do the will of God becomes stultified and the life of joyful obedience deteriorates into a rigid, complex code of do's and don'ts.

The final feature of guilt which Ricoeur discusses (SE 139-141) is the "psycho-theological," or the "hell" of a guilty conscience. Ricoeur brings attention at the outset to the New Testament theme of St. Paul of the "curse of the law," a curse which springs from the opposition of human finitude and the infinity of the law's demand for perfection. The law, the infinite command of God, not only 'teaches' the sinner that she is sinful but also provokes the sinner to sinful behaviour. There is "a new quality of evil" which manifests itself as the "will to save oneself by satisfying the law ... [the] will to self-justification [or] 'boasting in the law'." (SE 141) According to the Pauline doctrine, the attempt to avoid and diminish sin by obedience to the law, itself becomes sin and the crux of the curse of the law. (SE 143)

The curse has two results. (SE 143-144) In terms of the "structure of accusation," there is a proliferation and multiplication of demands in contrast to the one, "*radical* demand" posed under the reign of sin. Ricoeur calls this "indefinite enumeration and indictment" the "evil infinite" of the law. There is, furthermore, a change in the structure of the "accused conscience," due to the "juridicization" of the law. This process destroys the dialogal relation of the Covenant, a destruction which is explained by Ricoeur:

It is enough that the sense of sin as being before God be abolished for guilt to work its havoc; at the limit, it is an accusation without an author. To be accursed without being cursed by anybody is the highest degree of accursedness ... By the semblance of intention that remains in a radically anonymous condemnation, the verdict is hardened into fate. (SE 144)

In this, there is no longer any hope of the mercy of God, experienced as God's repentance, there is only "alienation," the state of being one's own judge and jury. This essential "cleavage" in the self is what is understood in the Biblical notion of "flesh." Ricoeur describes the flesh as "myself alienated from itself, opposed to itself and projected outward," and a "powerlessness of myself ... whose desires are contrary to those of the spirit." However, he insists that this dualistic "existential category" is "far from being a primordial ontological structure; it is rather a regime of existence issuing from the will to live under ... and to be justified by the law," and later as "the flower of evil." (SE 141-145)

In addition to the curse of the law and the state of alienation, the guilty conscience suffers under a new dominion of death. (SE 141-142) The flesh and the law combine to bring death as the inevitable consequence of seeking life through adherence to the law. It is not as if death were the penalty for sin, rather, Ricoeur declares, "it is secreted by

[sin] in accordance with an organic law of existence ... it is the actualized dualism of the Spirit and the flesh." (SE 142) Thus, not only is the guilty conscience segregated through the loss of communion with other sinners, its lack of "promise" renders it a "slave," prone to despair. Ricoeur regards despair as the "sin of sins: no longer transgression, but a despairing and desperate will to shut oneself up in the circle of interdiction and desire. It is in this sense that it is a desire for death." (SE 146)

This extreme point of the symbolism of fault can only be achieved retrospectively - in view of being already "dead in your sins" - a view which is only possible under the prospective symbol of "justification by faith." (SE 147-148) Ricoeur follows the Pauline interpretation of this symbol, which sees it as a "verdict of acquittal" by which a person is declared just, and which "is something that comes to a man - from the future to the present, from the outward to the inward, from the transcendent to the immanent." (SE 147) This eschatological feature of justice is what renders the attempt to justify oneself by the "works of the law" ultimately futile and vainglorious. This future justice creates the immanent experience of justice which Paul speaks of as a "new creature." This experience is itself grounded in "liberty," which, rather than being the freedom to choose between various alternatives, is the state of "being at home with oneself, in the whole, in the recapitulation of Christ." (SE 148) Ricoeur confirms that

It is ... impossible to reflect philosophically on fault while omitting the fact, embarrassing for reflection, that the ultimate meaning of fault could be manifested only by means of the great contrasts set up by the first passionate thinker of Christianity: justification by the practice of the law and justification by faith; boasting and believing; works and grace. Whatever weakens those contrasts dissipates their meaning. (SE 148)

There is thus an ambiguity in sin which is revealed from this new perspective, consisting in its double properties of the hell of the guilty conscience which is an

"impasse," and of justification by faith, which is the "supreme pedagogy." The guilty individual is the condemned individual, but this condemnation is only fully understood retrospectively, in the light of the justified conscience. (SE 149-150)

B. The Language of Relation

Perhaps the most significant overall aspect of the consciousness and symbolism of fault which Ricoeur brings to light is its eruption and growth within a 'personal' space, that of the dialogal relation of the Hebrew Covenant. After the primitive, impersonal stage of the fear of defilement, Ricoeur repeatedly characterizes the human situation of fault as one of being "before God." (SE 50) This situation is itself the condition of our awareness and confession of sin and guilt, experienced as the violation of that relation and its subjective aftermath. As Ricoeur states, sin is a religious rather than a moral issue. (SE 52) The Covenant is an intimate bond, an 'I-Thou' relation depending on the communication of call and response between God and humankind. As well as reminding the people of the holiness and majesty of God, the Hebrew prophets also speak of the tenderness, love and mercy of God, likening the Covenant to an affectionate relationship between husband and wife, or to the protective relationship between a shepherd and his sheep.

1) Mythical Expression: Narratives of Fault

As the explicitation of the symbols of fault, myth is therefore essentially relational or dialogal in origin and orientation. It has no other reality, no grammar or vocabulary,

which does not spring from the basic relatedness of humanity to God, or to being. Ricoeur indicates that the "situation of man [is] at the heart of the being in which he moves, exists, and wills ..., " and that the symbols and myths of evil "speak" of this situation. (SE 356) Whatever the various myths describe in the way of human isolation, alienation, or uprootedness, it is always as the perversion of a more fundamental union or belonging - whether it be the anguish of the already doomed hero, the loneliness of the separated soul, the estrangement of the excommunicated from Paradise, or the precariousness of the servant and play-thing of the gods.

As noted above, Ricoeur has also defined the basic relation which myth reveals as "the bond between man and what he considers sacred," a bond which is threatened by the "crisis" of evil. (SE 5) It is this threat, Ricoeur believes, which serves to heighten an awareness of our reliance on the sacred. (SE 6) He concludes,

Therefore, the myth of "crisis" is at the same time the myth of "totality": in recounting how these things began and how they will end, the myth places the experience of man in a whole that receives orientation and meaning from the narration. Thus, an understanding of human reality as a whole operates through the myth by means of a reminiscence and an expectation. (SE 6)

Myth has an integrating and educating role to play, assigning to humankind its origin and destiny within the perspective of a vast cosmic whole. As explained above, however, myth must never be confused with the etiological and pseudo-scientific scope of gnosis. Its function is rather to reveal, the process referred to by Ricoeur as "opening up and disclosing." (SE 165) The meaning or significance of the myth then becomes a matter of mythic revelation, and the question already quoted above, "How can the narration *mean* in a symbolic and non-etiological mode?" is then posed. (SE 166)

To answer this question, Ricoeur turns to an investigation of the "mythical consciousness," or, as interpreted by the phenomenology of religion, the "undivided consciousness [which relates] itself affectively and practically to the whole of things." (SE 166) For Ricoeur, however, what is important is the reason why that pre-linguistic consciousness "nevertheless breaks out into language under the form of narration." (SE 166) He is determined that

If the phenomenologists of religion have been more concerned to go back from the narration to the pre-narrative root of myth, we shall follow the opposite course from the pre-narrative consciousness to the mythical narration. It is in this transition that the whole enigma of the symbolic function of myths is centered. (SE 166)

To explain the fact that myth is a linguistic expression and the narrative form of the symbol, Ricoeur refers to that mythical structure which the phenomenology of religion sees as the matrix of "all the images and all the particular narrations peculiar to this or that mythology." (SE 167) This structure signifies "the intimate accord of the man of cult and myth with the whole of being," an "indivisible plenitude," an integrity of the supernatural, natural, and the psychological. (SE 167) This wholeness is, however, not experienced, but only "aimed at," for "[t]he primitive man is already a man of division. Hence the myth can only be an intentional restoration or reinstatement and in this sense already symbolical." (SE 167) Myth-making is viewed by Ricoeur as both a 'symptom' of this "unhappy consciousness," and an attempt to alleviate its distress. It is the speaking forth of an unfulfilled desire for "unity, conciliation, and reconciliation." (SE 167, 168)

The diversity and multiplicity of myths, of symbols and rituals, is a consequence of the disparity between the actual experience of finitude and the infinitude which can

only be aimed at in myth. The only way that the mythic totality is accessible is through the diffusion of signs and symbols of the sacred whole, and in the ritual words and narrations which designate and define those sacred 'objects.' (SE 168-169) Ricoeur sums up, "If the plenitude were experienced, it would be everywhere in space and time; but because it is only aimed at symbolically, it requires special signs and a discourse on the signs." (SE 169) Fault is only ever experienced "in relation or in tension with a totality of meaning, with an all inclusive meaning of the universe," (SE 170) which is aimed at by the symbols and myths. If the experience of fault is separated from the symbolism which signifies and invokes the cosmic whole, that totality of meaning is lost. (SE 170,171)

The totality is not a fixed and stable 'state,' but has itself been "established, lost, and re-established dangerously, painfully." (SE 169-170) The paradigmatic totality is a "primordial drama," which is why, according to Ricoeur, the myth is constructed as a narration with its own space, time and cast of characters. (SE 170) He therefore maintains that

the narrative form is neither secondary nor accidental, but primitive and essential. The myth performs its symbolic function by the specific means of narration because what it wants to express is already a drama. It is this primordial drama that opens up and discloses the hidden meaning of human experience; and so myth that recounts it assumes the irreplaceable function of narration. (SE 170)

Thus, it is the dramatic character of the narration which enables myth to "mean" in a non-etiological way.

In addition to the reasons given above as to why the mythical consciousness breaks out into language, another motive may be discerned in the relation itself between humanity and the totality of meaning. As indicated above, Ricoeur designates the

experience of fault as integral to the "personal relation to a god." (SE 48) He clarifies that relation further when he describes the god as "anthropic," as "essentially turned toward man," a god with whom humanity is involved through "encounter and dialogue." (SE 48,50,51) It would seem, then, that humanity is a co-respondent in an ongoing dialogue with divinity and is only moved to tell its struggles and involvement in the primordial drama of the Beginning and the End from this place of interrelationship. Myth may not be so much the cry of a completely isolated and bewildered people as an answer within an eternal call.

2) The Myths

i) "The Drama of Creation and the 'Ritual' Vision of the World"

Ricoeur turns first to the Sumero-Akkadian theogonic myths as illustrative of the "type" of myth concerning the beginning and end of evil, specifically to the creation drama narrated in the Babylonian epic titled *Enuma elish*. Here is recounted the birth of the divine, a beginning which precedes the creation of the cosmos. (SE 175) For Ricoeur, what must be understood beyond this myth is that "cosmology completes theogony, that what there is to say about the world is the result of the *genesis* of the divine." (SE 175-176)

In the story, (SE 177-183) Apsu, the primordial father, plots to destroy the divine children of Tiamat the primordial mother because they are "troubling" the primordial pair. When Apsu is murdered in his sleep, Tiamat is infuriated and gives birth to monsters to fight against her sons. However, she is defeated and killed by Marduk, one of the divine sons, who has been enthroned by the other gods. The cosmos is born from

the conflict between mother and offspring, the parts of the world being formed from the different pieces of Tiamat's body. Marduk thus personifies the coincidence of creation and destruction. Humanity also is created at this time, made from the blood of the leader of the traitorous gods who is tried, found guilty and executed.

The principle of evil is doubly intended in this myth, both as "the chaos anterior to order, and as the struggle by which chaos is overcome." (SE 179) This epic account designates the origin of things as "blind" and something that must be overcome, it is a "promotion of the divine at the expense of the primordial brutality." (SE 178) This "terrible possibility" of origin means

Negatively, that man is not the origin of evil; man finds evil and continues it ... Positively, that evil is as old as the oldest of beings; that evil is the past of being; that it is that which was overcome by the establishment of the world; that God is the future of being. (SE 178)

Although the Babylonians did not think of the gods as guilty, in naming the gods they nevertheless designated evil. There is, in fact, a certain anthropomorphism in effect, in that the motivations and deeds of the gods are recognizably those which are specified as evil by mortals. Further, since violence is inseparable from the generative principle, the act of creation being simultaneously the destruction of a primordial enemy, it is subsequently absolved and explained in human affairs as the necessary destruction of the enemies of the king acting as servant of the god. (SE 182)

There are Babylonian myths which resemble those of the Fall and the Flood. None of the Babylonian myths, however, takes up either the theme of the degeneration of the created order occurring after the moment of creation or of divine punishment for crimes committed against the deity. Neither the idea of the appearance of human evil distinct from the creative act, nor of an ethical God offended by human behaviour,

appeared within the Babylonian typology. Even the *Epic of Gilgamesh*, which contains the Babylonian account of the flood, is not principally concerned with 'sin,' but with the evil of death, and specifically with the kind of 'pointless' death which must occur when an ethical God is completely absent. Death is here the final insult in a universe ruled by violent, capricious and uncaring deities. (SE 183-190) Ricoeur concludes that:

Where evil is primordial and primordially involved in the very coming-to-be of the gods, the problem that might be resolved by a myth of the fall is already resolved. That is why there is no place for a myth of the fall alongside a creation myth of this sort; the problem of evil is resolved from the beginning and even ... before the beginning: before the creation of man, before the creation of the world, even before the birth of the god who establishes order. (SE 190-191)

Since, in this type of myth, the moment of creation is coincidental with the eradication of evil, then the questions of 'salvation' and creation are also indistinct. For Ricoeur, "every historical drama, every historical conflict, must be attached by a bond of *re-enactment* of the cultural-ritual type to the drama of creation," a re-enactment which has political and religious implications. (SE 191) The cult is the way by which the drama of creation enters into the history of humankind, being not only an imaginative rehearsal of the drama but its "renewal... [through] active participation." (SE 192) As Ricoeur comments,

Mankind ... was created for the service of the gods, for which the gods founded Babylon, its temple, and its cult; and this service, when it is addressed to the god who established order, evoking this attribute explicitly, calls for the real re-enactment of the drama of creation. (SE 192)

The Babylonian festival of the New Year is a particularly striking example of this, and the role of the king in this festival is crucial. (SE 192-193) The king represents the "type of *man* corresponding to ... [the] vision of theogonic strife." (SE 191) As an

intermediary between humanity and the gods, he is the symbolic character who connects history to the cult, itself bound to the theogonic drama. In the festival, the king is the medium through which the transition from cosmic drama to history is accomplished. "The king," says Ricoeur, "is Man ... the epitome of all the ties that bind the human to the divine, the political to the cosmic, history to the cult." (SE 194)

A theology of sovereignty accompanies this vision. The god is also king, and the entire cosmos is his kingdom, an image which implies a political dimension within the divine state, a collusion with history and its temporal, human enactment. The earthly king reigns by divine favour and is the pivotal point between heaven and earth. Thus, as well as being responsible for the relations between the two spheres, he is also the "victim of any discord," of the continual instability inscribed in the universe, to which he can only submit. (SE 194-196)

Ricoeur believes that such a mythology must conclude in a "theology of war" which portrays the Enemy as the array of powers which the king-as-god must continually overcome, the powers of chaos ranged against the representative of order. (SE 198)

Ricoeur determines that:

the *King-Enemy* relation ... becomes the political relation *par excellence*. This phenomenological filiation is fundamental, for it introduces us through the myth to the problem of political evil ... According to [the first mythological "type"] ... evil is not an accident that upsets a previous order; it belongs constitutionally to the foundation of order. Indeed, it is doubly original: first, in the role of the Enemy, whom the forces of chaos have never ceased to incarnate ...; second, in the figure of the King, sent to "destroy the wicked and the evil" by the same ambiguous power of devastation and of prudence that once upon a time established order. (SE 198)

Thus, the drama of creation inspired and sustained the entire Babylonian culture, as well as providing it with an understanding of its political life.

In order to verify his typological method, Ricoeur next discusses the "phenomenological 'transition' between types," beginning with a "recessive" form of the Babylonian myth, or a "superimposition of a dominant form on a recessive form," which he discovers in the myth of the Hebrew King. (SE 198) He finds there certain themes of the Hebrew Bible reminiscent of the drama of creation, such as "the schema of reign, subjugation, [and] contests against enemies," which is present in the Book of Psalms, as well as the cultural-ritual ceremony of Yahweh's enthronement. The theme of the oriental king who is constantly fighting against the enemies of God and His people, is particularly important. From the idea of primitive "ritual combat" can be drawn the figure of the aboriginal man reigning over the earth because he is also the "image of God," and thus there seems to be a well founded line from the original King to the primeval man. Also, a passage is established from ritual to historical combat. Ricoeur believes that the "historicization" and "demythologization" of the 'enemy' in the form of the Assyrians or the Philistines was a necessary preliminary to the extreme moral or spiritual interpretation of the enemy as Adversity or the agent of Satan. Further, when history becomes real, it also becomes eschatological. In the cultural view, history is never really new, but simply a re-enactment of what has already definitively occurred. In being demythologized, the drama becomes historicized. The final outcome has not yet taken place. It awaits fulfilment. (SE 199-202)

While conceding these "survivals" from the creation-drama, which can always be found when deciding to "explain the new by the old, the event by its historical 'sources'," (SE 202) Ricoeur points out that a methodology more attentive to typological differences will not begin in the same way. He maintains that

A different system of "significations" is at work with the same representations. In the new system creation is good from the first; it proceeds from a Word and not from a Drama; it is complete. Evil ... can no longer be identical with prior and resurgent chaos ... History, too, ... is an original dimension and not a re-enactment ... Evil and History are contemporaneous ... Salvation ... [can no] longer be identified with the foundation of the world; ... it becomes itself an original historical dimension like evil.

[This] ... is the discontinuity at the level of "types" of myth; this new type organizes itself around new "significations" concerning creation, evil, history, salvation. But as a "type" does not become explicit all at once, it is perfectly understandable that it should at first avail itself of the "images" deposited by the vanquished myth in the culture of the people; aided by this sort of inertia of images, the new myth works a slow transmutation in them until it carries them to the level of the new "myth." (SE 203-204)

There are various themes which can be referred to the "subterranean work of the new myth." These include the themes of the transition of the King to the Son of Man and Lord of the gospels; the refocusing of symbolic significance from the creation-drama to the unravelling of History; the transmutation of primordial man into a purely human being and the 'fall' of this 'man' within an essentially 'good' creation and the existence of the Adversary as an evil Other-than-human which is the last evidence of the creation-drama. (SE 204-205)

The second type of creation myth which Ricoeur considers is a "mutant" form that "hesitates" between types. The theme of the Titan displays a certain "indetermination among several forms," lending itself to interpretation in terms of the Orphic myth as well as of the Hebrew myth of the fall. (SE 206)

In the cosmology of Hesiod, Mother Earth and Father Sky have terrible sons who "stretch (*titainontas*) their hands too high," and who hate their parents from the beginning. The myth of the Titans resembles the creation-drama in its depiction of

violent primeval forces. However, the Titans represent a devastation which occurs after the institution of order. (SE 207,208) Ricoeur explains that Hesiod's stories

have ... [an] ambiguous character of continuing creation-drama and of presaging what one might call the post-divine drama - in a word, anthropogony, whether it be of the tragic type, the Orphic type, or the Adamic type. (SE 208)

The figure of Prometheus who steals fire from Zeus because the god has withdrawn the fire of lightning from mortals, is transformed by Aeschylus into a tragic hero pursued by the wrath of the god. At the same time he is assigned the status of "a demigod who gives man his humanity thus ... becom[ing] a sort of model man." (SE 209) Next, the Orphic myth of the exiled soul imprisoned in the body is where the Titan myth becomes an etiological myth most closely associated with anthropogony. The human race is portrayed as having been raised from the ashes of the Titans who had devoured the god Dionysos, and therefore as having a divine and a Titan ancestry. Finally, the Biblical version of the Flood includes an account of the destruction of a race of corrupt giants, who are partly to blame for the divine punishment. (SE 209-210)

The myth of the Titans is thus representative of this elusive, indeterminate type.

For Ricoeur, it illustrates

an uncertain attempt to situate the origin of evil in a region of being intermediate between the divine and the human. That is why it remains unusual, close both to chaos and to the *Urmensch*. It signifies, perhaps, an attempt to tie the antiquity of human evil, which is always already there, to those aspects of brute reality which testify of themselves to a resistance to order and beauty - masses of shapeless rocks, the Caucasus battered by storms, to which Aeschylus' Prometheus is nailed. (SE 210)

ii) "The Wicked God and the 'Tragic' Vision of Existence"

For Ricoeur, Greek consciousness and literature are paradigmatic of the tragic experience. (SE 211-213) Once the essence of Greek tragedy is grasped, then an understanding by analogy of tragedy in general will be acquired. Furthermore, the connection of tragedy with theology is apparent in the Greek description of humanity "blinded" by the gods, and the dramatic presentation of Greek tragedy fits its application to tragic spectacle rather than to speculation. Spectacle preserves and protects the symbolic power in tragic myth. This both warns the philosopher against dispensing with the myth once its message has been elicited and invites her to detect a hermeneutic of the tragic symbol which would "take into account the invincibility of the spectacle in the face of any reductive criticism based on the transposition from 'theatre' to 'theory.'" (SE 213)

Tragic theology, which is the basis of tragic spectacle, is made up of a number of "pre-tragic" motifs. The theme of the blending of divine and demonic is implied throughout tragic theology and anthropology. This conviction, that fault originates in the divine and can enter into and possess human being through some innate frailty, is the principal pre-tragic theme. In this schema, humankind is helpless to resist the "infatuating blindness" which the god inflicts and which is the origin itself of fault. There is an ambiguity in the source of such blindness, embracing both an impersonal aspect in the form of fate and the intrusion of "*δαίμων*" into the emotions and will, and a more personal aspect in the figure of Zeus. The personalization of divine malevolence, which eventually becomes the core of the tragic, is signified by divine jealousy against immoderation or "*hybris*." When humanity, burdened by the jealousy of the gods, seeks to escape its lot, then the gods will retaliate, for they cannot bear any greatness besides

their own. Human longing beyond the fatality of death is a punishable 'crime.' Thus, to be *human* is to be *tragic*. (SE 213-217)

These pre-tragic themes only culminate in the properly tragic when their central idea of a "predestination to evil" encounters the subject of the "hero." Ricoeur pinpoints the "crux" of the tragic as the "magnifying to the breaking point" of the problems surrounding the wicked god and the hero. In the former, "the undivided unity of the divine and the satanic" achieves its apex. The story told in Aeschylus' *The Persians* shows Zeus as the wicked god and the defeated Xerxes as the defenceless victim of a "transcendent aggression" who manifests the "mystery of iniquity." Here, there is no question of Xerxes being able to avoid his fate, either by moral reform or by superior cunning. In this tragic situation, our only response to the hero can be one of pity. (SE 218-220)

The gods are historical beings who appear through suffering and anger so that within divinity there is the dark, chthonic element. There is, then, a certain "guiltiness of being" itself which Zeus represents and which is challenged by the Aeschylean figure of Prometheus. (SE 220) There is, Ricoeur says,

a paradox of guiltiness [of being] whose other side is the "immoderation" or "excess" of the "hero" treated as authentic greatness and not as unwarranted exaltation ... a paradox of the wicked god and human guilt ...

Without the dialectics of fate and freedom there would be no tragedy. Tragedy requires [both] ... hostile transcendence ... and ... the upsurge of a freedom that *delays* the fulfilment of fate ... [and] causes it to appear contingent at the height of the crisis ... The freedom of the hero introduces into the inevitable a germ of uncertainty, a temporary delay, thanks to which there is a "drama" ... an action the outcome of which, while it is taking place, is uncertain. Thus delayed by the hero, fate, implacable in itself, deploys itself in a venture that seems contingent to us; thus is born the tragic action with its peculiar cruelty ... (SE 220-221)

The introduction of a human side in guiltiness is required for the appearance of an ethical moment in evil, an awareness of responsibility which is nevertheless still clouded by a sense of predestination. From now on, the anger of the gods is countered by human anger, and it is specifically in the person of Prometheus that this dialectic is figured. Suffering for his love of humanity, he represents first of all the very humanity of humankind, for "even if his autonomy is also his fault, it expresses first his generosity; for the fire that he has given to men ... of the hearth ... and community cult, ... of reason, culture, and of the heart ... sums up what it is to be a man." (SE 223) On the other hand, Prometheus' freedom is of "*defiance* and not of *participation*," he possesses the secret of destroying Zeus, of annihilating being. Thus, human freedom is first identified with chaos. Divine and human wrath, the wicked god and Titanic freedom are intertwined. (SE 222-225) Ricoeur observes:

The tragedy of Prometheus begins with the unjust suffering. Nevertheless, by a retrograde motion, it makes contact with the original germ of the drama: the theft was a benefaction, but the benefaction was a theft. Prometheus was initially a guilty innocent. (SE 225)

Any attempt to systematically formulate the tragic theology would involve the religious consciousness in a 'suicide mission,' for any such consciousness is founded on the notion of the innocence or holiness of the deity.

Whereas in the creation-drama salvation supervened in the creation of order out of chaos, any "deliverance" from the tragic seems to be of the Aeschylean variety, either as the result of the redemptive passage of time, or with the destruction of the tragic theology itself in a transition to an etiological "type" where holiness prevails over primordial evil. Even then, salvation remains *within* the tragic vision, where suffering as a form of understanding becomes a "tragic wisdom ... [or] tragic knowledge." In

conclusion, Ricoeur does not believe that Greek religion ever contributed a true deliverance from the tragic, only offering instead the Apollonian "counsel" and the Dionysian transformation of personality which both fail to settle the internal conflicts of the tragic schema itself. (SE 227-229)

"There remains," Ricoeur suggests, "the tragic *spectacle* itself, to purify whoever yields himself to the sublimity of the poetic word." It is the "chorus and its lyricism" which is the "place of tragic reconciliation." (SE 231) Ricoeur explains:

The ordinary man knows only fear and the sort of bashful sympathy that the spectacle of misfortune calls forth; in becoming a member of the chorus, he enters a sphere of feelings that may be called symbolic and mythic, in consideration of the type of utterance to which they are proportionate ... Terror and Pity are both modalities of suffering, but of a suffering that may be called suffering in the face of destiny ... [feelings which] come to birth only in the aura of tragic myth. But they are also a *modality of understanding*: the hero becomes a seer; when he loses his sight, Oedipus attains to the vision of Tiresias. But he does not know that which he understands in any objective and systematic way ...

Such is the deliverance which is not outside the tragic, but within it: an aesthetic transposition of fear and pity by virtue of a tragic myth turned into poetry and by the grace of an ecstasy born of a spectacle. (SE 231) (My emphasis)

There is, then, an understanding which has nothing to do with reason or with speculation but which is called forth by the poetic word as a particular aesthetic experience. It is a 'feeling with' or sympathetic discernment of symbolic-mythic feelings which can only be apprehended by entering into the tragic milieu.

iii) "The 'Adamic' Myth and the 'Eschatological' Vision of History"

Only the Adamic myth is thoroughly anthropological, and this for three reasons. (SE 232-235) First, it is an etiological myth which links the genesis of evil with an actual forebear of the human race, an ancestor who is homogeneous with us today.

Ricoeur, therefore, does not believe that Adam was in a state of "supernatural perfection" from which he subsequently 'fell,' and nor does he believe that the symbol of the fall is appropriate to the Adamic myth. Secondly, this myth is the clearest example of the attempt to sever the origin of evil from the origin of good, its aim being to "set up a *radical* origin of evil distinct from the more *primordial* origin of the goodness of things." It is the telling in story-form of the innate human "power of defection," the 'fallibility of man.' Human beings, to quote Kant, are "destined" for good but "inclined" to evil, and this transition is here "*narrated*" in mythical terms as an event in time. Lastly, the Adamic myth includes the Serpent and Eve as ancillary figures who "decentralize" the story but without detracting from the Adamic figure who always remains the focus of attention and significance. (SE 232-235)

To understand the myth we must retain the notion of an "event" as the "symbol of the break between two ontological regimes and abandon the idea of *past fact*." Understanding does not include interpretation of the myth as true history, in fact, the myth has "more meaning" than historical fact can provide, a meaning which is educed in the relation of the pre-philosophical to the philosophical. Ricoeur refers to the myth as a hermeneutic of the symbols which articulated and gave form to the prior consciousness of sin. Myth only "anticipates speculation" and gives rise to thought because it itself is already an interpretation of those symbols. For Ricoeur, the problem is to discover what the myth adds to the symbols. (SE 235-237)

Consequently, any interpretation is mistaken which begins from the Adamic myth or which exaggerates the speculative refinement of the doctrine of original sin without acknowledging that the Hebrew penitential experience is always prior and fundamental.

This vital experience opens the way for the myth. First, because Yahweh is holy, evil must enter the created world by some kind of disaster, "original badness" must be divorced from "primordial goodness." Both the tragic and theogonic theologies must be demythologized, and this is accomplished through the affirmation of an anthropogenic evil. (SE 239-240)

Second, the innocence of a holy God and the guiltiness of humanity engenders a "spirit of repentance" which discovers a common "root" of evil. Evil is not simply an individual act or disposition but a "communal dimension," and, says Ricoeur, it is because the confession of sins "involved this virtual universalization that the Adamic myth was possible: the myth, in naming Adam, man, makes explicit the concrete universality of human evil." (SE 241) The Old Testament chronicles God's constant intervention in the lives of his people. It is a history of repeated threats of divine judgement and promises of divine mercy. (SE 240-241) This experience, too, is shared by all nations and peoples, for

the prologue to history in the garden of Eden contains in epitome all that the dramatic destiny of Israel had revealed about the meaning of human existence: call, disobedience, exile ... [it] extend[s] to all mankind the great tension between condemnation and mercy that the teaching of the Prophets had revealed in the particular destiny of Israel. (SE 242)

The third and final way in which the spirit of repentance prepares the way for the myth is in its acknowledgement of the "absolute perfection" of the creator and the "radical wickedness" of the creature. The myth then explores the point of divergence or rupture between the ontological and historical regimes, between the goodness of the created order and the corruption of the historical condition, and is thus a kind of prolegomena to any subsequent speculation. (SE 242-243)

The intention of the myth is brought out in a dialectic between the "event" of the fall located in a single man and single act, and the "space of time" of the drama of temptation, involving several characters and episodes. The experience of alienation and exile of the 'one man' is the pattern of the beginning of evil for 'everyman.' The taking and eating of the fruit, the specificity of evil action, marks a historical termination of the time of innocence and the initial moment of "malediction." What is especially noteworthy is that there are two accounts in Genesis of the primordial state of innocence, one in which innocence seems to have been consonant with industry, intelligence and sexual maturity and another in which innocence seems to have lacked any cultural attributes, human traits which only appeared after the incident of the fall. (SE 243-246)

Ricoeur remarks that the fact of two interpretations is meaningful:

every dimension of man - language, work, institutions, sexuality - is stamped with the twofold mark of being destined for the good and inclined toward evil ... The ambiguity of man ... pervades all the registers of human life ... the opposition of the two ontological regimes ... [is expressed henceforth in] ... the hardship of being a man which ... makes manifest his fallen state. Thus an anthropology of ambiguity issues from the myth; henceforth the greatness *and* the guilt of man are inextricably mingled. (SE 246-247)

When God forbade Adam to eat the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, the interdiction was taken up into the regime of innocence as into an "ethical structure where freedom constitutes the authority of values in general ... [where] the forbidden fruit stands for prohibition in general ... [and] eating [it] is a peccadillo ... less important than the alteration of the relation of trust between man and God." (SE 248-249) Within such a regime, the authority which imposes limits is one that "orients and guards" freedom, whereas after the fall the limit is felt and known only as prohibition, as restriction of freedom. (SE 247-250)

Ricoeur concludes that the temporal priority of innocence to sin signifies an important anthropological fact:

By the myth anthropology is invited, first ... to gather all the sins of the world into a sort of transhistorical unity, symbolized by the first man; then to put the stamp of contingency on that radical evil; and finally to preserve, superimposed on one another, the goodness of created man and the wickedness of historical man, while "separating" the one from the other by the "event" which the myths tell of as the first sin of the first man. (SE 252-253)

Over and above the narration of the instant of the fall, there is the telling of a transition from innocence to fault, a passage which is represented by the figure of the serpent. The serpent questions Eve about God's limiting authority, introducing doubt and distorting the limit with the suggestion of the "evil infinite ... [which springs up as] the desire of desire, taking possession of knowing, of willing, of doing, and of being." It is the desire to be as gods, knowing good and evil. (SE 252-254) According to Ricoeur, this has profound anthropological and philosophical implications, since this desire for "always something more,"

[now] *seems* to constitute the reality of man. The restlessness that makes us discontented with the present *seems* to be our true nature ... In a way, the promise of the serpent marks the birth of a human history drawn by its idols towards the infinite; all phenomenology develops in this enchanted precinct of vanity, under the category of the *Pseudo*. That is why no phenomenology, no science of appearances, can take the place of a critique of the illusion of appearance. The myth is the symbolic form of that critique. (SE 254)

The woman Eve is designated as the partner in the dialogue with the serpent because she points to an "'eternal feminine' which is more than sex and which might be called the *mediation of the weakness*, the frailty of man ... [She] represents the point of least resistance of finite freedom to the appeal of the *Pseudo*, of the evil infinite." (SE 254-255) The fall is caused not so much by any psychic drive or sexual energy, as by

the composition of human freedom. The serpent as chthonic creature represents that animal part of human being which is unrecognizable and inaccessible to reason, the "quasi-externality" of an evil to which we yield, which is identified in the Bible with the "flesh." Thus, the serpent figures the "passive aspect of temptation, hovering on the border between the inner and the outer." (SE 254-256)

The serpent also illustrates the externality of evil, the fact that no one is ever the absolute origin of evil. Evil is always already there, it is part of the human "tradition," not simply something that intervenes. It further symbolizes the 'subterranean,' chaotic aspect of human experience, the "universal absurdity" which is encountered as part of the fabric of the universe. Thus, the serpent represents "the chaos *in me, among us, and outside* ... he represents the aspect of evil that could not be absorbed into the responsible freedom of man." (SE 257-258)

Although the Adamic myth posits this limiting 'outside' of evil, any speculation beyond this point as to the positive identity of such evil is "very risky." (SE 259)

Ricoeur insists that the perpetual presence of evil in the world is, nevertheless,

the *other* aspect of evil for which ... *I* am responsible ... Man knows evil only as that which he inaugurates; that is why a first step in "Satanology," ... is always necessary. But ... outside the quasi-external structure of temptation, which is still a structure of man's sin, I do not know what Satan is, who Satan is, or even whether he is Someone ...

That is why the Biblical myth, in spite of Eve and the serpent, remains "Adamic" - that is to say, anthropological. (SE 259-260)

The final point that Ricoeur explores in the Adamic myth is the coherence of its retrospective symbols of the Beginning with the eschatological symbols of the End. For, he confirms, the Adamic symbols are closely bound up with "a whole historical experience turned toward the future," and only find their full meaning in the "temporal

whole" from which they have been extracted. (SE 260) The eschatological symbols will be immersed in the symbolism of "pardon" which culminated in the theme of justification as described above (pp. 61-62). Accordingly, "the living experience of pardon will ... unfold" (SE 260) through the symbolism of justification for,

in passing through the metaphysical imagination, the experience will be enriched by a meaning that could not be expressed in the direct language of religious experience. It is on this long road of the hermeneutics of symbols that the experience comes to the light of speech. (SE 261)

Ricoeur presents the symbols of the "Son of Man" and the "second Adam" as the principal eschatological symbols, as "homogeneous with the fall of the first Man." The metamorphosis of the figure of the king best illustrates the passage from ritual-cultural to eschatological type. The ancient kingship gradually becomes the "Kingdom to come." The king, who still has the care of the universe, will come to reconcile and redeem the cosmos, will usher in a reign of perfection. Expiation through the voluntary suffering of another is essential to the idea of pardon, and so the figure of the suffering Servant of God also appears, the Innocent One who will suffer for human sins and so bring us pardon. (SE 261-267)

The apocalyptic personage of the Son of Man combines the roles of future Judge and King as he gathers the saints at the end of time and shares his reign with them. The Son of Man is situated in the Kingdom which is to come, at the last judgement, when he will receive power and honour and glory. (SE 267-268) Ricoeur quotes Théo Preiss who says:

The meaning is not mythical (in the sense of repetition of primordial Event) and anthropological, but eschatological: a savior who establishes a new world. The interest is turned towards the future, towards the second creation which will surpass the first creation in the very act of completing it. (SE 268-269)

The notion of pardon, attached to the symbolism of the Son of Man becomes, then, the "beginning of the new creation in the midst of men on earth ... [and] this power of pardon issues from the eschatological focus constituted by the cosmic judgment." (SE 270)

This theme of a second creation is consummated in the Pauline figure of the "second Adam," which both "consecrates" the preceding figures and adds to them. The writings of St. Paul not only fuse the figures of the Son of Man and the Suffering Servant, but also, in establishing a congruence between the first and second Adam, establish at the same time a "progression" or "how much more." Jesus Christ as the second Adam not only restores a pre-lapsarian order, but inaugurates a "new creation." The old regime, under the domination of the law and the "abundance of sin," has been broken forever, leading to the new regime of the superabundance of grace. God miraculously intervenes so that the "curse of paradise lost becomes a test and a medicine." (SE 271-274) In sum, Ricoeur declares that:

man's access to his humanity, his passage from infancy to maturity ... [must] proceed through awareness of his limitations, his conflicts, and his sufferings. Salvation evolves a history; in symbolic terms: the second Adam is *greater than* the first Adam; the first is *with a view* to the second Adam ... The Bible never speaks of sin except in the perspective of the salvation that delivers from sin. This "pedagogy" of the human race makes the pessimism of the fall abound in order that the optimism of salvation may superabound. (SE 274)

Pardon is not something that is experienced either wholly subjectively or wholly objectively, but must be signified symbolically by the individual who participates in the "type" of the "fundamental Man" for the experience to be meaningful. Faith is necessary to achieve a "plenary sense" of the figures of the Son of Man and the Second Adam. (SE 274-275) The individual experiences pardon

because he is incorporated into that which those 'images' [or figures] signify ... The experience of pardon is, so to speak, the psychological trace of what happens in reality, and which can only be spoken of in an enigma and signified as the passage from incorporation in the first Adam to incorporation in the second Adam. (SE 275)

The meaning of pardon is further amplified by the symbols of eschatological judgement and acquittal. The call to return and repentance is complemented by the divine enterprise of eschatological acquittal. Humanity is thus presented as "acquitted," not just on an individual basis, but in terms of the entire race. Also, the symbolism of judgement decrees that the human body and cosmos are to be redeemed or saved. Salvation is all-inclusive. (SE 276-278)

Finally, the Son of Man represents a homogeneity with the human race, itself symbolic of a kind of "grafting" which "makes possible the living communion between the Spirit and spirits." (SE 278) This figure illuminates

the mystical immanence of life by the Spirit ... [I]t is ... the power of the symbol, giving what it says, that secretly animates the experience of the "life in Christ," the feeling of continuity between the "vine and the branches." One lives only that which one imagines, and metaphysical imagination resides in symbols; even Life is a symbol, an image, before being experienced and lived. And the symbol of life is saved as a symbol only through communication with the ensemble of the eschatological symbols of "justification." (SE 278)

Ricoeur remains unsure in conclusion as to whether a philosophy of pardon can be drawn out of this symbolism. (SE 278)

iv) "The Myth of the Exiled Soul and Salvation Through Knowledge"

This last type of myth is epitomized by archaic Orphism. It is the only type which establishes a dualism in human being, separating body and soul. All subsequent anthropological dualism draws on this myth in its interpretation of humankind as identical

with the "soul" and alien to the "body." The Orphic myth recounts the 'humanizing' of the originally divine soul, how the 'encounter' of the body with the soul engenders humanity and makes of it the place where the original distinction between "earthly" body and "divine" soul is forgotten or eradicated. (SE 279-280)

Whereas none of the other types of myth shares the same vision of the soul, of human being as split into two realities, Platonic philosophy traces its roots into the "ancient" but undiscovered "discourse" of Orphism. A perfect form of the myth exists only in neo-Platonic writings. In this etiological version, the young Dionysos is killed and devoured by the Titans. They, in turn, are destroyed by Zeus who brings forth the race of humans from their ashes. Human beings therefore share the divine nature of Dionysos and the evil nature of the Titans. (SE 280-282)

As well as this "post-philosophical" myth of origins there exists a "myth of situation" more suited to phenomenological investigation and clarified by Ricoeur as:

a myth of the present situation of man which reveals 'soul' and 'body' as distinct magnitudes and powers, although it remains silent concerning the origin of their confusion ... It is, by itself, the "ancient discourse" presupposed by philosophy. (SE 282)

The original version of the situational myth incarcerates the soul in the body as a place of expiation for some previously committed evil. Here, the body is not the origin of evil, but, as a place of penance, it is already an experience of alienation and exile. The soul then takes on a "new evil," generated by exposure to the degrading circumstances of its imprisonment. The "schema of reiteration," which holds that life and death are interchangeable as the two states of experience, increases the punishment by imposing a constant repetition whereby "existence ... appears to be a perpetual backsliding." (SE 283-284)

Added to this was the idea of an "infernial punishment," the great fear of a dreadful punishment after death, preached by the Orphics as a threat which no one escapes. Ricoeur unites the themes of atonement in the body and in the lower world: "life is a repetition of hell, as hell is a doublet of life," and the body as tomb gains significance from "the circularity of death and life and the coincidence of their inverted values." He observes that this interplay is central to the understanding of the body where the penitential experience of the soul is one of a corruption by punishment, rather than of purification. Life, then, is a perpetual moment of degeneration. (SE 285-287) Thus:

The schema of exile, heightened by the schema of repetition, tends to make of the body the symbol of the misfortune of existence; for is there a more frightening idea than that which makes life a rebirth to punishment? In propagating itself from one life to the other ... evil becomes the coincidence of self-inculpation and self-punishment. This mixture of condemnation and reiteration is the very figure of despair. (SE 287)

This understanding of the body itself gave rise to a new understanding of the soul. Ancient Greek culture did not focus on the soul as the unique locus of the human experience and the cults of 'enthusiasm' believed in a divine possession of the soul. The Orphics, however, held that this ecstatic state was a flight from the body rather than an incursion of the god. This state is the soul's true nature which ordinary life conceals and which the sinner cannot enter. (SE 287-288)

Orphism further refined this idea by teaching that humanity is akin to the gods, divine and not mortal. The division between divinity and mortality is now within humanity, soul is sundered from body. The ultimate goal becomes deliverance for the divine soul from the cycle of life and death, a survival for the soul, not just to rebirth in the body, but to a place of 'repose.' Ricoeur locates this development as the

"threshold of a new understanding of the self," which preceded Plato and which contributed to the later elaboration of an ethics and an aesthetics based on the soul as judge and possessor of true knowledge. (SE 287-289) It is, Ricoeur confirms, the "imaginative expression" of the dualism of body and soul, or rather, "the construction of that dualism in imagination." (SE 298)

The myth of situation eventually unfolds into a "final myth" of origin, an Orphic myth of the offense of the Titans, which itself clarifies and concludes the myth of situation. This myth belongs to the type of the drama of creation, but it also "veers in the direction of an anthropogony in agreement with the experience of the deep-seated discordance in man." (SE 293) The Titans represent the "pain of being" of primordial, pre-human evil but also the new, anthropocentric understanding of the origin of evil. Phanes is the central figure in the Orphic myth. He is "Protogonos, the first-born - ... born of the primordial egg." (SE 289-294) In this figure, "the one and multiple manifestation," there is no longer depicted a primordial conflict between good and evil, (SE 294) but rather

a progressive separation, ... [a] gradual differentiation, as one sees in the myth of the primordial Egg. This myth, in abandoning the contradiction and replacing it by a movement from the Confused to the Differentiated, ceases to account for the unhappiness of man, which consists, on the contrary, in the confusion of his twofold original nature ... A myth of differentiation no longer suffices to explain the evil in man, which is a mixture; and it is not surprising that the source of evil is dislodged from the divine ... and that theogony appeals to an anthropogony to explain an evil, the secret of which it no longer possesses. (SE 295)

The myth proceeds with the devouring of Phanes by Zeus who later relinquishes his power to Dionysos, the youngest of the gods, who was later devoured by the Titans and from whose ashes, in the final form of the myth, humankind is born. Thus humanity inherits the dual nature of Dionysos and the Titans. The myth of situation is completed

by this myth of origin. The duality of human identity is forgotten in the experience of a confused existence, and the myth of origin recalls the beginning of the confusion which constantly conceals the "vision of duality." (SE 294-298)

The antecedence of evil is implied by the expiation of evil in the body, expiation for sins committed in another life. The idea of another life represents the "unfathomable origin of an evil, the remembrance of which would be older than all memory." The myth of the Titans does not entirely remove the responsibility for evil from the sphere of the human to the other than human. (SE 299) According to Ricoeur, the Titan is not

truly other than man: we are born from his ashes; he is the inherited and contracted part of evil choice ...; he attests that the lowest degree of freedom is close to the brute, angry, inordinate force of the unleashed elements ... This savage possibility in ourselves, beginning from which our freedom becomes humanized, is relegated ... to the origin and incarnated in a crime older than any human fault; and so the Titan represents the anteriority of evil in relation to actual human evil. (SE 299)

The Orphic myth narrates the "always already there" of evil which is also both "choice and heritage." (SE 300)

For the exiled soul, trapped in an alien and impure body, the hope of escape from the wheel of continual rebirth is grounded in knowledge as the "purifying act *par excellence*." This is the act whereby the soul knows itself as other than body, for "all knowledge of anything, every science, whatever its object, is rooted in the knowledge of the body as desire and of oneself as thought in contrast with desire." (SE 300-301) This is a cleansing in "spirit and in truth" which is the theme of the deliverance of wisdom, of philosophy, taken up especially by the Pythagoreans. Here, Ricoeur notes the evocation of the *philia*, fractured by "discord," separating humanity from the divine and from its own beginnings. The aim of philosophy before Plato is thus the detachment

of the soul and its "reunion" with the divine. The myth of origin serves eventually as the starting point of a speculative endeavour, a cosmology which in Empedocles is worked out in terms of the principle of Discord and Friendship, a principle of "*things* which is manifested in *human* evil." (SE 300-305)

C. The Language of Imagination

1) Symbol and Myth as the Language of Unifying Imagination

Ricoeur emphasizes the significance and prerogative of the imagination and its relationship to the symbol. He insists that "One lives only that which one imagines, and metaphysical imagination resides in symbols; even Life is a symbol, an image, before being experienced and lived." (SE 278) There are two aspects of imagination which are implied in Ricoeur's exposition of the symbols and myths of fault. First, imagination is the faculty which sorts and synthesizes the diverse constituents of experience, representing them in an innovative mode. Second, it follows from this that the unity of experience is the intentional horizon, or *telos*, of imagination.

The first point that Ricoeur has insisted on in his criteriology of symbols is that the symbol is always communicated via language. The otherwise inarticulate and chaotic experience of fault is surmounted by the voice of confession, by language as the "light of the emotions." (SE 7) The fact that defilement, sin and guilt are externalized in speech is the only reason they are accessible to the philosopher via the "re-enactment in sympathetic imagination." (SE 3)

More specifically, throughout *The Symbolism of Evil* Ricoeur refers to the imagination as the faculty which sympathetically re-enacts the confession of fault. As

pointed out above, imagination performs the epoché which enables the philosopher to temporarily embrace, or to "re-feel" the "motivations and intentions of the believing soul" in the confession of fault, both as "reminiscence and expectation." (SE 6,19) This is the principle of the sympathetic re-enactment, in which the function of the imagination should not be reduced either to the operation of fancy or illusion, or to an affective assimilation or rehearsal of the consciousness of fault.

In *Fallible Man* Ricoeur designated the imagination as the faculty which is able to represent the original, undivided innocence, affirming that

There is nothing scandalous in this imagination for philosophy. Imagination is an indispensable mode of the investigation of the possible. It might be said ... that innocence is the imaginative variation that makes the essence of the primordial constitution stand out, in making it appear *on* another existential modality. (FM 222)

According to this description, imagination is no mere fabricator of fantasy. It is the agent of intentionality which is able to re-produce or re-create the consciousness of fault for critical examination, and as such it is an essential philosophical tool. As the faculty which is able to project, combine and recombine elements of experience in "imaginative variation," it alone is capable of presenting reality in the mode of the 'as if.' In this way, and in contrast to Kant, imagination grasps possible experience.

This "imaginative and sympathetic understanding, without personal appropriation" should be understood as the mediator which harmonizes the religious experience with any subsequent philosophy of fault. It allows us to 'make sense' of the fragmented experience of fault, and Ricoeur refers to it as "the thinker's only resource" when reason fails to encompass the disjointedness of the world of fault. (SE 345)

Ricoeur has repeatedly remarked that the symbol, in all its stages of development, is never simply a direct translation of one thing in terms of another. It is opaque and enigmatic, with no immediately evident points of comparison between it and the thing signified. Indeed, the only way to penetrate to the *significatum* is by first being *in* the *significans*. The relationship is one of participation for, in contrast to a datum comprehended by the intellect, the symbol *means* existentially. Further, since the symbol is concerned with a "latent meaning" which is never discernible simply by observation, it follows that it signifies something absent, or that it "say[s] things without the things." (SE 14-18)

Ricoeur differentiates this symbolic facility for making the absent present from the simple act of portraiture, which is the reinstating of the absent through a representation of its likeness. As noted above, he affirms the identity of symbol as being "closer to a word than to a portrait." (SE 13) Rather than retaining and making reappear that which had previously disappeared the symbol introduces something new, and Ricoeur maintains that it is specifically the role of the poetic imagination to bring this word to life. In this way, imagination is a truly creative and productive faculty. As described above, this imaginary or poetic aspect of the symbol, its status as a new being in language, is joined to its cosmic and oneiric aspects to form the one, indivisible, tripartite symbolic structure. (SE 14)

Ricoeur's investigation of myth has also demonstrated that fault is only ever symbolically experienced as part of a whole, and that the symbols are only ever conjured up in imagination. The cosmic whole, the overall meaning within which the experience of fault is situated and distinguished, can only ever be approximated intentionally. It is

only myth which "conjures up," which remembers and anticipates wholeness through its "fanciful history," the imaginative narration of the lost and rediscovered state of primordial purity and integrity. (SE 171)

Thus, Ricoeur attributes productive as well as reproductive capabilities to the imagination, for the true symbol is always a new being of language and a product of the imagination. The symbols of fault and their elaboration as myth, are said to "complete" the experience of fault by situating it within the overall meaning of the universe. (SE 171) Since it is the imagination which produces the symbols, it is also the imagination which recollects and reaches for the cosmic whole. It is the imagination which mediates between the present state of existential disintegration and the longed for primordial integrity.

2) Imagination and Reason: "The Symbol Gives Rise to Thought"

Given that symbol and myth operate at the level of imagination, given that the language of confession is always contingent and incompatible with 'pure' reflection, the problem arises of how the symbols and myths of evil may be incorporated in a philosophy of the will, and how these expressions may enhance any such philosophy. Ricoeur believes that the apparent incongruity of symbol and critical reflection is overcome by the fact that both symbol and thought are grounded in language. However, the language of imagination should not be relegated to a parallel discourse, nor should philosophy undertake the role of allegorizing interpretation. Philosophy must somehow encompass symbol and myth, a scope which is conveyed in the principle "the symbol gives rise to thought." (SE 347,348)

The relationship of thought to the symbol, and the relationship of each to language, is crucial, both for philosophy and in terms of contemporary culture. If philosophy is to be useful and 'true,' it must re-examine its own claim to a radical founding in light of the fact that "everything has already been said." As the "fullness of language" the symbol gives us "something to think about," and is always prior to any reflection. (SE 19,348) The symbol's gift means that the "first task [of a philosophy of symbols] is not to begin but, from the midst of speech, to remember; to remember with a view to beginning." (SE 349)

The need to remember is especially important considering the current 'emptiness' of language. This barrenness is the paradoxical fruit of modern technology and underlies a peculiarly modern complaint, that of "forgetfulness." Ricoeur refers to the "forgetfulness of hierophanies, ... of the signs of the sacred, loss of man himself insofar as he belongs to the sacred." (SE 349) Our language has become suited to the formal language of symbolic logic, "more precise, more univocal, [and] more technical," and so we need to "recharge [it] ... to start again from ... [its] fullness." (SE 349) In other words, the desire is to restore to language the gifts of imagination, both poetic and symbolic; a desire animated by the hope of re-creating and replenishing language, by "reminding itself of the fullest meanings, the most pregnant ones, the ones which are most bound by the presence of the sacred to man." (SE 349)

The indebtedness of thought to symbol raises the question of freedom of thought. How can thought be free and autonomous if it is bound to the contingent symbol? Rather than surrendering the critical process, Ricoeur stresses that although everything has been said enigmatically, i.e. symbolically, "it is always necessary to begin it again in the

dimension of thinking." He proposes a new form of criticality, one that escapes the previous "desert." Since symbols are always in the element of language, since they ensure that humanity *is* language, they have always also engendered a spontaneous interpretation. Philosophy is not, therefore, completely hostile to the language of imagination. Modern, or critical hermeneutics, concerned with undermining the etiological pretension of the myth, illuminates the symbol as a sign of the sacred and "restores" the myth as symbol. Criticism is not abandoned but renewed as it adopts a "restorative" rather than a "reductive" role. Ricoeur affirms that this will result in the "revivification of philosophy through contact with the fundamental symbols of consciousness." (SE 349-351)

This contact through criticism in no way furnishes a "primitive naïveté" or an "immediacy of belief" in the symbols. (SE 357) It does, however, aspire to a "second naïveté," for "It is by *interpreting* that we can *hear* again. Thus it is in hermeneutics that the symbol's gift of meaning and the endeavour to understand by deciphering are knotted together." (SE 351) This union of gift and endeavour is in reality a "circle," a circle which translates as the need to understand in order to believe and to believe in order to understand. (SE 351) Ricoeur sums up:

Such is the circle: hermeneutics proceeds from a prior understanding of the very thing that it tries to understand by interpreting it. But thanks to that circle in hermeneutics, I can still today communicate with the sacred by making explicit the prior understanding that gives life to the interpretation. Thus hermeneutics, an acquisition of "modernity," is one of the modes by which that "modernity" transcends itself, insofar as it is forgetfulness of the sacred. I believe that being can still speak to me - no longer, of course, under the precritical form of immediate belief, but as the second immediacy aimed at by hermeneutics. The second naïveté aims to be the postcritical equivalent of the precritical hierophany. (SE 352)

Whereas the imaginative and sympathetic re-enactment of the confession of fault was without the "personal appropriation" of belief and avoided the question of 'the-truth-for-me' of the symbols, the hermeneutic circle requires the moment of belief as the condition of autonomous thought. The movement towards personal appropriation, towards "*philosophical* hermeneutics" and the "critical dimension of exegesis," originated with the so-called "dynamics" of the myths set in motion by the selection of one myth as dominant. This act of preference destroyed the illusion of what Ricoeur calls "the remote and disinterested spectator." (SE 353-354)

As long as the circle remains unbroken, however, a genuine philosophical hermeneutics is not being practiced. For the philosopher, unlike the exegete or the scholar of comparative religion, is aware of the hermeneutic circle and cannot accede to the "conveniences of neutralized belief." Ricoeur insists that rather than thinking from within the symbols, the philosopher should begin from the symbol and attempt to foster and fashion its meaning by a "creative interpretation." (SE 348) According to Ricoeur, this will be a "'transcendental deduction' of symbols" in the Kantian sense of "justifying a concept by showing that it makes possible a ... domain of objectivity." (SE 354,355) By encountering the symbol in the mode of a transcendental deduction, the philosopher at the same time breaks from the hermeneutic circle by "transforming it into a *wager*." In terms of a transcendental deduction, the philosopher wagers on the symbol as a cipher of human reality, relying on the "guidance" of the symbols and myths of "evil existence" to expound an "empirics of the servile will." (SE 355) As Ricoeur describes,

I wager that I shall have a better understanding of man and of the bond between the being of man and the being of all beings if I follow the *indication* of symbolic thought. That wager then becomes the task of *verifying* my wager and saturating it with intelligibility. In return, the

task transforms my wager: in betting *on* the significance of the symbolic world, I bet at the same time *that* my wager will be restored to me in power of reflection, in the element of coherent discourse. (SE 355)

The verification of the symbolism of evil consists, then, in its contribution to an empirics of the "servile will." Ricoeur confirms that

the symbol, used as a means of detecting and deciphering human reality, will have been verified by its power to raise up, to illuminate, to give order to that region of human experience, that region of confession, which we were too ready to reduce to error, habit, emotion, passivity, ... (SE 355)

Ricoeur points out (SE 356) that the reference to a transcendental deduction of symbols is somewhat misleading, implying as it does "a simple augmentation of *self-awareness*." Philosophy is never an autonomous or self-referential process. The symbol's distinction as a "fullness" of language and its donative relationship to philosophy means that philosophy is entrusted with the "qualitative transformation of reflexive consciousness." In fact, if the symbol's gift is taken seriously, the idea of a pure self-knowledge is completely undermined, and the quest for self-knowledge is revealed as the necessity to "situate [oneself] better in being." (SE 356) The symbol thus demonstrates its "ontological function," and Ricoeur announces that

it is as an index of the situation of man at the heart of the being in which he moves, exists, and wills, that the symbol speaks to us. Consequently, the task of the philosopher guided by symbols would be to break out of the enchanted enclosure of consciousness of oneself, to end the prerogative of self-reflection. The symbol gives reason to think that the *Cogito* is within being, and not vice versa. Thus the second naïveté would be a second Copernican revolution: the being which posits itself in the *Cogito* has still to discover that the very act by which it abstracts itself from the whole does not cease to share in the being that challenges it in every symbol. All the symbols of guilt ... all the myths ... speak of the situation of the being of man in the being of the world. The task, then, is starting from the symbols, to elaborate existential concepts ... not only structures of reflection but structures of existence, insofar as existence is the being of man. Then the problem will arise, how the quasi-being and

the quasi-nothingness of human evil are articulated upon the being of man and upon the nothingness of his finitude. (SE 356,357)

Against Kantian and neo-Kantian transcendental philosophy Ricoeur here reasserts the priority of being over the thinking ego. The symbols indicate the being of man. To begin from the symbols, rather than from the operations of the ego, is to discover ontological structures rather than pure structures of reflection. In this way, Ricoeur hopes to overcome the separation of subjectivity and objectivity which is the inevitable outcome of transcendental idealism, and to reunite the ego with the world and with the being of the world. It is the imagination at work in a genuinely philosophical hermeneutics which inspires and facilitates this drive towards unity.

Ultimately, Ricoeur concludes that any transcendental deduction of the symbols and myths of evil must be contained within an "ontology of finitude and evil" which accords the symbols the status of existential concepts. (SE 357) Any attempt to progress from a purely reflective phenomenology of fallibility to an empirics of the "servile will" must be prepared to make such a "wager." Only a philosophy which originates from within the fullness of language, and which acknowledges and explicitates its own contingency and rootedness can dare such a wager. Only a philosophy which enters into the fullness of its own cultural situation, which abandons the objectivity of 'knowledge' for the commitment of beliefs, and which seeks "understanding" on the basis of those beliefs can claim to be fully rational. (SE 357) Only then can the reflective and speculative genius of philosophy seek to "disclose the rationality of its foundation ... and remain constantly concerned with thematizing the universal and rational structure of its adherence." (SE 357)

CHAPTER THREE:

IMAGINATION AS A HERMENEUTIC ESSENTIAL

The preceding chapter has examined three linguistic aspects of the symbolism of evil characterized under the headings of the language of fault, the language of relation and the language of imagination. This chapter will focus on the language of imagination and its hermeneutic significance.

1) Language and Understanding

In agreement with Heidegger, Ricoeur has not only characterized Western philosophical thought as immersed in the question of being, (SE 20) but has also professed the unsuitability of the univocal and univalent formal languages of science, technology and logic to pursue and reveal being. (SE 349) Like Heidegger again, Ricoeur contends that these languages are extremely influential today and provoke "a certain situation of modern [Western] culture," that of forgetfulness of the sacred or of being, to which a "philosophy instructed by myths" wishes to reply. (SE 348) For Heidegger, however, an awareness of the 'thereness' of the world first founds our understanding which is a mode and a capacity of our being, a mode of *Dasein*, of our 'being-there' or 'being-in' the world. Accordingly, hermeneutics is primarily concerned with interpreting this 'being-in-the-world' which is understanding. (HM 101,102) John Van Den Henge! observes that

Heidegger locates understanding within the trilogy of situation ... understanding ... and interpretation. This trilogy is the existential constitution of 'there.' For Heidegger, before ever I come to language, I first find myself in a situation. I feel something before I face it, before

I express myself ... Before I talk ... [or] move I am like a plant rooted [by feeling] in a situation ... Understanding arises out of this *Befindlichkeit* ... [and] remains prior to language, ... [It] is a power of being [whose] task is to orient us in a situation ... Being is primordial; language is the way we articulate and manifest the understanding of our Being-in-the-world. (HM 101-102)

Ricoeur, on the contrary, refuses this direct ontological approach because it ignores the "epistemological question of the status of the human sciences." He believes these must be included within a hermeneutic constituted of a "dialectical blend of the ontological and the epistemological," which he calls "methodical," while his ontology is called "indirect." (HM 103,105) Ricoeur's first concern is with the forms of understanding, the most fundamental being language. For Heidegger, language was the hermeneutic field of understanding, and therefore primordially bound to forgotten being, which it reveals by letting-be. This language is *sagen*, and is opposed to *sprechen* which is "ordinary and logicized language." For Ricoeur, however, "language not only says out our being, but it equally manifests a structure and a strategy in its very saying." (HM 106,107)

As discussed above, and as Van Den Hengel also observes, Ricoeur uses the notion of "participation" to describe the ontological dimension of language. This idea indicates a primitive relation of things to a foundational Whole, to a "source ... that is inclusive, encompassing, and global." (HM 107) Van Den Hengel explains that the concept of participation expresses

an ontological pre-eminence which says that a belonging to and a dependence on being is prior to any distinction between subject and object. [It] ... breaks with any vision of a self-constituting subjectivity. Participation implies, that it is not the subject who is the source of the unity of meaning, but something that precedes the subject. Subjectivity as well as objectivity are, therefore, secondary, derived forms ... Similarly, explanation and understanding in the epistemological sense are derived forms. In the very heart of the epistemological process, Ricoeur finds [in "*Expliquer et comprendre*, 1977,] a notion of understanding that

points beyond a concern for accuracy and validation to an "apprehension, at a level other than scientific, of a belonging to the whole of what is."
(HM 107)

Ricoeur thus redefines "understanding" and the knowledge which accrues from it in line with his reorientation away from a pure phenomenology of knowing towards the being of the knowing subject. Knowledge and understanding are no longer predicated or modeled on pure, *a priori* precision or the exactness of scientific verification. Knowledge is now an existential "apprehension," a laying-hold or claiming of one's place in the whole of being.

In *The Symbolism of Evil*, Ricoeur affirms that participation is a fundamental category of myth and that it is expressed in the language of symbol and myth as the "bond between the being of man and total being." (SE 12,167) Van Den Hengel refers the notion of participation to Ricoeur's exploration of feeling in *Fallible Man*. There, feeling or the Platonic *thumos*, is specified as the mediating and bonding function between the self and the world. Feeling is an "intentional expression of my bond with reality" (HM 108) which always presupposes and qualifies that reality as loveable, hateful, fearful etc. Whereas the analytic method of cognition separates the subject from its object, this dichotomy is lost within feeling which attaches us to things by intending or meaning something - love, desire, hate, fear, etc. - on things. (HM 108) Ricoeur declares that "the mystery of feeling is the undivided connection of my existence with beings and being through desire and love," and "the universal function of feeling is to bind together. It connects what knowledge divides; it binds me to things, to beings, to being." (FM 134,200) For Ricoeur, however, feeling is bound up with knowing, and although feeling recognizes and mediates our primordial relation to being,

it remains indistinct, unconscious, and not human unless it is informed by the knowing process. And in knowing, what was previously one in vital affectivity, is split apart. Reason creates the degrees of feeling and differentiates feeling. Reason becomes the source of the conflict in life between feeling and reason. (HM 108)

Human participation in being aspires to reach the level of awareness. This can only be achieved through externalizing the affective experience, by "interrupt[ing] our participation in order to signify." (HM 109) As Ricoeur makes clear in *The Symbolism of Evil*, it is language which realizes this goal, which can overcome the indistinctness of feeling, its blindness and confusion, for language is the "light of the emotions." (SE 7) When being expresses itself in language, it "becomes itself." At the same time, this process of the speaking-out or exteriorization of being distances the speaker from reality. Ricoeur understands this "distanciation" as the "transcendental condition" which enables any interpretation of our bond with being. (HM 109) For Heidegger, as for Hans-Georg Gadamer following him, the distancing of objectified ordinary language (or *sprechen*), especially that of written texts, fosters the forgetfulness and alienation of being. For Ricoeur, however, this "creation of a distance" through language is viewed as contemporaneously "primitive and radical" with participation. It is this which enables language to be and to become a form of understanding. (HM 109,110)

2) Metaphor

Ricoeur defines the scope of language as extending to the "text." The notion of text is itself expanded to mean "any object of hermeneutical inquiry, even human existence. It circumscribes the hermeneutic field, even though ... it remains but one point of departure. In short, one might equate Ricoeur's hermeneutics of the text with

his philosophy itself: a hermeneutic phenomenology." (HM 111) As far as *The Symbolism of Evil* is concerned, Ricoeur's 'textual' interest is confined to the field of symbols and myths which express human fallibility and evil. The symbol is taken as situated at the "threshold of language," and investigates the ineffable ground of life. As the language of being, and hence as an interpretation of being, the symbol sustains a fine tension between the linguistic and the non-linguistic which, if ignored by the philosopher, could lead to the "forgetfulness of being." (HM 117,126)

As the narrative dimension of symbol, myth brings to language our relationship to being. In discussing myth, Van Den Hengel refers to the "dominant current of philosophical thought" which consigns myth to the realm of "folklore, fables and legends." (HM 128) Ricoeur is determined that this trend should not eclipse another tradition which was pre-figured in the Kantian schematism and productive imagination.

Romanticism and Jungian psychology link myth with the creative and productive imagination and do not oppose myth to *logos*, maintaining instead that myth "expresses the power of the imagination to explore the realms inaccessible directly to speculative thought." (HM 129) Samuel Taylor Coleridge, for example, in his *Biographia Literaria*, distinguishes between "Fancy" and the imagination which is a "mode of memory" operating by association to recombine and rearrange elementary sense data. Fancy is the inventor of dragons, fairies and other fantastical beings, whereas the imagination is the "coadunating faculty" which dissolves and transforms the data, creating novelty and emergent quality. Imagination represents the essential creativity of the mind as the "'esemplastic power' - the bringing into oneness." For Coleridge, the poetic or imaginative power as such is ruled by "the sense of wholeness." (LPI 55-57) In line with

this tradition, Ricoeur sees the relation of myth to philosophy as one of meaning. In myth,

language is the medium whereby the fullness of experience, the invisible and unsaid, receives its tangible form ... the myth is a ... discourse, ... the contingent form, of what the myth signifies. The myth intends to say something about the reality in which we live. It commits a subject to its vision.

... [T]his referential function of the myth is founded upon its metaphorical surplus of expression. The narrative interpretation of the symbol, which we said is the myth, assumes the form of metaphorical language. (HM 129)

Symbol and myth have been characterized above as the language of the imagination, a language which specifically intends the unity of the Whole and which mediates our participation in the Whole or in being. This cosmic totality is therefore the "reality in which we live" which myth intends or refers to. The language which expresses the imaginative vision of symbol and myth is now revealed as metaphorical. Mary Schaldenbrand has therefore designated the productive, myth-making faculty as the "metaphoric imagination." (MI 58-80) The questions now arise of how and why imagination and metaphor combine in the pursuit of those realms of reality inaccessible to speculative thought.

In *The Symbolism of Evil*, Ricoeur grants the image-symbol a founding status when he states that "Life is a symbol, an image, before being experienced and lived." (SE 278) He acknowledges that this work is not properly speaking a linguistic study, since such a study, which he later undertakes, differentiates between the verbal and non-verbal dimension of symbol. The symbol is, for Ricoeur, language in its "highest form and greatest density," and he believes that the symbolic function of language is one which is reserved to the poets. (HM 57) This poetic language is a "language which

creates us rather than a language which we create," a language which speaks to us rather than our manipulating and controlling it, as is the case in scientific and logical languages. (HM 57) Life is first of all made manifest in the symbol as the non-verbal language of being, and myth extends the poetic function of symbol into narrative form. According to Ricoeur, the non-verbal aspect of symbol becomes apparent only in the verbal, and the verbal dimension of the symbol, or myth, has the same structure as the metaphor, so that a "theory of the metaphor provides a linguistic framework for a semantic approach to the symbol." (HM 58)

Ricoeur's philosophy of the metaphor first of all modifies traditional substitution theory, which is based on the pre-eminence of the noun in classical rhetoric and which proposes that a metaphor is a simple substitution of one word for a more agreeable or interesting one. The substitution nevertheless fails to add or introduce anything new to the substituted word. (MI 66) Contemporary "interaction" theory re-locates metaphoric meaning within the predicative function of the sentence rather than in the naming power of the word. It proposes that metaphorical attribution occurs at the point of interaction between various semantic contexts or fields, resulting in the "semantic event" of metaphor brought about by what Ricoeur terms the "metaphorical twist." (HM 62) Metaphor as the intercourse between diverse contextual levels consists of the concrete image which 'presents,' (the vehicle,) and a latent, figurative meaning (the tenor) which is elicited by the image. In this contextual theory of meaning, the metaphor both embodies the semantic event and is itself only perpetuated within a specific semantic context. It is "an event that means and a meaning created by language." (MI 67,68; HM 62)

Neither the substitution theory nor the interaction theory allow for the metaphor as both "diaphoric" or constructive and "epiphoric" or intuitive. These paradoxical components of metaphor engender the "semantic innovation" which Ricoeur sees as the hallmark of metaphor. (MI 68,69) As Van Den Hengel describes it, metaphor establishes a "leap in meaning," or a "semantic pertinence out of ... impertinence at the literal level." He states,

in contradistinction to the normal interchange of word and sentence, the metaphorical word is not a potential meaning. It *establishes* meaning. Metaphorical meaning comes from nowhere. It emerges out of the interplay. A metaphor is a change of meaning, or more exactly, to use Aristotle's word, an *epiphora*, a transfer of meaning. (HM 64)

The innovative capacity of metaphor, its ability to generate pertinence from impertinence, is indebted to the crucial function of the metaphoric process, the "image" which puts likeness "under our eyes." (MI 70) It is resemblance which constitutes the "metaphoricity of the metaphor." There occurs a "seeing as," an intuition of the similar in the dissimilar which "unites or assimilates ... contradictory ideas." (HM 68) There is also a discursive, constructive operation involved in metaphor, for

The kinship between things is not perceivable through ordinary vision. It must be made to appear. The resemblance is ... constructed ... as much as it is ... intuitive... The glance that sees the similar in the protesting dissimilar, is fashioned into a yielding object in the discursive moment. (HM 68)

Schaldenbrand points out that it is the "pivot-image" of metaphoric resemblance, ignored by interaction theory but concordant with substitution theory, which joins both discursivity and insight. She states that this image is

at once verbal and pictural. ... here, everything depends on inserting the image-picture within an image movement properly semantic. Failing this, creative imagination loses its chance: reduced to the "faded impression" of Humean psychology, its image is reproductive only. (MI 70,71)

Kant specifies the transcendental imagination as the faculty which mediates between intellect and sensibility, an act which is at the same time a "method for giving an image to a concept, or a method for opening up meaning." (HM 76) Ricoeur also assigns to the imagination the role of mediator between opposites. It is the language of metaphoric imagination which is able to intuit likeness in the "far" and "near" of "bizarre predication," a process which allows them to combine without collapsing into each other. Ricoeur has thus contributed a "linguistic twist" to the Kantian schematism of the productive imagination which united the sensible and intellectual facets of the idea. (MI 71) In metaphor, the imagination produces a "semantic innovation by producing the figurative meaning, the image ... [which] is therefore first of all a work of discourse." (HM 71) This is in line with Ricoeur's contention that an image is "much closer to a word than to a portrait." (SE 13)

However, in stressing the linguistic feature of imagination Ricoeur does not disregard the role of the sensible image. For him, the "figurative presentation" or "iconical" function of the "seeing as" process is the work of imagination, just as the figurative, or the 'icon,' also has its own order of discourse, which is that of the imagination. (HM 75) The term iconical is derived from the work of Paul Henle, who describes the image as iconical as a result of its "seeing one thing through the medium of another term ... the icon has the distinct ability to contain within it an internal duality that it overcomes at the same time." (HM 77)

For Ricoeur, it is in reading poetry that the intuitive and constructive constitution of "seeing as" is most evident, for in poetic language there is a merging of meaning and the sensible which condenses the poem into a "sculpture-like object" which takes the

form of an icon and absorbs the reader's entire attention. In reading, reality is suspended and the imagination is free to roam - to evoke and to remember - to enter into "adjacent sensorial fields." (HM 77) As Schaldenbrand elucidates it:

To read a poem is doubtless to see pictural images. These simply come upon the gifted reader; their flood or flow escapes voluntary control: in the end, one sees or one does not see. And yet these images are not simply free. They are bound to poetic diction. The reader is obliged to select from the flow of sensory images those aspects more or less appropriate to the poetic text. For: "the same imagery which occurs also means."

Though two-sided, "seeing as" is one event. Its selective act requires the flow of sensory images; inversely, the flow of sensory images requires its selective act. Within one and the same event, the light of meaning is joined to the plenitude of imagery ... "seeing as" plays the role of schema uniting empty concept and blind impression. (MI 72)

Metaphoric "seeing as" is thus crucial within Ricoeur's hermeneutic project of re-uniting the subjective and objective poles of experience. It brings new meaning to birth by bridging the sensory and the intellectual in a completely new way, through "semantic innovation." Van Den Hengel explains that the operation of "seeing as" is simultaneously something experienced and an act of understanding. It occurs within language and is grounded in resemblance between the image and a verbal meaning, a resemblance which results from the experience and which did not exist before. In other words, "'seeing-as' instituted the resemblance and not vice-versa." The new meaning or semantic pertinence established by metaphor is thus created at the point of interaction between sense and the imaginary. (HM 78,79)

What is at stake, according to Schaldenbrand, is the "secret of *epiphora*," the "transfer of meaning" which brings about "kinship through conflict." She observes that "Precisely, this secret resides in the iconic nature of intuitive passage. Face-to-face with metaphoric iconicity, semantic theory of metaphor encounters its limit. Irreducible to

language though suffused with its sense, the sensory image makes possible the seeing of likeness." (MI 72) Ricoeur confirms that this boundary of semantics is best accessible to a phenomenology of imagination "where the verbal is vassal to the non-verbal." (HM 79) The domain which extends beyond the limit of the verbal is still, however, empowered and vitalized by language. As Van Den Hengel remarks, "the image remains word-bound." (HM 79) It is at this point that Ricoeur refers to Bachelard's phenomenology of imagination which gives prominence to the poetic image as "psychic origin," since, by putting us at the "origin of the speaking being, ... it expresses us in making us that which it expresses." (SE 13) As a "new being of our language," the poetic image augments our consciousness. More specifically, it is a "becoming of our being," or increase of being. (HM 79; MI 73)

The metaphorical "seeing as," as "poem in miniature," (HM 58) extends the achievement of the poetic image beyond the confines of the formal poem or literary text to embrace any object of hermeneutic interest. As the crystallization of the language of imagination, metaphor is the heart of the symbolic or ontological function of language. The philosophical goal of understanding entailed in the aphorism "the symbol gives rise to thought" has been disclosed (above, p.104) as the need to "situate [oneself] better in being." Since being can be said to 'be at home' in, or congruent with metaphor, it is clear that it is imagination, rather than speculative thought, which is the foremost hermeneutic tool in the quest for self-understanding.

3) Reality and Truth

What is the relationship of the metaphorical imagination to reality, and can the question of truth be applied to its work and project? It was stated (above, p.110) that the symbol, situated on the "threshold" of language, explores and manifests being as the inexpressible ground of life, and that the philosopher must either remember the symbol's tension between the linguistic and the non-linguistic or risk 'forgetting' being. This tension between the non-semantic aspect of symbol and its simultaneous status as the fullness of language means that what precedes language is nevertheless bound to language. The symbol is the "moment when language first captures its own ground," and as such it must be defined as "a word that effects something in relation to being." (HM 118) Just as the image remains word-bound, so the word itself is bound, bound to being.

The attachment of being to language is expressed through the tripartite symbolic structure - cosmic, oneiric and poetic. The cosmic symbols, with which Ricoeur is principally concerned in *The Symbolism of Evil*, form a hierophany manifesting the sacred in and on the universe, reaching its fullest expression in the words of invocation and imprecation. The desire for union with the sacred, or with being, which is mediated by feeling, is itself "imbued with a drive toward meaning and language ... [which is also] a drive towards self-understanding " (HM 126,note) Myth is the meaningful interpretation of symbol, and as indicated above (p.111,) its language is that of the metaphor which envisions "the reality in which we live."

Myth, then, binds us to the reality of being through the use of poetic image and metaphorical language. The question then arises of **how** myth refers to, or speaks of, reality. The conventional sense-reference distinction proposes that "sense" is the

meaning of a sign and "reference" is its denotation. In Frege's version, "reference proceeds from the word to the sentence which ... refers to a 'state of affairs.' ... [While for] Benveniste [it] proceeds from the sentence to words whose denotation is decided by their use." (MI 73) Ricoeur introduces a third referent corresponding to a "text ... [or] work." According to Ricoeur, "work" refers to "world." However, the words and sentences of poetry and metaphor do not refer to a real world in the same way a work of prose may. The language of metaphoric imagination seems to destroy the notion of reference. As Schaldenbrand asks, "To whom does Ulysses refer? To what does a poem refer?" The poem is a world unto itself whose movement, rather than being from sign to thing, is essentially "centripetal." Quoting French structuralism, she reiterates that the poem or metaphor "'refers to no reality.' Whereas 'the function of prose is denotative, the function of poetry is connotative.'" (MI 73,74)

However, Ricoeur contends that metaphor displays a "doubling of reference." Metaphor is the point of emergent meaning at which literal meaning disappears. For Ricoeur the counterpart of new metaphorical meaning is "an upsurge of new reference," which can be explained in terms of a theory of scientific models and a theory of metaphor as redescription. (MI 74; HM 80) As described by Van Den Hengel, the scientific model is

a theoretical model operative in the logic of scientific discovery. The model attempts to represent one field of scientific endeavour in the terms and language of another, which is better known or organized ... [It] is not visual or sensible ... [and] cannot even be constructed. It is a heuristic device, an imaginary medium. Its properties are derived from language and the conventions of language. Via the detour of the described model, the imagination perceives new relationships [between the domain one seeks to understand and the domain 'described' in the model.] (HM 80)

The new relationships which are perceived through this imaginary medium are the result of change brought about by "metaphorical redescription." The explanation of the new area or field in terms of the more familiar one is not achieved through a rational deduction. Instead, rationality consists for Ricoeur in "continuous adaptation to a world continually expanding; metaphor is one of the principal means of accomplishing this." (MI 74) The descriptive ability of language does not apply to the new area which the model/metaphor illuminates. Rather, it is the "seeing as" power of the metaphor which prevails in enabling the new sphere to be 'seen as' the model, for "the metaphor puts one in touch with a deeper level of language: a language that opens reality at the level of what Husserl called the *Lebenswelt*, or of Heidegger's being-in-the-world." (HM 81) Thus, the poetic metaphor creates its own complex and meaningful world.

Ricoeur points out that the description of one field through another is reminiscent of the Aristotelian *mimesis* and *mythos*. For Aristotle, the poetic imitation of life through myth was certainly not a duplicating or reproductive process but a "denotative description ... [enabling us to] see human life *as* myth exhibits it." (MI 75) The poetic distancing of "mood" from normal reference, its attachment to the poem itself, can be thought of as the reference of the poem. In a lyric poem, mood acquires the property of myth or an "affective fiction." The mood redescribes reality which is now felt as another world, rather than seen as one. As discussed above, feeling is not a subjective emotional state but is the intentional link between persons, things and the world. The mood of a poem would therefore seem to articulate the being of things rather than simply the state of the subject, prefiguring the "reconciliation of subject and object." (MI 75; HM 83)

The power of poetic metaphor to re-shape reality lies in its inventive referential quality. When ordinary reference is destroyed and along with it our ability to manipulate and control the world, then that world is shaken. Ricoeur proposes that when this happens, "our vision of things ... is actually increased. [Metaphoric] language, although centripetal, breaks through to reality, even to the very origin of reality. The concerns of this language are not to describe reality, but to organize and even to re-organize reality." (HM 79)

This redescription of reality raises the issue of metaphorical truth which for Ricoeur is bound up with the "existential function of the verb 'to be.'" (HM 84) Reality is redescribed through the use of the verb 'to be' in the poem-metaphor, where the copula 'is' is not merely predicative but also intentional. In other words, "things *are* as said." (HM 84) The verb 'to be' has both a literal and metaphorical meaning which initiates a tension between the 'is' and the 'is not,' for, "to assert the 'is' without the mediating negation is to lose interaction of identity and difference ... [which produces] kinship through conflict." (MI 75) Van Den Hengel concludes that for Ricoeur the secret of metaphoric truth lies in how the existential functioning of the verb 'to be' is affected by this tension, since

For Ricoeur the 'is' does not indicate complete identity between the two terms. It is not truth as found in the mathematical sciences. The 'is' is a metaphorical 'is' ... [which] puts us in touch with language at "a pre-scientific, ante-predicative level, where the very notions of fact, object, reality, and truth, as delimited by epistemology, are *called into question*." ... [P]oetic or metaphorical truth is tensional truth ... As Ricoeur says, "There is no other way to do justice to the notion of metaphorical truth than to include the critical incision of the (literal) 'is not' within the ontological vehemence of the (metaphorical) 'is.'" (HM 84)

The 'is' of metaphor implies an existential judgement, an act of "metaphoric faith" in the capacity of metaphor to reveal reality and express being, bringing about the creation of new worlds of meaning out of the destruction of our customary perception of reality and its truth conditions. In this way, Schaldenbrand comments, in enabling metaphoric creativity "belief works against dogmatic slumber ... [and] metaphoric 'as' mediates extremes of ontological fideism and skepticism." (MI 75)

The epistemological status of metaphorical expression does not attain that of the concept but is called by Ricoeur a "semantic sketch," being incomplete on the levels of both sense and reference. However, the newly emerged meaning created by metaphor seeks to go beyond the similarity of the seen-as and to make a "passage to the concept." It is speculative discourse rather than metaphor which undertakes such a passage, exploring metaphorical space with its own *sui generis* laws and ideas. Ricoeur thus underscores the heterogeneity of discourses, asserting that it is possible to "pass from one discourse to the other only by an *epoché*." Using its own theoretical tools, speculative thought conceptualizes the semantic sketch. Speculative discourse therefore grounds conceptual discourse. (HM 92) Whereas the concept is proper to the level of speculative discourse, the imagination uses the language of the symbol's double intentionality and imagery. Van Den Hengel elaborates the different roles of speculation and imagination as follows:

The concept is not derived from perception or from images, as [is] ... the imagination ... The speculative is not based on the similar - as the imagination is - but upon an understanding of the *same* ... knowing that where things are similar there is also identity. Hence, ... the level of the imagination and the level of the speculative, remain distinct. In fact, it can be said the speculative discourse is the upper limit of metaphorical discourse. (HM 92)

As analyzed above, Ricoeur insists on the co-operation of the image and word functions at the level of metaphoric imagination, for it is this metaphoric mediation of "seeing as" which enables the reconciliation of "the extremes of ontological fideism and skepticism" with which Ricoeur is so concerned. (MI 76) However, he posits a discontinuity between the image and the concept at the discursive level. The question has been posed (above, p.6) as to the viability of raising the symbolism of evil to the level of speculation, a question which demanded either a reconciliation of imagination and reason or else established their incompatibility. A partial answer would seem to lie in the interpretive role of speculation, not only in response to the various symbols and myths of humanity but also in terms of the broader level of "text" understood as the indiscriminate object of hermeneutical enquiry, including the general field of "human existence." (HM 111)

Van Den Hengel points out that rather than proposing a strict inconsistency between the levels of discourse, Ricoeur's "inclination" is towards "a constant interanimation and interplay of the order of discourses" which is achieved in the moment of interpretation. (HM 93) He explains that

By means of the primary notions and principles of the speculative order, the concept *interprets* the metaphorical sketch ... the concept will elucidate this sketch and seek to arrive at a univocal statement. The suspension and the tension will be dissolved, as will the experience of the metaphoric utterance. As such, the concept is a reduction. ... [I]s it not possible to have a non-reductive interpretation beside the reductive one? Ricoeur thinks that this is possible through the discipline of *hermeneutics* ... a type of interpretation which respects both the conceptual aim and the experience seeking to be expressed in the metaphorical aim.

Interpretation functions at the threshold of two areas: the speculative and the metaphorical. It seeks to respect both the clarity of the concept and the dynamism of the metaphorical meaning. A metaphor "is living by virtue of the fact that it introduces the spark of imagination

into a 'thinking more' (Kant) at the conceptual level." Interpretation is the 'soul' of this activity. (HM 92,93)

Van Den Hengel's characterization of interpretation as the "soul" of metaphoric activity recalls Ricoeur's notion of *thumos*, which I shall explore more fully below. As already observed, Ricoeur understands by *thumos* the feeling as "intentional expression" which mediates between the self and the world. Here, interpretation is similarly portrayed as a mediating activity, reconciling speculation and imagination. The depiction of interpretation as the "soul" or animating force of this reconciliation also reiterates *thumos*, which functions as the vitalizing energies of desire and love.

It is precisely this "discipline of hermeneutics," mediating as it does the communion between the work of the imagination and of reflection, which is encapsulated in the aphorism "the symbol gives rise to thought." The aim of such a discipline, and hence of both imagination and reflection, is the fullest possible participation in human being, since any hermeneutical undertaking is a response to the symbol's ontological appeal to situate ourselves better in being.

4) Human Being and Imagination

According to Ricoeur, human existence is grounded in being, in an ontological totality within which and towards which we live and move and have our own being. However, human being does not correspond to this Whole which grounds it. In both *Fallible Man* and *The Symbolism of Evil*, Ricoeur elaborates our non-coincidence with being. In the Preface to the former, he refers to Jean Nabert's notion of the "'primary affirmation'" by which a person is "constituted as a self over and above all [his/her] ... choices and individual acts," a discovery of freedom which is primarily evident in the

consciousness of fault. For Nabert, the penitent mode roots one's individual acts in the "undivided causality of the self, and although "we have no access to this self outside of its specific acts, ... the consciousness of fault makes manifest in them and beyond them the demand for wholeness which constitutes us." (FM xxvii) Furthermore, the consciousness of fault creates a kind of "reverse participation" or "obscure experience of non-being," which can only be breached and surpassed by a reflection which would realize the primary affirmation. (FM xxvii, xxviii)

As indicated above, (p.9) Ricoeur's own word for the essential human condition is "torn." He declares that

It is this secret rift, this non-coincidence of self to self that feeling reveals. Feeling is *conflict* and reveals man as primordial conflict. It shows that mediation or limitation is only intentional, aimed at in a thing or in a task, and that for himself man suffers disunion. But this discord that man lives and suffers approaches the truth of language only at the end of a concrete dialectic which discloses the fragile synthesis of man as the *becoming of an opposition*: the opposition of originating affirmation and existential difference. (FM 216)

The "truth" of the language of fault is expressed via the symbols and myths of evil which severally tell of the discrepancy between a primordial, ontological state of wholeness and the historical, existential state of separation and disharmony. Where Nabert speaks of a kind of "reverse participation" in non-being, Ricoeur's emphasis is on the symbolic hierophany and mythical narration of our intentional participation in the original cosmic Whole. All human knowing and doing are bound by and within this enveloping relationship to being.

The coming to language of the primitive experience of fault, the desire to discover and communicate the meaning at the core of human being, is at the same time a recognition of our participation in the "whole of what is." (HM 107) This belonging to

being, or to Heidegger's "Being-in-the-world," is therefore the primordial hermeneutic experience. (HM 189) Unlike Heidegger, however, for whom to know being is to simply let it 'lie,' Ricoeur believes that it is through the distancing power of language, which externalizes the experience of participation, that this experience reaches awareness and the level of understanding. As he says, "to know being is not merely to let it appear, but is also to determine it intellectually, to order it, to express it." (FM 67) Van Den Hengel confirms that for Ricoeur

... the experience [of participation] is not intuited. It is not grasped in its immediacy. Participation is human only to the extent that this primordial participation is intercepted and exteriorized, so that it becomes accessible to understanding. In Ricoeur's view, for participation to be human it must be correlated with distancing. Distancing, is therefore, constitutive of human existence ... [it] is the transcendental condition of every human science, and for Ricoeur the challenge of the contemporary human mode of being. (HM 189)

Ricoeur specifies the *thumos* as the mediating core of humanity whose activity illustrates human existence. He maintains that these illustrations must be looked for "within the passions which are essentially (and not accidentally) interhuman, social and cultural." (FM 168) Human existence is essentially an intersubjectivity mediated by feeling. If Ricoeur's theory of feeling is valid, then, he contends,

the feelings which gravitate around power, having and worth ought to be correlative with a constitution of objectivity on a level other than that of the merely perceived thing ... They ought to manifest our attachment to things and to aspects of things which are no longer of a natural order but of a cultural one ... The investigation of authentic human affectivity, therefore, must be guided by the progress of objectivity ... The truly human quests establish new relations with other persons at the same time as a new relation to things ... [which must be specified] by means of the objectivity which is built on the themes of having, power and worth. (FM 171)

Whereas relations of having are mutually exclusive and those of power are asymmetrical and hierarchical, relations of worth allow the "Self" to pursue "the aim of being esteemed, approved and recognized." The constitution of my self is undertaken as a "quest for reciprocity," in which the other will reflect the "idea" of my humanity as possessing "worth in *itself*." (FM 184,186) Ricoeur continues by asserting that this

hyper-economic and hyper-political humanity is expressed in monuments which bear witness to this search for recognition. "Works" of art and literature, and, in general, works of the mind, insofar as ... they search out man's possibilities, are the true "objects" which manifest the abstract universality of the idea of humanity through their concrete universality. (FM 188)

Thus, if the distancing of our participation in being is constitutive of human existence, it is in works of the imagination and of the intellect that this is achieved in fullest measure. For Ricoeur, intellectual and art objects express and reflect human promise and potential.

As outlined above, imagination is bound to both language and perception, and in *Fallible Man* Ricoeur grounds perception itself in a mediating, productive image-schema, so that imagining and perceiving are not mutually exclusive and so that "a way is ... opened to a 'seeing-as' which would be perceiving in an imaginal mode," as Schaldenbrand suggests. (MI 77) Here, Ricoeur also already attaches perception to language which overcomes the finite perspective of perception in the "sense which intentionally transgresses [it]." (FM 42) Imaginative distancing, as illustration of human possibility, is therefore the work of both perception and language.

Specifically, however, it is the language of symbol and myth which first discloses our situation within being. Language, which intentionally transgresses the finitude of the human perspective, here reaches out in imagination to the transcendent through the

symbols and myths of human fault. Thus, the "objects" which demonstrate the idea of human worth and which are constitutive of our human existence and of our human being, are inextricably involved with symbol and myth. The forgetfulness of the sacred which characterizes contemporary culture thus explains and underlies the "loss of man" to which Ricoeur wishes to reply with a philosophy informed by myths. (SE 348,349)

Ricoeur himself elucidates "certain [forgetful] situations" of modern culture along the lines of Karl Jaspers' boundary situations, such as war, suffering, guilt and death, which are experiences of existential crisis for the individual or for the community. He continues:

At such moments the whole community is put into question. For it is only when it is threatened with destruction from without or from within that a society is compelled to return to the very roots of its identity; to that mythical nucleus which ultimately grounds and determines it. The solution to the immediate crisis is no longer a purely political or technical matter but demands that we ask ourselves the ultimate questions concerning our origins and ends: Where do we come from? Where do we go? In this way, we become aware of our basic capacities and reasons for surviving, for being and continuing to be what we are. (RR 484)

The unique gift of symbol and myth is this power of revelation, the bringing to awareness of our fundamental drives and ambitions. Not only this, but as a work of the imagination, the language of symbol and myth is uniquely expressive of ideal human possibility. Ricoeur elaborates the power of genuine myth:

The important point here is that the original potential of any genuine myth will always transcend the confines of a particular community or nation. The *mythos* of any community is the bearer of something which exceeds its own frontiers; it is the bearer of other *possible* worlds. And I think it is in this horizon of the 'possible' that we discover the *universal* dimensions of symbolic and poetic language. (RR 489)

For Ricoeur, myth is "genuine" if it can be "reinterpreted in terms of *liberation* ... as both a personal and collective phenomenon," (RR 485) and it can only survive as

myth if it is exposed to such continual critical review as will seek not the literal interpretation but the symbolic meaning. This must be drawn out of myth in terms of the "needs, conventions, and ideological motivations" of each generation, taking care always to differentiate between "liberating and destructive modes of reinterpretation." (RR 486) Myth and the poetic imagination are the power of possibility and invention, they lie at the heart of human freedom expressed and lived always as a creativity.

5) Philosophy and Imagination

In light of the above, philosophy must take a double part. First, it must remind itself of the "fullest meanings" of symbolic-mythic language, the poetic and metaphorical meanings which are most reminiscent of being. While recognizing that metaphoric and philosophic discourse are not identical, Mary Schaldenbrand also wonders whether Ricoeur's formula "kinship through conflict" may not allow an affinity in "works proceeding from scientific, poetic, and philosophic modes of metaphoric imagining." (MI 79) Such a recognition would contain a "spur to creativity" since its goal of integration would "give no quarter to the expediency of 'scissors and paste.'" (MI 79) She continues:

Positively, a philosophic use of metaphoric strategy corresponds to a sense of expanding reality. If, as Mary Hesse points out, "a world in continuous expansion" obliges practitioners of scientific method to "continuous adaptation of their language," their philosophic counterparts are no less obliged. It thus appears that metaphoric strategy enables, not only scientific and poetic creativity, but philosophic creativity as well ... doing so entails return to the cornerstone rejected by positivism: the productive imagination that brings kinship from conflict. (MI 80)

Second, when philosophy is renewed and replenished by such language, it must meet "the challenge of the contemporary human mode of being." (HM 189) That mode

is characterized by a negligence of being and resulting loss of freedom, experienced as the narrowing and flattening of perspective, the dulling of innovative thought and activity, the deprivation of personal and communal potential, and, ultimately, as the denial of hope. To this loss of being resulting from the proliferation of univocal and technical languages, Ricoeur wishes to oppose a hermeneutics or philosophy of language which is concerned with "the permanent spirit of language," by which he intends

not just some decorative excess or effusion of subjectivity, but the *capacity of language to open up new worlds*. Poetry and myth are not just nostalgia for some forgotten world. They constitute a disclosure of unprecedented worlds, an opening on to other *possible* worlds which transcend the established limits of our *actual* world. (RR 489-490)

Scientific language has no "real function" of interpersonal communication or dialogue, and ordinary language is a locus of bias and prejudice. Therefore, Ricoeur believes, a third, "critical and creative" dimension of language is needed. This is the poetic dimension which is "directed towards ... the disclosure of possible worlds." (RR 490) Furthermore, Ricoeur maintains that "[t]he adequate self-understanding of man is dependent on this third dimension of language as a *disclosure of possibility*." (RR 490)

Ricoeur's philosophy of language is "profoundly phenomenological" in that, along with Husserl and Heidegger, it raises the question of meaning. (RR 490) In terms of the quest for wisdom, the only kind of knowledge that will allow us to situate ourselves well within being, understood as the achievement and expression of our human potential, the question of meaning has ultimate value. He says:

It is here that we find the main dividing line between the structuralist analysis and phenomenological hermeneutics. Whereas the former is concerned with the immanent arrangement of texts and textual codes, hermeneutics looks to the 'meaning' produced by these codes. It is my conviction that the decisive feature of hermeneutics is the capacity of world-disclosure yielded by texts. Hermeneutics is not confined to the

objective structural analysis of texts or to the *subjective* existential analysis of the authors of texts; its primary concern is with the *worlds* which these authors and texts open up. It is by an understanding of the worlds, actual and possible, opened by language that we may arrive at a better understanding of ourselves. (RR 490)

Such meaning is only ever a revelation, called forth or evoked within the terms of the hermeneutic "wager." As such, the philosopher 'enters in' to the meaning, rather than deducing or inferring it. This hermeneutic endeavour demands a kind of philosophic honesty, self-knowledge and personal involvement foreign to most philosophical research.

CONCLUSION

Ricoeur's meticulous research in *The Symbolism of Evil* into the various symbolic and mythic expressions of fault reveals a fundamental human experience of discontinuity, felt as a discrepancy between the self as finite and infinite, temporal and eternal, servile and free. This experience is summed up in the concept of the "servile will" which "recapitulates" the symbolisms of defilement, sin and guilt, the symbolic expressions of our "fallibility." For Ricoeur, self-consciousness is constituted by means of these primary symbols and is then elaborated in the secondary symbolism of the myths of creation, of the tragic vision of existence, of the fall and of the exiled soul, which bring the symbols to language in narrative form. The tertiary symbols of speculation complete the circle, a circle which must be understood in its entirety if the "living experience of fault" is to be interpreted correctly. (SE 9)

This interpretation of human being via the symbolic expressions of evil is grounded in Ricoeur's designation of the symbol as a "region of double meaning." (FP 7) For Ricoeur, a symbol has a double intentionality wherein one meaning transcends another. Interpretation always begins from a full language, from symbols that are already there, already "in the element of speech," (SE 350) and which give us something to think about. Ricoeur explains that "a symbol is a double-meaning linguistic expression that requires an interpretation, and interpretation is a work of understanding that aims at deciphering symbols." (FP 8,9)

Whereas Ricoeur's earlier work *Fallible Man* was concerned with a descriptive eidetics of the will, *The Symbolism of Evil* attempts to grasp that will through a

sympathetic "re-enactment in imagination" of its confession of fault. Descriptive phenomenology relies on the description of images which 'appear' in consciousness. Hermeneutic phenomenology, on the other hand, explores the creative function of imagining, the linguistic or poetic capacity of "semantic innovation" whereby new meanings are created. As Richard Kearney states in *The Narrative Path*, Ricoeur thus "links the productive power of language and that of imagination." (NP 5) Poetic imagination "creates meaning by responding to the desire of being to be expressed." (NP 5) Symbolic expression is a work of the imagination which enables the opening-up or disclosure of possibility and the emergence of a "new being of our language." (SE 13) Being emerges in the signification of language and, by extension, as reflection or interpretation, whence Ricoeur's hermeneutic maxim, "the symbol gives rise to thought." (NP 7)

Ricoeur confirms that "Despite appearances, my single problem since beginning my reflections has been creativity." (NP 24) In his earlier works on the will, he "considered it from the point of view of individual psychology," and in *The Symbolism of Evil* he considers it at the cultural level. (NP 24) Hermeneutics has before it the task of recovering or restoring the richness of symbolic language. Ricoeur hopes for a "recreation" of contemporary language which has been impoverished by the univocal, univalent force of scientific and technological discourse. In keeping with the current emphasis on objective truth, myth as explanation should be repudiated. This will enable the repossession of the symbolic value of myth. In contrast to the reductive approach of allegory which sees the symbol as a disguise concealing a 'real' or underlying

significance, Ricoeur's "creative interpretation" attempts to "promote the meaning" of the symbol. This creative approach is the work of the hermeneutic imagination.

As I showed in Chapter Three, Ricoeur assigns various roles and capacities to the imagination in the experience of fault. It acts both as mediator between the religious experience of fault and its philosophic interpretation, and as the agent of intentionality which reproduces the consciousness of fault for critical thought; it is the unifying and interpretive capacity of the discrete data of the experience of fault, projecting, combining and recombining the data in "imaginative variation." It looks beyond the empirical world to another level or order of reality, envisaging new horizons of possibility, bringing new meanings to birth. It is somehow both active and passive, uniting both objective/reproductive and subjective/productive or creative capabilities. (NP 3) According to Kearney, this functional composite of the diverse operations of the imagination is more important for Ricoeur than the content of the images. (NP 5) This function is understood as

an intentional projection of possible meanings (the phenomenological-hermeneutic model) and a schematizing synthesis of the many under the guise of the same ... Ricoeur [thus] combines the Kantian distinction between reproductive and productive imagination with the phenomenological distinction between imaging as a 'neutralizing' of perception and as a 'free variation of possibilities.'" (NP 5,21)

In *The Symbolism of Evil*, Ricoeur does not attend to the imagination beyond an immediate and unexplained declaration of its function in a phenomenological methodology. He simply announces that the confession of fault is to be apprehended through the "sympathetic re-enactment in imagination," which will result in an "imaginative and sympathetic understanding," (SE 345) or creative interpretation. Despite the crucial role played by the imagination both in the creation and interpretation

of meaning, Ricoeur's hermeneutics remains, however, emphatically reflective. The "re-enactment" does not replace philosophy, but must be taken up into the "element of philosophic discourse," and find its place within a reflective or critical understanding. (SE 3,4)

Ricoeur warns against the confusion of myth either with allegory or with gnosis as the essential pre-condition for reaching this "truly *philosophical* anthropology." (FM 219) He maintains that only by way of a "philosophical exegesis and understanding" (SE 162) can the symbolic value of myth be recovered. He identifies as gnosis the "simulacrum of rationality" (SE 164) which encounters myth as explanation rather than as a revelation of being. He fails, however, to provide any criteria for distinguishing this speculative, gnostic imitation from true philosophy.

In what, exactly, does the rationality of philosophy consist? Ricoeur seems to be dividing human reason against itself, or at least within itself. On the one hand, a genuine or philosophical rationality appears as a synthesizing power which pursues the meaning of the cosmic whole, the totality of being. On the other hand, gnostic speculation is the analytical capacity which seeks to reduce this whole to discrete, manipulable data. In itself, this dual capacity of reason is not unfamiliar. Consider, for example, the Kantian distinction between *Vernunft* and *Verstand* or the Hegelian opposition between reflective and speculative or intuitive philosophy. These differences are also expressed in the classic hermeneutic distinction between understanding and explanation.

Nevertheless, it is unclear just how reason functions when it differentiates between these disparate operations. How is it that the different capacities of reason are at times confused and 'mistaken' in their applications? Why does speculation sometimes usurp

the role of rationality? How can it be 'deceived' in this way and how is the integrity of true philosophy maintained in spite of the potential treachery of speculation? What exactly is this 'will-to-truth' which philosophy seems to possess in contrast to gnostic pretensions to mere knowledge? If the outcome of the hermeneutic endeavour depends on the 'character' of this philosophy, then answers to these questions are crucial.

Ricoeur's introduction of the imagination as an essential hermeneutic tool is problematic in terms of its amalgamation or harmony with a reflection whose role is itself ambiguous. As I stated at the beginning of this thesis, Ricoeur's overall aim of raising the symbolism of evil to the level of genuine philosophy raises the question of whether and how reason and imagination may be integrated. If genuine philosophy is motivated by what I have called a 'will-to-truth,' then with regard to Ricoeur's hermeneutic desire for the restoration of meaning, the imagination could be called the 'will-to-meaning.' Ricoeur assumes the possibility of the co-operation of the 'will-to-meaning' and the 'will-to-truth.' What are the conditions, not only of this co-operation, but also of the actuation of these 'wills'?

A clue to this co-operation was found in Chapter Three and is summed up in Mary Schaldenbrand's phrase "kinship through conflict." (MI 75) For Ricoeur, metaphor is the "power to transform contradiction into new meaning." (NP 16) Reason seeks unity and identity, working on behalf of the "concept" to reduce all difference to sameness. The activity of the "'seeing as'" of metaphor, on the other hand, produces identity from difference. As discussed above, the tensional truth of metaphor shatters our usual perception of reality and the truth conditions which support that view. Metaphoric truth is thus inaccessible to reason, or rather to speculation, in terms of

Ricoeur's own argument. Speculation cannot, by virtue of the nature of its own operations, discover such a truth. It is hermeneutics which mediates the interdependence of speculation and imagination. Ricoeur explains that

Language possesses deep resources which are not immediately reducible to knowledge ... my interest in hermeneutics has always been an attempt to detect and describe these resources. I am convinced that all figurative language is potentially conceptualizable ... This is why I insisted ... upon the essential connection or intersection between speculative and poetic discourse ... Conceptualization cannot reach meaning directly or create meaning *ex nihilo*; it cannot dispense with the detour of mediation through figurative structures. (RR 468-469)

Ricoeur's notion of the metaphoric imagination as simultaneously something experienced in sensation and an act of the understanding is also a new interpretation of the way in which reason and imagination co-operate. Ever since Plato, there have been various attempts to give an account of the 'soul' and its activities based on the obvious distinction between sensation and reason combined with the conviction that there must be something between them. Imagination has been one of the candidates for this intermediary role. Ricoeur's emphasis on language focuses on the resemblance between an image and its verbal meaning. The "seeing as" of metaphoric language creates new meaning at the point where sense and the imaginary interact.

This discussion of the "interanimation" of reflection and imagination, which Ricoeur proposes both as ground and means of the hermeneutic project, does not yet address the crucial question of possibility. Another way of asking this question is to ask for whom this creative and re-creative project is available - for philosophers only, for all philosophers?

It seems to me that Ricoeur's notion of feeling, or *thumos*, is decisive here. As described above, Ricoeur designates the aesthetic feeling of the Greek chorus as a

"modality of understanding." (SE 231) I have also explored above how, for Ricoeur, *thumos* mediates between the self and the world, how, through "desire and love" the "mystery of feeling" integrates my being with "beings and being." (FM 134) In Plato's *Republic*, *thumos* was related to the level of society known as *phylakes*, the guardians of all that is noble and graceful, from whose ranks the bearers of wisdom arise. It is the heart, the spirited, courageous element of the soul which lies between the intellectual and the passionate parts of the individual. For Ricoeur, *thumos* is this heart of my being which desires and loves, which moves towards being and which is the ground of the possibility of wisdom.

This heart, (or *coeur*,) is also courage, the courage which animates the desire for being itself and which, in terms of the principles of Ricoeur's hermeneutic "wager," must establish the hermeneutic project. Rather than being an intellectual intuition of the self, reflection seeks to recover the "positing of the self" within its "existential activity," (CI 328) at the "heart of the being in which ... [it] moves, exists and wills." (SE 356) The hermeneutic enterprise is this recovery of the self through its objectified works, a recovery which is therefore an ontological decision, a response to an appeal to situate ourselves better in being. (SE 356) Ricoeur's hermeneutic "wager" requires the willingness to commit oneself at the level of one's beliefs, to involve oneself in a personal way in the project of understanding. This surely is the key. It indicates a certain commitment to truth, a desire or disposition to understand.

At this point, I think it is instructive to briefly acknowledge Ricoeur's indebtedness to Karl Jaspers and, more especially, to Gabriel Marcel. (HM x) It is within their philosophies that we find the roots of Ricoeur's own conception of true

philosophy and of the "wager." Both philosophers were concerned to demonstrate the limits of objectifying thought, in particular with regard to its use in the sciences and wherever it is borrowed by philosophy. For both, true philosophy is neither analytic/reductionist nor systematic/synthetic. Rather it begins and ends with, or as, the individual in the concreteness and reality of his or her 'thereness' or immediacy, within a particular body and immersed in a particular situation. It transcends existence as such, all subjective and objective being to touch the mysterious, ineffable ground or wellspring of being itself, which is always interpreted as 'my being.' Both affirmed that true philosophy manifests human dignity and truth in the activity and openness of communication, communion and contemplation.

This being so, neither Jaspers nor Marcel were satisfied to simply present their ideas as surplus intellectual food for mass ingestion. They searched for, and appealed to, a particular audience or co-respondent. Jaspers was looking for "the individual ... devoted to the truth," one who is willing to rise above the "surface din" made by the egotistical, violent and evil majority. (P 35,36) Marcel required someone distinguished by the degree and quality of their standards and demands on life. He wanted a person who will possess "mental courage" and a "certain inner intellectual need, not unrelated to ... the inner moral need, felt by men of good will, to seek peace and ensue it ..." For him, the philosopher asks the questions which lead to the spiritual illumination of truth. (MB 13-17)

It seems to me that Ricoeur's hope for the restoration and recreation of language, a restoration which will also yield self-understanding as the basis of a rational ontology, is built upon the deep desire for just such an "illumination." Like Jaspers and Marcel,

Ricoeur also seems to posit a "mental courage" and a particular "intellectual need" dedicated to truth as the conditions of his philosophical venture. The co-operation of the imagination and reflection are never demonstrated but are believed in as this active "good will" of the true philosopher. Without this will, the philosopher fails in the essential tasks of revivifying philosophy, of situating him or herself better in being, and of becoming wise.

"... imagination is the medium for the process of infinitizing; it is not a capacity, as are the others - if one wishes to speak in those terms, it is the capacity *instar omnium*. ... [W]hatever of feeling, knowing, and willing a person has depends upon what imagination he has, upon how that person reflects himself - that is, upon imagination. Imagination is infinitizing reflection ... the rendition of the self as the self's possibility ... and the intensity of this medium is the possibility of the intensity of the self."

Søren Kierkegaard, *The Sickness unto Death*

* * *

"If the doors of perception were cleansed every thing would appear to man as it is, infinite.

For man has closed himself up, till he sees all things thro' narrow chinks of his cavern."

William Blake, *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

- CI: Ricoeur, Paul, *The Conflict of Interpretations: Essays in Hermeneutics*, ed. Don Ihde (Evanston: North Western University Press, 1974.)
- CT: Heidegger, Martin, *What is Called Thinking?*, tr. J. Glenn Gray (New York: Harper and Row, 1968.)
- FM: Ricoeur, Paul, *Fallible Man*, tr. Charles Kelbley (Chicago: Henry Regnery, 1967.)
- FP: Ricoeur, Paul, *Freud and Philosophy: An Essay on Interpretation*, tr. Denis Savage (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1970.)
- HM: Van Den Hengel, John W., *The Home of Meaning* (Lanham: University Press of America, 1982.)
- LPI: Levi, Albert William, *Literature Philosophy and the Imagination* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1962.)
- MB: Marcel, Gabriel, *Mystery of Being: Reflection and Mystery*, tr. G.S. Fraser (London: The Harvill Press, 1950.)
- MI: Schaldenbrand, Mary, "Metaphoric Imagination: Kinship through Conflict" in Reagan, Charles ed., *Studies in the Philosophy of Paul Ricoeur* (Ohio: Ohio University Press, 1979.)
- NP: Kearney, Richard, "Paul Ricoeur and the Hermeneutic Imagination" in Kemp, T. Peter and Rasmussen, David eds., *The Narrative Path: The Later Works of Paul Ricoeur* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1989.)
- P: Jaspers, Karl, *Philosophy, Vol. I*, tr. E.B. Ashton (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1969.)
- RR: Valdés, Mario J., ed., *A Ricoeur Reader: Reflection and Imagination* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1991.)
- SE: Ricoeur, Paul, *The Symbolism of Evil* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1969.)

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- also as: *Fallible Man*, tr. Charles Kelbley, Chicago: Henry Regnery, 1965 [1967.]
- _____, *Philosophie de la volonté. 2. Finitude et culpabilité, II. La symbolique du mal* (Philosophie de l'esprit) Paris: Aubier, 1960 [1963, 1968.]

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