Metaphor and Phenomenology of Religion:

Paul Ricoeur's Hermeneutics and the Interanimation of Discourses

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Abstract:

This study considers Paul Ricoeur's theory of discourses within the context of a phenomenology of religion. I focus on the eighth study of *La Métaphore vive*, wherein Ricoeur explores the possibility of *interanimation* between speculative and poetic discourses. While Ricoeur is willing to consider the interactions between religious and philosophical discourse in a number of essays, he does not develop the further possibility of the interanimation between religious and speculative thought. I take up this unexplored possibility by suggesting that metaphors are capable of slipping between discourses and animating speculative and religious discourses. Specifically, I use Jean-Louis Chrétien's metaphor of "wounding" as a case study wherein the phenomenal form of paradox defines one meaning of wounding, while another meaning is connected to a poetic expression that refers to our belonging in the world. Together, the two meanings of the metaphor enliven Chrétien's phenomenology of religion.

Cette étude considère la théorie du discours de Paul Ricoeur dans le contexte d'une phénoménologie de la religion. Je me concentre sur la huitième étude de *La Métaphore Vive*, dans laquelle Ricoeur explore la possibilité d'interanimation entre le discours spéculatif et le discours poétique. Alors que Ricoeur considère les intéractions entre le discours religieux et le discours philosophique dans de nombreux essais, il ne développe pas la possibilité supplémentaire d'interanimation entre la pensée religieuse et la pensée spéculative. Je considère cette possibilité inexplorée, et je suggère que la métaphore est capable de se glisser entre les discours, et d'animer à la fois le discours spéculatif et le discours religieux. En particulier, j'utilise la métaphore de blessure de Jean-Louis Chrétien en tant qu'exemple où un sens de la blessure est précisé par la forme phénoménale du paradoxe, alors qu'un autre sens est lié à une expression poétique qui fait allusion à notre appartenance dans le monde. Ensemble, les deux sens de la métaphore vivifient la phénoménologie de la religion de Jean-Louis Chrétien.

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Introduction:

Divided Meaning

And all is always now. Words strain,
Crack and sometimes break, under the burden,
Under the tension, slip, slide, perish,
Will not stay still.

T.S. Eliot, *Burnt Norton*

My interest in this study began with a tenuous conviction that the multiple meaning of certain words, despite presenting equivocities, also opens up possibilities for philosophical articulations of religion. To explore this possibility I began where this study now ends – examining the metaphors used in the phenomenology of Jean-Louis Chrétien. Drawing on Christian theology and literature, as well as the history of philosophy, Chrétien uses an abundance of metaphors that push disciplinary boundaries both in content and in form. Yet as I considered Chrétien's work, Paul Ricoeur's hermeneutical philosophy persistently formed the background for the issues I brought to Chrétien's texts. More particularly, Ricoeur's eighth study "Métaphore et discours

philosophique" (MDP) in *La Métaphore Vive,* explicitly articulated the questions I was concerned with: Should philosophy aim to avoid metaphorical language? What happens to the meaning of metaphors when they are articulated in a philosophy that attempts to use univocal language? And more pertinently to the philosophy of religion, what happens to the meaning of religious metaphors when they are expressed philosophically? With questions concerning the relationship between metaphor, philosophy, and religion in mind, I was never able to leave aside MDP. The result of which is this short study on Ricoeur.

In the following, I argue that Ricoeur's hermeneutical analysis of the interanimation of discourses opens possibilities for phenomenological articulations of religion. The first two chapters are primarily exegetical and lay critical groundwork for the arguments advanced in the final two chapters of this study. "Chapter One" considers the first three sections of the eighth study wherein Ricoeur develops his notion of the "discontinuity" between discourses and attempts to validate the internal integrity of philosophical discourse. My position throughout the first chapter is that Ricoeur is defending the philosophical act wherein thought attempts to use univocal language to articulate the meaning of concepts. Critical to this chapter is Ricoeur's criticism of Derrida's essay "La Mythologie blanche." Although my reading of Ricoeur is developed with reference to their debate, the focus of the chapter remains on the development of Ricoeur's thought and not on adjudicating the differences between the two thinkers. Articulating the discontinuity between discourses is necessary for my eventual consideration of the "interanimation."

In the second chapter, I interpret the final two sections of MDP wherein Ricoeur suggests the possibility of interaction and interanimation between discourses. Ricoeur aims to clarify the manner in which metaphorical utterance provides a conceptual sketch that speculative thought adopts according to its own sphere of reference. To articulate this process of interaction, I clarify the meaning of the terms "speculative" and "poetic" in some detail before exploring how the experiences of *belonging* and *distanciation* relate to those discourses. This chapter explicates the central themes used to consider the possibility of interanimation between religious and philosophical discourses in the following chapters.

I develop the central position of this study based on the exegetical work of the first two chapters. The argument advanced in "Chapter Three" remains internal to Ricoeur's oeuvre. I adopt Brian Treanor and Henry Venema's suggestion that Ricoeur's work is now open to a "a second religious reading" by comparing Ricoeur's theory of discourses articulated in MDP with the interaction between speculative and religious discourse in a number of his essays on religious discourse. I explicate how Ricoeur remains open to interactions between religious and speculative thought, even though he does not continue along the path of MDP to develop a notion of interanimation between the two discourses.

My final argument builds off the previous chapter, but takes on the character of a more exploratory investigation. In "Chapter Four" I suggests that metaphor can be an interanimating bridge between philosophical and religious discourses given Ricoeur's theory. Jean-Louis Chrétien's metaphor of wounding in *La Parole Blessée* serves as a

case study for considering this possibility. This chapter remains focused on the context of MDP and as such develops a reading of Chrétien based on Ricoeur's hermeneutics.

In the concluding chapter of this study, I consider further questions and avenues of research in reference to the metaphor of "life" for the philosophy of religion. For instance, I suggest reversing of the order of this study, wherein one reads Ricoeur in light of Chrétien. This reversal would present important complications for Ricoeur's theory of discourses, since Chrétien's studies into religious phenomena could be seen to exceed what Ricoeur says constitutes religious discourse. A consideration of Christ, as the Wounded Word who gives *life* might not be reducible to a hermeneutical inquiry. The full presentation of these issues would suggest attention to Michel Henry's work in the *Words of Christ*, wherein he presents an understanding of Christ that bypasses the hermeneutical detour Ricoeur advocates in reference to religious texts.

Limitations

The primary focus of this study is Ricoeur's hermeneutical development of the interanimation of discourses articulated in the final study of *La Métaphore Vive.* While I refer to Ricoeur's other texts and the broader framework of *La Métaphore Vive* to contextualize my work, these references are employed with the purpose of enriching my reading of the eighth study. In part, my focus can be justified through Ricoeur's position that, "Each of these studies develops one specific point of view and constitutes a complete whole."[1] However, he also notes, "At the same time, each forms part of unique

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[1] Paul Ricoeur, *The Rule of Metaphor: The Creation of Meaning in Language*, trans., Robert Czerny with Kathleen McLaughlin and John Costello (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1977), 1. Cf. Paul Ricoeur, *La Métaphor Vive* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1975), 7. The following citations have the French pagination following the English for *La Métaphor Vive*.

path, which begins with classical rhetoric, passes through semiotics and semantics, and finally reaches hermeneutics."[2] I emphasize this longer path taken in *La Métaphore Vive* only to enrich an understanding of the specific point of view developed in *MDP*.

Another limitation for this study is Ricoeur's meaning of fundamental terms such as "speculative" and "poetic" discourse. This interpretive choice does not discount that other terminologies and with them different understandings of philosophy and poetry might complicate Ricoeur's position. A similar limitation emerges due to Ricoeur's almost exclusive references to Jewish and Christian scriptures to articulate the meaning of religious discourse. Focusing on Judeo-Christian texts does not represent antipathy to other religions or to the discipline of "theology," but is an extension of Ricoeur's hermeneutical method. As a Christian, Ricoeur works primarily within the Jewish and Christian scriptures based on his conviction that there is no "surveillance point, from which the uninterested epistemological subject considers with a neutral and simply curious eye the dispersed field of religious beliefs."[3] Although this method necessarily brackets out other religions for Ricoeur and by extension my study, it does not imply that there is much work to be done in reference to a broader understanding of religion for philosophers of religion operating from outside of the Western philosophical tradition.

Research Context

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[2] Ibid.
[3] Paul Ricoeur, "Experience and Language in Religious Discourse," in *Phenomenology and the Theological Turn*, trans., Jeffrey L. Kosky (New York: Fordham University Press, 2000), 131. For the French edition see: Paul Ricoeur, "Expérience et langage dans le discours religieux," in Jean-Louis Chrétien, Michel Henry, Jean-luc Marion, and Paul Ricoeur, *Phénoménologie et théologie*, preséntation Jean-François Courtine (Paris: Criterion, 1992).

The primary context forming this study is found in the English reception of Ricoeur's work.[4] Two areas within the existing English scholarship on Ricoeur contextualize my study. The first area is focused around the philosophical background of MDP and figures most prominently in the first two chapters. Most of the commentaries on MDP focus on Ricoeur's critique of Derrida's essay "White Mythology." Leonard Lawlor's *Imagination and Chance* provides the most detailed and prolonged engagement on the differences between the thought of Ricoeur and Derrida. He emphasizes the centrality of Ricoeur's notion of *distanciation* and develops the meaning of the term within the broader context of Ricoeur's work.[5] Lawlor's text is a good introduction to the debate between Ricoeur and Derrida that took place in the 1970s, though his focus on distanciation emphasizes the movement of discontinuity between discourses. My own reading of MDP is geared towards the consideration of a possible interanimation of discourses for the philosophy of religion.

Guiseppe Stellardi provides a notably critical analysis of MDP. In *Heidegger and Derrida on Philosophy and Metaphor,* Stellardi criticizes Ricoeur's "dialectics of belonging and distanciation" on account of its refusal to put thought at "risk."[6] In Stellardi's reading, only Derrida puts "thought (even if only by supposition) in danger of

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[4] Boyd Blundell points out that, "one of the difficulties surrounding the reception of Ricoeur involves collections that exist only in the English language." See: Boyd Blundell, *Paul Ricoeur: Between Theology and Philosophy* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2010), 7. Blundell does not explain exactly what he means by "difficulties." However, the English commentators do generally to refer to other English commentators in their work on Ricoeur. A number of notable exceptions to this linguistic context are: Richard Kearney, Gaëlle Fiasse, Jean Greisch, and Jean Grondin.

Although the English commentaries make up the primary context for the position I develop in this thesis, a number of un-translated French commentators contribute to my interpretations. In particular, Jean-Luc Amalric's work helped to clarify for me the ambiguous nature of the disagreement between Derrida and Ricoeur and the critical position of Heidegger within their differences. See, Jean-Luc Amalric *Ricoeur, Derrida. L'enjeu de la métaphore* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France).

[5] Leonard Lawlor, *Imagination and Chance: The Difference Between the Thought of Ricoeur and Derrida* (New York: State University of New York Press, 1992), 53

[6] Giuseppe Stellardi, *Heidegger and Derrida on Philosophy and Metaphor: Imperfect Thought* (New York: Humanity Books, 2000), 103.

losing itself, puts it in a position of relative difference, that is, of partial exteriority to the traditional, speculative line of thought."[7] Stellardi asserts that Ricoeur's dialectics and distanciation fail to untangle philosophy and metaphor sufficiently to establish a philosophical starting point. Stellardi's position seeks to undermine the internal integrity Ricoeur identifies in various spheres of discourse. In "Chapter Two," I highlight the manner in which I believe Stellardi has misunderstood Ricoeur's understanding of speculative discourse.

Clive Cazeaux's reading of Ricoeur has informed my interpretation most thoroughly. My interpretation of Ricoeur's analysis of Kant in MDP has adopted much Cazeaux's position. In the final chapter of *Metaphor and Continental Philosophy*, Cazeaux heavily criticizes Stellardi (and to a lesser extent Lawlor), for overlooking "the extent to which the concept of intersection operates in Ricoeur's theory."[8] Cazeaux opposes Stellardi's work in large part because Ricoeur's work is presented as "too compartmentalized – to accommodate the complexity of the interrelationship between metaphor and thought offered by Ricoeur."[9] While Cazeaux's interpretation emphasizes the concept of interaction between discourses, my interest is primarily in the concept of interanimation, which I see as critical for opening possibilities for philosophical articulations of religion.

The literature on the debate between Ricoeur and Derrida extends beyond the three texts mentioned above and includes texts other than MDP. In *Reading Derrida and*

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[7] Ibid. Stellardi argues that Derrida puts thought at risk because there is "no respite" for a philosophy from the "irresistible drifting dragging," that carries it "from metaphor to metaphor, from difference to difference." Ibid., 104.

[8] Cazeaux also includes critical remarks for Lawlor's emphasis on distanciation, but to a much lesser extent and reserves the majority of criticisms for Stellardi. Clive Cazeaux, *Metaphor and Continental Philosophy: From Kant to Derrida* (New York: Routledge, 2007), 179.

[9] Ibid., 181.

Ricoeur, Eftichis Pirovolakis suggests that due to the ambiguous nature of the disagreement between Derrida and Ricoeur, the commentators "tend to affirm an incongruity between the thought of Ricoeur and Derrida," yet widely disagree on why this is so.[10] Due to the ambiguity of the debate, the evaluation of Ricoeur's work ranges from J. Hilllis Miller's belief that all of Ricoeur's "basic presuppositions are mistaken," to Stephan H. Clark, who "praises Ricoeur for his exploratory, radical interventions and 'cross-disciplinary thought.'"[11] As a result of these wide-ranging evaluations of Ricoeur's thought, I do not attempt situate this study primarily within the context of the differences between Ricoeur and Derrida, but acknowledge the differences only to the extent that it is illuminating for Ricoeur's theory of discourses and the philosophy of religion.

My consideration of philosophical articulations of religion brings a second context for the commentaries informing this study. There have been a variety of evaluations of the boundary between philosophy and religion in Ricoeur's thought. For instance, Christina Gswantdner has noted that Peter Kenny identifies three stages over the course of Ricoeur's career; an initial stage where the relation between philosophy and religion was "fluid," a middle stage that was marked by a stricter division, and finally a more free engagement between the two after Ricoeur's retirement.[12] Alternatively, Henry Isaac Venema emphasizes "how Ricoeur's 'philosophical explorations have indeed been

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[10] Eftichis Pirovolakis, *Reading Derrida and Ricoeur* (New York: State University of New York Press, 2010) 3.

[11] Ibid.

[12] Christina Gschwantdner, "Paul Ricoeur and the Relationship between Philosophy and Religion in Contemporary French Phenomenology," *Études Ricœuriennes / Ricœur Studies*, Vol 3, No 2 (2012), 8. Also see, Peter Kenny, "Conviction Critique and Christian Theology," *Memory, Narratively, Self, and the Challenge to Think God: The Reception within Theology of the Recent Work of Paul Ricoeur*, ed. Maureen Junker-Keeny, Peter Kenny (Munster: LIT Verlag, 2004), 92-100.

deeply motivated by his Christian faith and cannot be isolated from this religious faith."[13]

Boyd Blundell is critical of Venema's approach, since he believes those who emphasize the theological within Ricoeur's work rely too "heavily on interviews or Ricoeur's more explicitly religious work" at the expense of Ricoeur's major philosophical texts.[14] Blundell identifies three Ricoeurs, "biblical hermeneuticist, philosopher of religion, and professional philosopher and suggests that the first two have received undue weight in the American appropriation of Ricoeur, which makes him seem far more 'theological' than he actually is."[15] Gswantdner for her part, suggests three different emphases regarding the relationship between philosophy and religion in Ricoeur:

> (a) his explicit statements, sometimes in his texts but most often in interviews, about how he himself regards their interaction or distinction in his own work, (b) his engagement of biblical and religious sources, especially in his work on biblical hermeneutics but occasionally also in other places, such as the early texts *The Symbolism of Evil* and *History and Truth*, (c) his brief comments about faith, religion, conviction, or agape in his later philosophical texts *Reflections on the Just, The Just, Memory, History, Forgetting* and *The Course of Recognition*.[16]

In Chapter Four I engage with the issues considered in the above commentaries to argue that Ricoeur's theory of discourses as it is developed in MDP allows for a fluid relationship between philosophy and religion. With this approach I accommodate Blundell's appeal to focus on Ricoeur's major philosophical texts rather than interviews or essays on religion, but leave space for Venema's suggestion that Ricoeur's philosophy and Christian faith are not isolated.

Of course, this overview is not an extensive review of the scholarship surrounding Ricoeur; rather it highlights my primary conversation partners within the two areas of

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[13] Gschwantdner, *Philosophy and Religion*, 8-9. Also see, Brian Treanor and Henry Venema, "Introduction: How Much More Than the Possible?" in *A Passion for the Possible: Thinking with Paul Ricouer*, ed. Brian Treanor and Henry Isaac Venema (New York: Fordham university Press, 2010), 63.
[14] Gschwantdner, *Philosophy and Religion*, 9.
[15] Ibid.
[16] Ibid.

English scholarship that contextualize this study. There are many others that contribute to the content of the pages that follow and more still that I have yet to encounter. The following attempts to focus on one concept in Ricoeur's thought, with the purpose of exploring philosophical approaches to understanding religion.

Chapter One

Discontinuity Between Discourses

In the 8th and final study of *La métaphor vive* Ricoeur examines whether and which, "philosophy is *implied*" in the movement from rhetoric to semantics and from sense to reference in metaphorical utterance.[17] To undertake this project, Ricoeur argues "for a relative pluralism of forms and levels of discourse" and emphasizes a discontinuity between speculative and poetic discourses. However, he also maintains that discourses are capable of a confrontation that is "enlivening," through the "interanimation" of discourses.[18] In the following, I consider the first three sections of this final study wherein Ricoeur uses four examples to articulate the meaning of the discontinuity between discourses. My position throughout this first chapter is that Ricoeur is defending the philosophical act wherein thought aims to use univocal language to articulate the meaning of concepts and that this constitutes a unique sphere of discourse. The question

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[17] Paul Ricoeur, *The Rule of Metaphor: The Creation of Meaning in Language*, trans., Robert Czerny with Kathleen McLaughlin and John Costello, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1977), 304. Cf. Paul Ricoeur, *La Métaphor Vive* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil), 323.

[18] Ibid., 304-6/323-5. Ricoeur adds the radical heterogeneity of discourses is associated with Wittgenstein's "language games – which exclude the very cases of interaction with which the closing part of this study will be concerned." Ibid., 304/324.

concerning the legitimacy of this philosophical project is central to Ricoeur's explication of the discontinuity between discourses throughout the opening sections of MDP.

The following is divided into two sections: First, I identify what Ricoeur considers to be the "semantic aim" in the texts of Aristotle and Aquinas.[19] Ricoeur emphasizes the significance of breaking with poetic discourse for Aristotle and Aquinas to illustrate what he considers to be integral to a "speculative" project. In the second section, I turn to Ricoeur's interpretation of Derrida and Heidegger. Ricoeur argues the latter authors have unnecessarily intertwined metaphysics and metaphor in their analysis of the history of philosophy. In each section Ricoeur defends what he considers to be the speculative aim, rather than the particularities of the various speculative projects. Ricoeur can be said to be defending the history of Western philosophy, without fully endorsing the particular instantiations of that history.

Section One

Aristotle: The Concept of the Analogy of Being

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[19] The meaning of the term "semantic aim" is not discussed in detail in "Métaphor et discours philosophique," however, Ricoeur notes that his "discussion" of Aristotle and Aquinas "will be seen to have been situated at the level of stated intentions of speculative – even onto-theological – discourse – thus to have had at issue only the order of its argumentation," (ibid., 305/325). One should connect the idea of the semantic aim to Ricoeur's broader understanding of interpretation. Ricoeur decisively rejects the notion that interpretation should seek to focus on authorial intent. In Ricoeur's critically important essay, "What is a Text? Explanation and Interpretation," he clearly rejects psychologizing interpretations of texts. Ricoeur argues the *text's intention* should be the central focus of hermeneutics by focusing on "what is at work, in labor, in the text." See: Paul Ricoeur, "What is a Text? Explanation and Interpretation," in *Hermeneutics and the Human Sciences: Essays on Language, Action, and Interpretation*. Ed., trans., John B. Thompson. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 150. Within the context of the essay, Ricoeur asserts that natural sciences use "explanation," whereas the human sciences engage in "interpretation." The methodology of the natural sciences is adopted in structuralist approaches that only consider the inner logic of a text's linguistic structure. This approach, however, does not fully articulate how a reader discovers meaning in a text for Ricoeur. As I explain in chapter two, the reader must both imaginatively and critically consider the relation between the "sign" to "object" (or the relation between being and saying). This additional consideration requires the work of a philosophy of language, or, what Ricoeur calls interpretation.

Ricoeur's first case study for the discontinuity between discourses is Aristotle's concept of the analogy of being. According to Ricoeur, the concept of analogy depends on "an initial divergence between poetic and speculative discourse."[20] He attempts to identify the "search that animated" Aristotle's break with poetics, rather than articulate the success or failure of the project.[21] Ricoeur articulates this search by first examining Aristotle's "act of ordering" and its relationship to "the question that decisively breaks with poetic discourse – what is being?"[22] Ricoeur writes:

> This question is entirely outside the bounds of all language games. For this reason, when the philosopher is confronted by the paradox that 'being is said in several ways' and when, in order to rescue the diverse meanings of being from dispersal, he establishes between them a relation of reference to a first term that is neither the univocity of a genus nor the mere chance equivocalness of a simple word, the plurivocity that is thus brought to philosophical discourse is of a different order than the multiplicity of meaning produced by metaphorical utterance.[23]

The question 'what is being?' is distinguished from the multiplicity of meaning exemplified in metaphorical utterance because the question considers how metaphor's multiple meanings maintain a reference to being. Aristotle seeks to reverse the dispersal of meanings by identifying the relations between references that govern the meanings of a term. Ricoeur notes that Aristotle develops his theory of reference partially out of a rejection of a Platonic ontology of participation that Aristotle viewed as "only

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[20] Ricoeur, *Métaphore Vive*, 307/325.
[21] Ibid., 321/343.
[22] According to Ricoeur, since Aristotle the question concerning the "conditions" required for the multiple meanings of being has historically, remained central to philosophical discourse: "Since Aristotle, through the neo-Platonists and the Arab and Christian medieval philosophers, down to Kant, Hegel, Renouvier, and Hamelin, this act of ordering that the *Categories* represents has remained the perennial signal task of speculative discourse" (ibid., 307/326).
[23] Ibid.

metaphorical."[24] With the rejection of participatory ontology, however, Aristotle is left to

ascertain a non-generic unity of being that will be conceptual rather than metaphorical.

Ricoeur argues that the problem of identifying the non-generic unity of being

leads Aristotle to the concept of analogy. He considers Aristotle's work on analogy to be

"a second-order reflection on the *Categories*," arising "from the question of whether, and

to what extent, reference to the first term is itself a conceivable relation."[25] The

possibility of this reference is determined when "paronyms" are introduced in the

Categories as a "non-metaphorical and properly transcendental resemblance among the

primary significations of being."[26] Ricoeur writes:

> To say that there are not two classes of things to name – synonyms and
> homonyms – but three classes, with the insertion of paronyms, is to open up a
> new domain for philosophical discourse based on the existence of non-accidental
> homonyms… To say that this resemblance is unscientific settles nothing. It is
> more important to affirm that because it breaks with poetics, this purely
> transcendental resemblance even today attests, by its failure, to the search that
> animated it – namely, the search for a relation that is still to be thought otherwise
> than by science, if thinking scientifically means thinking in terms of genus.[27]

The move towards paronyms in the *Categories* decisively shifts thinking into a

transcendental realm of resemblance when "a segment of equivocalness" is "wrested

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[24] Ibid., 308/327.

[25] Ibid., 318/339. The question of a conceivable relation emerged through Aristotle's reflections on predication. The second-order reference that Ricoeur refers to is centered on the question of "what sort of relation is generated" Ibid.

[26] Ibid. 321/343. Ricoeur explains that paronyms are, "those things that derive their name from some other name, but differ from it in termination (*ptôsis*). Thus the grammarian derives his name from the word *grammar,* and the courageous man from the word *courage* (*Categories* 1 a 12–15). Here for the first time an intermediate class is inserted between homonymous and synonymous items, and consequently between expressions that are merely equivocal and expressions that are absolutely univocal." The intermediate class opens up the possibility of a non-metaphorical explanation for the multiple meanings of being.
Ricoeur goes on to note, "The entire following analysis will attempt to widen the gap opened up by paronyms in the solid front of equivocalness and to lift the general ban on equivocalness laid by one of Aristotle's own theses, namely that 'to mean more than one thing is to mean nothing at all'" (ibid., 310/329).

[27] Ibid.

once from poetry and incorporated into philosophical discourse."[28] Ricoeur emphasizes "once," since this movement establishes a split between discourses. Aristotle shifts from the problem of the multiple meaning of terms from poetics to the transcendental realm of concepts.

This shift towards the transcendental is precisely where Ricoeur identifies the significance of Aristotle's project. Once Aristotle aims towards a non-generic unity of meaning through "the conceptual labour crystallized in the logical result," the context for modern philosophy's return to the problem is established. [29] Ricoeur explains that the *Categories* "has proved capable of continual consideration and reworking" because Aristotle considers "the difference between analogy of being and poetic metaphor."[30] This movement towards the transcendental is built upon thought's capacity to use language in a manner that is not metaphorical. As will become clear, the very possibility of the discontinuity between discourses and the integrity of the speculative project requires this capacity.

Aquinas: Analogy and Participation

The second case study Ricoeur considers is the Thomistic doctrine of analogy. As with his interpretation of Aristotle's work on analogy, Ricoeur's objective is to articulate the *semantic aim* of the "conceptual enterprise" that is "crystallized" in the Scholastic debate on analogy, while also articulating how a "split is forged between speculative and poetic discourse" in this context.[31]

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[28] Ibid., 322/344.
[29] Ibid., 321/343.
[30] Ibid.
[31] Ibid., 323/346

Ricoeur acknowledges that any split with poetic discourse in the Scholastic context occurs in an already composite discourse of theology and philosophy. However, he maintains that the purpose of scholasticism "is to establish theological discourse at the level of science and thereby to free it completely from the poetical forms of religious discourse, even at the price of severing the science of God from biblical hermeneutics."[32] Yet unlike Aristotle, Aquinas remains committed to the "need to base analogical predication on an ontology of participation."[33] Aquinas's project aims towards a univocal manner of speaking that is grounded in an ontology of participation that permits him to speak about God.

Ricoeur identifies "being as act," as the "ontological keystone" in Aquinas' theory of analogy, the consequence of which is that "causality" plays a central role within the theory.[34] Ricoeur argues that causality is not "the resemblance of copy to model but the communication of an act, the act being at once what the effect has in common with the cause and that by reason of which the effect is not identical to the cause."[35] When causality is conceived of as the communication of an act, it assumes an analogous function. Within the scholastic context, this function is initiated by a "creative causality" and is established by "the bond of participation that makes the relation by analogy ontologically possible."[36] 'Being as act' takes on the function of causation because it participates in the first cause.

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[32] Ibid.
[33] Ibid., 323/347.
[34] Ibid., 324/348). Ricoeur adds that Aquinas develops this theory of analogy in contrast to his earlier work in the *Commentary on Book I of the Sentences*, wherein Aquinas appears to be much closer to Platonic exemplarism (ibid., 324/347).
[35] Ibid., 326/350.
[36] Ibid., 326/350-1.

According to Ricoeur, there is no separation between "horizontal analogy" and "vertical analogy" in Aquinas's theory.[37] Analogy can function as "two things to a third," (i.e. "quantity and quality relate to one another in relating to substance") and it can also function as "one thing to another" (i.e. as accidents relate to substance or as created beings relate to the divine)." The power of causality establishes relations that can move in both directions, as "secondary analogues to the principle analogue," but also "proceeding from the most eminent to the less excellent."[38] The ordering of relations sits halfway between the equivocal and the univocal – it is established horizontally through participation in God and vertically according to causality's analogical function.

This ordering of relations opens possibilities for speaking about God, but also circumscribes the relation between Being and Saying. Ricoeur writes:

> In the interplay of Saying and Being, when Saying is at the point of being forced to silence by the force of the heterogeneity of being and beings, Being itself revives Saying by means of underlying continuities that provide an analogical extension of its meanings to Saying. But at the same time, analogy and participation are placed in a mirror relationship, conceptual unity and the unity of the real corresponding exactly to one another.[39]

Being revives Saying because analogy allows for the extension of meaning. However, analogy is grounded by an ontological reference through participation, which in turn circumscribes the possible extension of meaning for Saying. This system unfolds analogically, so that the "effect" does not appear as the cause and yet even the most "heterogeneous" causes remain analogous and therefore structured by a reference to the "real."[40]

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[37] Ibid. 326/351.
[38] Ibid.
[39] Ibid., 327/352.
[40] Ibid.

This system allows Aquinas to speak about God based on a distinction between metaphorical and analogical predication in Scripture. Referencing *De Veritate*, Ricoeur writes:

> In symbolic attribution, God is called a 'lion,' 'sun,' etc., in these expressions 'the name implies something belonging to the thing primarily designated,' and with it 'matter that cannot be attributed to God.' On the other hand, only transcendentals such as 'being,' 'good,' 'true,' can be attributed to God, because they 'include no defect nor depend on matter for their act of existence.'[41]

For Aquinas, whenever metaphors are used to describe God in biblical passages a shift towards transcendental analogy is necessary. If God is called a lion, it is because "God manifests strength in His works, as a lion in his." The strength of God is properly transcendental, while metaphor is left to function "proportionally" so that the "poetic dresses speculative analogy in iconic garb."[42]

Although Ricoeur states that the "circle of analogy and participation" was "forced to give way under a barrage of criticism," the status of Aquinas' argument is less important to Ricoeur than the refusal to compromise with poetic discourse.[43] As with Aristotle, Ricoeur asserts that this refusal to compromise is "the distinctive feature of the semantic aim of speculative discourse."[44] Though the meaning of the term *speculative* is still emerging within MDP, Ricoeur's reading of both Aristotle and Aquinas sets out two examples where philosophy requires the discontinuity between poetic and speculative discourse. As we will see in Ricoeur's reading of Heidegger and Derrida, he is prepared

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[41] Ibid., 328/353.

[42] Ibid. 328/353. Ricoeur identifies this difference between metaphor and analogy within the "predicative operation" of the sentence in which the material content is carried by metaphor, but the analogical signification "rests on the predication of transcendental terms" (ibid). Ricoeur concludes, "Such is the magnificent exercise of thought which preserved the difference between speculative discourse and poetic discourse at the very point of their greatest proximity" (ibid., 330/356).

[43] Ibid., 327/352.

[44] Ibid.

to defend the possibility of this discontinuity against philosophies that seek to deconstruct it.

Section Two

Metaphor and Metaphysics: Martin Heidegger

In the third section of the MDP Ricoeur considers what he believes to be the "inverse" of Aristotle and Aquinas. It is the inverse because it "reverses the pattern of philosophical argumentation."[45] Rather than emphasizing the stated intentions of philosophical discourse, Heidegger and Derrida attempt to uncover "the undeclared movement of philosophy and the unseen play of metaphor that are in complicity."[46] Unlike his analysis of the semantic aims of Aristotle and Aquinas, Ricoeur offers critical appraisal of the conclusions reached by Heidegger and Derrida.

Ricoeur begins by considering the statement given by Heidegger: "The metaphorical exists only within the metaphysical."[47] Ricoeur suggests that Heidegger proposes equivalence (*nämlich)* in the "transposition of meaning" inherent to both metaphor and metaphysics.[48] The transfer inherent to metaphysics is the sensible to the non-sensible and is considered "determinative (*massgebend*) for Western thought," while the metaphorical transfer moves from the literal to figurative and "'gives the standard for our representation of the nature of language.'"[49] By placing metaphorical and

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[45] Ibid., 305/325
[46] Ibid.
[47] Ibid., 331/357. See: M. Heidegger, *Der Satz vom Grund*. 77-90.
[48] Ricoeur, *Métaphore Vive*, 333/359.
[49] Ibid., 332/358

metaphysical transfer together, Heidegger embeds metaphor with the "philosophical presuppositions" inherent to Western 'metaphysics since Plato.'[50]

Ricoeur limits the scope of Heidegger's statement on metaphor by identifying a "twofold" context within which the statement is situated. First, Ricoeur notes that the statement "refers to an earlier analysis of the 'principle of sufficient reason.'"[51] Within this context, Heidegger determines "a network of the terms *seeing*, *hearing*, *thinking*, and *harmony*, which underlies thought as it mediates on the connection between '*ist* and *Grund*' in the formulation of the Principle of Sufficient Reason."[52] Thus, the connection between metaphor and metaphysics is limited to a philosophy that establishes a harmony between "is" and "reason" through particular philosophical metaphors (i.e. seeing, hearing, thinking). Because Heidegger is referring to philosophical metaphors this "circumscribes the field of discussion from the very outset."[53] This restriction is why Ricoeur believes "what Heidegger does when he interprets poets as philosophers is infinitely more important than what he says polemically, not against metaphor, but against a manner of casting metaphors as particular philosophical statements."[54] Heidegger is criticizing undeclared metaphors used by philosophers and not a criticism of metaphors employed by poets.

The second context Ricoeur identifies restricts the scope of Heidegger's statement further, since it refers to a particular "objection" Heidegger was making. Ricoeur writes:

> Our hearing and seeing are never simple reception by the senses. As soon as we call thought a listening and a seeing, we do not mean this only as (*nur als*)

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[50] Ibid.
[51] Ibid.
[52] Ibid.
[53] Ibid., 333/359.
[54] Ibid.

metaphorical transposition, 'but rather as (*nämlich als*) a transposition of the allegedly (*vermeintlich*) sensible into the non-sensible' (88).[55]

If we interpret seeing and hearing according to the transposition of the sensible into the non-sensible, we receive the "standard for our representation of language'" and thus, metaphors can only exist within the bounds of the metaphysical.[56] Thus, Ricoeur finds that Heidegger's objection is pertinent only to a particular view of "Platonism," which then suffers Heidegger's "wholehearted denunciation."[57]

Ultimately, Ricoeur concludes that the impact of Heidegger's work is less significant than it might appear at first glance. He argues that Heidegger's confluence of metaphor and metaphysics is based on an "obsolete semantic notion that does not have to be tacked onto metaphysics to be taken to pieces."[58] In "Chapter Two," I articulate in some detail the alternative understanding of metaphor that Ricoeur develops throughout the *La métaphore vive*. At this point, however, Ricoeur does not recognize the "undeclared movement of philosophy and the unseen play of metaphor that are in complicity," as permeating throughout the history of philosophy. He endeavors to defuse the significance of Heidegger's statement and by extension, maintain the view that philosophical discourse can be fundamentally discontinuous with poetic discourse. Further into the eighth study Ricoeur will return to his critique of Heidegger to argue that the significance of Heidegger's project is located within the context of speculative philosophy, despite Heidegger's claim to have significantly departed from what speculative discourse.

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[55] Ibid., 332/358.
[56] Ibid., 333/359.
[57] Ibid.
[58] Ibid.

Metaphor and Metaphysics: Derrida

The "equivalence" in "transfer" between metaphor and metaphysics suggested in

Heidegger's statement sets the context for Ricoeur's reading of Derrida. However, while

Ricoeur depicted Heidegger's statement as "restrained," he characterizes Derrida's work

as "unbounded deconstruction."[59] As I noted in the "Introduction," this section of MDP

has received the most attention from commentators. Derrida responds to Ricoeur with his

essay "La Retrait de la métaphore" presented at conference with Ricoeur, although no

dialogue was subsequently exchanged. While I touch on Derrida's reply and

acknowledge the possibility that Ricoeur has misunderstood Derrida, the overall

trajectory of the following remains focused on the articulation of Ricoeur's theory of

discourses.

Ricoeur focuses on two aspects in the "tight fabric of Derrida's demonstration" in

"La Mythologie blanche."[60] The first aspect is concerned with "worn-out metaphor in

philosophical discourse," while the second aspect is "the deep-seated unity of

metaphorical and analogical transfer."[61] With worn-out metaphors, Ricoeur encounters a

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[59] Ibid., 336/362. Ricoeur's criticisms of Derrida follow the first public debate between the two thinkers that took place at a conference on "Communication" in Montreal (1971). Eftichis Pirovolakis characterizes the exchange as the first in a series of "miscarried dialogues" between the two. The transcripts of the discussion touch on a wide range of issues, but according to Pirovolakis, whether "the dichotomy between semiology and semantics, the event of signature, or *différance* is at issue, Ricoeur and Derrida seem to be talking at cross-purposes through this discussion." At certain points, "the confrontation becomes so lively that the two interlocutors cannot help interrupting each other, thereby rendering the possibility of a patient dialogue very difficult indeed." Subsequent to the conference, even when the two thinkers explicitly encounter the other's work on metaphor, Pirovolakis suggests they do not "fully engage with the other's arguments." See: Eftichis Pirovolakis, *Reading Derrida and Ricoeur*, (State University of New York Press, 2010) 1-2. The transcripts of the debate were published without revision, in *Actes du XVe de L'Association des Sociétés de Philosophie de Langue Francaise*, Université de Montreal, 1971, volume 2, pp. 393-431. For an English translation and analysis of the debate see the Appendix in: Leonard Lawlor, *Imagination and Chance: The Difference between the Thought of Ricoeur and Derrida* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1992).

[60] Jacques Derrida, "White Mythology: Metaphor in the Text of Philosophy," in *New Literary*, 6.1 (Fall 1974) 5-76. The article first appeared as "La Mythologie blanche," in *Poetique*, 5 (1971).

[61] Ricoeur, *Metaphor*, 336/362

view opposite to his own development of living metaphor. He argues that the "efficacy"

of worn-out metaphors take on their "full meaning" for Derrida "only when one

establishes the connection between the *wearing away* that affects metaphor and the

ascending movement that constitutes the formation of the concept."[62] Ricoeur

summarizes Derrida's interpretation of Hegel's *Aesthetics* to illustrate the wearing away

of metaphor into the concept:

> It begins by stating that philosophical concepts are initially sensible meanings transposed (*übertragen*) to the spiritual order; and it adds that the establishment of a properly (*eigentlich*) abstract meaning is bound up with the effacement of what is metaphorical in the initial meaning and thus with the disappearance of this meaning, which, once proper, has become improper."[63]

Whereas Hegel "saw an innovation of meaning" in the movement to the "properly"

spiritual, Derrida emphasizes the wearing away of metaphor. When a sensible meaning

passes over into a "properly" spiritual meaning, the metaphor that initially expresses the

sensible meaning "erases its trace."[64] The loss of the metaphor's trace results in a concept

that appears as though it were not initially dependent on metaphorical utterance.

If the production of concepts is dependent on worn-out metaphors this creates a

philosophy that never escapes its metaphorical beginning even if the initial metaphorical

trace has been erased. Ricoeur explains:

> The paradox is this: there is no discourse on metaphor that is not stated within a metaphorically engendered conceptual network. There is no non-metaphorical standpoint from which to perceive the order and the demarcation of the metaphorical field. Metaphor is metaphorically stated.[65]

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[62] Ibid., 337/363. Ricoeur then summarizes Derrida's thesis: "wherever metaphor fades, there the metaphysical concept arises" (ibid., 338/364).

[63] Ricoeur adds, "*Reléve*, raising, is Derrida's very apt translation of the Hegelian *Aufhebung* (sublation, a transformation that partially conceals, a reinterpretation to a higher level)." Ibid., 337/363.

[64] Ibid., 338/364.

[65] Ibid., 338-9/364.

If the "conditions" of any concept are metaphorical in character then the field of activity is "absolutely uncontrollable."[66] Even if one were to "establish order amid figures, still one metaphor at least would escape," since any conceptual discourse on metaphor would have to be metaphorically engendered.[67] From this point of view, the discontinuity between discourses that Ricoeur identifies in the Aristotelian and Thomistic projects is undermined since the distinctiveness of a conceptual discourse is impossible without being metaphorically engendered. Poetic and speculative discourses are inevitably entangled; no distanciation can ever create the necessary space between discourses required for the articulation of a "properly" philosophical meaning of concepts.

This paradox leads to the second aspect of "Le Mythologie blanche" that Ricoeur considers, namely, the 'deep-seated unity of metaphorical and analogical transfer.' The unity that Ricoeur believes Derrida has depicted is the result of what Ricoeur describes as a "perplexing tactic" that "consists in destroying metaphysical discourse by reduction to aporias."[68] Ricoeur claims that little by little, all "oppositions" are seen to lead to the oppositions that in turn, "found metaphysics as such."[69] This approach to metaphor and metaphysics is similar to Heidegger in the sense that the "movement of elevation and absorption or 'raising' by which worn-out metaphor is concealed in the figure or concept is not just some fact of language."[70] Rather, it is considered the "pre-eminent philosophical gesture that, in a 'metaphysical' orientation, sights the invisible beyond the visible, the intelligible beyond the sensible, after having first separated them."[71] The

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[66] Ibid., 339/365.
[67] Ibid.
[68] Ibid.
[69] Ibid.
[70] Ibid.
[71] Ibid., 340/366.

difference between the two is that Ricoeur characterizes Derrida's deconstruction as an unbounded reduction of all oppositions into metaphysics, whereas Ricoeur found Heidegger's statement on metaphor and metaphysics to be restricted to particular words (i.e. seeing, hearing) used as philosophical metaphors to describe what he recognizes as a form of Platonism.

To address the perceived difficulties with Derrida's 'unbounded' deconstruction, Ricoeur criticizes Derrida's interpretation of Hegel. He argues that the formation of the concept in Hegel does not demonstrate worn out metaphors, but is the result of Hegel's careful movement from poetics to speculative discourse. Ricoeur explains in reference to the text interpreted by Derrida in Hegel's *Aesthetics*:

> This text describes two operations that intersect at one point – dead metaphor – but remain distinct. The first operation, which is purely metaphorical, takes a proper (*eigentlich*) meaning and transports it (*übertragen*) into the spiritual order. Out of this expression – non-proper (*uneigentlich*) becomes transposed – the other operation makes a proper abstract meaning. It is the second operation that constitutes the 'suppression-preservation' which Hegel calls *Aufhebung*.[72]

In Ricoeur's reading both operations of transfer and suppression-preservation are "distinct."[73] The suppression-preservation "creates the proper sense in the spiritual order out of an improper sense coming from the sensible order."[74] This operation builds off an initial metaphorical transfer, but it is not reducible to it since it effectively establishes its own sphere of reference through the process of suppression-preservation. As a result, Ricoeur argues that, "when a dead metaphor beneath a concept is revived; it must still be proved that no abstract meaning was produced as the metaphor wore away."[75] Where

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[72] Ibid., 345/371
[73] Ibid.
[74] Ibid.
[75] Ibid., 346/372. See, Jacques Derrida, "The *Retrait* of Metaphor," as found in *Psyche: Inventions of the Other, Vol. I*, ed., Peggy Kamuf and Elizabeth Rottenberg (CAL: Stanford University Press, 2007).

Derrida sees worn-out metaphor, Ricoeur sees a new conceptual expression within a distinct sphere of discourse. Ricoeur's position is built upon a commitment to the capacity to use univocal language when an original meaning is suppressed and a new conceptual meaning is produced.

In Derrida's reply in "Le Retrait de la métaphore" he states that Ricoeur has misunderstood his text and ignored his analysis of semantics, but he does not set out his own critique of Ricoeur's analysis of metaphor.[76] Although Derrida's reply is important for identifying differences between Derrida and Ricoeur, I refrain from attempting to

For the French edition see: Jacques Derrida, "Le *Retrait* de la métaphore," as found in, *Pysché: Inventions de l'autre* (ParisL Galilée, 1987).

[76] While I have not articulated the details of Derrida's response and the subsequent literature negotiating the differences between Derrida and Ricoeur in this chapter, it is helpful to contextualize the issues by noting that in Derrida's brief response to Ricoeur in "Le *retrait* de la métaphor." Derrida provides two objections to Ricoeur's reading. First, he asserts, "it is often because I subscribe to Ricoeur's propositions that I am tempted to protest when I see him turn them back against me as if they were not already readable in what I wrote" (ibid., 54). Derrida argues that "White Mythology" "constantly calls into question the common and commonly philosophical interpretation (in Heidegger as well) of metaphor as a transfer from the sensible to the intelligible, as well as the privilege accorded this trope (by Heidegger as well) in the deconstruction of metaphysical rhetoric" (ibid., 55). Derrida cites the first line of "note 19," in "La mythologie blanche," which states, "'This explains the mistrust that the concept of metaphor inspires in Heidegger [I emphasize: the *concept* of metaphor]. In The Principle of Reason, he stresses especially the 'sensible/non-sensible' opposition, an important trait but not the only, nor doubtless the first to appear, nor the most determinant for the value of metaphor" (ibid). Rather than associate with a reading that suggests equivalence between metaphorical and metaphysical transfer, Derrida claims that "White Mythology" calls it into question. The second objection Derrida submits is that Ricoeur fails to acknowledge Derrida's emphasis on the semantic form of metaphor. He writes, "I have constantly called into question – in *White Mythology* and elsewhere, and with an insistence that might be judged tiresome, but which in any case cannot be neglected – the privilege of the name and the word, like all those 'semiotic conceptions which,' Ricoeur says precisely, 'impose the primacy with attention to the syntactic motif dominant in *White Mythology'* (ibid*., 58)*. Although it appears that Derrida has a case for asserting Ricoeur has misunderstood his position, Derrida does not offer his own criticism of Ricoeur's notion of living metaphor developed throughout *La vivre métaphor.* Following Derrida's assertion that Ricoeur has failed to acknowledge his own attention to semantics, Derrida quickly moves on to develop his own complicated reading of Heidegger's statement, "The metaphorical exists only within the metaphysical," in the remainder of "Le *retrait* de la métaphore." Absent is a more detailed engagement by either Ricoeur or Derrida, significant space remains for their interpreters to negotiate the status of their disagreement.[76] Jean-Luc Amalric summarizes the status of their disagreement, stating, "Nous avons donc en réalité affair à un debat qui n'a pas eu lieu: d'une part, parce que Ricoeur n'aurait pas bien ressaisi le statut de certain arguments de Derrida; d'autre part, parce que Derrida n'aurait fait que pointer ces malentendus sans pour autant engager ensuite un veritable débat avec Ricoeur." See: Jean-Amalric, *Ricoeur, Derrida*: *L'enjeu de la metaphor* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 2006), 8.

adjudicate what Jean-Luc Amalric describes as a debate "qui n'a pas eu lieu."[77] The central issue for this study is that Ricoeur's criticisms of Derrida emphasizes a discontinuity between discourses that supports the speculative capacity to use univocal language to articulate conceptual discourse.

Consequences for the Discontinuity

The exegetical focus in this chapter has presented the manner in which Ricoeur identifies a "split" in discourses through his analysis of the semantic aims in Aristotle and Aquinas, but also in his critical response to the evaluation of metaphysics and metaphor in Heidegger and Derrida. I have suggested throughout that Ricoeur is defending the philosophical act wherein thought uses univocal language to articulate the meaning of concepts. To this point in MDP Ricoeur has simply defended the validity of this philosophical act. This defense is critical to establishing the internal sphere of reference inherent to speculative thought. However, Ricoeur has not inferred that discontinuity between speculative and poetic thought implies a lack of interaction or overlap between discourses. In the following chapter I explicate the ways in which speculative and poetic discourse interact and even bring life to one another. This continued exegesis of the conceptual framework in MDP is necessary to determine the precise meaning of the *interanimation* between discourses, which is the central idea carried throughout the arguments presented in the final two chapters of this study.

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[77] Ibid.

Chapter Two

Interanimation Between Discourses

In the final two sections of MDP Ricoeur investigates the "interanimation of philosophical and poetic discourse" through a study "of the phenomenology of semantic aims."[78] His objective is "to show that the possibility of speculative discourse lies in the semantic dynamism of metaphorical expression, and yet that speculative discourse can respond to the semantic potentialities of metaphor only by providing it with the resources of a domain of articulation that properly belongs to speculative discourse by reason of its very constitution."[79] In accordance with my position in "Chapter One," Ricoeur continues to defend the philosophical act wherein thought employs univocal language to articulate the meaning of concepts. However, Ricoeur aims to clarify the interaction between speculative and poetic discourse without undermining the internal sphere of references that constitutes their discontinuity.

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[78] Paul Ricoeur, *The Rule of Metaphor: The Creation of Meaning in Language*, trans., Robert Czerny with Kathleen McLaughlin and John Costello (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1977), 349; Paul Ricoeur, *La Métaphor Vive*, (Paris: Éditions du Seuil), 375.

[79] Ibid., 306/325.

The following is divided into three sections. First, I explicate the terms "poetic" discourse and "speculative" discourse that Ricoeur uses, but does not explicitly detail the meaning of until the fourth section of MDP. Second, I consider Ricoeur's exploration of the interaction and interanimation between speculative and poetic discourses both as it relates to the ontology of potentiality and actuality, and more specifically in Ricoeur's assertion that metaphor can be a "spark" for "thinking more" in conceptual discourse. Third, I articulate how the experiences of "belonging" and "distanciation" establish the central dialectic underlying Ricoeur's theory of discourses. The identification of precise modes interanimation between *poetic* and speculative in this chapter establishes a framework for considering the possible interanimation between speculative and *religious* discourse in the following chapter.

Poetic and Speculative Discourse

Poetic Discourse

Within MDP Ricoeur broadly defines the term "poetic discourse" and explains how metaphor works within this broader discourse. In the following I briefly review his theory of metaphor and then articulate how this fits within his definition of poetic discourse.

Ricoeur's understanding of metaphor in MDP builds off the tensional theory he develops in the third, sixth, and seventh studies of *La métaphore vive*.[80] Therein, the production of meaning within metaphor relies on three different levels of tension: "the tension between the terms of the statement, the tension between literal interpretation and

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[80] In his "Introduction," Ricoeur suggests that "Study 3" contains "the decisive step of the analysis; it can, therefore be considered the 'key' Study" (ibid., 2/8). He suggests that the third study "animates" studies 6 and 7 in particular (ibid., 3/8).

metaphorical interpretation, and the tension in the reference between is and is not."[81]

Ricoeur reviews this tensional theory and emphasizes how the play of pertinence and

impertinence in metaphorical utterance produces both a semantic innovation and a

conceptual sketch.

Ricoeur's tensional theory is built upon the notion that metaphorical statements

are both a "semantic event" and "semantic innovation."[82] He writes:

> In a metaphorical statement… the contextual action creates a new meaning, which
> truly has the status of an event since it exists only in the present context. At the
> same time, however, it can be reidentified as the same, since its construction can
> be repeated. In this way, the innovation of an emergent meaning can be taken as a
> linguistic creation.[83]

While a metaphorical statement can only be encountered as an event that takes place

within the present, the innovation of new meaning is not reducible to the present. Lawlor

points out that Ricoeur characterizes meaning as "omnitemporal, relatively permanent,

ideal."[84] This relative stability in meaning is what allows for the identification of the

"same" and structures the possibility for impertinent uses of language, and by extension,

semantic innovations.

According to Ricoeur, the first level of tension that produces a new meaning

occurs between the "terms of the statement." Metaphorical utterance takes place at the

level of the sentence because the "predicative structure" of metaphor requires a "principle

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[81] Ibid., 353/378.

[82] Ibid., 114/127. The metaphor encountered in a text rather than a spoken statement shifts the
context of the "event." Yet, the dynamics of the "event" and "meaning" described above still remain in
written metaphor since the reader encounters the metaphor in the present, while the meaning of the
metaphor operates in a relatively permanent ideal.

[83] Ibid., 115/127. Once a community adopts this shift in meaning it becomes lexicalized and then
is no longer a living metaphor. Ricoeur writes, "Only authentic metaphors, that is, living metaphors, are at
once meaning and event" (ibid.).

[84] Leonard Lawlor, *Imagination and Chance: The Difference Between the Thought of Ricoeur and
Derrida* (New York: State University of New York Press, 1992), 56.

subject" and a "modifier of this subject" that "operates like a sort of attribution."[85] Thus, the first tension emerges when a common understanding of the subject (*pertinence*) of a metaphor is adjusted by the placement of a new modifying predicate (*impertinence*).

This first gain in meaning is built upon by the second tension Ricoeur identifies between the literal and the figurative. Ricoeur explains a literal interpretation is "restricted to the established values of words," and a metaphorical interpretation results "from the 'twist' imposed on these words in order to 'make sense' in terms of the statement as a whole."[86] In his sixth study Ricoeur places the play between the literal and the figurative on the level of the schema and relates it to Kant's understanding of the productive imagination. He writes:

> This schematism turns imagination into the place where the figurative meaning emerges in the interplay of identity and difference. And metaphor is that place in discourse where this schematism is visible, because the identity and the difference do not melt together but confront each other.[87]

At this level, the literal and figurative "remains caught in the conflict of 'same' and 'different,' although it constitutes the rough outline of and demand for an instruction through the concept."[88] The figurative and literal tension operates at the level of the image, setting before us the play of identity and difference that was initiated by the new predicative structure.

Ricoeur develops the third level of tension within metaphor in "Study 7" by identifying a "split reference" within metaphor. He maintains that the tension produced in metaphor must be set within the copula of being and not-being. Metaphor always asserts

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[85] Ricoeur, *Metaphor,* 115/127.
[86] Ibid., 350/375.
[87] Ibid., 236/254
[88] Ibid., 351/376.

"being as" in some capacity, however, "being as" requires both "being and not being."[89]

This ontological tension is implicit in metaphor, but only sketches a conceptual network.

The result is that metaphor suggests an "ontological vehemence" that "must be reconciled

with the requirements of the concept."[90] It is this reconciliation that brings Ricoeur to the

eighth study, wherein the tensional theory of metaphor is considered within the broader

paradigm of poetic discourse and its potential interaction with conceptual discourse.

Ricoeur's broader understanding of poetic discourse in MDP describes an

experience of belonging in the world that both precedes and receives us. He explains:

> Poetic discourse brings to language a pre-objective world in which we find
> ourselves already rooted, but in which we also project our inner-most
> possibilities. We must dismantle the reign of objects in order to let be, and to
> allow to be uttered, our primordial belonging to a world which we inhabit, that is
> to say, which at once precedes us and receives the imprint of our works.[91]

Metaphorical utterance is expressed within this pre-objective world in the sense that the

pertinences of language are founded on usages we first receive and belong to before any

impertinence can be created. However, metaphor is not simply an uncritical expression of

a pre-objective world; metaphor intercedes in this world and innovates with impertinent

uses of language.

When a poet such as Gerard Manley Hopkins writes, "World broods with warm

breast [&] with ah! bright wings," or, "Evening strains to be time's vast, womb-of-all,

home-of-all, hearse-of-all night," he is poeticizing a living experience through *living*

expression. He is describing the experiences of belonging in a world, but he describes it

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[89] Ibid., 351/376.
[90] Ibid., 354/379.
[91] Ibid., 361-2/387. Lawlor relates this notion of belonging to Heidegger's notion of being-in-the-world, wherein "belonging implies that we always already find ourselves functioning in historical situations" (Lawlor, *Imagination*, 54).

with new language that has the possibility for opening new meaning within that world.[92] The metaphors intercede on language by soliciting for us new possibilities of experience.

Ricoeur argues throughout *La Vive Métaphor* and *Temps et Récit* that poetic discourse is not naïve or irrational. When poetic discourse redescribes reality, it is necessarily articulated within the movement from sense to reference and refers to a sense of actuality and possibility. Moreover, metaphorical utterance maintains a connection to the copula of being, and as such, never operates within a vacuum of feeling that is merely poetic ornamentation.[93] Any analysis of poetic utterance that neglects the conceptual sketch inherent to poetic discourse undercuts the "very structure of the utterance."[94] So when Hopkins says that the world "broods with warm breast," but also that evening is the "hearse-of-all-night," he employs the resources of the concept (the copula of being), and in doing so he also suggests a critical redescription of reality. Although poetic discourse describes our experience of belonging to the world, this does not negate interaction with speculative thought. In fact, when poetic discourse intercedes in language, it provides a conceptual sketch that Ricoeur argues speculative thought in turn can take up.

Speculative Discourse:

Although poetic discourse provides a conceptual sketch, this "does not bar" speculative thought "from beginning in itself and from finding the principle of its

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[92] This explanation of Hopkins is similar to the Charles Taylor's analysis in the final chapter of *A Secular Age*. Taylor develops the idea that language has the potential to open new possibilities for being in the world. He uses Hopkins as an example of a poet who opens "new itineraries in Western modernity." Taylor acknowledges that he is employing a very high view of language, in that he asserts "linguistic expression, makes things exist for us in a new mode, one of awareness or reflection." Cf. Charles Taylor, *A Secular Age* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2007), 755-64.

[93] In "Study Seven" Ricoeur is deeply critical of Wheelwright and Turbayne whose "metapoetics" do not consider the ontological vehemence found within the poetic reference to 'as if' (ibid., 295-302/314-321).

[94] Ibid. 362/388.

articulation within itself."[95] According to Ricoeur, the necessity of speculative discourse

proceeds "from the very structures of the mind, which it is the task of transcendental

philosophy to articulate."[96] This procedure does not determine that speculative discourse

will have no interaction with Ricoeur's semantic theory of language or draw on the

resources of metaphor, rather it implies that speculative discourse can be accounted for

according to the terms of its own sphere of reference.

Ricoeur asserts that the speculative sphere of reference deals with the "space of

the concept." Reflecting on the space of the concept is built on a reversal of the notion

that concepts are built on the perception of images. Ricoeur explains:

> [S]peculative discourse is the discourse that establishes the primary notions, the
> principles, that articulate primordially the space of the concept. Concepts in
> scientific language as well as in ordinary language can never actually be derived
> from perception or from images, because the discontinuity of levels of discourse
> is founded, at least virtually, by the very structure of the conceptual space in
> which meanings are inscribed when they draw away from the metaphorical
> process, which can be said to generate all semantic fields. It is in this sense that
> the speculative is the condition of the possibility of the conceptual.[97]

The articulation of conceptual space is dependent on the mind's capacity to undertake a

"second-level" of reflection, wherein one operates within a "meta-language" that

articulates the space of concepts.[98] Although speculative discourse inevitably employs the

resources of language, speculative thought possesses the capacity to reflect on language,

while being in language.

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[95] Ibid., 354/380.
[96] Ibid., 355/380.
[97] Ibid.
[98] Ibid. Ricoeur continues, "If, in the order of discovery, the speculative surfaces as a second-level discourse – as meta-language, if one prefers – in relation to the discourse articulated at the conceptual level, it is indeed first discourse in the order of grounding. This discourse is at work in all the speculative attempts to order the 'great genera,' the 'categories of being,' the 'categories of understanding,' 'philosophical logic,' the 'principles of representation,' or however one wants to express it" (ibid).

Ricoeur turns to Husserl's critique of the image as an example of the type of second-order reflection characteristic of speculative discourse. Husserl's critique of the image is built on the inverse of the position that turns to perception for "genetic explanation." Ricoeur explains:

> The speculative is the very principle of the disparity [*inadéquation*] between illustration and intellection, between exemplification and the conceptual apprehension. If *imaginatio* is the kingdom of the 'similar,' the *intellectio* is that of the 'same.' In the horizon opened by the speculative, 'same' grounds the 'similar' and not the inverse. In fact, 'wherever things are "alike," an identity in the strict and true sense is also present.'[99]

Within the sphere of speculative discourse the identification of the "similar" plays "nothing more than a 'supportive' role."[100] This is the inverse of metaphorical discourse, since it perceives the concept as that which makes the poetic play of representation possible.[101] From this point of view, the work of the concept is what allows one to identify the "sense" of the image and place it in a sphere of "logical signification."[102]

Although Husserl's critique is in reference to "the image," Ricoeur argues that his critique "can be transposed easily into a critique of 'metaphor' in so far as the imagination includes not only so-called mental images but also, and especially, predicative assimilations and schematizations that underlie metaphorical utterance."[103] Poetic discourse does not reflect on the concepts that it employs; it only makes use of them. To further explicate the conceptual sketch implied in metaphorical utterance, one

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[99] Ibid., 356/381. Cf. Edmund Husserl, *Logical Investigations*: *Volume 1*, trans. J.N. Findlay (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1970), 348. *Logische Untersuchungen,* (Halle: Niemeyer 1913).
[100] Ibid.
[101] Ibid.
[102] Ibid.
[103] Ibid., 356-7/382. Recall Ricoeur's description of the tension between the literal and the figurative that is founded on schematizations of the image, which move back and forth between a recognition of identity and difference within metaphor (ibid., 350-1/375-6).

needs to rise to the level of second-order reference wherein univocal articulation of the concept takes place.

Guilles Stellardi suggests that Ricoeur's emphasis on the capacity for second-order reference implies that philosophy "never risks its own point of foundation."[104] However, Ricoeur's argument throughout MDP is to defend the legitimacy and necessity of the speculative project, but says nothing to pacify the "risk" involved in speculative discourse. Stellardi fails to see that speculative thought's initial movement towards univocal expression based on the structures of the mind remains tenuously built upon a foundation that is assumed for Ricoeur. For example, in "Chapter Three" I note how Ricoeur asserts that Kant's transcendental knowledge operates at the level of a "presumption."[105] He argues that for Kant, "I think" becomes the "principle of everything that is valid" and assumes the status of a "foundation that founds itself."[106] To say that speculative philosophy can be founded on the structures of mind is simply to say how speculative thinking initially begins. This beginning operates at the level of a presumption wherein one "risks" the adoption of a foundation from the very outset of speculative discourse.

For Ricoeur then, speculative discourse can be summarized as the struggle towards univocal articulation of the concept through a reflective capacity. This reflective capacity allows philosophy to use language to articulate the space of the concept, a

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[104] Guilles Stellardi, *Heidegger and Derrida on Philosophy and Metaphor: Imperfect Thought* (New York: Prometheus Books, 2000), 103.

[105] Paul Ricoeur, "Naming God," *Figuring the Sacred*, ed., Mark I. Wallace (Minneapolis: Augsberg Fortress, 1995), 223. Originally published in: *Union Theological Seminary Quarterly Review* 34 (1979): 215-27.

[106] Ibid.

project Ricoeur defends throughout MDP, but does not assess in terms of its various

successes or failures. This understanding of speculative philosophy coincides with

Ricoeur's earlier defense of the split between discourses in the work of Aristotle and

Aquinas, wherein Ricoeur defends their aims rather than their conclusions. However,

just as significant as the discontinuity that sets the space for difference between

discourses, is the interaction between these discourses. Ricoeur turns to the possibility of

this interaction in the final pages of *La Métaphore Vive*.

A Hermeneutical Analysis of the Interaction Between Discourses

Ricoeur envisions the interaction of discourses to be one of continual movement.

However, this movement is not completely uncontrollable. Ricoeur writes:

> My inclination is to see the universe of discourse as a universe kept in motion by
> an interplay of attractions and repulsions that ceaselessly promote the interaction
> and intersection of domains whose organizing nuclei are off-centred in relation to
> one another; and still this interplay never comes to rest in an absolute knowledge
> that would subsume the tensions.[107]

Each discourse functions within its own sphere of reference with its own 'organizing

nuclei' that is 'off-centred in relation' to other discourses.[108] The meaning of poetic

discourse is encountered through our pre-objective belonging to the world, whereas the

meaning of speculative discourse is articulated according to second-order reflection,

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[107] Ibid. Ricoeur's rejection of any "absolute knowledge" that would "subsume" (*résorberait*) demonstrates Clive Cazeaux's assertion that Ricoeur should be associated with Kant rather than Hegel in MDP. Cazeaux also suggests that Ricoeur's proximity to Kant is critical for understanding the difference between Derrida and Ricoeur's position on philosophy and metaphor. He writes, "The German idealists who inform Ricoeur's and Derrida's studies – Kant with the former, Hegel with the latter – may go some way to explaining the difference between Ricoeur's discourse-intersection metaphor and Derrida's supplementary, 'outside the field' metaphor." See: Clive Cazeaux, *Metaphor and Continental Philosophy: From Kant to Derrida* (New York: Routledge, 2007), 183.

[108] Henry Isaac Venema helpfully summarizes Ricoeur's vision of discourses by stating, "While each of these levels of discourse retain its own irreducibility, none is truly autonomous." Cf. "The Source of Ricoeur's Double Alliance," in *Passion for the Possible*, ed., Brian Treanor and Isaac Venema (New York: Fordham University Press, 2010), 65.

which aims towards conceptual clarification. These two discourses are kept in motion through ceaseless attraction and repulsion between the spheres of reference.

According to Ricoeur, this movement between discourses can be explicated by philosophical hermeneutics. He envisions hermeneutics as a speculative discourse in the sense that it "cannot help but be the work of elucidation," and "consequently a struggle for univocity."[109] Ricoeur acknowledges that the struggle for univocity can lead to certain "reductive interpretations" consistent with the semantic aim of speculative discourses, which may result in the "destruction of the metaphorical by the conceptual." However it is "not the only outcome of the interaction between different modalities of discourse."[110] Ricoeur writes, "One can imagine a hermeneutic style where interpretation would conform both to the notion of concept and to that of the constitutive intention of the experience seeking to be expressed in the metaphorical mode."[111] With this hermeneutical approach, one discourse does not abolish the other. Interpretation functions at the "intersection of two domains, metaphorical and speculative." Operating at the intersection of two domains creates "a composite discourse, therefore, and as such cannot but feel the opposite pull of two rival demands."[112] Consequently, while Ricoeur's understanding of interpretation is one that aims to elucidate meaning univocally, it remains sensitive to the pull of both speculative and poetic thought, attempting to identify within each discourse its own internal integrity and reference.

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[109] Ricoeur, *Métaphore vive*, 357/383.
[110] Ibid., 358/383.
[111] Ibid.
[112] Ibid.

Ricoeur relates his position to the *Critique of the Faculty of Judgment*, where Kant "calls 'the spirit (*Geist*) in an aesthetic sense,' 'the life-giving principle of mind (*Gemüt*)."[113] Ricoeur associates this notion of *Geist* with the metaphor of life:

> The metaphor of life comes to the fore here, because the *game* in which imagination and understanding engage assumes a task assigned by the Ideas of reason, to which no concept is equal. But where the imagination fails, imagination still has the power of 'presenting' (*Darstellung*) the Idea. It is this 'presentation of the Idea by the imagination that forces conceptual thought to think more. Creative imagination is nothing other than this demand put to conceptual thought.[114]

Ricoeur continues by stating that metaphorical utterance "vivifies a constituted language," introducing "a spark of imagination into thinking more' at the conceptual level." This "struggle to think more is the 'soul' of interpretation."[115] The creation of new meaning vivifies language according to the tensional theory of metaphor. This creation challenges speculative thought to consider how new meaning works within the sphere of concepts.

To consider how metaphor helps us to think more at the conceptual level, Ricoeur aims for a "clarification of the postulate of reference," which he works towards in an "exploratory and not in a dogmatic fashion."[116] As a work of hermeneutics, Ricoeur considers his remaining project to be a "philosophical task" and not a linguistic one, since he is exploring the "relation of language to its counterpart, reality," and this "concerns the conditions for reference in general, and thus the meaning of language as a whole." [117]

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[113] Ibid. Also see: Immanuel Kant, *Critique of the Faculty of Judgment*, trans., James Creed Meredith (Oxford: Clarendon Press 1952), A 190; pg 175-6.

[114] Ricoeur, *Metaphor*, 358/383-4. Cf. Kant *Critique of the Faculty of Judgment*, A 192; pg 177.

[115] Ricoeur, *Metaphor*, 358/384. Cazeaux writes, "And this 'thinking more' is (again) 'ontologically vehement'; it applies to the world, it is schematized in a Kantian sense… Ricoeur's position is Kantian to the extent that the diaphoric swirl of ideas turns about a perpendicular, world-directed axis, where the turning and the world-directedness are mutually defining vectors." Cazeaux, *Metaphor and Continental Philosophy*, 184.

[116] Ricoeur, *Métaphore vive*, 364/391.

[117] Ibid., 359/384.

Through his exploration of the "postulate of reference," Ricoeur attempts to determine both the nature and limits of the *interaction* between poetic and speculative thought.

Although Ricoeur sees his task as philosophical rather than linguistic, he acknowledges that there can be "no standpoint outside of language."[118] Consistent with his previous statements on speculative discourse he argues that language includes in it a "reflective capacity," which means one can use language to "place itself at a distance and to consider itself, as such and in its entirety, as related to the totality of what is."[119] Language can be used by "reflective consciousness," which is not "intra-linguistic but extra-linguistic; it moves from being to being-said, at the very time that language itself moves from sense to reference."[120] Once the capacity for reference in language is considered, then "reality" becomes the "final category upon which the whole of language can be thought, although not known, as the being-said of reality."[121] Interpretation is not narrowly a question of semantics (although *La Métaphore Vive* clearly does not discount the importance of semantics); it includes a broader philosophical act in which one considers how language corresponds to being.

With this broad understanding of his interpretative project, Ricoeur seeks to clarify the postulate of reference in the interaction between poetic and speculative discourses. Ricoeur returns to Aristotle by suggesting that poetic discourse aims to "set before the eyes" and "represent things as in a state of activity."[122] To 'set before the eyes' implies that "when the poet infuses life into inanimate things, his verse represents

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[118] Ibid., 359/385.
[119] Ibid.
[120] Ibid., 360/386.
[121] Ibid.
[122] Ibid., 363/389. Also see: Aristotle, *The Rhetoric and the Poetics of Aristotle,* trans. W. Rhys Roberts (New York: Random House Modern Library, 1954), 1411 b 24-5.

everything as moving and living; and activity is movement'."[123] Once a poetic expression

of things is depicted as activity, we are led us "to seek the ontological clarification of

reference by reconsidering the meaning of being on the level of speculative discourse."[124]

Ricoeur continues:

> [T]he semantic aim of metaphorical utterance does intersect most decisively with
> the aim of ontological discourse, not at the point where metaphor by analogy and
> categorical analogy meet, but at the point where the reference to metaphorical
> utterance brings being as actuality and as potentiality into play.[125]

Cazeaux maintains that this ontology of actuality and potentiality is depicted as an

"ongoing process, with the consequence being that there are no absolute definitions,

which are exclusive of less immediate, fringe possibilities."[126] Despite no absolute

definitions, metaphorical utterance remains comprehensible because "the object, as a

component in the play of meaning, sustains the actualities and possibilities introduced by

predication."[127] In this sense, poetic expression allows for multiple meanings through its

depiction of the world as movement and activity. However, one does not arrive at this

ontology within poetic discourse without the speculative act that seeks to interpret

metaphorical utterance in accordance with the univocal depiction of concepts.

Ricoeur goes on to suggest that signifying things in act "may mean seeing things"

as "*lively* expression."[128] The poet who signifies things as act sees "things as not

prevented from becoming," but "as blossoming forth."[129] This ontology opens up an

understanding of reality that is "sketchy and in process" and "perceives every form

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[123] Ibid.

[124] Ibid.

[125] Ibid..

[126] Cazeaux, *Metaphor and Continental Philosophy*, 186.

[127] Ibid.

[128] Ricoeur, *Métaphore vive*, 364/391.

[129] Ibid.

attained as a promise of newness."[130] However, Ricoeur does not go so far as to assert

that the poet represents the ontology inherent to a 'blossoming forth' most decisively.

Ricoeur suggests that the statement "signifying the blooming of appearing" already

contains "determinations, that is to say, limitations and restrictions that miss something of

what is indicated in the expression."[131] In the movement between speculative and poetic

discourse, the ontological point of intersection between the two discourses includes the

necessity for second-order reflection if what is missed in the expression is to be

considered. Ricoeur writes:

> If there is a point in our experience where living expression states living
> existence, it is where our movement up the entropic slope of language encounters
> the movement by which we come back this side of the distinctions between
> actuality, action, production, motion.[132]

Moving up the entropic slope of language presents a picture of interaction, yet also

maintains the discontinuity necessary for each discourse to operate. Poetic description

suggests moving, blossoming, living reality that brings to speculative discourse a sense of

belonging to the world that animates the work of the concept.

To further clarify the ontological reference that determines the manner of

interaction between discourses, Ricoeur turns to Heidegger's later work. He evaluates

Heidegger's thought as beneficial only to the extent that the split between poetic and

speculative discourse is maintained. Ricoeur asserts that Heidegger's later work is "an

attempt from which we must draw inspiration whenever it manifestly contributes to

clarifying speculative thought in accordance with the semantic aim that animated

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[130] Ibid., 364/392.
[131] Ibid., 365/392.
[132] Ibid.

Aristotle's investigation into the multiple meanings of being."[133] However, he warns that Heidegger's later work also remains "a temptation we must shun when the difference between speculative and poetic threatens to disappear."[134]

Ricoeur identifies the "core" of Heidegger's thought as the "belonging together of *Erörterung* and *Ereignis*."[135] He explains that *Erörterung* "designates both the search for the 'place' and the 'commentary' on this search." *Ereignis* "designates the 'thing-itself' that is to be thought."[136] Ricoeur notes that *Ereignis* is confirmed negatively, in that its "scope" is not reduced to an "event (*Geschehnis*) or to process (*Vorkommnis*)."[137] It is "confirmed positively" by its relation to "*es gibt*," which "announces every blossoming of appearing under the connotation of 'gift.'" Yet for Ricoeur, this "capacity for coming to a 'meeting,' the nearness of the 'near'" between *Erörterung-Ereignis,* engages the "play of resemblance" and as such, is not a radically new philosophical project.[138] He argues that for the reader familiar with the "old doctrine of the analogy of being," this struggle "should not surprise."[139] In Ricoeur's reading, Heidegger has simply undertaken the old speculative project of determining how being corresponds to saying. Ricoeur

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[133] Ibid., 365/393.

[134] Ibid.

[135] Ibid., 366/393. Ricoeur suggests that identifying the belonging together of *Erörterung* and *Ereignis* as the core of Heidegger's thought is a commonly held interpretation. Ricoeur cites, Otto Pöggeler, *Der Denkweg Martin Heidegger* (Pfullingen: Neske, 1963), Odette Laffoucrièe, *Le Destin de la pensée et la 'mort de Dieu' selon Heidegger* (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1963) 1-40, L.B. Puntel *Analogie und Geschichtlichkeit*, vol. 1 (Freiburg I.B.: Herder, 1969).

[136] Ricoeur, *Métaphore vive*, 366/393.

[137] Ibid.

[138] Ibid.

[139] Ricoeur continues, "When the philosopher fights on two fronts, against the seduction of the ineffable and against the power of 'ordinary speech' (*Sprechen*), in order to arrive at a 'saying' (*Sagen*) that would be the triumph neither of inarticulateness nor of the signs available to the speaker and manipulated by him – is he not in a situation comparable to that of the thinker in Antiquity or the Middle Ages, seeking his path between the powerlessness of a discourse given over to the dissemination of meaning and the mastery of univocity through the logic of genera?.. By moving towards *Ereignis*, *Erörterung* moves towards a 'same,' an 'identical,' by which it is defined as speculative thinking. And this 'same' is like analogy for the Ancients, to the extent that here, too, resemblance assembles [*ressembler… c'est rassembler*]" (ibid., 366/393-4).

affirms this exploration in Heidegger, but maintains that it is not a radical departure from past speculative projects.

Ricoeur goes on to argue that there remains a decisive discontinuity between philosophical and poetic metaphors in Heidegger's work. He states that the "difference is infinitesimal when the philosopher approves a thinking poetry – that of poets who themselves write poetically on language, like Hölderlin – and when he responds in a thinking that poeticizes, 'semi-poetic thinking.'"[140] Ricoeur explains his reference to "semi-poetic thinking" by stating:

> But even here, speculative thought employs the metaphorical resources of language in order to create meaning and answers thus to the call of the 'thing' to be said with a semantic innovation. A procedure like this has nothing scandalous about it as long as speculative thought knows itself to be distinct and responsive because it is thinking. Furthermore, the philosopher's metaphors may well resemble those of the poet – like the latter, they diverge from the world of objects and ordinary language – but they do not merge with the poet's metaphors.[141]

Speculative thought is perfectly capable of adopting a "new meaning in order to blaze a path to the 'thing' itself."[142] Ricoeur also suggests that this is what is happening in the etymologism found in Plato and Hegel. The philosophical use of etymology should not associate the "primordial meaning" with some sort of "mystique," conversely though, returning to the old metaphors such "light, ground, home, the way, or path," is a form of "innovation" when they are rejuvenated in a new context as such.[143] Old philosophical metaphors can be re-adopted and produce a gain in meaning, but this meaning will still struggle towards the univocal articulation of the thing itself. Thus, metaphors of light, ground, home, the way, etc. are productive for philosophy when reflection gathers those

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[140] Ibid., 367/394.
[141] Ibid., 367/395.
[142] Ibid.
[143] Ibid.

metaphors within a conceptual sphere. Speculative discourse aims to identify the "same" rather than the "similar" even when it uses 'semi-poetic' thinking to contemplate new meaning.

Ricoeur then returns to his earlier criticism of Heidegger's analysis of metaphysics and metaphor, saving his most critical remarks for Heidegger's analysis of the history of Western metaphysics. He does not recognize any break with metaphysics or a "'leap' outside its circle that poetizing demands" in Heidegger's thinking.[144] Heidegger's reading of the history of Western thought within "the unity of 'the' metaphysical" is according to Ricoeur, "a sort of vengefulness." He writes:

> What philosophy worthy of the name prior to Heidegger has not meditated on the metaphor of the way and considered himself to be the first to embark on a path that is language itself addressing him? Who among them has not sought the 'ground' and the 'foundation,' the 'dwelling' and the 'clearing'? Who has not believed the truth was 'near' and yet difficult to perceive and even more difficult to say, that it was hidden and yet manifest, open and yet veiled?[145]

According to Ricoeur, the contribution of Heidegger's thought comes precisely in its relation to the traditional aim of speculative discourse. The value of Heidegger's philosophy of *Erörterung-Ereignis* lies in "its contribution to the continuous and unceasing problematic of thinking and of being."[146] Heidegger's work is helpful as an addition to the ongoing philosophical struggle which looks for "a *saying* more appropriate than ordinary *speech*, a *saying* that would be a *showing* and a *letting-be*; a

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[144] Ibid., 368/395.

[145] Ibid. 368/396. In regard to Ricoeur's highly critical remarks of Heidegger's evaluation of his own project and the history of metaphysics, he adds, "The unity of the 'metaphysical' is an after-the-fact construction of Heideggerian thought, intended to vindicate his own labour of thinking and to justify the renunciation of any kind of thinking that is not a genuine overcoming of metaphysics. But why should this philosophy claim for itself alone, to the exclusion of all its predecessors, that it breaks through and innovates? It seems to me time to deny oneself the convenience, which has become a laziness in thinking, of lumping the whole of Western thought together under a single word metaphysics" (ibid. 368/395-6)

[146] Ibid., 369/397.

mode of thought, finally, which could never leave discourse behind."[147] Heidegger's

project does not break (and should not break) from the semantic aim distinguishing the

work of speculative thought in Ricoeur's analysis. Although the resources of poetry can

animate speculative thinking, this does not negate the discontinuity between poetic and

speculative thought.

Interanimation: Experiencing Belonging and Distanciation

In the concluding pages of MDP Ricoeur identifies the "critical movement"

between poetic and speculative thought. Despite Ricoeur's criticisms of Heidegger, he

concludes MDP by emphasizing "this excellent statement from the later works of

Heidegger:"

> Between these two [thinking and poetry] there exists a secret kinship because in
> the service of language both intercede on behalf of language and give lavishly of
> themselves. Between both there is, however, at the same time an abyss for they
> "dwell on the most widely separated mountains."[148]

Ricoeur identifies this kinship according to the "very dialectic between the modes of

discourse in their proximity and in their difference." Within this dialectic the "'tensional'

conception of truth for thought" sketched in poetic discourse will "come to completion

finally in the paradox of the copula, where being-as signifies being and not being."[149] The

context in which Ricoeur uses the term "completion" does not indicate a completion

wherein philosophy finally determines the meaning of poetic utterance. We have seen

that throughout MDP, Ricoeur determines that concepts do not fully articulate the

meaning of poetic utterance. The organizing nuclei of each discourse are off-centred in

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[147] Ibid., 369-70/397.

[148] Ibid., 370/398. Cf. Martin Heidegger, *What is Philosophy?* trans W. Kluback and J.T. Wilde
(New Haven: College and University Press, 1956), 95; Martin Heidegger, *Was ist das – die Philosophie?*
(Pfullingen: Neske 1956, 3rd edition 1963).

[149] Ricoeur, *Métaphore vive*, 370/398.

relation to each other. The completion that Ricoeur indicates refers to the second-order reflection on concepts offered by speculative thought. Metaphor's sketch of the copula of being is completed only in the sense that this conceptual sketch is taken further within the sphere of speculative discourse.

Undergirding the tension in this dialectic are the experiences of *belonging* and *distanciation*. As noted earlier, the experience of belonging is central to poetic discourse. This belonging is determined according to our pre-objective experiences of the world. Poetic utterance describes this sense of belonging, but also remains critical. Metaphors intercede in language and create new meaning through the play between pertinent and impertinent uses in language. This new meaning is built upon a movement from sense to reference, which perceives being in action and things as blossoming forth.

Ricoeur considers the opposing movement of *distanciation* to constitute the "critical moment."[150] Distanciation "is contemporaneous with the experience of belonging that is opened or recovered by poetic discourse, and because poetic discourse, as text and as work, prefigures the distanciation that speculative thought carries to its highest point of reflection."[151] The speculative capacity for second-order reflection is built on the basic experience of distanciation. While both discourses employ the resources of distanciation, speculative discourse reflects on the conditions for

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[150] Ibid. Lawlor provides a helpful summary of Ricoeur's understanding of distanciation by stating, "Distanciation, for Ricoeur, is not an empirical or contingent condition, but a transcendental or essential condition; it is basic to all experience." Moreover, he suggests that distanciation is the "reflective, critical, or suspicious moment within consciousness" (Lawlor, *Imagination*, 53). I provide more detail on what constitutes distanciation for Ricoeur in the following chapter, when considering what differentiates religious discourse from other modes of discourse. For more on the importance for distanciation for Ricoeur's broader hermeneutics see: Paul Ricoeur, *Hermeneutics and the Human Sciences*, trans. John B. Thompson (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 131-145.

[151] Ricoeur, *Métaphore vive*, 370/399.

distanciation and thereby aims to carry our experience of distanciation to its 'highest point of reflection.'

Ricoeur concludes MDP by stating that, "What is given to thought in this way by the 'tensional' truth of poetry is the most primordial, most hidden dialectic – the dialectic that reigns between the experience of belonging as a whole and the power of distanciation that opens up the space of speculative thought."[152] This "most hidden dialectic," is the movement that allows for a hermeneutical identification of the *interanimation* of discourses. For all of Ricoeur's emphasis on the discontinuity between discourses, there remain both our experiences of belonging and distanciation and the interactions between the two. Poetic and speculative discourses require both experiences, and more to the point of this study, both experiences are necessary if the interactions between discourses are to be *animating*. Living metaphor is capable of pushing through the discontinuities between discourses. It offers ways to re-imagine our way of being in the world, while also pushing us to think more conceptually.

In the remainder of this study, I undertake a critical application of Ricoeur's theory of discourses for the philosophy of religion by considering the possibility of interanimation between speculative and religious discourses. Central to this application is the question of how religious expression fits within Ricoeur's theory of discourses. Although Ricoeur closely aligns religious discourse with poetic discourse, there are nuanced differences between the two. These differences complicate the manner in which speculative discourse can be said to interact with religious discourse. Moreover, these complications bring into question the possibility of interanimation between religious and speculative thought and more broadly, the positive evaluation of philosophical

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[152] Ibid., 371/399.

articulations of religious expressions. It is to these issues that I turn to in the following chapter.

Chapter Three

Philosophy and Religious Discourse

For the majority of his work, Ricoeur is committed to keeping religious and philosophical reflections separate. However in some of his later essays Brian Treanor and Isaac Venema explain, "these two lines of thought intersect in a remarkable way." They point to Richard Kearney's view that, "to read Ricoeur's work as 'a medial position' between 'philosophical theology' and 'theological philosophy,' or as 'eschatology of restored capacity' that liberates selfhood with the affirmation that 'you are better than your action': grace is possible."[153] Ricoeur himself confirms that he had begun to see less separation between his religious and philosophical writing at a conference at Trinity College in Dublin, where he acknowledged, "I am beyond that."[154] By extension, Treanor and Venema argue that Ricoeur has opened his "philosophical language" up "to a second religious reading."[155] Over the course of the next two chapters, I argue that Ricoeur's

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[153] Brian Treanor and Henry Venema, "Introduction: How Much More Than the Possible?" in *A Passion for the Possible: Thinking with Paul Ricouer*, ed. Brian Treanor and Henry Isaac Venema, (New York: Fordham University Press, 2010), 2.

[154] Ibid., 3.

[155] Ibid.

theory of the interanimation of discourses articulated in MDP helps lay some of the critical groundwork for this second religious reading.

My procedure is to first establish the manner in which Ricoeur perceives religious discourse as a particular type of *poetic* discourse. I consider a number of essays on religious language written by Ricoeur around the same period as the publication of *La métaphore vive*. I then argue that the interactions between religious discourse (as a form of poetic discourse) and speculative discourse in Ricoeur's essay "Naming God," display nuanced differences with the analysis of "interaction" in MDP. More specifically, I argue that the reference to "God" inherent to religious discourse changes how speculative discourse interacts with religious discourse at the level of the concept. These differences in interaction are not contradictory, but have demonstrative results for limiting what speculative discourse can say about religion discourse. Finally, I conclude by identifying the interanimation of religious and speculative discourses as an unexplored possibility within Ricoeur's work.

Religious Discourse as Poetic Discourse

In his essay "Philosophy and Religious Language," Ricoeur investigates a number of themes comparable to those explored in MDP. While the title of the essay uses the word "language," Ricoeur quickly suggests that the term "discourse" is a more accurate word to use for his analysis of language in religion.[156] His purpose in the essay is to

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[156] Paul Ricoeur, "Philosophy and Religious Language," *Figuring the Sacred: Religion, Narrative, and Imagination*, ed., Mark I. Wallace, (Minneapolis: Augsberg Fortress, 1995), 35. Reprinted with permission from *Journal of Religion* 54 (1974): 71-85. Ricoeur's reasons for asserting "discourse" is a more appropriate term are for the same reasons he uses the term discourse in *La Métaphore Vive*. Ricoeur situates his hermeneutical analysis in a broader philosophical context. The term 'discourse' implies a vision of the philosophy of language that includes ontological considerations (how language corresponds to being).

"clarify" three assumptions regarding a philosophy of religious language following a hermeneutical method.[157] These clarifications involve: 1) explicating how Ricoeur's method of philosophical hermeneutics identifies "religious discourse," 2) defending the uniqueness of religious discourse and using various biblical forms to demonstrate this, and 3) disclosing why religious discourse can claim to be true and associating it with poetic discourse. The purpose behind engaging with Ricoeur's clarification of these three assumptions is to elucidate the meaning of the term "religious" discourse for Ricoeur, which will in turn allow me to consider the possibilities of interaction between religious and speculative discourse.

To clarify the first assumption, Ricoeur distinguishes religious discourse from theological discourse and suggests the manner in which the process of distanciation helps us identify various modes of religious expression. Ricoeur does not start from theological propositions like "God exists," or "God is immutable, or all-powerful."[158] Rather, a hermeneutical philosophy "will try to get as close as possible to the most *originary* expressions of a community of faith, to those expressions through which the members of this community have interpreted their experience for the sake of themselves or for other's

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[157] Ricoeur, *Religious Language*, 36.

[158] Ibid., 37. For additional context regarding Ricoeur's understanding of the relationship between theology and religious discourse see the introduction to *Thinking Biblically*. Ricoeur writes, "Theology, in fact, is a very complex and highly speculative form of discourse, eminently respectable in its place. But it is a mixed or composite form of discourse where philosophical speculation is already inextricably intermingled with what deserves to be called 'biblical thought,' even when it does not assume the specific form of Wisdom, but also that of narrative, law, prophecy, or the hymn. Our working hypothesis here is that there are modes of thought other than those based on Greek, Cartesian, Kantian, Hegelian, etc. philosophy. Is it not the case, for example, with the great religious texts of India or the metaphysical traditions of Buddhism? Hence the initial philosophical wager here is that the literary genres we shall speak of below are forms of discourse that give rise to philosophical thinking."[158] This quote was first brought to my attention by Christna Gswandtner, "Paul Ricoeur and the Relationship between Philosophy and Religion," in Contemporary French Phenomenology," *Études Ricœuriennes / Ricœur Studies*, Vol 3, No 2 (2012), 13. For the French edition see: André LaCocque and Paul Ricoeur, *Penser la Bible* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1998).

sake."[159] These orginary expressions of religious faith are "embedded in such modes of discourse as narratives, prophecies, legislative texts, proverbs and wisdom sayings, hymns, prayers, and liturgical formulas."[160] According to Ricoeur, these modes of discourse can be identified according to the manner of distanciation intrinsic to the texts.[161] He explains that, "A work of discourse, as a work of art, is an autonomous object at a distance from the authorial intention, from its initial situation (its *Sitz-im-Leben*), and from its primitive audience."[162] As hermeneutics attempts to overcome this distance it must "use distanciation as both the obstacle and the instrument in order to reenact the initial event of discourse in a new event of discourse that will claim to be both faithful and creative."[163] Thus, the various modes of discourse are identified through the manner of distanciation employed in the text. These different forms of distanciation are then filtered through a second level of distanciation, which is the "new event" articulated in hermeneutical analysis. Through this dialectic between the reader and text a hermeneutical philosophy seeks to identify even "the most primitive dialectics of exteriorization and objectification on which the different modes of discourse will build the autonomy of the corresponding literary forms."[164] Thus, the first assumption is that philosophical hermeneutics can identify originary religious texts through the manner of distanciation inherent to the text itself.

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[159] Ricoeur, *Religious Language*, 37.
[160] Ibid.
[161] Ibid..
[162] Ibid., 38.
[163] Ibid. 37-8
[164] Ibid., 37. Ricoeur continues by explaining, "modes of discourse are more than means of classification – as the word 'genre' seems to say; they are means of production – by this I mean instruments for producing discourse as a *work*" (ibid. 38). This coincides with Ricoeur's reading of Aristotle's *Poetics*, wherein the totality of the work has an inner organization that constitutes more the "summation of its partial meanings" (ibid.). Distanciation moves from the most primitive dialects of exteriorization and objectification and builds broader classifications through this process.

Ricoeur clarifies his second assumption by using the biblical text to demonstrate how the various modes of discourse disclose "styles" of faith. He explains, "The 'confession of faith' that is expressed in the biblical documents is inseparable from the *forms* of discourse, by which I mean the narrative structure."[165] These various forms include prophecy, parable, or hymns, and each constitutes a "style" of confession of faith that creates a "polyphonic language."[166] Each style of confession produces a particular understanding of God according to the mode of discourse it employs. For instance, sometimes God appears "as the hero of the saving act, sometimes as wrathful and compassionate, sometimes as the one to whom one can speak in a relation of I-Thou type, or sometimes as the one whom I meet only in a cosmic order that ignores me."[167] Because these forms for discourse do not establish a unified style of faith, one's "theological significations" will be "correlatives of forms of disclosure."[168] What each mode of discourse signifies about God will be uniquely meaningful to the faith community as it embodies, or adopts the style of faith expressed.

The third presupposition is concerned with the truth of religious language. This presupposition is particularly pertinent for the present study, since Ricoeur identifies the relation between poetic and religious discourse. Ricoeur argues that poetic discourses develop "specific claims to truth measured by criteria appropriate to this kind of discourse."[169] Each poetic text produces a "world" that includes a "referential dimension that is absolutely original with fictional and poetic works."[170] As is the case in MDP's

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[165] Ibid., 39.
[166] Ibid., 39-41.
[167] Ibid., 41.
[168] Ibid.
[169] Ibid.
[170] Ibid., 42. Ricoeur's notion of the "world of the text" builds off of Husserl's concept of *Lebenswelt* and Heidegger's being-in-the-world (ibid). Ricoeur argues that we should "cease to ask the

articulation of poetic discourse, these original referential dimensions open "new possibilities of being-in-the-world" in "everyday reality."[171] Moreover, poetic texts "intend being, but not through the modality of giveness. They do so, rather, through the modality of possibility."[172] Religious discourse adopts the same creative dimensions active in poetic texts. The text solicits the readers, allowing a possible world to manifest and challenge him or her to project their own possibilities within this world. As an example Ricoeur suggest that the Bible is a "poem, albeit unique" and "eccentric," which "refers to our many ways of belonging to the world before we oppose ourselves to things understood as 'object' that stand before a 'subject.'"[173] The truth claims that are articulated in religious discourse are associated with those in poetic discourse.

Thus, Ricoeur's philosophical hermeneutics assumes that religious discourse is associated with the most originary expressions that found a community of faith. Those expressions can be identified and explored through the distanciation inherent to the manner of expression. These various expressions will in turn give rise to various styles of faith that uniquely describe our relation to God and his interaction with us. Furthermore, Ricoeur asserts that these orginary religious expressions are best considered as forms of poetic discourse that solicit our imaginations through the projection of a possible world.

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question of the inspiration of the writings in the psychologizing terms of an insufflation of meaning to an author that projects itself into the text (ibid.)" Alternatively, Ricoeur recommends we turn to the text itself, and the referents inherent to the "world" described in the text. Only to the extent that we can imaginatively enter into this world does the text appear meaningful (ibid., 44).

[171] Ibid., 43.

[172] Ibid.

[173] Paul Ricoeur, "Naming God," *Figuring the Sacred*, ed., Mark I. Wallace, (Minneapolis: Augsberg Fortress, 1995), 221. Reprinted with permission from *Union Theological Seminary Quarterly Review* 34 (1979): 215-27.

Limit-Expressions and *Discontinuity* between Discourses

As with Ricoeur's procedure in *MDP*, it is helpful to first depict the discontinuity between speculative and religious discourse before clarifying their interactions.[174] In his essay, "Naming God," Ricoeur considers listening to Christian preaching as an example of an originary religious expression. He writes, "For the philosopher, listening to Christian preaching is first of all to let go (*se depouiller*) of every form of onto-theological knowledge. Even – and especially when – the word God is involved."[175] By assuming the position of "letting-go," one encounters the religious expression without applying the conceptual aims of speculative discourse to the message. This 'letting go' adopts a notion of truth as "manifestation," wherein the text proposes a world that "I can project my ownmost possibilities" into.[176]

Ricoeur argues that assuming the disposition of letting go is not unique to religious discourse. He identifies a similar situation within the procedure of modern philosophy, particularly in the work of "Kant and his general conception of philosophy as knowing our limits." He explains:

> There the index of this letting go is the idea of "a transcendental illusion" that reason necessarily produces whenever it undertakes to forge a knowledge of God by way of "objects." The paralogisms and antinomies thus become for critical

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[174] Just as Ricoeur proceeded in "Philosophy and Religious Language," the examination of the interactions between religious and philosophical discourse will also exclude theological discourse in "Naming God." Communicating "God exists," or "God is the first cause" already employs the resources of speculative thinking "inasmuch much as theology's discourse is not constituted without recourse to concepts borrowed from some speculative philosophy, be it Platonic, Aristotelian, Cartesian, Kantian, Hegelian, or whatever" (ibid., 221).

[175] Ibid.

[176] Ibid., 222. Ricoeur compares truth as manifestation to truth as adequation. He writes, "If we have become blind to these modalities of *rootedness* and *belonging-to* (*appartenance*) that precede the relation of a subject to objects, it is because we have, in an uncritical way, ratified a certain concept of truth, defined by adequation to real objects and submitted to a criterion of empirical verification and falsification." Poetic discourse calls into question the "reduction of the referential function to descriptive discourse and opens the field of a nondescriptive reference to the world" (ibid.).

reason the ascetic instruments by which it is led back to itself within those boundaries where its knowledge is valid."[177]

In Ricoeur's interpretation, Kant's philosophy releases God from being an "object," because "knowledge" of God suggests possibilities outside the system that constitute the limits of what reason can know. Ricoeur suggests that Kant's rejection of knowledge of God by way of objects constitutes a "presumption," wherein Kant's "asceticism" actually "has no apologetic value, even in its negative form."[178] Ricoeur writes:

> For if a first hubris is knocked down, that of metaphysical knowledge, a second one replaces it, that of a knowledge that is no longer metaphysical but transcendental. This knowledge makes the principle "I think" the principle of everything that is valid. This knowledge does not stand on the side of objects to be known but on the side of the conditions of possibility of knowing, therefore on the side of the subject. The idea of a subject that posits itself thus becomes the unfounded foundation, or better, the foundation that founds itself, in relation to which every rule of validity is derived. In this way, the subject become the supreme 'presupposition.'[179]

Since Ricoeur identifies this 'foundation that founds itself' as a presumption, religious expression appears to be free to provide an alternative to speculative thought starting with its own presupposition. Religious expression assumes the possibility that there is no "self-founding" and alternatively, that there is "an antecedent meaning that has always preceded me. *Listening excludes founding oneself.*"[180] However, Ricoeur states that the letting go involved in listening to Christian preaching is "a more subtle and more tenacious pretension than that of onto-theological knowledge. It requires giving up (*dessaissement*) the human self in its will to mastery, sufficiency, and autonomy."[181] This giving up presumes the "double renouncing of the absolute 'object' and the absolute

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[177] Ibid., 223.
[178] Ibid.
[179] Ibid., 223-24. The "foundation that founds itself" coincides with Ricoeur's articulation of speculative thought in MDP, wherein he asserted that speculative thought is developed according to the "resources of the mind." *See, La Métaphore Vive*, 355/380.
[180] Ricoeur, *Naming God*, 224.
[181] Ibid.

'subject'" as "the price that must be paid to enter into a radically nonspeculative and prephilosophical mode of language."[182]

This religious mode of language expresses a nonspeculative discourse, however it is not without its own limits. For instance, the word "God" implies various meanings depending on the mode of discourse in which the word is deployed. Similar to the styles of faith described above, the meaning of the term 'God' changes depending on whether it is expressed "in narration that recounts the divine acts, prophecy that speaks in the divine name, prescription that designates God as the source of the imperative, wisdom that seeks God as the meaning of meaning, and the hymn that invokes God in the second person."[183] Within these modes of discourse the word God "says more than the word 'being' because it presupposes the entire context of narratives, prophecies, laws, wisdom writings, psalms, and so on."[184] These names for God encounter limits according to their mode of expression. Ricoeur uses the example of God's appearance to Moses in the burning bush wherein God states, "I am who I am" (Ex. 3:13-15). Ricoeur argues that within the narrative context of this passage 'I am who I am' is "not an act of naming, but an act of deliverance."[185] The "secret of the 'in-itself' of God" is protected, and "this secret, in turn, sends us back to the narrative naming through the names of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and by degrees to the other namings."[186] The narrative naming creates a "recession into infinity of the referent 'God,'" where each naming of 'God' implies the broader contextual naming throughout the text. If speculative discourse abstracts the word 'God'

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[182] Ibid.
[183] Ibid., 225.
[184] Ibid., 227.
[185] Ibid., 228.
[186] Ibid.

from the narrative structures of the biblical text the sense of this narrative naming is abandoned.

The parables of Christ are another example Ricoeur uses to demonstrate "limit-expressions." He writes, "It is as plot and as point that the parabolic narrative undergoes a transference of meaning, a metaphorical displacement that through the crisis and the denouement of the story recounted obliquely intends the kingdom."[187] Together, the narrative structure and metaphorical transfer produce paradox and hyperbole that first disorient and then orient the listener or reader.[188] Within this parabolic context, the limits inscribed in the narrative structure and metaphorical references are deliberately transgressed through hyperbole or paradox.

Although Ricoeur suggests that we can approach the biblical naming of God with reference to limit-expressions, he warns against the reduction of naming God to these limit-expressions. He writes:

> We may not therefore reduce the mutation of poetic language in religious language, under the pressure of the naming of God, to the single game of limit-expressions. It is the models and their qualifiers taken together that are the seat of this mutation.[189]

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[187] Ibid., 229. Ricoeur develops his theory of the parable as metaphor in an essay entitled "Biblical Hermeneutics." See Paul Ricoeur, "Biblical Hermeneutics," *Semeia* 4 (1975): 27-138. Dan R. Striver summarizes Ricoeur's position by stating, "The parables convey a message, but like the significance that Ricoeur saw in other biblical genres, the medium is also the message. As 'extended' metaphors, parables likewise began to be seen as not fully translatable into literal language, into theological 'points'; as containing a surplus of meaning; and as catalysts of new meaning rather than as ornamental figures of meaning best expressed in prosaic language." See Dan R. Striver, *Theology After Ricoeur: New Directions in Hermeneutical Theology*, (Louisville: Wesminster John Knox Press, 2001), 118.

[188] Ricoeur provides the following to demonstrate the paradox and hyperbole used in parables: "Paradox: 'For whoever would save his life will lose it; and whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel's will save it.' Hyperbole: 'But if anyone strikes you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also; and if once would sue you and take your coat, let him have your cloak as well and if any one forces you to go one mile, go with him two miles" (Ricoeur, *Naming God*, 229).

[189] Ibid., 233.

Although limit-expressions are a seat used for naming God, they "hold back" who the God is that is being named, they protect "the secret in-itself of God."[190] Limit-expressions only function within particular modes of discourse and as we will see, they do not constitute a conceptual system of knowledge. Religious discourse remains discontinuous from speculative thought, operating according to a prephilosophical mode of language that offers various ways of belonging in the world. It is a unique form of poetic discourse that asks us to 'let-go' of an onto-theological agenda. The question that remains is whether or to what extent religious discourse and speculative thought still interact.

Limited Interactions

While I have indicated that Ricoeur considers religious discourse to be a form of poetic discourse, it is necessary to see how religious discourse remains distinct from poetic discourse as it is described in MDP if we are to consider possible interactions and the interanimation between religious and speculative discourse. In particular, the reference to 'God' inherent to religious discourse has implications for the way in which religious discourse can be said to interact with "concepts." In MDP, poetic discourse "introduces the spark of imagination into a 'thinking more' at the conceptual level.'"[191] However, when a reference to "God" enters the world of the text, this spark to think more at the conceptual level assumes a different degree of complexity.

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[190] Ibid., 228.
[191] Ricoeur, *Métaphore Vive*, 358/383.

Ricoeur's analysis of interaction between religious discourse and the concept is related to the role of limit-expressions. Limit-expressions function as a *category,* which in Kantian terms means they function at the level of the schema.[192] Furthermore:

> They only work within the milieu of a fundamentally analogical or metaphorical language, itself engendered by the narrative, prescriptive, prophetic, and finally the parabolic naming of God. These limit-expressions serve to qualify, modify, and rectify this analogical language.[193]

Metaphorical and analogical language can offer "images," but not concepts according to Ricoeur.[194] The diversity of images produced in these discourses is "incapable of forming a system." Because "the only systems are conceptual systems," the narrative naming of God cannot be reduced to conceptual discourse.

Similarly to MDP, Ricoeur relates his analysis to role of the 'Idea' in Kant's *Critique of the Faculty of Judgment*. He writes:

> Just as, according to Kant, the Idea requires the surpassing of not only the image but also the concept, in the demand to 'think more,' the Name subverts every model, but only through them… The Name works on the schema or model by making it move, by making it dynamic, by inverting it into an opposed image. (Thus God assumes all the positions in the figures of the family: father, mother, spouse, brother, and finally 'Son of Man.')[195]

Just as Kant's Idea surpasses both the image and the concept in MDP, the image depicted in the biblical text suggests an inversion of the schema into an opposed image. However, the precise manner in which the image relates to the concept is shifted.

This subtle shift is clarified when Ricoeur asserts that God cannot be considered as a concept based on the biblical naming of God, despite remaining open to the

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[192] Ricoeur, *Naming God*, 233.
[193] Ibid.
[194] Ricoeur also uses the language of "modern epistemology," explaining that these "images" can only considered as "models for figures of the divine" (ibid.).
[195] Ibid.

possibility of interaction between naming God and conceptual thinking. Near the

conclusion of "Naming God," Ricoeur allows for this possible interaction. He writes:

> [T]he poetics of the name of God – which is expressed principally in the model's labor – is not abolished but intensified through paradox, hyperbole, and all the primary expressions that give rise to the "negative way" at a higher degree of conceptuality (itself only conceivable in relation to the analogical way for which it is the complement and the corrective).[196]

With reference to this "higher degree of conceptuality," Ricoeur leaves room for

interaction between religious and speculative discourse at the level of the concept to the

extent that the relation gives rise to the "negative way at a higher degree of

conceptuality." Within Ricoeur's theory, one can only claim that biblical names for God

are not reducible to a conceptual system and as such the meaning of those names cannot

be articulated positively within the sphere of conceptual discourse.

This interaction via the negative way shifts the manner of interaction that was

available between poetic and speculative discourse in MDP. In the eighth study,

metaphors such as "light, home, the way, etc." were open to speculative discourse, but

the meaning of the poetic reference of those metaphors are adopted and explained by the

conceptual aims of speculative thought. This process left room for positive interactions

between discourses, however this same freedom to adopt the metaphorical language that

religious discourse uses to name God (i.e. shepherd, the vine, bridegroom) is not

available to speculative thought. The "spark to think more" only arrives to conceptual

discourse via the negative way. The references to God are continually inverted at the

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[196] Ibid., 233-4. As Ricoeur concludes the essay he expands his thinking and suggests that Christ's parables ask the reader to shift from poetics to politics. Rather than simply "celebrating language," the poetic work "opens up a new world, which is the issue of the text, the world of the poem." This world: incites the reader, or the listener, to understand himself or herself in the face of the text and to develop, in the imagination and sympathy, the self capable of inhabiting this world by deploying her or his ownmost possibilities there." Ibid., 234.

level of the schema within the biblical text and do not positively articulate the meaning of 'God' in speculative discourse. If God is named as a concept (i.e. First Cause, or God exists), this severs the Name from the modes of discourse that give rise to the 'styles' of faith that are said to found the community believers.

The Unexplored Possibility of Interanimation

While Ricoeur acknowledges limited forms of interaction between religious and speculative discourse, he never develops the possibility for interanimation as he does in MDP. In an interview near the end of his career, Ricoeur gives us a clue as to why this line of thought might not have been taken:

> This is what I've learned from hermeneutic thought, it is a fact that we always aim at totality and unity as a horizon, but that our thought always remains fragmentary. This means that we cannot transform this horizon into a possession… Thus I find that there is more violence in this integration of religion with philosophy than in the recognition of their specificity and the specificity of their intersection.[197]

Interanimation implies that life is brought to various discourses when they interact and this amplification of interaction between discourses may increase the danger of the violent integration of religion with philosophy. Perhaps this danger is why interanimation is critically developed within the relationship between poetic and speculative thought in MDP, but is not considered by Ricoeur in the relationship between religious and speculative thought.

However, given that Ricoeur has also acknowledged that he is "beyond" the strict separation between his philosophical agnosticism and Christian commitments, my suggestion is that part of the critical work for constituting that "beyond" is already

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[197] Christina Gschwantdner, *Philosophy and Religion*, 17.

articulated in MDP through Ricoeur's explication of the interanimation of discourses. In David Pellauer's essay, "Remembering Ricoeur," he writes:

> The advantage we now have is that of being able to see this work as a whole. One immediate result of such a perspective is that we are able to see how much of what came later was already implicit in, if not already signaled in, [Ricoeur's] early work… It is now possible, in other words, to trace lines of development in his thoughts because we know where they end – and we are able to do so without distorting their individual values, although each such reading may mean setting aside other possible lines of development, especially ones that were not carried through quite so carefully.[198]

I hope to explore one such 'line of development' in Ricoeur's thought through the interanimation of discourses.

In the following chapter, I consider the possibility that phenomenology is a type of speculative discourse that remains open to forms of interanimation with religious discourse. My position is that interanimation is possible in a manner that remains faithful to the limitations Ricoeur establishes in "Naming God." By focusing on Ricoeur's notion of interanimation articulated in MDP, I am able to address Boyd Blundell's criticism of authors who rely too "heavily on interviews or Ricoeur's more explicitly religious work" at the expense of Ricoeur's major philosophical texts. Yet, the direction I follow also remains open to Treanor and Venema's assertion that Ricoeur has opened his work up to a second religious reading.

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[198] David Pellauer, in *A Passion for the Possible: Thinking with Paul Ricouer*, ed. Brian Treanor and Henry Isaac Venema (New York: Fordham University Press, 2010), 43. Originally published as "Remembering Ricoeur," *Philosophy Today* 51, SPEP Supplement 2007, 9.

Chapter Four

Metaphors at the Limits of the Phenomenology of Religion

My remaining objective in this study is to explore Ricoeur's notion of the interanimation of discourses on behalf of a phenomenology of religion. To undertake this project, I focus on Paul Ricoeur's essay "Expérience et langage dans le discours religieux" and Jean-Louis Chrétien's "La parole blessée." Both essays emerged from a seminar conducted at "Centre de recherches phéoménologiques et herméneutiques – Archives de Husserl de Paris," wherein they considered possibilities for the phenomenological treatment of religion.[199] Anne A. Davenport has considered the relation between these two essays in her "Translator's Preface" to Chrétien's *The Call and the Response*, wherein she provides justification for the phenomenological legitimacy of Chrétien's project in light of the hesitations articulated by Dominique

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[199] Both essays can be found in: Jean-François Courtine, "Introduction: Phenomenology and Hermeneutics of Religion," in *Phenomenology and the 'Theological Turn:' The French Debate*, trans., by Jeffrey L. Kosky (New York: Fordham University Press), 121-2. For the French edition, see: Courtine, *Phénoménologie et théologie* (Paris: Criterion, 1992). The French pagination continues to follow the English in the following.

Janicaud and Ricoeur.[200] Although the question concerning what constitutes a proper phenomenological method remains relevant for this chapter, my purpose in the following is not to justify Chrétien's phenomenology. Consistent with the previous chapters in this study, the context remains within the purview of MDP. Chrétien's essay will serve as a case study to consider the interanimation of discourses for a phenomenology of religion, according to the terms Ricoeur develops.

In this chapter I argue that metaphors function at the limits of a phenomenology of religion when their meaning can be articulated both philosophically and poetically within the same text. Metaphors are capable of slipping between discourses and open the possibility for interanimation between speculative and religious discourse. There are four sections in the following: First, I demonstrate the manner in which Ricoeur considers phenomenology to be a speculative discourse. Second, I suggest that Chrétien's metaphor of wounding is a philosophical metaphor in its relation to the phenomenal form of paradox. Third, I consider Chrétien's metaphor of wounding as a poetic expression of our experience of belonging to the world. Fourth, I articulate the manner in which that metaphor opens the possibility of interanimation and enriches philosophical depictions of religious meaning.

Phenomenology as a Speculative Discourse:

In "Expérience et langage dans le discours religieux," Ricoeur implicitly depicts phenomenology as a speculative discourse based on the aims and difficulties he distinguishes for a phenomenology of religion. He acknowledges that religious "feelings

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[200] See Anne A Davenport, translator's preface to *The Call and the Response*, by Jean-Louis Chrétien (New York: Fordham University Press, 2004).

and dispositions" exist and to these "correspond fundamental dispositions that can be placed under the general heading 'prayer'."[201] Moreover, phenomenology can aim to articulate "the feelings as well as the dispositions" of prayer as long as it aims towards "its most universally widespread characteristics."[202] Thus, a phenomenology of religion is possible, but remains limited to the consideration of religious dispositions and feelings articulated in its most universal phenomenological structures. This aiming towards the universal is the clearest evidence that Ricoeur considers phenomenology to be a speculative project.

Describing the universal presents a number of difficulties for a phenomenology of religion. The first difficulty that Ricoeur identifies is the distinction between a call/response and a question/response structure. He questions "the equivocity clinging to the term "response" common to both pairs of correlative terms."[203] The question/response structure is a "resolution of a problem, thereby establishing a close correlation between the singularity of a problematic situation and the singularity of a resolution."[204] Religious dispositions are distinct from this structure because rather than responding to the problems of "scientific or philosophical knowing," religious responses begin in obedience, "in the strong sense of an 'I hear' where the superiority of the call – by which we mean its position as Most High – is recognized, avowed, confessed."[205] This difference between religious and philosophical response indicates a fundamental split

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[201] Ricoeur, *Expérience et langage*, 128/17. Ricoeur adds that these feelings and dispositions can "range from complaints to praise, passing through supplication and demand" (ibid.).

[202] Ricoeur explores some of the possibilities for a phenomenology of religion in his essay "Manifestation and Proclamation," where he considers a phenomenology of "the sacred" through the work of Mircea Eliade. See, Paul Ricoeur, "Manifestation and Proclamation," in *Figuring the Sacred*, trans., David Pellauer, ed., Mark I. Wallace (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1995).

[203] Ricoeur, *Expérience et langage*, 128/17.

[204] Ibid.

[205] Ibid., 128-9/17-18.

between the discourses commonly identified in Ricoeur's hermeneutical approach. According to Ricoeur, any phenomenology of religion will need to account for this discontinuity in the articulation of the structures of religious response.

The difference between the religious and philosophical meaning of 'response' leads Ricoeur to describe the most "significant difficulty" for a phenomenology of religion: the "status of *immediacy* that could be claimed by the dispositions and feelings allied with the call-and-response structure in religious order."[206] Ricoeur argues that the linguistic, cultural and historical edifices inherent to religious phenomena necessarily mediate any phenomenological investigation of religion.[207] Religions are inextricably entangled with the particularities of their historical expression and this "condemns phenomenology to run the gauntlet of a hermeneutic and more precisely of a textual and scriptural hermeneutic." The "fragmentation of textual collections and scriptural traditions makes it such that the continent of the religious stands out like a detached archipelago, where one cannot locate anywhere the universality of religious phenomenon."[208] The "universal character of the structure call/response" is called into question because in each historical instantiation of religion, "obedience to the Most High" is differentiated in feeling and in practice.[209] The distinctions introduced by the textual fragmentation and historical particularity of religious manifestation again emphasizes Ricoeur's broader theory of the discontinuities between religious and speculative thought.

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[206] Ibid., 129/116.
[207] Ricoeur continues, 'To speak of 'linguistic mediation' is already to summon up the grand edifices of speech and writing that have structured the memory of events, words, and personalities – all equally endowed with a founding value. To put it briefly: religion is like language itself, which is realized only in different tongues" (ibid., 130/117).
[208] Ibid.
[209] Ibid., 130-1/117.

If we recall MDP, there is further evidence that Ricoeur considers phenomenology as a speculative discourse. As Ricoeur notes, "speculative discourse is the discourse that establishes the primary notions, the principles, that articulate primordially the space of the concept… This discourse is at work in all the speculative attempts to order the 'great genera,' the 'categories of being,' the 'categories of understanding,' philosophical logic,' the 'principle elements of representation, or however one wants to express it."[210] Ricoeur's depiction of phenomenology as the articulation of "widespread structures" is consistent with Ricoeur's characterization of the speculative aim to develop a 'primordial' conceptual space, which inherently pursues the most universal applicability.

Further evidence that Ricoeur considers phenomenology to be a speculative discourse can be found in his explanation of Husserl's project in MDP. He argues that "Husserl's distinction between the *Aufklärung* of 'acts of knowing' and any genetic-style *Erklärung* draws its source from the speculative horizon in which meaning is inscribed when it takes on conceptual status."[211] This distinction indicates that one can know the meaning of an image or perception only because that image is placed within a "network of meanings of the same order in accordance with the constitutive laws of the logical space itself."[212] This logical space requires the "kingdom of the same," i.e. the univocal language of the concept. However, it is not only Husserl's phenomenology that Ricoeur associates with speculative discourse in MDP. As noted in "Chapter Two," Ricoeur asserts that even Heidegger's later work, which explores of *Erörterung-Ereignis* finds its

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[210] Paul Ricoeur, *The Rule of Metaphor: Mutli-disciplinary studies of the creation of meaning in language*, trans., Robert Czerny, with Kathleen McLaughlin and John Costello (Toronto: Toronto University Press, 1975), 355/380.
    [211] Ibid., 355/380.
    [212] Ibid., 356/381.

significance precisely to the extent that it operates within the context of speculative

discourse. Ricoeur saves some of his harshest criticisms for Heidegger's claim to have

departed from the historical aims of speculative thought.

Of course, the precise manner in which phenomenology is considered speculative

philosophy will differ depending on the particularities of the phenomenology being

considered. These differences will have consequences for how phenomenology might be

able to consider religious phenomena. Jean-Luc Marion's inversion of the Kantian

categories based on saturated phenomena will produce demonstratively different findings

than Michel Henry's monistic phenomenology of life developed out of a critique of

Kant's understanding of inner sense.[213] My argument to this point is to suggest that

phenomenology is a form of speculative discourse based on the meaning of the term as it

is broadly laid out in Ricoeur's analysis. Ricoeur's development of speculative discourse

based on a phenomenology of semantic aims in MDP leaves room for a variety of ways

in which phenomenology can be considered speculative.

"Wounding" as a Phenomenological Metaphor

Given that Ricoeur understands phenomenology to be a form of speculative

discourse, I now want to consider the possibility that a metaphor can be articulated both

phenomenologically and poetically within the same text. Jean-Louis Chrétien's metaphor

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[213] Jean-Luc Marion, The Saturated Phenomenon," in *Phenomenology and the 'Theological Turn': The French Debate*, trans. Thomas A. Carlson (New York: Fordham University Press, 2000); Jean-Luc Marion, "Le Phénomène saturé," in Courtine et al., *Phénoménologie et théologie*. Michel Henry, "Empty Subjectivity and Life Lost: Kant's Critique of 'Soul,'" in *The Genealogy of Psychoanalysis*, trans. Douglas Brick (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1993); Michel Henry, Génélogie de la psychanalyse: le commencement perdu (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1985).

of *wounding* (*blessant/blessure*) provides a case study for the consideration of this possibility in his essay "La Parole blessée."[214]

To understand the phenomenological meaning of wounding, the metaphor needs to be placed within the context of Chrétien's phenomenology of the call and the response. Chrétien's call and response structure is a radicalization of Heidegger's reflections on the question and answer.[215] According to Chrétien, Heidegger constructively shows that "men engaged in a conversation only appear to be the sole speakers; in fact, they speak from having been addressed by language which alone produces an authentic exchange."[216] Thus, one is capable of speech only because one has "always already, listened to speech."[217] However, Chrétien questions the "correspondence" he asserts is inherent to Heidegger's question and answer structure.[218] Chrétien writes, "If the call is a call from the infinite, sent into infinity itself, then it is an infinite call. The fact that a finite response can only receive from it what it must dutifully return hardly implies a

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[214] There are two English translations of this essay. The first edition can be found in the collection of *Phenomenology and the 'Theological Turn'* and is translated by Jeffrey Kosky. In the following, I use the more recent translation by Andrew Brown found in the second chapter of, *The Ark of Speech*, trans., Andrew Brown (New York: Routledge, 2004). One of the important differences between the two translations is in the title of the essay. Brown's translation renders it "Wounded Speech," while Kosky's translation states, "The Wounded Word." The French word *parole* can be rendered both speech and word and implies a greater flexibility than either "speech" or "word" does in English. Brown's use of the term "speech" places the word more firmly in the category of phenomenology and emphasizes Chrétien's depiction of prayer as an act of *speech* (Kosky also uses the term "speech act" in his translation). However, translating parole as "word" relates more directly to the wounded Word, as depicted in the English translations of the Gospel of John. See: Chrétien, "La Parole Blessée," in Courtine et al., *Phénoménologie et théologie.*

[215] Davenport uses the term "radicalize" to describe Chrétien's use of Heidegger. Davenport, *Translator's Preface*, X. For Chrétien's development of Heidegger's work in broader context see: Jean-Louis Chretien, *The Call and the Response*, trans., Anne A. Davenport (New York: Fordham University Press, 2004), 27-32; Jean-Louis Chrétien, *L'Appel et la réponse* (Paris: Les Éditions Minuit, 1992) 40-45.

[216] Ibid., 27. Chrétien cites, Martin Heidegger, *Unterwegs zur Sprache* (Pfulligen, 1971), 152; Martin Heidegger, "Language," in *Poetry Language, Thought*, trans., Albert Hofstadter (New York: Harper and Row, 1971).

[217] Chrétien, *L'Appel et la réponse*, 27/40.

[218] Chrétien depicts correspondence as, "The act of listening, insofar as it is a belonging, and speech, insofar as it is a retelling of what we have let ourselves be told, means that our every utterance, according to Heidegger, responds and corresponds." Chrétien, *L'Appel et la réponse*, 28-31/40-42.

corresponding match."[219] Chrétien aims to explore the possibility of excess in an infinite

call that breaks correspondence between the call and the response.

Much of Chrétien's phenomenological work attempts to depict this infinite call

through the phenomenal form of paradox. Davenport emphasizes this in her "Translator's

Preface" when she writes that, "Chrétien's contribution to phenomenology consists

largely in disclosing *paradox as the precise phenomenal form under which the infinite*

disproportion that characterizes the religious call-response structure appears."[220]

Moreover, Davenport argues that Chrétien's approach to paradox is properly placed in

the context of philosophical discourse. She writes:

> Only the rigorous philosopher, as Zeno and Eleatic well knew, is in a position,
> paradoxically, to be properly 'perplexed' by the infinite. Only by carefully
> following rational paths and applying the good old conceptual tools of academic
> philosophy will the human mind reach the outer boundary of its own radiant
> muscularity and behold the coincidence of opposites at the undecidable limit of
> objectification: Zeno's flying and motionless arrow surprises only the most
> rationally devout philosopher.[221]

Although the recognition of paradox requires the conceptual labor of philosophy,

Davenporte recognizes that Chrétien does not pursue "a formal grasp of paradox as a

logical structure, but a phenomenological grasp of the events through which paradox

seizes and alters the ego, transforming self-reliant subjects into self-overcoming

witnesses."[222] Understanding paradox as an event distinguishes Chrétien's position from

forms of speculative philosophy founded on the structures of the mind described by

Ricoeur in MDP. Chrétien does depict the experience of a radical call that we receive and

remember, however, this call remains radically outside of our mind and founds any

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[219] Ibid.
[220] Davenport, *Translator's Preface*, xiv.
[221] Ibid., xvi.
[222] Ibid., xvii.

possible response.[223] Nevertheless, describing religious events through the phenomenal form of paradox within the call and response structure requires a particular eidetic reduction that aims to describe the most widespread universal structures of religious phenomena. Thus, Chrétien's approach remains speculative precisely in this reduction to the phenomenological concept of paradox.

A phenomenology focused on the depiction of the "event" remains acutely open to religious discourse as Ricoeur describes it. In the previous chapter, I noted Ricoeur's observation that the parables of Christ combine narrative structure with metaphorical transfer to produce paradox and hyperbole. Ricoeur articulated this analysis of parables with reference to "limit-expressions," which he asserted functions at the level of the "category" and did not produce conceptual knowledge. A phenomenology of the event can adopt Ricoeur's hermeneutical analysis and prove capable of encountering the parable as a depiction of an event where phenomenal form of paradox introduces conceptual discourse into our reading of the text. This approach does not inquire into a conceptual name for God, but it clearly moves towards a conceptual reading of the parable wherein the most universal structures of the religious experience are found in relation to the paradox and hyperbole inherent to the parable.

It is within the context of the phenomenal form of paradox that the philosophical meaning of Chrétien's metaphor of wounding can be identified. The concept of paradox

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[223] Chrétien develops this call to the mind in *The Unforgettable and the Unhoped For*, particularly as it refers to our *memory* and the arrival of the call to the present in relation to time. We receive the call of the infinite both as an unforgettable call, as well as one that is completely unhoped for. He explains, "These two terms have for us a dimensional character: they aim at that from which such events can be given to us. In this sense, the concept that could unite them is that of the unceasing: that which does not cease to come to us, towards us, whether from the past (unforgettable) or from the future (unhoped for)." Jean-Louis Chrétien, *The Unforgettable and the Unhoped for*, trans. by Jeffrey Bloechl, (New York: Fordham University Press, 2002), xxi. Jean-Louis Chrétien, *L' inoubliable et l'inespéré* (Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1991).

is decisive for the meaning of wounding throughout "La Parole blessée," wherein

Chrétien considers vocal prayer as a *speech act* directed towards an infinite *addressee*.

Chrétien brackets the question of whether or not the addressee is real, exists, or differs

within the various forms of prayer, since it is the structural disposition of the one who

prays that is at issue. This bracketing is critical given the complexities introduced with

the reference to God that were explored in the previous chapter. What Chrétien's

phenomenology depicts about religion is limited to the religious disposition of the one

who prays and any reference to a conceptual understanding of God remains limited by

this disposition. The central phenomenological issue in the metaphor of wounding is not

one concerning conceptual knowledge of God, but rather the disposition of the one who

prays.

It is within the structural disposition of the one who prays that Chrétien identifies

a paradox that results in wounding. Wounding arrives in vocal prayer according to the

manner in which the "words of our speech affect and modify the addresser and not the

addressee." Chrétien explains:

> This is the first wound in prayer: the gap introduced by the addressee has broken
> the closed circle of speech, opened within it a fault that alters its nature. Another
> has silently introduced himself into my dialogue with myself, and has radically
> transformed and broken it. My speech rebounds off of me and affects me, as
> indeed would any speech of mine of the kind I always hear, but it affects me
> much more in so far as it is not aimed at me, and has a completely different
> addressee from me.[224]

Paradox emerges when we speak toward the silent and transcendent and find that our

speech rebounds and affects us. We encounter a gap between finite speech-act and its

infinite addressee. Thus, "I am not talking for myself." Here, "my own speech, altered at

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[224] Chrétien, *The Ark of Speech*, 21; Chrétien, "La Parole blessée," in Courtine et al.,
Phénoménologie et théologie, 157.

its very origin, and perhaps even before that, turns back on me with such a singular

force."[225] A wound is opened through the phenomenal form of paradox when another is

silently introduced through our experience of this gap.

It is helpful to relate Chrétien's articulation of wounding to the philosophical

metaphors Ricoeur observes in Heidegger's studies on Hölderlin in MDP. Recall

Ricoeur's argument:

> [S]peculative thought employs the metaphorical resources of language in order to
> create meaning and answers thus to the call of the 'thing' to be said with a
> semantic innovation. A procedure like this has nothing scandalous about it as long
> as speculative thought knows itself to be distinct and responsive because it is
> thinking. Furthermore, the philosopher's metaphors may well resemble those of
> the poet – like the latter, they diverge from the world of objects and ordinary
> language – but they do not merge with the poet's metaphors.[226]

Speculative discourse properly uses metaphors when they are aimed at the determination

of the thing to be said within the metaphor. Within the context of Chrétien's metaphor of

wounding the philosophical meaning of the metaphor is characterized by its relation to

the paradox inherent to the phenomenon of prayer. The metaphor of wounding is defined

by the speech act of prayer (the 'thing' to be said). From this vantage point, the

speculative meaning of wounding does not merge with a poetic use of metaphor. The

phenomenal form of paradox conceptually defines the metaphor's meaning.

Although Chrétien's metaphor of wounding can be considered a philosophical

metaphor within the context of Ricoeur's theory of discourses, a number of limitations

need to be acknowledged if this reading is to be preserved. In "Expérience et langage

dans le discours religieux," Ricoeur develops three "consequences" that constrain the

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[225] Ibid.

[226] Ricoeur, *La Métaphore Vive*, 367/394.

possibilities of a phenomenology of religion based on the hermeneutical detour through the linguistic, cultural and historical mediation that Ricoeur asserts is required. All three consequences limit the extent to which Chrétien's metaphor of wounding can be considered philosophical within Ricoeur's framework.

The first consequence Ricoeur argues for is that we cannot create a phenomenology of religion in its "indivisible universality." We can only trace the "broad hermeneutic strands of just one religion."[227] While Chrétien seeks to identify in religious phenomenon its most universal structures, he can only move towards this universality by tracing one hermeneutical strand at a time. If prayer is to be considered a speech act directed towards an infinite addressee, we will need to investigate the different ways in which this speech act has been manifested and remains limited to the particularity of the phenomenal strand that is being traced within the various instantiations of prayer.

The second consequence Ricoeur identifies is that the particular internal hermeneutic of various religions can approach a universal phenomenology only through the process of a "analogizing transfer." This transfer is a slow progression, moving "one step at a time, starting from the place where one stands at the outset."[228] One must begin within a particular historical circumstance or text since there is "no gaze from nowhere." Ricoeur contrasts this with a "comparative history of religions," which ideally presupposes "the adoption of a placeless place, a surveillance point."[229] For Chrétien, this means his phenomenological investigations must start within the particularity of his Catholic standpoint. Chrétien's overt Christian commitments indicate that he has never attempted to operate from a placeless place. He does explore other religions (i.e. ancient

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[227] Ricoeur, *Expérience et langage*, 131/118.
[228] Ibid.
[229] Ibid.

Greek and Roman religions), but he prioritizes his reflections on Christianity and can only extend his analysis through a step-by-step analogizing transfer.

Finally, the third consequence Ricoeur draws is that, "Religion, remains just an idea – by which one is to understand a regulative ideal projected on the horizon of our investigations."[230] From Ricoeur's point of view, the universality of a phenomenology of religion remains an aim towards which our structural descriptions of the religious disposition will point to, but not achieve. By extension of this limitation, the philosophical meaning of Chrétien's metaphor of wounding will not achieve universal applicability.

All three of Ricoeur's consequences are based on the tensions inherent to describing religious phenomena in its most widespread universality and a hermeneutics sensitive to the historical instantiations of religious discourse. Thus, any account of Chrétien's metaphor of wounding within the context of Ricoeur's conception of speculative philosophy remains limited by these tensions. These limitations, however, do not preclude a philosophical meaning for the metaphor of wounding, since the metaphor's meaning can be defined within the contours of the semantic aims of speculative discourse. Like Ricoeur's reflections on Aristotle and Aquinas, assessing the success or failure of the project is not the central point in my analysis of Chrétien. Rather, it is simply to show how the metaphor of wounding functions within the theory of discourses that Ricoeur establishes.

"Wounding" and Our Poetic Belonging to the World

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[230] Ibid., 132/119.

Given the above articulation of the philosophical meaning of wounding, I now want to consider the manner in which metaphor can slip outside philosophical discourse and into a poetic expression of our primordial belonging to the world. I want argue that the possibility of slippage in metaphor's meaning brings life to phenomenological depictions of religion.

To articulate the specific manner in which wounding functions poetically for Chrétien, we need to distinguish the manner in which the multiple meaning of words supports rather than undermines his broader phenomenological project. Chrétien's support for multiple meanings can be observed in what Christina Gschwandtner calls the "multivocal" character of his work. She explains that Chrétien welcomes many "voices into his own writing" and as a result it is "hard to separate Chrétien's own argument from these other voices."[231] His use of widespread citations is consistent with a phenomenological structure that submits to the reception of the call prior to the response in the sense that Chrétien's work is possible because he was first addressed by other voices and subsequently speaks in response to those voices.[232] One can never fully possess the meaning of words since one speaks only because of a prior call. This uncontrolled element of language opens the possibility of multiple meanings for the metaphor of wounding. The metaphor can be said to depict both a phenomenological meaning and a poetic meaning, depending on Chrétien's response to the various calls within his multivocal explorations.

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[231] Gschwandtner, *Postmodern Apologetics*, 144-5

[232] Ibid., 145. One of the meanings of the metaphor of wounding is expressed by this mutlivocal element. Chrétien writes of prayer: "Wounded, too, is this speech because it attempts to gives voice to all the voices that are silent, excluded as they are from prayer by the hollow echoing effect created when they address their individual or collective idols, or by the atrocious plight of the destiny they endure, whose despair does not even become a cry in which they could voice their complaint to God, which itself may be a way of praying" (Chrétien, *The Arc of Speech,* 37, Chrétien, "La Parole blessée," in Courtine et al., *Phénoménologie et théologie*, 162).

One can observe the metaphor of wounding slipping into poetic discourse through what Gschwandtner describes as the "performative" element of Chrétien's writing. Chrétien's writing is "performative" in the sense that he attempts to let phenomena "speak for themselves and to be experienced, usually through his writing itself."[233] Chrétien's phenomenological descriptions solicit the reader's imagination, asking us to enter into the world of the text and experience the phenomenon he is depicting. In the language of Ricoeur's hermeneutics, this performative element opens the reader to the primordial experience of belonging to the world characteristic of the poetic sphere of discourse. This sense of belonging to the world is not simply a description of the emotive element of our experience, since poetic discourse uses language to intercede on behalf of our experience to describe new meanings. Living metaphors are semantic innovations that suggest new possibilities for being in the world based on the recognition of new similarities in image and word expressed with impertinent uses in language.

The metaphor of wounding refers to this imaginative solicitation of the reader in Chrétien's consideration of praying the psalms. Chrétien states, "To pray the psalms is not to add one theoretical interpretation to another, it is to allow oneself to be interpreted by them, to offer one's own life, to which they give a much deeper expression in the words of God, as a space in which they can echo and their promise be heard."[234] Moreover, "we pray psalms by anticipating their meaning, as if we were inventing them, and also by remembering – remembering our own trials and tribulations, which are the best explanation of them."[235] Chretien at once will describe the experience of praying the

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[233] Gschwandtner, *Postmodern Apologetics,* 145.
[234] Chrétien, *The Arc of Speech* 36; Chrétien, "La Parole blessée," in Courtine et al., *Phénoménologie et théologie,* 162.
[235] Ibid.

psalms, but also invite the reader to remember their own prayers, trials, and tribulations. Without imagining our experiences of belonging in the world, the metaphor of wounding loses an essential meaning. Prayer is wounded speech because "it always opens its lips to some tearing asunder. And if it does, it is still wounded, even more so."[236] Our own experiences of loss and suffering bring *life* to the phenomenal form of paradox that structurally defines this wounded speech. We are invited to experience this wounding through the performative elements of Chrétien's texts.

Chrétien's work continually slips between a phenomenological description of our structural disposition and an imaginative solicitation. He wants his readers to see both paradox, and let the phenomena speak for themselves so that we might experience them ourselves. The metaphor of wounding is to be adopted by Chrétien's readers, so that we might imaginatively project our 'ownmost possibilities.'

Conclusion: Interanimation

Metaphor opens the possibility of *interanimation* between discourses when it functions as a bridge between religious and philosophical discourse. Chrétien's metaphor of wounding is articulated philosophically through the concept of paradox, but is malleable enough in its meaning to solicit our imaginations and poetically suggest a primordial experience of belonging to the world. Together, philosophy and religious discourse can bring life to each other, while simultaneously being limited by the sphere of reference internal to each discourse. According to Ricoeur's theory, interanimation is only possible if the organizing nucleus of each discourse remains off-centered in relation to one another, since religious discourse can animate speculative thought only if the

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[236] Ibid., 37/162.

primordial belonging in the world that religious texts re-imagine is not subsumed by speculative thought. The possibility of interanimation between discourses requires a hermeneutical disposition that is skeptical of a fully conceived synthesis between the two. The tension between various discourses remains flexible. One can be drawn by the pull of either discourse only if this tension is not broken.

Wounding is only one of the metaphors that suggest the possibility of an interanimation between religious expression and phenomenology. A longer study might consider more permeating metaphors moving through the history of philosophy, religion, and poetry, such as that of the "night." In Chrétien's meditations on the poetry of the night in *L'antiponaire de la nuit*, he suggests, "La nuit est aux limites de la phenomenolgoie, et c'est pourquoi la parole poétique a l'irremplaçable charge, dans ses antiennes, de la dire."[237] Phenomenology can aim towards a univocal articulation of a poetic depiction of the night. However, these articulations find their limits within that aim and do not solicit the imaginative senses of the night depicted within poetic expressions. Limitations, however, do not exclude interanimation. The multiple meaning of words opens us to semantic innovations in metaphors that still push us to think more philosophically. I have suggested that when this 'thinking more' is initiated by religious metaphors, we can arrive at a path toward speculative discourse through a phenomenological depiction of the event. Within Ricoeur's theory, this path will be constituted by the singularity of religious expression and as such, never achieves universality, even if that is what speculative thought aims for.

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[237] Jean-Louis Chrétien, *L'Antiphonaire de la nuit*, (Paris: Méandres L'Herne, 1989,) 62.

Conclusion

Further Questions and Research

Over the course of this study I have considered Ricoeur's hermeneutical analysis of the interanimation of discourses in the eighth study of *La Métaphore Vive.* I suggested that the interanimation of discourses opens possibilities for phenomenological articulations of religion when metaphors function as a bridge between poetic and speculative discourses. This position embraces the multiple meanings of words, but supports philosophical projects that attempt to express meaning univocally. Jean-Louis Chrétien's metaphor of wounding was used as an example of how words can carry a philosophical meaning, but also appeal to poetic resources that solicit us to reimagine the way in which we belong in the world.

As a conclusion, however, rather than review all the central points of this study, I would like to suggest a number of areas where further research might build upon the material discussed in this study. Each of the suggested areas of research refers to the metaphor of *life* and relates Ricoeur's work to this broader theme within the philosophy of religion.

To begin with, further examination of Ricoeur's references to Kant would enrich our understanding of Ricoeur's metaphor of life and subsequently his development of "speculative" and "poetic" thought in MDP. David Pellauer states that the question of Ricoeur's relation to Kant is still an undeveloped issue in scholarship surrounding Ricoeur.[238] Within the context of MDP, this would require a detailed study of how Ricoeur's metaphor of life relates to Kant's notion of *Geist* in *The Critique of Judgment*. These relations would lead to the larger question concerning the extent to which Ricoeur's notions of poetic and conceptual discourse have been influenced by Kant's philosophy.

Second, a consideration of Derrida's notion of "entanglement" as it is developed in "La Retrait de la Métaphore" would provide a valuable contrast to Ricoeur's position. While others have debated the differences between Derrida and Ricoeur in detail, extending the notion of entanglement to philosophical interpretations of religious texts would produce a helpful alternative to Ricoeur's hermeneutical theory of discontinuity and interaction. The notion of entanglement would apply pressure to Ricoeur's organized movement between the experiences of belonging and distanciation by presenting an approach wherein it becomes more difficult to locate which discourse we are in. If the entanglement between poetry and philosophy renders the relationship between the two discourses, then the very meaning of the term "interanimation" is problematized. Central to this issue would again be the question concerning the meaning of the metaphor of "life." While Derrida emphasizes *dead* metaphor due to the entanglement between

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[238] David Pellauer, "Remembering Ricoeur," in *A Passion for the Possible,* ed. Brian Treanor and Henry Isaac Venema, (New York: Fordham University Press, 2010), 43.

philosophy and metaphor, would there be space within his account for the movement of life?

Finally, there is more to be examined in the relationship between Chrétien and Ricoeur's work. The procedure I followed in this study could be reversed so that Ricoeur's hermeneutics is critically examined in light of Chrétien's phenomenology. Further development of Chrétien's understanding of Christ as the Wounded Word made flesh might *exceed* Ricoeur's theory of discourses, since the Word is said to give *life* through a literal wounding. This would place the discussion of religious metaphors in another phenomenological context, wherein the hermeneutic detour Ricoeur follows is bypassed in the experience of the one prays to the Word made flesh. These considerations would necessarily bring us to Michel Henry's "anti-hermeneutical" position developed within *Words of Christ*, wherein, "what Christ says about himself is not a word about life which would still have to prove what it says, but it is Life itself – which reveals itself and speaks in his Word [*Verbe*] in such a way that, Word [*Parole*] and revelations of this absolute Life, it is the absolute Truth which bears witness to itself."[239] Henry's concept of life could be understood to leave aside Ricoeur's emphasis on a semantic theory of metaphor and assume a speculative meaning for the term that also describes our primordial experience of belonging to the world. From this

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[239] Christina M. Gschwandtner brought Henry's quotation to my attention. She adds to her characterization of Henry's "anti-hermeneutical" stance by stating, "Henry's dismissal of biblical criticism is linked to his rejection of hermeneutics more generally. Henry is emphatic in *Words of Christ* that Christ's words do not require interpretation. They are self-validating and self-authenticating precisely because of their immediacy that requires no hermeneutics of any kind." See Christina M. Gschwandter, "The Truth of Christianity: Michel Henry's Words of Christ," *The Journal of Scriptural Reasoning*, Vol 13, No 1 (June 2014) accessed August 1, 2014, https://jsr.lib.virginia.edu/vol-13-no-1-june-2014-phenomenology-and-scripture/the-truth-of-christianity-michel-henrys-words-of-christ/. Also, see Michel Henry, *Words of Christ*, trans., Christina M. Gschwandtner (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2012), 115.

perspective, the meaning of the term "life" might be related to what Ricoeur calls our most hidden dialectic between distanciation and belonging.

There is considerably more research that would both enrich and complicate the materials I have considered. These intimations concerning the importance of the metaphor of life only accentuate the limitations of this study and its claims. My approach has been to think alongside one of the important figures for the philosophy of religion, tracing one line in his thought with the purpose of positively applying it towards our understanding of religious language. Ricoeur says that we must begin from the place where one stands. This study has been an attempt at such a beginning.

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