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"AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE MEANING OF LITURGICAL LANGUAGE"

by

ANTHONY D. BAILEY

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ABSTRACT

Over the past number of years, the study of language has been engaged in increasingly by a wide variety of academic disciplines and fields. Perhaps this bears witness to the growing appreciation of the pivotal role that language plays in our formation as individual persons, as peoples and as cultures.

As a particular kind of speech, liturgical language takes seriously the multi-dimensional nature of human reality, and, among other things, addresses itself to the profound questions of meaning posed by the human condition, as well as the 'needs' that arise in the posing of these questions. Further, as a rich communicative complex, liturgical language is itself multi-dimensional and multi-valent. This study is undertaken to investigate the meaning of this kind of language. To do this, the analytical 'lenses' of Ritual, Performative Language Theory, and Metaphor will be employed and discussed.

RÉSUMÉ

Au cours des dernières années, l'étude du langage a fait l'objet d'une grande variété de disciplines et de domaines académiques. Il se pourrait que ceci témoigne de l'appréciation croissante du rôle que joue le langage dans notre formation en tant qu'individus, en tant que peuples, et comme cultures.

Le langage de la liturgie, comme genre particulier de langue, prend au sérieux la nature multi-dimensionnelle de la réalité humaine, et parmi tant d'autres choses, s'adresse aux questions profondes sur la signification posées par la condition humaine, ainsi qu'aux besoins qui surviennent en raison de celles-ci. De plus, comme outil de communication, riche et complexe, le langage de la liturgie est elle-même multi-dimensionelle et polyvalente. Cette étude est entreprise dans le but de rechercher le sens de ce genre de langage. À cette fin, les 'lentilles' analytiques du rituel, la théorie sur la langue performante, et la métaphore seront utilisées et discutées.

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For my late brother -

John Paul David Bailey

INTRODUCTION

It was in classical Greece that the systematic study of language began, at least in terms of Western culture. Making no distinction between the philosophy of language and linguistics, Plato's Cratylus discusses the question of arbitrariness in language; that is, whether it corresponds to reality or is simply conventional. The discussion produced a prevailing understanding of language as referential, as in fact corresponding to reality.[1]

This understanding of language and its attending rules of grammar that developed over time, predominated, with occasional modifications, until the nineteenth century. With the rise of the modern world-view, the classical world-view was replaced and with it the notion of reasoning from abstract principles as the standard explanatory method. Historical and scientific reasoning, with its inductive hypotheses, became the order of the day.

In the twentieth century there has been no shortage of attention devoted to the whole subject of language. Philosophers, anthropologists, linguists, sociologists and theologians all have had, and continue to have, something to say about language.

This thesis is an attempt to enter into this broad discussion of language through a small area of discourse having to do with a particular kind of language: religious language. Of concern to us is an investigation into the meaning of a certain kind of religious language known as liturgical language. To do this, three analytical lenses will be used: Victor Turner's theory of ritual, J.L. Austin's performative language theory, and Paul Ricoeur's theory of metaphor.

WHAT IS LANGUAGE

It may be said that when two or more persons enter into the process of communicating with each other in speech, the code they are using is called language. That language is constituted by a system of symbols which have meaning by convention. However, language is not confined to the context of interpersonal communication. It is used in thought, in soliloquy, and in spontaneous expressions of feelings, without regard to the audience.

Within any given group or society there exists at least one common language which may be considered as 'ordinary' insofar as it corresponds to the shared world of beliefs, life, ideas and experiences of the members of that group or society, and it names the realities to which the majority of them can relate. This language cannot be understood apart from the society which uses it and the activities, rituals and self-understanding of that society.

Religious language, which obviously comes under the general rubric of language, like ordinary language refers and gives expression to experiences, realities and a certain self-understanding. Unlike the case of ordinary language, however, the experiences, realities and self-understanding to which religious language relate are not necessarily embraced or assented to by the majority of a given group or society. Therefore, with religious language we are referring to a particular kind of language and particular kinds of experiences.

Religious language has to do with experiences and phenomena

that are understood to have a religious dimension. Within the Judeo-Christian tradition, religious language necessarily centres on God as its prime referent, its ultimate of explanation, and is best understood within the parameters of particular religious understanding and activity.

Donald Evans suggests that in order to understand religious language appropriately, one must discern its 'natural habitat', that is, the place where this language is most often used and not just talked about; for example, in worship, prayer, preaching, and christian religious discussion.[2] In other words, it is the context of the religious community from which religious language derives its intelligibility.

Religious experiences may be expressed through at least three types of articulation. One is doctrinal and theological, and may be termed third-order reflection. Here abstract philosophical speculation is used to organize thought into consistent and logical categories.

A second type of articulation may be observed in the narratives that comprise the sacred text of the Christian community. The scripture lessons record instruction, human exchange, paradigmatic stories, reflection and history. This may be referred to as second-order language.

The third type of articulation, which is called first-order discourse, has to do with the language of worship, prayer, and doxology. It is speech that is primarily directed to God by the assembled worshippers, personally and corporately. This kind of expression is known under the general category of 'Prayer', and has within it the power to articulate the community's experience

of who God is. The meaning of this kind of language relates to the assumption that those participating in the language share, to some extent, a common understanding and experience of the One to whom the language is being addressed. This experience of God, this appropriation of the presence of God, is the **sine qua non** of religious language.

LITURGICAL LANGUAGE

When religious language is employed within the context of the communal experience of worship and liturgy, we speak of it more appropriately as liturgical language. Liturgical language focusses religious language in specific ways and presses it into the service of the community in particular forms of speech: "speech to God, about Christ, about the event, about the assembly."[3]

Liturgical language is employed predominantly - but not exclusively - within the context of the liturgy. But what is meant by 'liturgy'? Louis Bouyer has defined liturgy as "that system of prayers and rites traditionally canonized by the Church as her own prayer and worship." He comments further about liturgy as follows:

> The liturgy in its unity and in its perfection is to be seen as the meeting of God's People called together in convocaton by God's Word through the apostolic ministry, in order that the People, consciously united together, may hear God's Word itself in Christ, may adhere to that Word by means of the prayer and praise amid which the Word is proclaimed, and so seal by the Eucharistic sacrifice the Covenant which is accomplished by that same Word.[4]

Bouyer understands the liturgy to be primarily one of the

word; the intentional exercise of appropriating God's Word 'come down to us.'

Gregory Dix, a monumental figure in the study of liturgy, has a similar yet distinct understanding of liturgy.

> 'Liturgy' is the name given ever since the days of the apostles to the act of taking part in the solemn corporate worship of God by the 'priestly' society of christians, who are 'the Body of Christ, the church.' 'The Liturgy' is the term which covers generally all that worship which is officially organised by the church, and which is open to and offered by, or in the name of, all who are members of the church. It distinguishes this from the personal prayers of the individual christians who make up the church, and even from the common prayer of selected or voluntary groups within the church... the term 'The Liturgy' has come to be particularly applied to the performance of that rite which was instituted by our Lord Jesus Christ Himself to be the peculiar and distinctive worship of those who should be 'His own'; and which has ever since been heart and core of christian worship and christian living - the Eucharist or Breaking of Bread.[5]

Dix lays stress on the fact that by its nature Christian liturgy is essentially corporate. It is intended to be a shared experience in which the participants are united with one another and united with the ultimate Mystery they name God.

Liturgical scholar Gail Ramshaw, like Dix, argues for an essential understanding of the liturgy as a corporate exercise. She maintains that in terms of the **'déroulement'** of the liturgy, it is best perceived in terms of forms of speech. She notes that, "speech is an essential ingredient in Christian liturgy...[it] is mated with symbol, and accompanied by music and ritual." She contends that "it is more accurate to think of liturgy as speech than as words, for in liturgy the words find their meaning in the context of the sentence, the hymn, the prayer, the whole rite,

and the assembly."[6]

Drawing on the work of Dutch phenomenologist Gerardus van der Leeuw, Ramshaw states that the speech of Christian liturgy is derived from the incantatory chants and ecstatic exclamations of primitive religions. She suggests that people's participation in religious chants and powerful speech was strong enough to alter their perception of the universe.[7]

It is Ramshaw's contention that liturgical speech is also powerful and can change the perceptions of the transcendent held by the participants in the liturgy. One of the ways in which liturgical speech does this is through the use of rhetoric. Ramshaw maintains that aspects of the rhetorical tradition can be useful in "tuning our ear to liturgical speech, for it signifies attention to words, images, syntax, and structure."[8]

The classical Greeks understood rhetoric to be the eloquent use of formal speech for the purpose of persuasion, the art of speaking effectively. In this kind of speech words are crafted, images employed, and syntax shaped and balanced for the purpose of persuading the listener to embrace a particular perspective or come to a desired understanding.[9]

It is within the context of worship that the use of rhetoric in liturgical language may be properly observed. The presence of rhetoric in this kind of speech, however, does not render the liturgy an event consisting of mere eloquent and formal persuasion; for as Ramshaw noted above, liturgy consists in the mating of several components.

It must be admitted, however, that although rhetorical influence may be observed in the formation of verbal and phrasing

patterns of the early Christian liturgy, some Christian scholars[10] are wary of embracing too wholeheartedly the use of rhetoric in contemporary liturgy. The main argument against this kind of use is that there are manipulative and deceptive aspects of rhetorical speech.

While the foregoing may be true, we believe it would be injudicious to discard an entire classical technique - Plato's objections notwithstanding - because aspects of it are susceptible to misuse. Rather, as it is used in worship to support the employment of symbol, the expression of faith and the recounting of relevant experiences, rhetoric may be viewed as an appropriate vehicle through which may be communicated certain important aspects of the worship experience.

As affirmed above, it is precisely this corporate worship experience in which liturgical language - with or without the use of rhetoric - is rooted. As such, liturgical language is always plural: "Do this"(*poieite*, plural) "We turn to you, O God." , "Let us pray." and so forth. "This plurality in language indicates that the worshipping community is a concretization and extension of the faith experience captured by language. Without denying the formative factor, liturgical language presupposes a faith to which it witnesses."[11]

The historical worshipping community has always employed liturgical language in worship, for it elucidates a common history focussed in Jesus Christ, and seeks to facilitate an ongoing encounter between the worshipper and the ultimate mystery whom it addresses. In order to do the latter, liturgical language

must walk a precarious line between moving the worshipping community along and helping it become absorbed in the Mystery called God, and collapsing into that very Mystery through misguided emphasis. In other words, in order for liturgical language to be faithful, it must be at one and the same time an expression of mystery as well as a conduit through which mystery may be engaged. Further, it must not become confused with the mystery it seeks to reveal.

RITUAL

The above forms one part of the background for our investigation into the meaning of liturgical language. Another part of that background is an analysis of ritual as it pertains to liturgy and liturgical language.

Victor Turner, a British anthropologist, describes ritual as "prescribed formal behaviour for occasions, not given over to technological routine, having reference to beliefs in mystical beings or powers." Developing van Gennep's term "liminality"[12] - which is based upon the Latin term limen, meaning "threshold" - Turner conceptualizes a dimension of life that lies between the structures of society (ie. societal institutions, their roles and statuses), in the "betwixt and between", "on the threshold".

In these interstices of life, according to Turner, one may discern liminal existence. In his more recent writings Turner employs "liminality" to refer to the notion of belonging to more than one social system. He argues that liminal existence is accessed and evoked through appropriate symbols and ritual.

Turner speaks of ritual symbols which depend for their power

upon their multivocity and multivalency. Our contention is that within the contexts of christian experience and the rituals of christian worship, liturgical language functions in a similarly multivocal and multivalent way. That is, as a multidimensional communicative complex, liturgical language gathers the community, focusses and gives prominence to its experience of ultimacy, addresses direct speech to this Ultimate Mystery, and thereby transforms the community and its relationship to the 'structures' of daily existence.

PERFORMATIVE LANGUAGE AND METAPHOR

Our foray into the meaning of liturgical language will also take us into an examination of the philosophical analytical categories of Austin and Ricoeur. In his landmark essays in **How to Do Things With Words,** Austin's classifications advance the thesis that the majority of human speech or utterance is 'performative.' That is, the utterance is itself the performance of the language act being spoken and not merely a report of it.

Scholars such as Jean Ladrière and Joseph Schaller have employed Austin's performative language theory for the purpose of analyzing liturgical language. Schaller maintains that unlike many other branches of the philosophy of language, performative theory "serves to unveil aspects of human communication which transcend the content of utterances and point to the realm of meaning which unfolds in the process of using language: how to do things with words."[13]

In comparison, and in some cases continuity, with this

perspective, we find Paul Ricoeur's comprehensive theory of metaphor. He appears to reject the Aristotelian notion of metaphor as merely ornamentation in language. Instead, Ricoeur understands metaphor to belong not to the syntax of language but to its semantics. For him, metaphor is a semantic event made possible by three kinds of tension.

Firstly, he contends that there is tension within the statement: between tenor and vehicle, between focus and frame, and between principal subject and secondary subject.

Secondly, according to Ricoeur, there exists tension between two interpretations: between a literal interpretation that yields to the persistence of semantic "impertinence", and a metaphorical interpretation whose sense emerges through 'non-sense'.

Thirdly, there exists a tension in the relational function of the copula, which Ricoeur calls the "is and the is not"; between identity and difference in the interplay of resemblance. This third form of tension in the metaphorical statement opens it to a referential field - a kind of split reference. Ricoeur contends that through this copula of utterance, the dynamism of meaning "allows access to a dynamic vision of reality which is the implicit ontology of the metaphorical utterance."[14]

Through the examination of the theories of Turner, Austin, and Ricoeur, this thesis proposes to demonstrate how the categories of ritual, performative language theory, and metaphor, together form a comprehensive framework for responsibly and appropriately investigating the meaning of liturgical language.

CHAPTER 1

To combine a study of liturgical language with a study of ritual is a relatively novel kind of undertaking. It may be suggested that this has to do with the rather suspect regard in which ritual has been held in the Christian Church.[1]

The Roman Catholic church has long maintained a dichotomy between the sacramental essence of the rite regarded as an act of God, and the remainder of the liturgy which is perceived as ceremony. The latter is seen as useful for the edification of the faithful but does not enjoy the same status and efficacy as the sacramental corpus. This was confirmed at the Council of Trent.[2]

Among Protestants, the influential Puritan criticism of any emphasis of 'externals' is well known. In fact, one may adjudge that a dominant impulse of the Reformation was a protest against the obscuring of the word by ritual.[3]

Mark Searle observes that such Protestant disparagement of ritual:

> carried over into late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century anthropology, where studies of 'primitive societies' focused on social organization, kinship, economic structures, and even mythology, but tended to disregard ritual behaviour as either childish and meaningless or as an obviously inadequate technology. This attitude is most manifest in the invention of the convenient distinction between 'religion' (where communication with the deity takes place rationally through the word) and 'magic' (regarded as an irrational belief in the power of human beings to coerce the powers believed to rule the world).[4]

RITUAL REVIVED

Since the 1960s, however, a new interest in ritual among

students of liturgy and students of the human sciences has been observed. This has involved a particular interest in the anthropology of religion. It appears that one of the major quests in this resurgence of interest has been that of understanding comprehensively the place of ritual within human existence.

The early part of this century saw scholars in the social sciences typically inquiring into the phenomenon of ritual in terms of what it intended to accomplish existentially. It was a technological and socio-functional way of perceiving ritual, which many came to believe was fundamentally inadequate.[5]

Originating in the thought of Emile Durkheim and continuing in the work of A.R. Radcliffe-Brown and M. Gluckman, structural-functionalist theory emerged as a supposedly new and improved way of understanding religion and ritual. This particular school of thought saw religion as a dynamic within society, which supports and maintains the institutional roles, status, and consequently the equilibrium of the society itself. Correspondingly, according to the above theory, the rituals of a society serve only to reinforce social structural norms.

Some researchers and scholars, however, notably Clifford Geertz and Robert Bellah, desired a more satisfactory and sophisticated understanding of religion in general, and more specifically of ritual in particular. After further research in the 1950s, Geertz advanced the claim that ritual is really part of a cultural system, related to but still separate from the social system, and therefore to be understood in the context of the entire dynamic symbolic life of the socio-cultural reality.

Advocates of the symbolic action theory, and notably Turner, embraced and expanded Geertz's new understanding of ritual.

Victor Turner was of the structural-functional school of thought, and a student of A.R. Radcliffe-Brown and Max Gluckman who passed on Durkheim's sociology to him. Turner's movement away from this school of thought was precipitated by his growing awareness of the various genres of cultural and ritual performance in many societies around the world. He came to a fuller understanding and appreciation of the role and power of symbolic forms of action in the ritual of all cultures.

As Urban Holmes has noted,

> Symbolic action...understands religion not only as a source of the equilibrium of the society but also perceives the rituals and myths to be a means of change, perhaps even a change effected by that to which the symbol points and in which it participates: the transcendent reality of God. Symbolic action can...be a means to a new appreciation of revelation and man's growth toward unity with the divine.[6]

Robert Bellah, another advocate of the symbolic action theory, contends that for humans reality is symbolic - if we are to have meaning it must be in terms of symbolized reality.[7]

There are many who locate this quest for meaning within the 'religious constructs' of various cultures. In his well-known essay **Religion as a Cultural System,** Geertz defines religion as a system of symbols that addresses issues of ultimate meaning and thereby formulates a particular existential order.

In a similar vein, George Lindbeck defines religions as

> comprehensive interpretive schemes, usually embodied in myths or narratives and heavily ritualized, which structure human experience and understanding of self and world. Not every telling

> of one of these cosmic stories is religious, however.[8]

Lindbeck goes on to say that in order for these narratives and cosmic stories to be considered religious, they must be told

> with a view to identifying and describing what is taken to be 'more important than anything else in the universe', and to organizing all of life including both behaviour and beliefs, in relation to this.[9]

For Lindbeck, religion functions somewhat like a Kantian a priori; a kind of idiom or framework that, like language and culture, acts communally to shape the inner attitudes, feelings and beliefs of individuals rather than being chiefly a manifestation of these "subjectivities."[10] Further, he notes that it is the rituals practiced by the religion that give form to the doctrines, cosmic stories and narratives.

Once again we return to the pivotal role that ritual plays in the appropriation of symbolic and ultimate reality by considering the work of Margaret Mead. She not only understands ritual to be an exceedingly important part of all cultures but contends, "It is on ritual forms that the imagination of each generation feeds."[11] She defines ritual as the repetition of those symbols which call forth the feeling of that primordial event which initially constituted the community with such power that a trans-spatial connection is made with that event.[12]

One might contend that in Christian ritual, the sacraments of Baptism and Eucharist function in a way that is consonant with Mead's definition. Both, among other things, seek to re-present the event of Jesus' death and resurrection. As such, they are multivocal and multivalent symbols.

VICTOR TURNER AND RITUAL

Turning now to a discussion of Turner's understanding of ritual, we observe that he not only defines ritual as "a bundle of symbols"[12], but, as noted above, as

> prescribed formal behaviour for occasions not given over to technological routine, having reference to beliefs in invisible beings or powers regarded as the first and final causes of all effects.[14]

This second definition is an expanded and slightly revised one. From his earlier form of this definition, Turner has replaced the word 'mystical' with 'invisible', and has added the phrase: 'regarded as the first and final causes of all effects.' In subsequent re-statements of his definition, Turner often refers the reader to this early formulation.

For having maintained allegiance to the above definition for so long, Turner has drawn criticism from other students of ritual. The critique tends to centre in two points. One is his close linkage of supernaturalism with religious ritual, and the other his generalization that ritual is always formalized.

Drawing on such distinguished names as Durkheim, Goody, Grimes, and Moore, ritual scholar Bobby Alexander[15] argues that Turner's definition is too restrictive for the reasons mentioned above. Alexander contends that, broadly conceived, religion does not require belief in the supernatural, citing Zen Buddhism as an example. Further, he suggests that "reference to the supernatural is not necessary in order for ritual to effect a transformation of the everyday world."[16] He maintains that a more appropriate concept would be something like Tillich's "ultimate concern".

Alexander and others contend that Turner's definition of religious ritual is far too dependent upon the rituals and world view of tribal people, principally the Ndembu of Zaire among whom he conducted his early fieldwork. It is this dependence that a number of scholars believe leads Turner to emphasize supernaturalism.

With respect to Turner's requirement of formalization in ritual, both Alexander and Ronald Grimes offer objections. Alexander's major critique is that the requirement of formalization does not "account for the many occasions when ritual involves and invites spontaneity and improvisation."[17]

Grimes, a student of ritual largely concerned about the origins of ritual and about those unconventional forms of ritual that are easily overlooked, contends that Turner's definition does not take account of the probability that rituals do not come about as conscious thought first, but perhaps more as preconsious and spontaneous activity. Grimes states:

> Unintentional, non-goal oriented actions such as playing and gambolling, as well as preconscious habits and mannerisms, must not be excluded by definition from ritual, since they are the seed-beds of ritualizing. Ritual does not originate in, nor is it exhaustively explainable by, conscious actions and theological rationale.[18]

'Nascent gesture' or 'nascent ritual' are the terms Grimes uses to refer to what he calls the formative stages of ritual. He contends that these may potentially develop into rites de passage or ritual practice. This supports Grimes' strong contention that rituals occur and not merely recur.

> We can no longer assume that all forms of ritual are static. 'Ritual' and 'tradition' are not synonyms. Ritual and creativity are

> not mutually exclusive...Rituals are not 'givens' because we just as surely create them as we receive them from traditions and revelations.[19]

The critique of rigidity and restrictiveness leveled against Turner's definition of ritual, and the challenge to his requirement of formalization must be taken seriously. Turner's definition of ritual simply does not encompass all aspects of ritualized action and activity.

We believe, however, that a number of things must be said in support of Turner's insights. We think that his theory of ritual offers a more credible and expansive understanding of ritual than that supplied by the 'structural-functionalist' approach. For instance, an interesting aspect of Turner's theory is that ritual is not viewed as an "epiphenomenon" - a mere reflection of some antecedent social reality - but as having "ontological status". Such a conclusion is warranted by the changes in the social structure that occur as a result of the experiences generated by ritual. Here, Turner's view resembles that of Erik Erikson who moved beyond Freud's view of ritual as being a disguised compensation for repressed drives - a kind of public counterpart of private obsessive practices - to develop an "ontology of ritualization" which perceives ritual as being essential and central in every individual's emotional development.[20] As well, the reader might observe that Turner is not so far from Grimes' contentions stated above.

Turner's view of ritual is a dialectical one in which ritual is not seen as that which exists for the purpose of serving social structure, but rather as that which acts to oppose the

rigidity of social structure and the requirements of social differentiation. This dialectical dynamic in ritual leads to the creation of community and introduces communitarian values into everyday life.

Although Turner's definition of ritual cannot be applied to all examples of ritual, as has been conceded above, his theory provides tremendously valuable insight into the understanding of the symbolic in human communities. As one peruses Turner's writings, one observes that at times even he seems to set aside a rigid application of his definition. He does this in favour of focussing on what one might call the sine qua non of his theory of ritual: **liminality**.

THE CONCEPT OF LIMINALITY

Turner borrows the term liminality from Arnold van Gennep's work on 'rites de passage'.[21] It is in the explication of this concept of liminality - built upon the Latin 'limen', meaning "threshold" - that we note the greater usefulness of Turner's theory in contrast to that advanced by a structural-functionalist perspective.

In his concept of liminality, Turner introduces the notion of 'anti-structure'. In order to understand what he means by this one must explore his view of societal structure. Following a sociological perspective, Turner regards the structures of society as being comprised of institutions with their attending roles and statuses. These institutions (e.g. family, language, church, government) form the context in which the identity of individual persons is shaped; that is, socialized from birth.

Turner argues that there is a dimension of life that falls outside these structures, 'between' them or on their 'margin'. He refers to this dimension as 'anti-structure'. His argument is that in liminal existence the rules of the structures that define existence are transcended. Some scholars, Urban Holmes for one, have contrasted Turner's concept of anti-structure with what R.D. Laing and Joseph Campbell describe as "creative schizophrenia." That is, "a perception of an extraordinary reality between the 'split' within what we take for granted."[22]

Anti-structure, with its complementary modes 'liminality' and 'communitas', has to do with a description of a realm of "mythic or symbolic" reality, that promotes the recovery of the meaning of the primordial.

Turner defines anti-structure in this way:

> ...the liberation of human capacities of cognition, affect, volition, creativity, etc., from the normative constraints incumbent upon occupying a sequence of social statuses, enacting a multiplicity of social roles, and being acutely conscious of membership in some corporate group such as a family, lineage, clan, tribe, nation, etc., or affiliation with some pervasive social category such as class, caste, sex or age-division.[23]

Turner remarks that ritual's relationship to everyday social structure is a dialectical one. Further, ritual is a necessary and recurring human activity, since it responds positively to the incessant need to transcend the limitations of social structure, the quest towards anti-structure.

It is within the context of anti-structure that Turner identifies and contrasts liminality and communitas.

> What I call liminality, the state of being

> in between successive participations in social milieux dominated by social structural considerations, whether formal or unformalized, is not precisely the same as communitas, for it is a sphere or domain of action or thought rather than a social modality.[24]

Therefore, whereas **liminality** refers both to the transitional framework of ritual which relaxes the everyday demands of social structure and to the ambiguous status assumed by participants in this framework, **communitas** has to do with the direct and egalitarian relationships that characterizes ritual liminality.[25]

Now even a cursory review of the essential elements of Turner's theory, as laid out above, would reveal a certain inconsistency. His definition of ritual as prescribed, formalized behaviour is in discordance with his emphasis on the ambiguous, open-ended, spontaneous aspects of liminality. In fact, Turner not only contends that ritual is not primarily "rules or rubrics" but also that:

> Rules may 'frame' the performance, but the 'flow' of action and interaction within that frame may conduce to hitherto unprecedented insights and even generate new symbols and meanings, which may be incorporated into subsequent performances. Traditional framings have to be reframed.[26]

We suggest that the apparent inconsistency in Turner's theory is a case of his insights having outgrown and surpassed his definition. Further, his investigation of different forms of liminality outside the tribal context is useful but not so well developed. He makes a rather interesting attempt to account for secular type rituals in his theory. He calls these secular activities that might pass for ritual, "liminoid genres". From the Greek "<u>eidos</u>" meaning 'form' or 'shape', Turner coins the

term liminoid to indicate phenomena that are 'quasi-liminal' or 'liminal-like'. These would include: theatre, art, opera, rock concerts, ballet, clowning, fiesta, carnivals, pilgrimage etc.

Turner maintains that while not identical with ritual, liminoid phenomena are "akin to the ritually liminal, or like it."[27] They operate as 'functional equivalents' of ritual but differ from ritual in that: 1) they are frequently 'secularized'; 2) they may not be necessarily collective nor concerned with calendrical, biological, or social-structural rhythms; 3) they are optional and not obligatory for every member of society; 4) they are not "centrally integrated into the total social process"; consequently, 5) they are not "ultimately eufunctional [beneficial]...for the working of social structure."[28]

LIMINALITY AND LITURGICAL LANGUAGE

With regards to the foregoing, it is still our contention that Turner's theory of ritual, and particularly his insights on liminality, are very useful for our discussion of the liturgy and of liturgical language. We maintain that liturgical language, employed in the rituals of the Christian community at worship, is the primary vehicle through which worshippers access the liminal state. Although Christian worship as ritual involves gestures, actions and set forms which are repeated over and over again, in general they are all accompanied by a particular kind of language. This particular kind - liturgical language - serves to carry the worshippers along and absorb them in the Mystery the community names God.

Liturgical language, at one and the same time, gives expression to and also shapes the faith experience of the participants in worship. It is necessary, however, that there be maintained a dynamic relationship between the faith experience and the language, in order for this kind of language to be expressive of mystery, as well as a vehicle through which mystery can be apprehended.

Further, liturgical language employed within the ritual of Christian worship enables the participants to grasp the new dynamic of the mystery proclaimed - a new relationship and identity made possible by Jesus Christ.

> You are all [children] of God through faith in Christ Jesus, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. (Galatians 3: 26-28; NIV)
>
> I now realize how true it is that God does not show favouritism but accepts [people] from every nation who fear him and do what is right. (Acts 11: 34,35; NIV)

We understand that a significant role of liturgical language is to be a means through which the gospel of Jesus Christ may call worshippers to embrace their new Christ-given identity and status, and especially to explore the new possibilities of life and faith in light of this new identity. It is a way for worshippers to open themselves to God's vision of redeemed life, a kind of spiritual liminality.

For it is in this sense that liturgical language, within the ambit of the ritual of Christian ritual, parallels the kind of new reality of which Turner speaks in liminality. As in the case of the liminal, liturgical language also engenders the notions of

inventiveness, potentiality, and "play" - a play of ideas, words, symbols, and metaphors.

Liminality speaks of what Turner calls a "formulable domain", a kind of spatial realm of "what may be". As such it is a constant and perhaps even subversive threat to existing social structures. Liturgical language is the significant mechanism through which the gospel's alternate vision and radical praxis is mediated as well as the worshippers' response to it; thus it promotes its own kind of 'formulable domain'. In this special sphere the impetus for new possibilities and radical transformation is engendered as the participants in the ritual of Christian worship "work out their salvation"[23] and respond positively to the recruiting power of God's agenda for the world. The results are intended to transform individuals as well as social structures.

As stated already, Turner has as part of his definition of ritual a kind of recalling or reconnecting with some kind of primordial event. In keeping with the spirit of this understanding, we suggest that the originating event of liturgical language is none other than the Christ event. That is, the freight of the meaning and significance of the life, death, resurrection and promised return of Jesus Christ is carried in liturgical language. This kind of language in turn renders this Christ event to the Christian community in symbolic and ritualistic terms. We have maintained that this occasions a kind of liminality through which new possibilities, potentialities, and formulations of the contemporary and trans-spatial

significance of this Event may be imagined and lived out.

Above, we have also noted that latterly, Turner's definition of liminality has included the notion of belonging to two social systems. Similarly, liturgical language serves to convey a similar message, one upon which the New Testament authors lay stress. The message is that although believers are <u>in</u> this world they are not <u>of</u> this world. That is, the Christ follower is believed to have 'heavenly citizenship' and earthly residence: he lives in two worlds. As such, 'heavenly citizenship' is intended to provide the vision, values, agenda, and power needed in order to transform earthly structures.

CHAPTER 2

In the previous chapter we delineated how Victor Turner's theory of ritual, and particularly his concept of liminality, have contributed to our understanding of the meaning of liturgical language. That is: a vehicle through which worshippers can gain access to a liminal state, which opens up mystery and stimulates transformation through the introduction of new insight and new possibilities.

As a multivocal and multidimensional communicative complex, liturgical language invites broader and more critical reflection in order to discern its full meaning. To facilitate this discerning we turn now to examine J.L. Austin's 'Performative Language Theory' and specifically its application to liturgical language in the work of Joseph Schaller and Jean Ladrière.

This examination will trace the development of Austin's concept of performatives, and articulate how he arrived at his theory of illocutionary forces. This will be followed by a brief critique and then the application to liturgical language.

J.L. AUSTIN'S PERFORMATIVE LANGUAGE THEORY

J.L. Austin (1911-1960), an English analytic philosopher, grew disillusioned with what he perceived to be a lack of thoroughness in the investigation of the problems of language on the part of philosophers and linguists. He contended that what most philosophers called "statements" may in fact not be. Rather, he believed them to be pseudo-statements and strictly non-sense. He maintains "that many traditional philosophical perplexities

have arisen through a mistake - the mistake of taking as straightforward statements of fact utterances which are either (in interesting non-gramatical ways) nonsensical or else intended as something quite different."[1]

Austin prefers to use the term 'constative' to describe statements that have the property of being true or false. He argues, however, for a different category of utterances whose main purpose is to be neither true nor false, but rather to perform an action. He names such utterances 'performative', for to utter such an utterance is to perform the action; an action that would virtually be impossible to perform in any other way. For example:

I apologize.
I welcome you.
I hereby dedicate this monument.

Austin continues to press his point by asserting that philosophers must concede that utterances can be found which

A. ...do not 'describe' or 'report' or constate anything at all, are not 'true or false'; and

B. the uttering of the sentence is, or is a part of, the doing of an action, which again would not normally be described as saying something.[2]

Examples of these types of utterances would be:

(E. a) 'I do (sc. take this woman to be my lawful wedded wife)' - as uttered in the course of the marriage ceremony.
(E. b) 'I name this ship the Queen Elizabeth' - as uttered when smashing the bottle against the stem.
(E. c) 'I give and bequeath my watch to my brother' - as occurring in a will.
(E. d) 'I bet you sixpence it will rain tomorrow.'[3]

Uttering these sentences is not a kind of describing or reporting of what one is or ought to be doing, it is to actually

do it: they are performative utterances. He maintains, however, that merely speaking performative sentences constitutes only a part of what is required to perform the action.

> Speaking generally, it is always necessary that the circumstances in which the words are uttered should be in some way, or ways, appropriate, and it is very commonly necessary that either the speaker himself or other persons should also perform certain other actions, whether 'physical' or 'mental' actions even acts of uttering further words.[4]

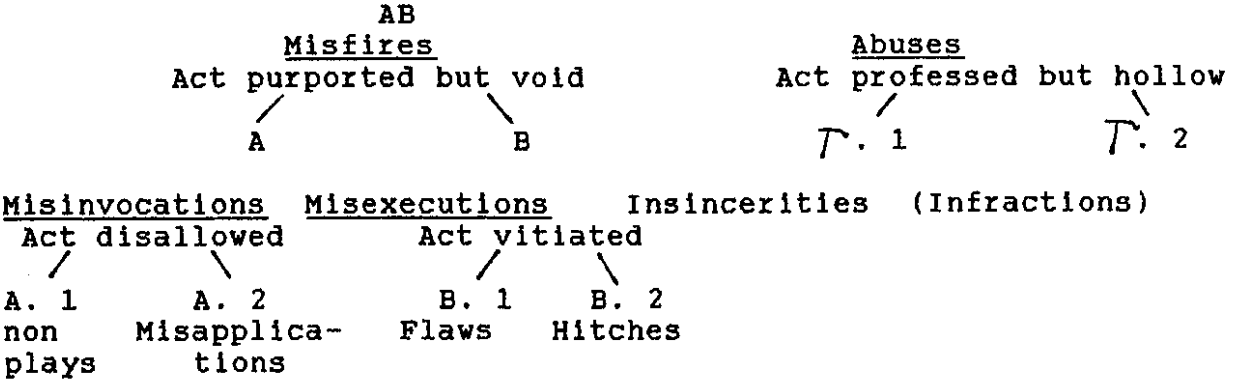
In addition to the circumstances, Austin names the intention of the speakers, social conventions and appropriate authority, among those factors which can contribute to a performative act's being 'unhappy' or infelicitous. For the happy functioning of a performative the following must obtain:[5]

> (A. 1) There must exist an accepted conventional procedure having a certain conventional effect, that procedure to include the uttering of certain words by certain persons in certain circumstances, and further,
>
> (A. 2) The particular persons and circumstances in a given case must be appropriate for the invocation of the particular procedure involved.
>
> (B. 1) The procedure must be executed by all participants both correctly and
>
> (B. 2) completely.
>
> (Γ. 1) Where, as often, the procedure is designed for use by persons having certain thoughts or feelings, or for the inauguration of certain consequential conduct of the part of any participant, then a person participating in and so invoking the procedure must in fact have those thoughts or feelings, and the participants must intend so to conduct themselves, and further
>
> (Γ. 2) must actually so conduct themselves subsequently.

The transgressing of these rules will produce an 'unhappy' performative. For instance, the captain and not the on-board cruise hostess must be the one to perform the marriage on the ship. There is no appropriate or conventional provision for the ordination of dogs to the ministry. A drunken stranger who, on the eve of an offical christening and launching of a ship, smashes his bottle of whiskey on the bow of the vessel uttering: "I hereby christen thee Sam," does not perform the desired act.

The infelicities which Austin names 'MISFIRES', 'ABUSES', 'MISINVOCATIONS' cover various permutations and combinations of the transgression of the rules of actual performatives. He illustrates them in this way.[6]

INFELICITIES



With respect to infelicities, it must be noted that all conventional acts are liable to infelicity and not just acts of 'uttering words'. A speech act is also vulnerable to other problems such as being performed under duress or by mistake.

CLARIFYING THE CONSTATIVE AND THE PERFORMATIVE

As Austin moved towards categorizing and making more precise his understanding of performatives he discovered that the distinction between the constative and the performative was becoming blurred. In fact, the constative seemed to collapse into the performative. For example, consider these utterances.

> "I warn you that the truck is coming."
> "I guess that a truck is coming."
> "I state that a truck is coming."
> "A truck is coming."

The first of these is an act of warning, the second one of guessing, the third apparently one of stating, and the fourth may in fact be any one of these as determined by the context. Therefore, the various forms of constatives - reporting, asserting, stating, etc. - appear to be merely a subset of performatives. It may be thought that a distinction still persists between constatives and performatives in that 'non-stative' performatives are not liable to the same designation of truth and falsehood, as are constatives. For instance, so the argument may go, while performatives may be unhappy and infelicitous (that is, promising to do something with no intention to do so, or claiming to perform a certain act without the legitimate authority to do so), they are not true or false in the same way that constatives may be.

Upon closer examination, however, one must ask - as did Austin - whether the distinctions are in fact so clearly delineated. For instance, is not the assessment of the quality of a performative closely parallel to the question of truth and falsity? If one esteems an act of judging to be fair or unfair,

or speaks of estimates as right or wrong, does this not approximate the attribution of truth and falsity to the category of constatives?

It is primarily the above blurring of perimeters that led Austin to abandon the distinction he had maintained between the performative and the constative. He used this as an opportunity to flesh out more comprehensively his understanding of the performative.

Grammatical Criteria

Austin began to inquire into the possibility that there may be grammatical criteria for identifying the performative. He looked at mood, tense, and the function of first, second and third person performatives. His conclusion was that "a single simple criterion of grammar or vocabulary" that could identify the performative does not exist. Though conceding that it might be possible to produce a set of criteria involving both grammar and vocabulary, he did not pursue this line of thought very vigorously.

Re-casting the Performative

Austin re-focusses his investigation by returning to his earlier assertion that a performative is or is to be included as a part of the performance of an action.[7]

> Actions can only be performed by persons... the utterer must be the performer...There is something which is **at the moment of uttering being done by the person uttering.**

The use of the first person singular (or plural) present indicative active makes explicit who is performing a given

action, and the verbs that seem to be performative obviously serve to make explicit the action that is being performed. This is important to Austin since it forms the basis for his clarification of questionable performatives. He makes a distinction between primary utterances and explicit performatives. For instance:

(1) primary utterance: 'I shall be there',
(2) explicit performative: 'I promise that I shall be there'.

Austin contends that as language develops it becomes more **precise** and thereby makes clearer the meaning of what is being said. Likewise, he maintains, by making a performative more explicit it makes clearer the **force** of the utterance, in other words, 'how is it to be taken'.

The Explicit Performative

Austin employs a number of speech devices to elucidate the explicitness of a performative.[8]

1. **Mood**

   'Shut it, do' resembles the performative 'I order you to shut it.'

   'Shut it, if you like' resembles the performative 'I permit you to shut it'.

   'Very well then, shut it' resembles...'I consent to your shutting it.'

2. **Tone of Voice, Cadence, Emphasis**

   It's going to charge! (a warning);

   It's going to charge? (a question);

   It's going to charge!? (a protest).

3. **Adverbs and Adverbial Phrases**

   'probably...'

'...without fail'

phrases can be used to give emphasis, such as:

'You would do well never to forget that...'

4. **Connecting Particles**

'still' with the force of 'I insist that';

'therefore' with the force of 'I conclude that';

'although' with the force of 'I concede that'.

5. **Accompaniments of the utterance**

gestures (winks, pointings, shruggings...)

6. **The circumstances of the utterance**

'coming from **him**, I took it as an order, not as a request.'

the statement 'I shall leave you my watch' takes on a certain kind of significance if the health of the speaker is in question.

Although the purpose of this kind of delineation is to be more precise in the understanding of explicit performatives and to move in the direction of ruling out equivocation, even Austin admits that problems still exist. For instance, there is still the need to distinguish among formulae that function as performative, those that function as descriptive, and those that may function as both. Consider Austin's illustration, (from left to right: performatives, ambivalent performative/descriptive, descriptive)[9]

I thank	I am grateful	I feel grateful
I apologize	I am sorry	I repent

I criticize I censure	I blame	I am shocked by I am revolted by
I approve	I approve of	I feel approval

In order to move towards greater clarity, Austin suggests a test for the purpose of discerning what is a true performative. The test comprises a series of four questions.[10]

1. One could ask of someone who says for example 'I welcome you', "Does this person <u>really</u>?" If in answering this question it makes sense to doubt it then what we are dealing with here is the descriptive form, 'I welcome you', and not the performative 'I bid you welcome'.

2. Another question would be: Could one accomplish the action without actually saying anything? Can one accomplish the act of being sorry without apologizing, the act of being grateful without thanking, etc?

3. Thirdly, one could ask whether an adverb like 'deliberately' could be placed before the performative verb. For instance, one could say 'I deliberately approved her action' or 'I deliberately apologized' which would constitute a performative. To say 'I deliberately approved of her action,' however, would not be considered a performative utterance.

4. Fourthly, it may be reasonably asked if what is uttered could be literally false. When one says 'I am sorry', that could be a false utterance. In the case of the performative 'I apologize' it could only be insincere (unhappy). We should note, however, that the distinction between insincerity and falsehood remains somewhat blurred.

LOCUTIONARY, ILLOCUTIONARY, AND PERLOCUTIONARY

In continuing to address the unsatisfactory distinctions and imprecision of his concept of performatives, Austin introduces the theory of what he calls "illocutionary forces." He maintains that whenever one says anything one performs a number of distinguishable acts. To say anything is:[11]

> (A.a) always to perform the act of uttering certain noises (a 'phonetic' act), and the utterance is a phoneme (sic);
>
> (A.b) always to perform the act of uttering certain vocables or words, i.e. noises of certain types belonging to a certain vocabulary, in a certain construction, i.e conforming to and as conforming to a certain grammar....This act we may call a 'phatic' act, and the utterance which it is the act of uttering a 'pheme'.
>
> (A.c) generally to perform the act of using that pheme or its constituents with a certain more or less definite 'reference' (which together are equivalent to 'meaning'). This act we may call a 'rhetic' act, and the utterance...a 'rheme'.

The performance of such an act (i.e. A.abc) is the performance of a locutionary act. Utterances in this sense are locutions; that is, the use of an utterance with a more or less definite sense and reference - "The shutters are flapping."

Further, "to perform a locutionary act is in general...also and *eo ipso* to perform an illocutionary act."[12] This pertains to questioning, answering, warning, announcing, appointing,

identifying, and so on. Here, the performance of an illocutionary act has to do with the performance of an act in saying something not of saying something.

A perlocutionary act is that which one may succeed in performing by means of one's illocutionary act. "Saying something will often, or even normally, produce certain consequential effects upon the feelings, thoughts, or actions of the audience, or of the speaker, or of other persons."[13]

To illustrate let us return to our earlier example:

Locutionary act: the act of saying "The shutters are flapping."

Illocutionary act: by uttering the above one may perform the illocutionary act of hinting, stating, or exclaiming.

Perlocutionary act: by performing the illocutionary act of hinting, one may accomplish the perlocutionary act of getting the hearer to close and lock the shutters.

THEORY OF ILLOCUTIONARY FORCES

The progression of Austin's understanding and classification of performatives leads him to advance the theory of illocutionary forces. By his own admission he is aware that this theory is not exhaustive. He says: "I have purposely not embroiled the general theory with philosophical problems (some of them complex enough almost to merit their celebrity); this should not be taken to mean that I am unaware of them."[14]

Austin distinguishes five general classes of utterance under the rubric of illocutionary force.[15]

1. Verdictives - related to the giving of a verdict

(final or tentative) or a finding on something that is uncertain. Examples are: acquit, rule, estimate, assess, diagnose, rate, analyse, locate, measure.

2. Exercitives - pertains to exercising rights, power, or influence. Examples are: voting, ordering, warning, advising, excommunicating, bequeathing. It is giving a decision in favour or against a certain course of action.
3. Commissives - have to do with committing oneself to a certain undertaking or course of action. Examples are: promising, contracting, covenanting, giving one's word, engaging, pledging, betting.
4. Behabitives - concern the matter of attitudes and **social behaviour**. They include the "notion of reaction to other people's behaviour and fortunes." Examples are: congratulating, commending, cursing, apologizing and challenging.
5. Expositives - comprise a number of sub-categories and are difficult to define. Generally speaking they elucidate how "our utterances fit into the course of an argument or conversation." Questions are raised as to whether at one and the same time they may not be verdictive, exercitive, behabitive or commissive. Examples are: remark, affirm, deny, deduce, mention interpret, inform, testify, postulate.

A CRITIQUE OF J.L. AUSTIN

As we have noted above, Austin is aware of the incomplete

nature of his theory. What he sets out to do in How To Do Things With Words is to move beyond the original distinction he maintained between constatives and performatives, replacing it with a more general and clear theory of speech acts.

Philosopher John R. Searle - the 'heir-apparent' to Austin - has developed his own theory of "speech acts". It must be said, however, that despite his critique of Austin it is his insights and work that form the basis of Searle's own project. In fact, we would argue that what Searle has done is to continue the process of sharpening and clarifying Austin's whole theory of illocutionary force.[16]

Searle argues that the distinction Austin ends up with in regards to locutionary acts and illocutionary acts collapses under further scrutiny. His point is that the two above-mentioned classes of acts cannot be separated in a distinct and mutually exclusive manner. Therefore in a sentence such as, "I hereby promise that I am going to do it," the meaning contains the illocutionary force of the locutionary act of promising.[17]

Searle writes:

> In the case of illocutionary acts we succeed in doing what we are trying to do by getting our audience to recognize what we are trying to do. But the 'effect' on the hearer is not a belief or response, it consists simply in the hearer understanding the utterance of the speaker.[18]

Searle disagrees with Austin's claim that the locutionary and the illocutionary are abstractions of the total speech act, arguing instead that even though there may be a difference in the concept of an utterance with a certain meaning and the concept of an utterance with a certain force, the classes overlap in the

absence of a clear determination of force.

Searle also finds exception with Austin's classification stating - quite accurately we may add - that Austin failed to realize or did not take account of the fact that his was really a classification of illocutionary verbs from the English language, and not of illocutionary acts. The verbs really signify the manner in which a particular illocutionary act is performed. In fairness to Austin, it must be noted that this is more a matter of clarification than a departure from the thrust of his argument, since illocutionary acts cannot be separated in any sensible way from the verbs that accomplish them. It is true, however, that some of the verbs Austin lists in his categories do not satisfy the definitions he gives for them (for example, many of his expositives could easily be verdictives).

Searle then proposes a re-classification of Austin's categories. Therefore instead of:

	Phonetic
Locutionary	Phatic
	Rhetic
Illocutionary	

Searle proposes as a new typolgy for acts:

Phonetic

Phatic

Propositional

Illocutionary

He symbolizes the general form of an illocutionary act in this way: $\underline{F}\ \underline{(p)}$, where F represents the illocutionary force and p the proposition.

THE PERFORMATIVITY OF LITURGICAL LANGUAGE

We turn now from the explication of Austin's performative language theory - with attending critique - to the consideration of how the derived insights may be helpful in aiding our investigation into the meaning of liturgical language.

A. C. Thiselton has suggested that there are three types of performatives especially relevant to liturgy, namely, those which Austin called commissives, behabitives and exercitives. Since the commissive commits the utterer to a certain course of action, then words from the liturgy such as 'promise', 'vow', 'pledge', and 'undertake', rest for their happiness or unhappiness on the utterer's intention at the time of speaking and on his subsequent action.[19]

As we have noted above, behabitives have to do with attitudes and reactions to someone else's acts and behaviour. Therefore, in the liturgy they would include thanking, blessing, cursing and praising.

> The exclamation 'God is good' may sometimes function not so much as a description of God as or an assent to a doctrine, as an act of response to God's act. It is more than simply a true-or-false statement. We do not normally talk about true-or-false praise, true-or-false apologies, and so on, although we might talk about praise and apologies as being sincere or insincere. Whether an apology turned out to have been sincere will at least partly turn on subsequent conduct. In such can we ask: 'was the act of praise or apology consistent with subsequent acts?'[20]

In listing his examples of exercitives - having to do with a decision that something **is** to be so - Thiselton is careful to point out that dedicating, naming, baptizing, proclaiming, warning, pardoning and so forth, do not "**do** things simply by

causal force". Citing the work of Austin and Donald Evans to support his contention, he maintains that

> it is not the physical act of uttering a warning, or a pardon, or a baptism formula that actually 'does' anything, but the status of the pronouncement within the whole framework of pre-supposition, status, authority, and propriety on which the utterance depends for its performative force...Any idea of 'word-magic' must be strenuously resisted.[21]

Although the foregoing is a helpful start in applying the insights of performatives to liturgical language, a much broader understanding is needed. Liturgical scholar Jean Ladrière offers such a context of understanding.

THREE MODES OF PERFORMATIVITY

Using the work of Austin and Searle, Jean Ladrière undertakes the development of a theory of the performativity of liturgical language. Ladriere respects the complexity of liturgical language and while he admits that a rather detailed analysis would yield a "more or less adequate categorization of the illocutionary forms of liturgical language," he realizes that something more is really needed. This something more has to do with how the various illocutionary forms are unitively connected and held together in the definitive totality of liturgical language. In other words, what are the internal operative characteristics of liturgical language and what is it that effectively preserves a unity within this kind of language?

Ladrière asks:

> What is the characteristic performativity of liturgical language?

He answers by stating:

> This question must refer, not to the sentences which go to make up liturgical language, taken individually, but to that language itself, to the general principle by which it functions. Hence the term "performativity" should no longer be understood in the sense of a "determined illocutionary form" but in the sense of a "general principle of operativity."[22]

This understanding requires us to treat liturgical language as a whole, indeed as the general context within which the various forms of liturgical speech function.

Ladrière suggests that there are three discernible modes of performativity in liturgical language: "that of an existential induction, that of an institution, and that of a 'presentification'."[23] He goes on to state, however, that though these three modes are reciprocal, that of "presentification" is the one that most unites liturgical language. Let us examine all three.

Existential Induction

By "existential induction" Ladrière is referring to "an operation by means of which an expressive form awakens in the person using it a certain affective disposition which opens up existence to a specific field of reality." We should note the correspondence of this idea with the perlocutionary aspects of language, outlined by Austin and Searle.

One question that needs to be addressed is that concerning the means by which the afore-mentionned effect is accomplished. The way into this investigation, as Ladrière notes, will lead us to employ an analysis of what performative verbs occur as well as of the role of personal pronouns. He argues that personal

pronouns indicate the "places" language users can occupy, while at the same time connecting actors and linguistic operations, thereby enacting the affective functioning of language as behaviour.[24]

In the liturgical sentence: "I offer you my praise, O Lord!" the utterer indicates - by using the first person personal pronoun - that the speaker has taken on the performative operations implicit in the enunciated proposition. By uttering this speech act he not only betrays a certain affective disposition and self-understanding (i.e. a worshipper in adulatory relationship with God), but also commits himself to a subsequent course of action (i.e. the commissive acts of praising and worshipping). As well, by so uttering he submits to the constitutive rules of language and participates in the circular referential reality of those rules. In other words, although he submits to these rules it is only his employment of them in speech acts that enables them to become operative, in effect, to have life.

If we return to the above sentence -**"I offer you my praise, O Lord"** - the second-person pronoun 'you' indicates the position of the One being addressed in relation to the utterer, and is clarified by the referent "O Lord". Further clarification of this 'you' is made possible by the context (i.e. worship, devotion) in which the utterance occurs.

Since liturgical language is predominantly plural in form, it employs generously the pronouns "we" and "us". Although this indicates that there is more than one speaker, the collective

voice of these speakers function as if there in fact were only one. The liturgical use of performative phrases like "Let us pray", "We now humbly give thanks", "We ask you, O God", "Let us confess", expresses illocutionary acts that presuppose attitudes of gratitude, trust, submission, contrition, veneration, and so forth. By employing the 'terms' "God", "Lord" "Creator" and "Father" the liturgical community is conversing with the One who speaks to them through the texts and discourse of the liturgy. It is the attitudes that are presupposed by the illocutionary acts which help to give the above 'terms' their meaning. Ladrière states that[25]

> by their own connotations these terms specify the range of those attitudes. These attitudes form a system: they reinforce one another and in their very reciprocity constitute a basic disposition, which, precisely because it is a disposition, is of an affective, and not a representative, order. In its very functioning, liturgical language is the putting into effect of certain specific acts which have their repercussion in the affectivity of the speakers.

Institution

This second mode of performativity distinguished by Ladrière relates to the essential communitarian dimension of the gathered liturgical participants. It is Ladrière's position that in "pronouncing the 'we', each of the participants to some extent takes upon himself the acts which occur at the same moment, and by virtue of the same words, by all the others. These acts obey very exact rules. They have specific characters and do not depend on the arbitrary impulse of any one speaker."[26]

What Ladrière is arguing is that liturgical language is the vehicle by means of which the worshipping community is

instituted, and not merely a report or a description of what that community does or ought to do. Further, the illocutionary force is perceptible in the specific things that are requested (e.g. the "thy kingdom come") and the particular blessings and benefits (e.g. "We thank you for the splendour of the whole creation...We thank you for the blessing of family and friends...we thank you for your Son Jesus Christ"[27]) for which gratitude is expressed.

But more than this: the community which is constituted by this kind of speech, and therein dialectically affirms and receives confirmation of its identity and unity, is also intimately connected with the trans-spatial historical community traditionally named the "communion of saints". Liturgical language serves to induce the kinds attitudes and consciousness that carries the participants into the mystery of unification which joins them with this "communion of saints". While it must be admitted that this mystery transcends the agency of liturgical language, it must also be conceded that it is the language of the liturgy - under the gracious auspices of the One to whom the speech is addressed - that ushers the paricipants into it.

Presentification

The foregoing leads us to Ladrière's third mode of performativity and the one he considers to unite liturgical language most decisively. He states:[28]

> By all those acts which it effects, this language makes present for the participants, not as a spectacle, but as a reality whose efficacy they take into their very own life, that about which it speaks and which it effects in diverse ways:

> that is, the mystery of Christ, his life and his death, and his resurrection: the revelation conveyed to us in him of the mystery of God: the accomplishment of the central plan by virtue of which we are called to become children of God, co-heirs of Christ in eternal life.

The effect of this presentification is made possible in three related ways, Ladrière contends: **Repetition, Proclamation, and sacramentality.** Repetition has to do not with the mere rehearsing of liturgical texts, but the "resumption into acts of today of words written or spoken at a given moment in the past."[29] Therefore the effectiveness of the text and of the speakers' utterances converge and the resulting illocutionary power carries forth the "revelatory essence of the original words."

Proclamation refers to the confession of faith that results from the culmination of the process of repetition. This confession of faith discursively articulates the mystery into which the worshipping community has been ushered by the speech of the liturgy.[30]

The most profound actualizing effect, however, occurs through the sacramental aspect of liturgical language. Here **sacramentality** pertains to the kind of performativity that inheres in the celebration of the Lord's Supper, as primary example. The celebrant, goes beyond the mere commemoration of the Last Supper, and re-presents the performative value and efficacy of the words of institution originally given by Christ. In the original event Christ enabled his words to do what they meant. Within the context of worship and prayer, the celebrant restores to these words their original performativity and thereby

participates in the enduring, living and dynamic essence of the liturgical text and constituency; this, notwithstanding the fact that it is primarily the present moment which concerns illocutionary force.

One of the most important points that Ladrière makes has to do with the role of faith in this entire enterprise. He, and we, understand that faith constitutes both the starting point which grounds liturgical language and the goal toward which it seeks to move the participants. Faith, for him, gives real efficacy to this kind of language, endowing it with performativity, and orienting the community to the "Thou" to which its speech is directed.

> faith is a resumption of the mystery of Christ, the acceptance of salvation and hope of benefits yet to come.[31]

Or as Vergote puts it:

> Faith...is a disposition towards God which is actualized only in expression. To express it is thus to effectuate it. So no faith exists that is not actualized in a rite that is indissolubly gesture and word.[32]

Zimmerman adds:

> The power of liturgy as a language of faith is that of the liturgical celebration definitively revealing Mystery in such a way as to draw the worshipping community into that Mystery.[33]

Ultimately, it is faith which provides the context for the liturgical community's self-understanding, and which constitutes the vehicle of response and orientation towards that community's 'Prime Referent' - God. It is the dynamic mediary between God and the faith response of the community. As such, it foundationally permeates the fabric of performativity in liturgical language.

A BRIEF CASE STUDY

We move now to the consideration of a particular liturgical text from the perspective of its performativity. The selected text is the **"Service of the Ministry to the Sick"** found in the Book of Alternative Services (BAS) of the Anglican Church of Canada.

We selected the Book of Alternative Services because it is one of the most recent 'revisions' of a major liturgical text, and because it stands in continuity with a rich liturgical tradition. Further, our choice of the **"Service of the Ministry to the Sick"** stems from our pastoral observation that this aspect of the Church's ministry is particularly meaningful to many people, both those actively involved in the life of the Church, as well as those with little or no affiliation to the Church.[34]

Liturgical scholar Joseph Schaller offers this observation with regard to the texts containing the kind of liturgy of which we are speaking.

> The texts establish and /or reinforce an existential relationship between the person who is the object of the prayer's concern and God, who holds the power to ultimately affect that person's situation.[35]

The specialized ritual act of ministering to the sick through prayer, laying on of hands, anointing and Holy Communion, receives its intelligibility from the context of the historical Christian commnunity, its particular language and speech, its self-understanding, its faith, and its sacred text, the Bible. The actions, content and performance of this ritual act define a "world of meaning" and the specific context into which the

participants are initiated and from which they may derive a more profound understanding of what they are performing. This act in which designated members of the liturgical community participate, not only communicates that something of value is taking place, but also that something is **actually being done.**

Schaller suggests that within the context of this kind of specialized act, "performatives which have been identified as of the commissive type generally entail 'role assignments,' which identify and thereby reinforce certain roles and attendant responsibilities which constitute relationships among the participants."[26]

MINISTRY TO THE SICK[27]

The service begins with the Ministry of the Word whereby the minister opens with the greeting:

> The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,
> and the love of God,
> and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit,
> be with you (all).

and the assembled respond:

> **And also with you.**

The foregoing greeting as well as the subsequent prayers, among which may be found the following:

> O God of peace,
> who taught us that in returning and rest we shall be saved, in quietness and confidence shall be our strength; by the might of your Spirit lift us, we pray, to your presence, where we may be still and know that you are God; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

serve to delimit that which is about to take place. In other words it marks a kind of **boundary** which signals to those participating that something quite different from that which they

were doing before is now beginning (i.e. providing they have not just come from a similar activity. But even then a new moment is being signalled).

The perlocutionary effect of the opening greeting and prayers may be that of evincing the affective disposition desired for all participants and the generation of a profound sense of the presence of God - "lift us, we pray, to your presence."

The greeting and opening prayers section also contains a variety of appropriate scripture lessons to be read. This recalls the repetitive dimension of Ladrière's notion of presentification as outlined above. These are followed by an optional time for 'Confession and Absolution'. Then comes the Laying on of Hands and Anointing.

This part of the service opens with a declaration by the minister which includes a dimension of prayer. This prayer supplies the moment when the healing power of God is specifically and particularly requested for 'this' sick person.

> Holy scripture teaches us
> that in acts of healing and restoration
> our Lord Jesus and his disciples
> laid hands upon the sick (and anointed them).
> By so doing they made known
> the healing power and presence of God.
> Pray that as we follow our Lord's example,
> you may know his unfailing love.

By so uttering, the minister reveals the self-understanding and affective attitudes of the assembled (existential induction); declares their collective identity and lends clarity to the roles of the participants (Institution); lays claim to some of the benefits promised that community (Institution); calls upon the

assembled to exercise faith (Presentification); and intentionally makes evident their trans-spatial relationship with the 'super-historical' mystery known as the "communion of saints" (Institution).

The service proceeds with the minister - and presumably those assembled where practicable - either 'just' laying hands on the sick person, or both laying hands and anointing with oil accompanied by making the sign of the cross on the sick person's forehead.

In the former case, the minister would say:

> (Name), may the Lord in his love and mercy uphold you by the grace and power on the Holy Spirit. Amen.

In the case of the latter, the utterance would be:

> (Name), through this holy anointing
> may the Lord in his love and mercy uphold you
> by the grace and power of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Following the anointing, the minister may add this prayer.

> As you are outwardly anointed with this oil,
> so may our heavenly Father grant you
> the inward anointing of the Holy Spirit.
> Of his great mercy,
> may he forgive you your sins,
> release you from suffering,
> and restore you to wholeness and strength.
> May he deliver you from all evil,
> preserve you in all goodness,
> and bring you to everlasting life;
> through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The service then ends with the celebration of the sacrament of Holy Communion, including the Great Prayer of Thanksgiving. Contained within the eucharistic celebration are those very same aspects of 'presentification' outlined above.

Concluding Reflection

By uttering and enacting the above liturgy, the minister performs a number of things. Firstly, the cleric alters and clarifies the roles of the gathered to be that of not only "fellow brothers and sisters in Christ" of the sick person, but also ministers of God's healing power, which is mediated by the Holy Spirit through them and the ritual act in which they participate. There is no intention to imbue this act with the assumption that the prayer of anointing effects a kind of magical transformation of the sick person from physical illness to health - although the community would certainly be open to God's action of restoring physical health. Rather, the prayer and the act 'identifies' and 'sets apart' the sick person as the object and focus of the community's love and concern and the recipient of Christ's healing ministry.

Secondly, the minister declares the effective and affective disposition towards the healing action of God of all those gathered and at the same time embodies a portion of this same action of healing. This thereby illustrates the illocutionary force of that in which those members have participated.

Thirdly, the minister and those gathered become agents of God in locating this person's sickness within the general human experience of sickness. And, as Schaller notes, this "sickness then is seen as having significance on a different plane: the sickness of the Christian places him or her at the heart of the meaning of salvation history." We concur with Schaller who suggests further that the commnunal relationships strengthened by this act may be understood as

> signifying the relationship which God has to the world through Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit....In participating in the human ritual which asks for healing and peace, the participants are incorporated into the cosmic pattern of God's work of redemption. It is the capacity of language to function with a multiplicity of meanings through varieties of 'sense' and 'reference' which allows a sacramental theory to become more intelligible.[38]

We will close this chapter with observations of the liturgical scholar Joseph Schaller on performative language theory and liturgy.

> Performative theory and the theory of speech acts focusses our attention on what is accomplished in 'saying' something. From this perspective prayer is analyzed and validated according to what happens 'in praying'. The objective in the prayers of the liturgy of anointing is , from a performative point of view, not exclusively the future restoration of health of the individual, or even the "supernatural" theological benefits of forgiveness of sin and preparation for final salvation, but rather the existential shift in the status or situation of the person in relationship to a world of meaning....Thus, by articulating a particular relationship between the individual, God and the praying community, that relationship is efficaciously established.[39]

In the following chapter, we will explore Ricoeur's theory of metaphor and consider how the insights derived from such an exploration, may assist us in our investigation into the meaning of liturgical language.

CHAPTER 3

> Metaphor is not first of all the language of poets but ordinary language. We use metaphors all the time in order to say something about things we know little about....Ordinary language is metaphorical through and through...there is no 'meta-level inquiry' which will unravel the ambiguous and tentative character of all our interpretations of reality.[1]

In the preceding chapters we have employed 'ritual' and 'performative language theory', as lenses through which to direct our investigative gaze upon the landscape of liturgical language. We turn now to our third 'lens' - metaphor - with which we shall continue our investigation into the meaning of this phenomenon.

That the study of metaphor enjoys serious attention and consideration from a wide variety of fields and disciplines, in part attests to its fundamental role and significance in human life and language. Theologians, grammarians, psychologists, philosophers (of both science and religion) literary critics, poets, sociologists and others, all investigate and comment on metaphor in their respective areas of discourse.

This pervasive nature of metaphor is not at all surprising to a number of scholars who contend that metaphor is as fundamental as thought and not merely a poetic device employed to create new meaning. Invoking the scholarly support of such scholars as Paul Ricoeur, Owen Barfield and Ernst Cassirer, Sallie McFague TeSelle claims that metaphor

> can be **the** source for new insight because all human discovery is by metaphor. Metaphor unites us and our world at a level

> below subject-object, mind-body; it is the nexus of 'man in the being of the world.' the intimation of our original unity with all that is.[2]

TeSelle perceives metaphor to be at the root of all our language and thought, and holds that we can "never get behind metaphor and symbol." She says that for human beings, metaphor is the same as what "instinctual groping is for the rest of the universe - the power of getting from here to there."[3] Formulated in this way metaphor is seen as "human movement". This echoes Sewell's thesis that the human 'method' of knowing is essentially metaphorical.[4]

Following Sewell and others, McFague TeSelle contends that:

> Metaphorical thinking, then, is not simply poetic language nor primitive language; it is the way human beings, selves (not mere minds) **move** in all areas of discovery, whether these be scientific, religious, poetic, social, political, or personal. The old Cartesian dichotomy between mind and body, objective and subjective, thought and feeling is not relevant to a radically metaphorical pattern of human movement and growth; human beings are organisms, not machines, and like other organisms they grope...[5]

This groping, she goes on to say, is a kind of fundamental "erotic" desire to unite with "what is"; a yearning to be fulfilled and to reach toward ultimate purpose and meaning, like the Platonic Eros. As such, metaphor may be understood as truly indigenous to all human 'being', learning and thought, and therefore fundamentally central to all humanly constructed disciplines of creative endeavour and scientific inquiry.

To argue this, then, is to say that whether one is investigating the field of literature or philosophy, of theology, or social science, of physics and pure sciences, the

centrality of metaphor will be discovered.

The literary critic John Middleton Murry suggests that:

> Metaphor is as ultimate as speech itself, and speech as ultimate as thought....Metaphor appears as the instinctive and necessary act of the mind exploring reality and ordering experience.[6]

In the area of science, physicists have long observed the significance of metaphor in the formulation of models. Jacob Bronowski comments on just this kind of observation.

> We cannot form any theory to explain, say, the workings of nature without forming in our mind some pattern of movement, some arrangement and rearrangement of the units, which derives from our experience....In this sense, the whole of science is shot through and through with metaphors, which transfer and link one part of our experience to another, and find likenesses between the parts. All our ideas derive from and embody such metaphorical likenesses.[7]

The foregoing illustration of the pervasiveness of metaphor in understanding human reality obviously has epistemological implications. By claiming that metaphor **is the human method of investigating the universe,** Elizabeth Sewell is arguing for an understanding of human thought as one term of the metaphor. In other words, her argument is that human beings - with all their concrete manifestations and particularities - are themselves the "figure", or image, in terms of which they may engage and comprehend whatever it is they are concerned to comprehend.

James Olney carries Sewell's contention perhaps a little to far when he argues:

> A theology, a philosophy, a physics or a metaphysics - properly seen, these are all autobiography recorded in other characters and other symbols....A metaphor...through which we stamp our own image in the face of nature, allows us

> to connect the known of ourselves to the unknown of the world, and, making available new relational patterns, it simaultaneously organizes the self into a new and richer entity....Metaphor says very little about what the world is...but a great deal about what I am.[8]

The point we want to make is that the centrality and importance of metaphor cannot be overstated. It is at the bottom of, or rather, "behind" human knowing, as presupposition or premise. It is not only the method of human thought, but also the language, the appropriate expression of that method. As such, the implications for our investigation into the meaning of liturgical language are many. Liturgical language is highly metaphorical and therefore indispensable in opening up a particular and dynamic way of apprehending human reality and of 'groping' after the ultimate Mystery of the universe. The heuristic models of the sciences are analogues of liturgical language.

ISSUES IN DEFINING METAPHOR

It may seem to the reader that what we have been doing hitherto in this chapter is a kind of defining of metaphor. That is only partly accurate. In a preliminary sort of way, we have been addressing the breadth of metaphor and more precisely its centrality. One reason for proceeding in this way was to emphasize the ubiquitous nature of metaphor, as well as to draw attention to the fact that in the very defining of it we are engaging in a metaphorical process.

Any responsible inquiry into metaphor, however, must clearly delineate what it is and what it is not; we cannot say that everything is metaphor. The task of defining metaphor is not an

easy or simple one; H. H. Lieb claims to have discovered 125 different definitions.[9] Part of the challenge lies in the fact that various fields bring diverse interests and curiosities to the study of metaphor; whereas the concepts of 'imagination' and 'vision' occupy literary critics, terms like 'paradigm' and 'model' are more the preoccupation of those coming from a perspective of philosophy of science

Following Janet Soskice, we would agree that it is useful to try to derive a basic definition that adequately cuts across disciplines and fields. Her working definition of metaphor is as follows:

> metaphor is that figure of speech whereby we speak about one thing in terms which are seen to be suggestive of another.

In explaining this definition, she is quick to point out that in using the term 'speak' she is refering to metaphor as a "phenomenon of language use (and not that it is oral)", and that employing the term 'thing' she has in mind any "object or state of affairs, and not necessarily a physical object."[10]

There is nothing complex about this definition, it is simple yet broad. Its simplicity, however, highlights an often overlooked or loosely entertained feature of metaphor: that it is a **figure of speech**, a form of language use. What we support in this definition is the basic clarity it brings to a sometimes confusing competition of claims about the nature and function of metaphor. Thus, while literary critical accounts and philososphical and psychological insights may variously conceive of metaphor as 'a process of the imagination', 'an emotive

response', 'a fusion of sense and sensa', 'a transfer of meaning', a 'perception', and while non-linguistic observations may characterize the use of metaphor, it must be maintained that by basic definition metaphor is primarily a figure of speech, and then by broader understanding, a process or a mental act. Of course there is an interconnection between the figure of speech that metaphor is, and the processes or mental acts used to extend it and understand its meaning. Though not confined to the linguistic setting, the study of metaphor must first begin there.

Soskice contends that introducing inaccurate terminology into definitions of metaphor "arises from a failure to distinguish two tasks: that of providing a nominal definition that allows us to identify metaphor, and that of providing a functional account that tells us how metaphor works."[11]

Paul Ricoeur - whose work we will be considering in more detail below - supports the distinction between a functional rendering and a nominal definition of metaphor. Following Leibniz, he argues that the "nominal definition allows us to identify something; the real definition shows how it is brought about...the nominal definition should not be abolished by the real definition."[12]

Earl R. Mac Cormac's insights may be helpful here, although not obviously so. He describes metaphor as "the juxtaposition of referents that produces semantic conceptual anomaly". To explain what he means by a semantic and conceptual understanding of the juxtaposition of seemingly ungrammatical and contradictory referents, he argues that metaphor could be regarded as:

> a process that exists at three interrelated

> levels: (1) metaphor as a language process - the possible movement from ordinary language to diaphor to epiphor and back to ordinary language, (2) metaphor as a semantic and syntactic process - the explanation of metaphor in terms of linguistic theory, and (3) metaphor as a cognitive process set in the context of a larger evolutionary knowledge process - metaphor explained not only as a semantic process but as an underlying cognitive process without which new knowledge might not be possible.[13]

Mac Cormac sees these three processes as really three aspects of what he calls the metaphorical process. Those aspects are: surface language, semantics, and cognition. The three aspects are inextricably interconnected in discerning the nature, extension, and meaning of metaphor. While recognizing their interconnectedness, however, he appears to support our contention that the study of metaphor must begin - though by no means end - with what he calls surface language use; this is not to say that metaphor **'begins'** in surface language use.

Perhaps we could draw on a part of the process of human birth to help further illustrate what is being said here. Normally speaking, after the moment of conception the *foetus* normally goes through a 40-week period of development and growth in the womb before being physically born. At the moment of birth a new and unique expression of life comes into 'out-of-womb' reality, one that obviously possessed a very concrete antecedent reality in the *in utero* maturational process. It was not until the baby was born, however, that a fuller appreciation and 'study' could be made of that new life (e.g. gender, colour of eyes, hair, skin, shape of face and family resemblances) - modern medical technology notwithstanding. Similarly, it is only when a metaphor is 'born' in speech - when it surfaces - that we are

able to begin that process of appreciating and studying its nature and its fuller significance and meaning, all the while recogizing that there is a very real antecedent process and life behind its 'birth'.

Mac Cormac puts it this way:

> Metaphors appear as linguistic devices in surface language, but the intentional ability to produce a semantic anomaly that suggests a new meaning originates in a cognitive process. The human mind combines concepts that are not normally associated to form new concepts.[14]

The attempt to address more fully the issues in defining metaphor leads us to make some other observations. Following Ricoeur and Soskice, and to some extent Mac Cormac, we would agree that the basic unit of metaphor is semantic and not syntactic. In fact, we would state that even though there are syntactic guidelines that pertain to the use of metaphor, there is no particular syntactic form that governs its expression. Further, we may observe in the following metaphorical utterances - which may be found in various parts of the liturgy -

'God is our heavenly Father.'
'Heavenly Father, have mercy on us.'
'Is God our heavenly Father?'

that metaphor is not confined to any single "mood", and that it is not limited to being an assertion.

Moreover, having contended that the basic unit in which a metaphor consists is semantic, we have somewhat betrayed our position on the 'scope of metaphor.' That is, following I. A. Richards, Ricoeur, and Soskice, we regard the word as an insufficient primary unit for identifying a successful metaphor. For not only is the phrase or the sentence necessary to

discern unambiguously the meaning of the metaphor, but sometimes even the wider referential context. For instance, in the biblical phrase:

"a great cloud of witnesses" (Hebrews 12:1)

the word **cloud** alone could not yield a successful metaphorical meaning, since its lexical value refers only to those visible masses of water or ice in the air. Further, even though it is recognized as a metaphorical utterance when taken as a phrase, it is only the wider biblical, theological, and liturgical context that enables that utterance to be recognize as a reference to the 'trans-spatial communion of saints', and that helps to flesh out its significance to the Christian community.

Ricoeur argues that part of the unfortunate legacy that a purely rhetorical treatment of metaphor bequeaths is an "excessive and damaging emphasis put initially on the word, or, more specifically, on the noun or name, and on naming...whereas a properly semantic treatment of metaphor proceeds from the recognition of the sentence as the primary unit of meaning."[15]

It is important to add, however, that Ricoeur is not discounting the crucial role of the word in discerning metaphorical meaning. Rather, borrowing from the vocabulary of Max Black, he regards the word as the "focus" and the sentence as the "frame" - that which gives shape to the contextual action.

While we agree with Ricoeur on the inadequacy of the word for fleshing out full metaphorical meaning, we might not go so far as to say that only a sentence may do that. In other words, we believe that metaphorical meaning can also be contrued from

clauses and phrases. (In fairness to Ricoeur he does admit this.)

We turn now to consider Paul Ricoeur's theory of metaphor more fully.

PAUL RICOEUR AND METAPHOR

We want to begin first by asserting what may seem to be the obvious, that is: the work of Paul Ricoeur must be placed along the historical continuum of creative inquiry into the nature of metaphor.

Background and Setting

Although credit is traditionally given to Aristotle for the first efforts to understand the nature of metaphor, because of its use in supplying new 'names' which extended language, it "implicitly had a place in one of the earliest-known controversies concerning language: whether language is grounded in nature or in convention."[16]

It was Aristotle, however - in contrast to Plato's disdain for the niceties of eloquence - even though he was himself a master of metaphor, who gave due and protracted consideration to this figure of speech as an explicit subject matter, in his writings both on poetics and on rhetoric. His view of metaphor - although appreciative, in that he based it on analogy which he regarded as important for reasoning - relegated it to the domain of a rhetorical device which was used to ornament language. As such, he understood metaphor as another way of saying something which could be said in a literal way. This came to be known as the 'Substitution Theory' of metaphor and was given a 'scholarly'

boost from Quintilian who wrote, among other comments to champion the cause of metaphor: "The ornate is something that goes beoynd what is merely lucid and acceptable" (De Institutione Oratoria, 803. 61, trans. H.E. Butler).

Cicero was another of the ancients who supported the decorative view of metaphor. He saw its development as arising out of necessity.

> As clothes were first invented to protect us against cold, and afterwards began to be used for the sake of adornment and dignity, so the metaphorical employment of words began because of poverty, but was brought into common use for the sake of entertainment. (De Oratore, 3. 155, E.W.Sutton and H. Rackham.)

Following the tradition of Plato's disapproval of this so-called 'decorative' use of language, English philosopher John Locke systematically denounced the figurative use of language, all the while failing to acknowledge his own complicity in this kind of language use.

> If we would speak of things as they are we must allow that...all the artificial and figurative application of words eloquence hath invented, are for nothing else but to insinuate wrong **ideas**, move the passions, and thereby mislead the judgement...[17]

Locke succeeded in setting the tone for the fact that metaphor was largely ignored in philosophy - a development behind which the rationalists and the empiricists united. It was the Romantics, with their rejection of the idealization and rationality of Classicism in general and Neoclassicism in particular, who could be credited with keeping alive this decorative and figurative use of language.

It was not, however, a static understanding of metaphor over

which Romanticism sat as sentinel. The descendants of that Romanticism, among whom would be numbered Jean-Jacques Rousseau, sought to expand and extend the ornamentalist view of metaphor and thereby, somewhat inadvertently, paved the way for metaphor to be treated as more that ornament. This was picked up by people such as S.T. Coleridge and his student I. A. Richards (from whom Max Black borrowed heavily), who gave substance to the work of moving beyond this restricted view of metaphor. Therefore, through a rather roundabout route it went from being understood as that figurative speech which lacked the cognitive content of the literal term with which it was associated, to being regarded - through Max Black's interaction theory - as having irreducible meaning and a distinct cognitive content.[18]

We have spoken of the substitution theory of metaphor, a decorative way of saying what could be said literally. Also, we have referred briefly to the essential tenet of what is known as the Incremental theories of metaphor, which view it as possessing a unique cognitive force that enables one to say things that can be said in no other way. There is another group of theories that view metaphor in terms of the affective impact it has; these are known as the Emotive theories of metaphor.

Paul Ricoeur's theory of metaphor falls into the Incremental group. We turn our attention now to the major elements of his theory.

Ricoeur's Theory of Metaphor

Paul Ricoeur is a contemporary French philosopher (equally at home in Chicago) whose voluminous works concern themselves

with the issues involved with the recovery of meaning in the context of human reality. In his massive work, The Rule of Metaphor: Multi-disciplinary studies of the creation of meaning in language, he argues for the radical and ubiquitous rule of metaphor in creating meaning in language use.

Basically speaking, Ricoeur's theory of metaphor is a theory which understands metaphor as a semantic event made possible by what he calls three kinds of tensions. By claiming a semantic identity for metaphor, he is rejecting the Aristotelian notion of metaphor as merely ornamentation in language, as being sufficient to explicate the nature, scope and function of metaphor. Further, since he understands the basic unit of metaphorical utterance to be the sentence, his may be called a theory of metaphorical statement and not of naming; this he says is by definition a "theory of the production of metaphorical meaning."[19]

We must hasten to add, however, that by laying stress on the metaphorical statement, Ricoeur is not trying to obliterate the role of naming or of the word. Consider this:

> the real definition of metaphor in terms of statement cannot obliterate its nominal definition in terms of word or name, because the word remains the locus of the effect of metaphorical meaning....Using Max Black's terminology...the word remains the 'focus' even while it requires the 'frame' of the sentence. And the reason why the word remains the locus of the effect of metaphorical meaning is that the function of the word within discourse is to embody the semantic identity. It is this identity that metaphor affects.[20]

Borrowing Monroe Beardsley's term, Ricoeur states elsewhere that the "metaphorical twist" is something that happens to words,

even though it is the phrase or the sentence which provides the context for the "emergent meaning".[21] This regard for the appropriate role of words in metaphorical statements is part of his understanding of their role as mediator in both semiotics and semantics.

Following insights gleaned from Ferdinand de Saussure's work in linguistics, Emile Benveniste employs the terms 'semiotics' and 'semantics' to refer to two forms of linguistics. Semiotics has to do with the structuralist system of signs, which compose its basic unit, and semantics to do with sentences, which form its basic unit. Following Benveniste, Ricoeur regards metaphor to be a function of what the French Sanskritist - as he calls him - calls 'discourse' [**discours**]. "It is in discourse, realized in sentences, that language is formed and takes shape. There language begins."[22] Ricoeur then contends that the semantics of discourse is not reducible to semiotics, because the latter is a closed system, self-referential and devoid of reference to a life-world. Ricoeur states, "To say with de Saussure that language is a system of signs is to characterize language in just one of its aspects and not in its total reality."[23]

Ricoeur, however, makes a distinction with respect to de Saussure's notion of signs. Whereas the latter understands signs as a word **par excellence**, Ricoeur sees the sign as being wholly within the language system, and suggests that the word correlates with an idea.[24] From here, he proceeds to make some bold claims about language use; his fundamental contention being that language is actualized when it is used as discourse. In this actualization language assumes a temporal dimension which

characterizes it as an event, an event which has "instantaneous existence" and then disappears. The event consists in the discursive exchange between interlocutors, which establishes it as communication and as relational. Also, because this discourse is linked by event to the speaker, it is therefore self-referential.

While recognizing that event could not fully describe the totality of discourse, Ricoeur attributes meaning to that which can be identified and reidentified as the same within the event of discourse, as well as that which can be repeated or spoken about in other words. Meaning not only permits the "repeatability of an event", but when the event has expended its instantaneous existence, it is this same meaning (or residue) which endures.[25]

Ricoeur believes this meaning to be at one and the same time static (in that it remains the same and endures) and dynamic. To explain this, he employs an analysis of the sentence - the basic unit of discourse - including its predicative and identifying propositional functions. His resultant contention is that static meaning inheres in its identifying function, in other words, in that which permits one to discern the subject to which or to whom the discourse refers. Further, that it is the predicative function - expressing a universal feature of the subject - that opens up dynamic and creative dimensions of meaning.[26]

Echoing our discussion of Austin's performative language theory in the last chapter, Ricoeur argues that at a semantic level dynamic meaning also has to do with the relationship between language use and human action. Thus by distributing

meaning to the locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary predicates, he goes beyond an understanding of it as mere propositional content and attends to its illocutionary force and perlocutionary effects.[27]

To account for this linguistic content and what he calls extra-linguistic reality, Ricoeur introduces a dialectic of sense and reference to his definition of meaning. In short, the question he is addressing here is: in language use "can what is said be distinguished from that of which one speaks?" His argument is that this distinction between sense and reference is "a necessary and pervasive characteristic of discourse." Since within the linguistic system signs refer to other signs there is no reference problem, he argues. An interesting phenomenon obtains, however, when "language passes outside itself", for then reference becomes "the mark of the self-transcendence of language."

> Reference is itself a dialectical phenomenon. To the extent that discourse refers to a situation, to an experience, to reality, to the world, in sum to the extra-linguistic, it also refers to its own speaker by means of procedures that belong essentially to discourse and not to language.[29]

Reference then is the "world" of discourse; it is effectively that "about which" and "before which" the discourse speaks. Once analyzed, the sense of discourse portrays one level of meaning, however:

> The reference of meaning is that logically prior existence in which the speaker first participates, then articulates, then participates again in a new way. This adds an extralinguistic dimension to meaning which relates to "what is said" to the "real."[30]

This helps us to perceive of language as having both a

'reality-reference' and a 'self-reference', joining the list of what Ricoeur calls "basic polarities of discourse": "event and meaning, singular identification and general predication, propositional act and illocutionary acts, sense and reference." His presupposition is that there exists

> a collective unity of modes of discourse as modes of use, such as poetic discourse, scientific discourse, religious discourse, and so on.[31]

Ricoeur also sees within this unity of modes of use, however, what he calls a radical **discontinuity** that permits the independence of one mode of discourse from another; metaphor, in his view, epitomizes this discontinuity since it possesses a semantic "twist" which yields conceptual gain in the form of the tension between the literal and the metaphorical interpretations - a "split" sense and well as a "split" reference.

This leads us to consider now the three elements of tension found in Ricoeur's understanding of the metaphorical statement:

> Three applications have in fact been given to the idea of tension:
> (a) tension within the statement: between tenor and vehicle, between focus and frame, between principal subject and secondary subject;
> (b) tension between two interpretations: between a literal interpretation that perishes at the hands of semantic impertinence and a metaphorical interpretation whose sense emerges through non-sense;
> (c) tension in the relational function of the copula: between identity and difference in the interplay of resemblance.

These three elements of tension permeate Ricoeur's investigation into metaphor. Once having stated them, however, he turns his attention to the question of how the metaphorical statement reaches reality. The third form of tension appears to

announce a kind of "implicit ontology" of the metaphorical statement:

> the reference of the metaphorical statement could itself be considered a split reference...This is what we meant when we lodged metaphorical tension right within the copula of the utterance. Being as, we said, means being and not being. In this way, the dynamism of meaning allowed access to the dynamic vision of reality which is the implicit ontology of the metaphorical utterance.[32]

From here, he puts forward the concept of "ontological vehemence" of the metaphorical utterance to identify the referential nature of metaphor found in the copula: 'is/is not'. "This ontological vehemence cuts meaning from its initial anchor...[making] use of mere hints of meaning." Regarding the relation of language to reality, he contends that "language becomes aware of itself in the self-articulation of the being which it is about."

Contrary to what the foregoing might appear to say, by laying stress on this extra-linguistic 'world' Ricoeur is not arguing for a metaphysics of the 'proper' as the condition of possibility in which the metaphorical statement may operate. Rather, he is suggesting a 'circularity of being' reflected in the 'circularity of language' whose use and context generates metaphoric meaning.

> metaphor does not produce a new order except by creating rifts in an old order....The idea of an initial metaphorical impulse destroys...oppositions between proper and figurative, ordinary and strange order and transgression...[33]

He then explains the circularity in this way:

> The circle can be described in the following manner. Initial polysemy equals 'language', the living metaphor equals 'speech', metaphor

> in common use [dead metaphor] represents the return of speech to language, and subsequent polysemy equals 'language'.[34]

While it might appear that this circularity of metaphoric language and meaning once again consigns the function of metaphor to a closed system of linguistic signs, this is not the case. Ricoeur rescues it from this apparent fate by insisting that within the metaphorical statement there consists an 'ontology of movement' or 'dynamis'.

In sum then, Paul Ricoeur argues for a tensive understanding of metaphor which is semantically expressed and understood with the minimal 'frame' of the sentence, and the 'focus' of the word. The metaphorical sentence is an event of discourse in which there inheres the multivalent referential and juxtapositional capabilities of the metaphor; these include the re-description of the literal in terms of extra-linguistic reality, and ontological vehemence.

This brings us to the task of inquiring into how Ricoeur's theory of metaphor might relate to our investigation into the meaning of liturgical language.

LITURGICAL LANGUAGE AND METAPHOR

> All Christian liturgy plays out a single root metaphor, that of the death and resurrection of Jesus as the disclosure, for all who will enter into it, of ultimate reality.... Jesus is the metaphor fo God and all other experiences and the metaphors to which they give rise are shaped and qualified and re-interpreted in the light of this one.[35]

When we speak of liturgical language we need to be clear that we are referring to that speech which is primarily

responsible for giving 'common currency' to a repeatable communal worship event that is couched in metaphor. Recognizing the pervasiveness of metaphor in the liturgy, Gail Ramshaw comments on the questions surrounding the names for God and the being of God:

> Multiply these questions by the number of words in the liturgy, and multiply that by the number of interrelationships born of the liturgical context, and you have an inquiry into the meaning of liturgical language.[36]

Ramshaw also reminds the student of metaphor that the inquiry is concerned with "where the metaphors originate, how the connections were made, what kind of reality results, and what the relationship is between the universe of speech and the universe outside speech."[37]

We believe that to a large degree we have been dealing with some of these important questions so far in this chapter. We have contended for an understanding of both the ubiquitous and the central nature and role of metaphor in human thought, life, and knowledge. Following McFague TeSelle, the human subject's fundamental 'groping' after 'what is' is variously signified throughout the liturgy. Consider the metaphors within these liturgical utterances:

> O Lord, I call to you; come quickly to me...
> keep watch over the door of my lips. Psalm 141:1,3
>
> For you created my inmost being;
> you knit me together in my mother's womb.
> I praise you because I am fearfully
> and wonderfully made; Psalm 139:13,14
>
> You only are immortal, the creator and maker of all;
> and we are mortal, formed of the earth,
> and to earth shall we return.
> For so did you ordain when you created me, saying,

"You are dust, and to dust you shall return."
All of us go down to the dust;
yet even at the grave we make our song:
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.
(Ministry at the Time of Death)*

The third excerpt particularly articulates an underlying belief that this afore-mentioned 'groping' extends up until, and perhaps beyond the grave. One wonders, however, if contemporary western humanity considers the liturgy to be instrumental in facilitating this groping after mystery, after 'what is'. It must be admitted that despite progressive changes, western culture and thought is still besought by the legacy of positivism.

Northrop Frye, in chapter one of The Great Code, analyzes the history of language and arrives at conclusions that suggest why positivism runs so contrary to the 'desire' of liturgical language. Employing Vico's schema for successive epochs in human history, Frye outlines three major linguistic epochs: (1) the mythic (characterized by Homer)- the age of the gods - in which language as metaphor is known as magical power, poetry being the primary mode; (2) the heroic (Dante) - the age of the aristocracy - in which language used in typology denotes linear order, allegory being the primary mode; and (3) the democratic (Locke) - the age of the people, in which language used in description corresponds to exterior reality, narrative being the primary mode. Biblical language, which Frye suggests is a combination of types one (language as poetry and word) and two (language as allegory), as the progenitor of liturgical language, bequeaths to this special kind of speech language uses that are far from dominant in Western thought and culture. Therefore it is reasonable to question "whether the common mindset which

characterizes our Western culture is capable of understanding the kind of thing the liturgical act is, and so of entering into it."[38] It is not surprising then that Langdon Gilkey observes as a contemporary crisis of faith "the elusiveness for all of us in our time of the holy, the absence for countless persons of a vivid sense of the presence of the divine..."[39]

We must hasten to say, however, that a despairing posture must not predominate in the liturgical community. That community is called by the Mystery it serves to faithfully enact and proclaim, the identity, message and action with which it has been invested. As a metaphoric communication event, the celebration of the liturgy admits of a language that is discursive, and that can be semantically examined and tensively analyzed, although this is not the primary function of this kind of speech.

Of encouragement to us are the studies in metaphor that are increasingly embracing its semantic necessity, and moving away from regarding it as merely ornamental, or what Philip Wheelright calls "steno-language", that is, language which points to its reference with a minimum of ambiguity. In contrast to this, Wheelright proposes a tensive view of language which agrees well with I.A. Richards' and Max Black's 'interactive' theory of metaphor.

Following Ricoeur, we would claim that liturgical language in use in the liturgy similarly points to extralinguistic reality, as explained above. The semantic "twists" of its discursive nature likewise open up the participants to the bivalent interpretations of which he speaks. The ground of

the referential field that is opened up by the myriad of appropriate metaphorical utterances in liturgical speech is the Mystery the liturgical community names God; this Mystery is the ground of our being, the 'telos' of 'what is'. As Ricoeur notes, "something must be for something to be said."

Further, we would argue that it is the self-disclosure of this same Mystery, that lies behind the 'ontological vehemence' of liturgical metaphorical utterance. Moreover, our contention would be that particularly within the context of liturgical celebration, the speculative discourse of which Ricoeur speaks - that discourse which "establishes the primary notions, the principles, that articulate primordially the space of the concept" - would in fact be one aspect of the language of faith that characterizes the liturgical community.

Ramshaw argues that within the liturgy, the eucharistic prayer itself "functions as a great metaphor" because there we "depict the meeting of God with God's people by means of a table blessing become ritual sacrifice become communal affirmation and supplication."[40] She contends that four lines of inquiry into the eucharistic prayer would help to flush out its broad metaphoric import. These four lines of inquiry are: the words of the text (for which a look at Ricoeur's textual hermeneutics would be helpful); the images in the text; the syntax of the text; and the structure of the text.

When Ramshaw refers to the **'words of the text'**, she has in mind the various ways in which "God, the worshippers, the eucharist and its elements" are named. As well, she poses questions about word choice and juxtaposition as well as

traditional language. Her contention is that the eucharistic prayer employs "acceptable" words, by which she means a mixture of dead and living metaphors that the liturgical community deems existentially appropriate. As an example she cites the father language for God, which was originally metaphoric but has now become a common name for God. Sacred words are named and accepted out of the tension existing between two impulses: that of preserving historical orthodoxy and that of translating words that make sense in contemporary reality.[41]

In terms of inquiring into the **images** in the text, Ramshaw asks:

> What is the source of the images? Do the images arise largely or exclusively from the Bible? Which parts of the Scriptures are favored? Of the many nonbiblical sources from which images could arise - mythology, theology, hellenistic, continental, or contemporary philosophy, psychology, nature, personal experience, or the unconscious - only certain sources are appropriate inspirations for liturgical writing.[42]

Ramshaw concludes that despite the wide possibility for the sources of images in eucharistic praying, the Bible and credally sanctioned philosophy (eg. Logos) are almost exclusively drawn upon. We note that it is through a rich mixture of metaphors and images that not only the overall metaphoric import of the text is enhanced, but also the encounter between God and humankind is disclosed through what Daniel Stevick calls "transformational images". Consider these sentences and phrases from Eucharistic Prayer 6 in the Anglican Book of Alternative Services:

> It is right to glorify you, Father,
> and to give you thanks;
> for you alone are God, living and true,
> dwelling in light inaccessible
> from before time and for ever.

Fountain of life and source of all goodness...
We acclaim you, holy Lord, glorious in power;
your mighty works reveal your wisdom and love.
You formed us in your own image...
When our disobedience took us far from you,
you did not abandon us to the power of death.
In your mercy you came to our help....

Here metaphors and images collide and enhance each other, opening up the worshippers to transformation and encounter with God and each other.

Regarding the matter of **syntax** and the liturgical text, Ramshaw contends that there are two matters of significance. One has to do with the placement of words. Because the syntax is that of expository prose, there is to be balance, with no sentence fragments or run-ons. A major consideration is one of tension. The liturgical text must be tensive but not overly so for liturgical language is not poetry, although there are poetic aspects to be found therein. The text ought not to be too tight but also not too open either.

The other syntactical matter of which Ramshaw speaks is that of the sound of the words in the text. Here she is referring to the sound that results from the juxtaposition of metaphors and images, as well as how it is impacted by rhythm, patterns of stress, alliteration, assonance and repetition. Her argument is that the metaphoric quality of the text is inestimably enriched by language that follows good prosaic and rhetorical principles, attending among other things to tone, balance, word placement and tension. In her words, "The syntax ought be splendid enough to command our delighted attention."[43] In the following quotation from Eucharistic Prayer 6 (BAS), note how affirmations of faith, recounting of salvation history, impetus for personal and

corporate transformation, self-involvement and the incursion of extralinguistic reality are mated. They are held together prosaically, syntactically and rhetorically, thereby modelling the simultaneous creation and nurturing of the metaphoric liturgical reality.

> Again and again
> you called us into covenant with you,
> and through the prophets
> you taught us to hope for salvation.
>
> Father, you loved the world so much
> that in the fullness of time
> you sent your only Son to be our Saviour.
> Incarnate by the Holy Spirit,
> born of the Virgin Mary,
> he lived as one of us, yet without sin.
> To the poor
> he proclaimed the good news of salvation;
> to prisoners, freedom;
> to the sorrowful, joy.
> To fulfil your purpose
> he gave himself up to death
> and, rising from the grave, destroyed death
> and made the whole creation new.
>
> And that we might live no longer for ourselves,
> but for him who died and rose for us,
> he sent the Holy Spirit....

Ramshaw names **structure** as the fourth line of inquiry into the liturgical text. By this she means the Antiochene structure which governs the '**déroulement**' of the eucharistic prayer. This familiar pattern is: some formulation of praise to the Father for creation and for both historical and ongoing redemption; recollection of the supper; anamnesis and oblation; epiclesis; doxology and the Amen. We would concur with her tendency towards maintaining the historic structure, chiefly because it locates the contemporary identity of present-day worshippers with the historical and trans-historical community of saints of the ages.

Ramshaw sums up:

> In conclusion let us affirm that in eucharistic praying there are boundaries to heed, that certain words, images, syntax, tone, and structure are more appropriate than others, while some are wholly ill-advised. But attention to these guidelines must be balanced with awe for the task at hand.[44]

RICOUER'S TEXTUAL HERMENEUTICS AND THE LITURGICAL TEXT

As we continue to probe how the metaphoric reality of the liturgical text - namely the eucharistic prayer - is to be understood and interpreted, we draw briefly on Ricoeur's insights as found in his hermeneutics of the text.

Ricoeur distinguishes between text and discourse by contending that the former possesses an intended configuration lacking in the latter. He considers a text to be a "complex entity of discourse" whose purposeful creation implies purposeful creation of meaning. It does not just appear out of thin air, and is more than "a linear succession of sentences. It is a cummulative, holistic process" [one which serves as a] "mediator between the human living which roots the production of the text and the motivation to action (praxis) which dialoguing with a text precipitates in the recipient."[45]

> By text...I mean principally the production of discourse as a work. With the work, as the word implies, new categories enter the field of discourse. Essentially these are pragmatic categories, categories of production and of labour.[46]

It is important to note that Ricoeur does not limit his notion of text to the written text.[47] It is, however, the written text that is of concern to us at this point.

The liturgical text may rightly be considered a text - in

terms of Ricouer's understanding - in that it is a closed sequence of discourse with an internal logic connecting its beginning and its end. Any hermeneutics of the liturgical text, however, must uppermostly respect the fact that the appropriate 'reading' of the text is actually its celebration. The attempt to recover its meaning must be inextricably linked to the issues surrounding its enactment and celebration. This is one of the attractive features of Ricoeur's textual hermeneutics, for his notion of text is not that it is something dead but alive as an essential mediation between temporal exigencies.

The liturgical text is born out of human experiences of life, faith, reflection and worship: it is living; it extends in all directions. Liturgical scholar Joyce Ann Zimmerman comments on the referential worlds in which liturgical language found in the texts participates:

> On the one hand are the past originary events which gave rise to the text and the future possibilities opened up by the world of the text. On the other hand is the present historical context of the text users. The liturgical text confronts the gathered community...with new modes of understanding in terms of the possibilities of the world opened up by the liturgical text.[48]

She also remarks that not only are the originary events both embodied and distanced by the text, but also each time the text is 'celebrated' it is in different historical context.

Ricoeur views participation as the pre-understanding of our personal experience. We would argue that in the celebration of the liturgy, the worshippers participate in the accumulated meaning of the texts and at the same time contribute to that corpus of meaning.

With respect to the eucharistic prayer, the originary event is grasped through the sacramental action that is the eucharist. While this action comes to the worshippers laden with historic meaning, the living nature of the text in which this action is 'contained', begs for the inclusion of present historical reality to 'round' out its meaning. This 'presentification' - to borrow Ladriere's term - is that which is presupposed in the participatory moment of the liturgical action, since what is taking place in this scenario is the "present of the future, the present of the past, and the present of the present in terms of one another."[49] Consider the following:

> On the night he was handed over
> to suffering and death,
> a death he freely accepted,
> our Lord Jesus Christ took bread;
> and when he had given thanks to you,
> he broke it, and gave it to his disciples,
> and said, "Take, eat:
> this is my body which is given for you.
> Do this for the remembrance of me."
>
> After supper he took the cup of wine;
> and when he had given thanks,
> he gave it to them,
> and said, "Drink this, all of you:
> this is my blood of the new covenant,
> which is shed for you and for many
> for the forgiveness of sins.
> Whenever you drink it,
> do this for the remembrance of me."
>
> ...and we offer our sacrifice
> of praise and thanksgiving
> to you, Lord of all;
> presenting to you, from your creation,
> this bread and this wine.

Here one may observe reference to the originary event; speech from that event (e.g. that contained in quotation marks); reference to the future continuity of this event (e.g. Whenever

you..., do this for...); and the present appropriation of that event (e.g. we offer our sacrifice...presenting to you). Zimmerman notes that:

> The liturgical act is an emplotment of a tradition of Christian interpretations of liturgical celebrations. The community's celebration extends the limits of the cultic occasion or community beyond itself to embrace not only the actual communication of the cultic occasion, but also a virtual communication whereby the consequences of the liturgical act become a small but nonetheless real and permanent part of the ongoing Christian tradition.[50]

While engaging the text Ricoeur's hermeneutical understanding also calls for a certain 'space' in which to engage in the analytical task. In other words, while not replacing participation, there must be a certain distance established in order to plum even greater significance and meaning. He calls this distanciation, which is an explanatory moment. It is an attempt to uncover the internal logic of the text, and the experiences that gave rise to it. Analyzing the liturgical text in this way would be to explore the tradition of Christian experience and to uncover what constitutes it as a Christian text.

Ricoeur's method of textual hermeneutics also includes another feature: that is, 'appropriation'. In other words, the point of engaging the text is not only to participate in it and to analyze it from a distance, but also to appropriate the truth that such process yields. The dialectic of participation and distanciation, with respect to the liturgical text, presents possibilities for the consideration of the worshipping community, which then must judge the faithfulness of these possibilities and

then appropriate the revealed truth. It is in so doing that the mediating role of the liturgical text is completed.

Since the truth of the liturgical text is expressed metaphorically we must take care to understand the meaning of metaphor, its nature and its function:

> just as metaphor can only operate as metaphor for those who recognize its metaphorical character, so liturgy can only act as a disclosure of God to those who surrender their claim to know beforehand what it means and who will allow its literal meaning to serve each time afresh as the starting point for the discovery of further meaning.[51]

As we remarked above, liturgical language both presupposes and witnesses to a faith in the transcendent reality called God.

CONCLUSION

At the outset it was reported that the concern of this thesis was an investigation into the meaning of liturgical language. This was done through the employment of three analytical lenses: Victor Turner's theory of ritual, J.L. Austin's performative language theory, and Paul Ricoeur's theory of metaphor.

Our contention was - and still is - that as a rich communicative complex, liturgical language would admit of several manners of inquiry and yet demonstrate a cohesive integrity and consistent meaning. In general, Turner's theory of ritual helped to provide an anthropological and sociological perspective on the 'natural' and profoundly significant place that ritual occupies in human societies and cultures. Specifically, his expanded notion of liminality helped to elucidate the transformative role that liturgical language can play - within the context of the Christian ritual of communal worship - in precipitating liminal experiences and establishing 'communitas'.

With respect to J.L. Austin's performative language theory, the insights derived therefrom support our contention that the performance of the liturgy is far more than the mere rehearsing of an ancient ritual, or the transfer of information, or the uttering of abstract statements. The illocutionary force contained in the performatives within liturgical language is not only self-involving and meaningful for the participants, but also actually accomplishes something. (That something has been carefully delineated above).

In terms of our study of metaphor, we have shown how P. Ricoeur's insights - as well as those of other scholars - have contributed significantly to our understanding and appreciation of metaphorical usage in liturgical language. Metaphor is operative in all human knowing and as such is instrumental in enabling us to engage and make sense of the extra-linguistic reality that is included in its scope of reference. We have contended that God is the ultimate Mystery who gives structure, meaning and significance to this extra-linguistic reality.

We believe that in terms of our investigative goal, this thesis has been successful. It has succeeded in demonstrating that despite three very different - though not totally unrelated - ways of analyzing liturgical language, a connective thread of meaning is discerned as woven throughout. For instance, if we take as basic to our contention that liturgical language is: 1. disclosing of transcendent reality; 2. grounded in contemporary historical experience; and, 3. self-involving in that it commits authentic participants to future courses of action, we observe that all three lenses have borne this out.

The thesis has also proved its point in an inverted sort of way, by showing the limitations of the three lenses to explicate fully the nature, role and significance of liturgical language. The notion of three 'lenses' is an optical metaphor that perhaps has been useful in illustrating that the multi-layered 'density' of liturgical language requires several degrees of magnification in order to fully explore its meaning.

At the outset of our investigation we suspected that there

were connections between these three lenses, but we were not sure what those might be. We have found some of those. What we have not done, however, is to suggest a methodological way of structuring and inter-relating these connections and comparisons. We found this to be beyond the scope of this thesis.

Finally, we would not want to claim too much for this thesis since there are other important issues that relate to liturgical language in the context of the liturgy that we have not addressed, or addressed sufficiently. Some of these issues are: the role of rhetoric in liturgical language, the nature of prayer, the relationship of liturgical language to other non-verbal dimensions of the liturgy such as gestures, silence, icons, symbolism of vestments, and so on.

There is still much work and investigation to be done.

ENDNOTES

INTRODUCTION

1. Irene Lawrence, Linguistics and Theology: The Significance of Noam Chomsky for Theological Construction, (London: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 1980), p. 1.

2. Donald Evans, The Logic of Self-Involvement, (New York: Herder and Herder, 1969), p. 16.

3. Gail Ramshaw-Schmidt, Christ in Sacred Speech: The Meaning of Liturgical Language, (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1986), p. 1.

4. Louis Bouyer, Life and Liturgy, (London: Sheed and Ward, 1956), p. 29.

5. Dom Gregory Dix, The Shape of the Liturgy, (Westminster: Dacre Press, 1945), p. 1.

6. Ramshaw-Schmidt, op. cit., p. 1.

7. Ibid., p. 2.

8. Ibid., p. 5.

9. The classical roots of the rhetorical tradition display a perennial tension. Plato states that "reason constrained us" to banish the poets from his Republic, for "there is an ancient quarrel between philosophy and poetry." (Rep. 607) Aristotle, on the other hand, first distinguishes rhetoric from dialectic: the one deals with matters of proof, the other with probabilities. He then identifies rhetoric as a "mode of persuasion" and thus "a sort of demonstration" (Rhet. 1355a). The art of persuasion, then, is appropriate to matters which are probable but not provable. Classical rhetoric was revived in the Renaissance (e.g. with Erasmus) when it was held that truth is conveyed best through eloquence.

10. Peter Mack objects quite strongly to the use of rhetoric in the liturgy in general, although he admits that this technique could be used responsibly in preaching. see Peter Mack, "*Rhetoric and Liturgy*" in Language and the Worship of the Church, eds. David Jasper and R.C.D. Jasper, (New York: St Martin's Press, 1990), pp. 82-109.

11. Joyce Ann Zimmerman, Liturgy as Language of Faith: A Liturgical Methodology in the Mode of Paul Ricoeur's Textual Hermeneutics, (New York: University Press of America, Inc., 1988), p. 7.

12. Arnold van Gennep, Les rites de passage, (paris: E. Nourry, 1908). Trans. by Monika B. Vizedom and Gabrielle L. Caffee, The Rites of Passage, (University of Chicago Press, 1960). Turner

actually went beyond van Gennep's notion of liminality by suggesting that it was not only liberation from their structural identities that participants experienced, but also a transition, a 'potentiality' of "what may be". Victor Turner, Dramas, Fields, and Metaphors: Symbolic Action in Human Society, (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1974).

13. Joseph J. Schaller, "*Performative Language Theory: An Exercise in the Analysis of Ritual*," **Worship** 62 (1988), p. 432.

14. Paul Ricoeur, The Rule of Metaphor: Multi-disciplinary Studies of the Creation of Meaning in Language. Trans. by R. Czerny with Kathleen McLaughlin and John Costello, SJ, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1975) p. 297.

CHAPTER 1

1. Mark Searle, "*Ritual*" in The Study of Liturgy, eds. Cheslyn Jones, Geoffrey Wainwright, Edward Yarnold, SJ, Paul Bradshaw, revised edition (London, New York: SPCK, Oxford University Press, 1992), p. 52.

2. Ibid.

3. The Reformation debates concerning things either necessary or indifferent (**adiaphora**) implied for Calvinistic, especially Radical and Puritan, circles such reliance on divine work and human faith as to denigrate outward symbols, including eucaristic ones.

4. Searle, op. cit., p. 53.

5. For these paragraphs, see the survey by Eric Sharpe, Comparative Religion: A History, (London: Duckworth, 1975).

6. Urban Holmes, "*Liminality and Liturgy*", **Worship** 47 (1973), p. 387.

7. Robert M. Bellah, "*Christianity and Symbolic Realism*", **Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion** 9 (1970), pp. 89-96. See his discussion of the expression of symbolic form in America.

8. George A. Lindbeck, The Nature of Doctrine, (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1984) p. 32.

9. Ibid., p. 32-33.

10. Ibid.

11. Margaret Mead, "*Ritual Expression of the Cosmic Sens*," **Worship** 40 (1966), p. 69

12. See her discussion of ritual in Margaret Mead, Twentieth

Century Faith: Hope and Survival, (New York: Harper & Row, 1972) pp. 127, 159-160.

13. Victor Turner, The Forest of Symbols: Aspects of Ndembu Ritual, (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1967), pp. 19-20.

14. Victor Turner, "*Ritual, Tribal and Catholic*," **Worship** 50 (1976), p. 504.

15. Bobby C. Alexander, Victor Turner Revisited: Ritual as Social Change, (Atlanta, Georgia: Scholars Press, 1991)

16. Ibid., p. 14.

17. Ibid., p. 15.

18. Ronald Grimes, Beginnings in Ritual Studies, (Washington D.C.: University of America Press, 1982), pp. 189-190.

19. Ibid., p. 57.

20. Searle, op. cit., p. 53.

21. In practically all of his works on 'Ritual', Turner acknowledges his indebtedness to Arnold van Gennep's insights on the liminal or transitional phase.

22. Holmes, Liminality..., op. cit., p. 389.

23. Quoted in Alexander, op. cit., p. 30.

24. Turner, Dramas, Fields..., op. cit., p. 52.

25. For further explication of the concepts of liminality and communitas see Victor Turner, The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure, (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1969) and Alexander, op. cit., pp. 29-44.

26. Quoted in Alexander, Ibid., p. 19.

27. Ibid., p. 21.

28. Ibid.

29. Philippians 2:12 (NIV Bible)

CHAPTER 2

1. John L. Austin, How To Do Things With Words, (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1962), p. 3.

2. Ibid., p. 5.

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid., p. 8.

5. Ibid., pp. 14-15.

6. Ibid., p. 18.

7. Ibid., p. 60.

8. Ibid., pp. 73-73.

9. Ibid., p. 79.

10. Ibid., pp. 79-80.

11. Ibid., pp. 92-93.

12. Ibid., p. 98.

13. Ibid., p. 101.

14. Ibid., p. 163.

15. Ibid., pp. 150-163. Here Austin engages in a rather exhaustive classification of utterances with distinct illocutionary force. He admits that he is not equally happy about all of them.

16. John R. Searle, Speech Acts: An Essay in the Philosophy of Language, (Cambridge: At the University Press, 1969). Searle admittedly bases his Speech Act Theory on the groundwork laid by Austin. Although he expands and modifies Austin's work he readily acknowledges his debt to him.

17. John R. Searle, "*Austin on Locutionary and Illocutionary Acts*," **Philosophical Review** 77 (1968), p. 407.

18. Searle, Speech Acts..., op. cit., p. 47.

19. A.C. Thiselton, Language, Liturgy, and Meaning, Grove Liturgical Study 2 (Bromcote, Nottinghamshire, England: Grove Books, 1975). See his discussion and analysis of Performative Language and first-person utterances. pp. 17-22.

20. Ibid., p. 18.

21. Ibid., p. 19.

22. Jean Ladrière, "*The Performativity of Liturgical Language*", Trans. by John Griffiths, in Concilium eds. Herman Schmidt and David Power, (New York: Herder and Herder, 1973), p. 55.

23. Ibid.

24. Ibid., p. 56.

25. Ibid., p. 58.

26. Ibid., pp. 58-59.

27. The Book of Alternative Services of the Anglican Church of Canada, (Toronto, Canada: Anglican Book Centre, 1985) p. 129.

28. Ladrière, op. cit., pp. 59-60.

29. Ibid., p. 60.

30. Ibid.

31. Ibid., p. 62.

32. A. Vergote, "*Symbolic Gestures and Actions in the Liturgy*", Trans. by B. Wall, in Concilium (New York: Herder and Herder, 1971), p.43.

33. Zimmerman, op. cit., p. 23.

34. While in the exercise of this type of pastoral ministry a strict adherence to a formal liturgy may or may not obtain, similar faith language, prayers and 'liturgical movements' are observed. We have chosen to follow a formal liturgy in order to highlight various modes and dimensions of performativity.

35. Schaller, op.cit., p. 425.

36. Ibid.

37. This service is found of pp. 554-557.

38. Schaller, op. cit., p. 429.

39. Ibid., pp. 426-427.

CHAPTER 3

1. Sallie McFague TeSelle, Speaking in Parables: A Study in Metaphor and Theology, (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1975) p. 43.

2. Ibid., p. 56.

3. Ibid

4. Elizabeth Sewell, The Orphic Voice, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1960). See in particular her epistemological arguments with respect to the fundamental role of metaphor in all cognitive investigation.

5. McFague TeSelle, op. cit., p. 58.

6. John Middleton Murry, Countries of the Mind: Essays in Literary Criticism, 2nd Series (London: Oxford University Press, 1931), pp. 1-2.

7. Jacob Bronowski, The Visionary Eye: Essays in the Arts, Literature and Science, ed. Piero E. Ariotti (Cambridge Mass.: The M.I.T. Press, 1978), p. 28.

8. James Olney, Metaphors of the Self: The Meaning of Autobiography, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1972), pp.5, 31-33.

9. Cited in Janet Martin Soskice, Metaphor and Religious Language, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985) p. 15.

10. Ibid.

11. Ibid., p. 16.

12. Ricoeur, Rule..., op. cit., p. 65.

13. Earl R. Mac Cormac, A Cognitive Theory of Metaphor, (Cambridge, Mass.: The M.I.T. Press, 1985) p. 42.

14. Ibid., p. 127.

15. Ricoeur, Rule..., op. cit., p. 45.

16. Soskice, op. cit., p. 1.

17. cited in Eva Feder Kittay, Metaphor: Its Cognitive Force and Linguistic Structure, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987), p. 5.

18. Ibid., p. 6.

19. Ricoeur, Rule..., op. cit., p. 65.

20. Ibid., p. 66.

21. Charles E. Reagan and David Stewart eds. The Philosophy of Paul Ricoeur: An Anthology of His Work, (Boston: Beacon Press, 1978) p. 135.

22. Ricoeur, Rule..., op. cit., p. 69.

23. Ibid.

24. Ibid., p. 102.

25. Ibid., p. 70.

26. Ibid.

27. Ibid., p. 75.

28. Ibid.

29. Ibid.

30. Zimmerman, op. cit., p. 55.

31. Ricoeur, Rule..., op. cit., p. 303.

32. Ibid., p. 297.

33. Ibid., pp. 22-23.

34. Ibid., pp. 121-122.

35. Mark Searle, "*Liturgy as Metaphor*," **Worship** 55 (1981), pp. 111-112.

36. Ramshaw, op.cit., p.8.

37. Ibid.

38. Searle, "Liturgy...", op. cit., p. 100.

39. cited in Searle, "Liturgy...", Ibid.

40. Gail Ramshaw-Schmidt, "*The Language of Eucharistic Praying*," **Worship** 57 (1983), p. 425.

41. Ibid., pp. 425-428.

42. Ibid., p. 428.

43. Ibid., p. 435.

44. Ibid., p. 436.

45. Zimmerman, op. cit., pp. 62-63.

46. Ricoeur, Rule..., op. cit., p. 219.

47. Ricoeur includes in his notion of 'text', phenomenon such as ballads, myths, and narrative poems, because they possess the characteristic of configured structure. See P. Ricoeur, Rule... op. cit., pp. 219-221.

48. Zimmerman, op. cit., pp. 87-88.

49. Ibid., p. 89.

50. Searle, "Liturgy...", op. cit., pp. 116-117.

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