

## CHAPTER II

### ON METAPHOR, SYMBOL, AND MYTH

"As Plato remarks in the Philebus--  
it is bad to arrive too quickly at  
the one or at the many."

From Paul Ricoeur, The Rule  
of Metaphor, p. 295.

It was important to the problems confronting this project in Chapter I (i.e., why make a particular language in the tradition the object of our reflection; and is it the power of the symbol of the Kingdom of God to be disclosive for understanding in the present that gives it authority for today, or is it the "fact" that the historical Jesus used this symbol and language that gives it authority?), that the discussion there turn, above all, to the hermeneutical discussion of Hans-Georg Gadamer. Now that the symbol of the Kingdom of God (embedded within the two myth currents of the cosmological and heilgeschichtliche) in this primary material of the tradition has become the object of the investigation, it is valuable to turn to the hermeneutical theory and project of Paul Ricoeur, because Gadamer and Ricoeur are helpful at two different levels of the hermeneutical task.

Where Gadamer discounts method in order to suggest the naivete of the positivism informing hermeneutical methodologies since the Enlightenment, he suggests that we must always consider the temporal horizon of the text by pointing to the role of "effective history" (Wirkungsgeschichte), or the simultaneity in temporal

sequence, in the event of understanding.<sup>1</sup> The consequence, as we saw above, is to insist upon the openness of the hermeneutical enterprise. "Der Betrachter von heute sieht nicht nur anders, er sieht auch anderes."<sup>2</sup> It is in light of this openness, and the "how" of the process of understanding, that we can understand adequately his claim that we don't understand better, we only understand differently if we understand at all. He has demonstrated the importance of the newness in the hermeneutical event, that allows him not to throw out the intention of the author altogether, but to discount the intention of the author as the "object" of hermeneutical understanding. "Understanding is not only a reproductive, but is always a productive process."<sup>3</sup>

The interpreter, who concerns himself with a tradition, seeks to apply it. . . . The interpreter wishes to understand nothing other than this universal--the text, i.e., to understand what the tradition says, what the meaning

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<sup>1</sup> See Gadamer, Wahrheit und Methode, p. 283: "Die Naivität des sogenannten Historismus besteht darin, daß er sich einer solchen Reflexion entzieht und im Vertrauen auf die Methodik seines Verfahrens seine eigene Geschichtlichkeit vergißt. Hier muß von einem schlecht verstandenen historischen Denken an ein besser zu verstehendes appelliert werden. Ein wirklich historisches Denken muß die eigene Geschichtlichkeit mitdenken. Nur dann wird es nicht dem Phantom eines historischen Objektes nachjagen, das Gegenstand fortschreitender Forschung ist, sondern wird in dem Objekt das Andere des Eigenen und damit das Eine wie das Andere erkennen lernen. Der wahre historische Gegenstand ist kein Gegenstand, sondern die Einheit dieses Einen und Anderen, ein Verhältnis, in dem die Wirklichkeit der Geschichte ebenso wie die Wirklichkeit des geschichtlichen Verstehens besteht. Eine sachangemessene Hermeneutik hätte im Verstehen selbst die Wirklichkeit der Geschichte aufzuweisen. Ich nenne das damit Geforderte 'Wirkungsgeschichte'. Verstehen ist seinem Wesen nach ein wirkungsgeschichtlicher Vorgang."

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 141.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 280. This is my translation of: "Verstehen ist kein nur reproduktives, sondern stets auch ein produktives Verhalten."

and reference of the text consists of. In order to understand this, he is not permitted to want to ignore himself and the concrete hermeneutical situation in which he finds himself. He must refer the text to this<sup>1</sup> situation if he wants to understand anything at all.

Hence, both the positivistic sense of the object, as well as, the romanticist influenced hermeneutics' search for the "intention of the author" are shown to be illusions. The task of hermeneutics is understanding, and understanding is an open-ended process (and this, far more radically than that the intention of the author eludes our search, that there is a tradition between the "text" and ourselves, and that our new situation demands a new response; no, this open-endedness has, in addition, to do with the Being-of beings that "is" and "is not," i.e., that is "what is" but "goes beyond"):

The present work /Truth and Method/ is devoted to this new aspect of the hermeneutical problem. In reviving the question of being /die Seinsfrage/ and thus moving beyond all previous metaphysics--and not just its climax in the Cartesianism of modern science and transcendental philosophy--Heidegger attained a fundamentally new position in regard to the impasses of historicism. The concept of understanding is no longer a methodological concept, as with Droysen. Nor, as in Dilthey's attempt to provide a hermeneutical ground for the human sciences, is the process of understanding an inverse operation that simply follows behind life's tendency towards ideality. Understanding is the original character of the being of human life itself. /Verstehen ist der

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 307. This is my translation of: "Der Interpret, der es mit einer Überlieferung zu tun hat, sucht sich dieselbe zu applizieren. . . . Der Interpret will gar nichts anderes, als diese Allgemeine--den Text--verstehen, d.h. verstehen was die Überlieferung sagt, was Sinn und Bedeutung des Textes ausmacht. Um das zu verstehen, darf er aber nicht von sich selbst und der konkreten hermeneutischen Situation, in der er sich befindet, absehen wollen. Er muß den Text auf diese Situation beziehen, wenn er überhaupt verstehen will."

ursprüngliche Seinscharakter des menschlichen Lebens selber.<sup>1</sup> Starting from Dilthey, Misch had recognized the 'free distance towards oneself' as a basic structure of human life, on which all understanding depended; Heidegger's radical ontological reflection was concerned to clarify this structure of There-being through a 'transcendental analysis of There-being'. He revealed the projective character of all understanding and conceived the act of understanding itself as the movement of transcendence, of moving beyond being /die Bewegung der Transzendenz, des Überstiegs über das Seiende/.

Again, however, this understanding process is the question not of method, but of truth.

We do not . . . ask the experience of art to tell us how it thinks of itself, but what it is in truth and what its truth is, even if it does not know what it is and cannot say what it knows--just so Heidegger has asked what metaphysics is, in contrast to what it thinks itself to be. In the experience of art we see a genuine experience induced by the work, which does not leave him who has it unchanged, and we enquire into the mode of being /nach der Seinsart/ of that which is experienced in this way. So we hope to understand better what kind of truth it is that encounters us there.

We shall see that this opens up the dimension in which, in the 'understanding' with which the human sciences are concerned, the question of truth is raised in a new way.

If we want to know what truth in the field of the human sciences is, we shall have to ask the philosophical question of the whole procedure of the human sciences in the same way that Heidegger asked it of metaphysics, and that we have asked it of aesthetic consciousness. But we shall not be able simply to accept the human sciences' own account of themselves, but must ask what their mode of understanding in truth is. The question of the truth of art in particular can serve to prepare the way for this wider-ranging question, because the experience of the work of art includes understanding, and thus itself represents a hermeneutical phenomenon--but not at all in the sense of a scientific method. Rather, the understanding belongs to the encounter with the work of art itself,

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<sup>1</sup>Gadamer, Truth and Method, p. 230 (German edition, pp. 245-246). See, also, Martin Heidegger, Being and Time, trans. by John Macquarrie & Edward Robinson (New York: Harper & Row, Pub., 1962), par. 31 and 32: "Being-there as understanding" and "Understanding and interpretation."

so that this connection can be illuminated only on the basis of the mode of being of the work of art /der Seinsweise des Kunstwerks/ itself.<sup>1</sup>

Paul Ricoeur recognizes, as well, that we find ourselves in a condition of "forgetfulness" in the midst of the "unsaid" in the said.<sup>2</sup> He concurs that there is indeed an openness to our situation, though not limited to the hermeneutical process of understanding. Language itself is "open:"

The question is precisely whether poetic language does not break through to a pre-scientific, ante-predicative level, where the very notions of fact, object, reality, and truth as delimited by epistemology, are called into question by this very means of /the/ . . . vacillation of literal reference.<sup>3</sup>

He does not, however, want to throw the baby out with the bath water. He does not dismiss methodology from the hermeneutical enterprise. By examining what at first glance seems to be the exception in language, i.e., figurative or metaphorical language, he demonstrates that there are various semantic fields operating in the understanding process. These semantic fields require various methodologies in order that we might understand "how" and "what" they "set before the eyes." Hence, Ricoeur recognizes the limits of structuralism, of historical criticism, of literary criticism/linguistics, and of ontological descriptions,<sup>4</sup> but these limits

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<sup>1</sup>Gadamer, Truth and Method, pp. 89-90 (German edition, pp. 95-96).

<sup>2</sup>See, for example, Ricoeur, The Rule of Metaphor, p. 284.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 254.

<sup>4</sup>The "truth" of structural criticism is its recognition of the immanent order and functioning of language, but its failure is the absolutizing of this immanent order at the expense of the "extra-linguistic," connotative Bedeutung (not simply Sinn in

are not seen as the excuse for dismissing them from the task. He employs them all, "recognizing their limits."

On the other hand, Ricoeur does not give up the focus on "truth" to champion method. All of his work on metaphor betrays an awareness of a definite ontological claim of reference that he calls the "tensional truth" of metaphor. The truth of metaphor is revealed and concealed not only in the relational function of the copula immanent in the sentence, but in the "what is," referential claim of the copula to which we gain most adequate access in the second-order reflective discourse of philosophy (and, again, for Ricoeur, as well as for Gadamer, this is found most adequately, despite its limitations,<sup>1</sup> in the work of Heidegger<sup>2</sup>).

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Frege's discussion), or referential character of language. The "truth" of the historical critical method consists in its affirmation of an "objective pole" to experience, but its failure is the absolutizing of this pole at the expense of the simultaneousness of the "subjective pole" including a simultaneous life-world consisting of all of the passive accumulations of "effective history" (Wirkungsgeschichte). The "truth" of literary criticism/linguistics has been its recognition of the importance of understanding "how" language functions at the level of the sentence as "the smallest complete unit of discourse," but until the work of Ricoeur it has failed to see the importance of "living metaphor" as the exemplar of discourse, i.e., the importance of the move from semantics to discourse/living speech. The "truth" of "ontological descriptions" has been their claim that there is an "ontological vehemence" to language, i.e., a truth claim, but this has been merely a naive claim of the "is" (a metalinguistic or metapoetic claim) without the more adequate understanding of metaphorical truth contained in the "split reference" of the "is"/"is not." Ricoeur, therefore, identifies the priority of poiesis in the search for ontological claims. The "symbol gives rise to thought," and speculative discourse, as a second-order reflection, provides an adequate "grounding" for the symbol, i.e., the adequate ontological description.

<sup>1</sup>For example, Ricoeur gives what amounts to a cry of anguish over Heidegger's generalized attack on metaphysics. See Ibid., pp. 311-312.

<sup>2</sup>See the analysis below, pp. 141f.

Ricoeur's investigation of metaphor, then, is both an example of the hermeneutical task (engaging all of these methodologies) and metaphor is seen as paradigmatic of language itself. Metaphor is not an exception, we learn, it is the exemplar.

Turning again to this particular symbol embedded in this tradition(s) of myth (and recognizing that there is an extensive and complex tradition extending from the time of this primary linguistic material of our heritage till now which influences, in addition, how we come to the material), what I wish to suggest here is that this language/symbol/myth demand more careful attention, and not simply because an historical critical investigation reveals that there is a long and complex history of the use of this central symbol both before and after its appearance in this particular linguistic material. For a look at the discussion in linguistics concerning the "how" of figurative (metaphorical) language will show that it is not just the historical critical analysis that suggests that this symbol cannot be merely understood literally. Such metaphorical language "works" precisely because of its "split reference,"<sup>1</sup> "double tension,"<sup>2</sup> or "stereoscopic vision" (in the

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<sup>1</sup>See Ricoeur, The Rule of Metaphor, pp. 7, 224, 230, 247, 248, 255, 296, 297, 298-9, 306.

<sup>2</sup>See Ibid., p. 40: "Considered formally, metaphor as a deviation represents nothing but a difference in meaning. Related to the imitation of our actions at their best, it takes part in the double tension that characterizes this imitation: submission to reality and fabulous invention, unaltering representation and enobling elevation. This double tension constitutes the referential function of metaphor in poetry" (partial emphasis added).

work of W. Bedell Stanford),<sup>1</sup> i.e., ". . . the ability to entertain two different points of view at the same time."<sup>2</sup> Or as Ricoeur says of metaphorical meaning:

. . . the way in which metaphorical meaning is constituted provides the key to the splitting of reference. We can start with the point that the meaning of a metaphorical statement rises up from the blockage of any literal interpretation of the statement. In a literal interpretation, the meaning abolishes itself. Next, because of this self-destruction of the meaning, the primary reference founders. The entire strategy of poetic discourse plays on this point: it seeks the abolition of the reference by means of self-destruction of the meaning of metaphorical statements, the self-destruction being made manifest by an impossible literal interpretation.

But this is only the first phase, or rather the negative counterpart, of a positive strategy. Within the perspective of semantic impertinence, the self-destruction of meaning is merely the other side of an innovation in meaning at the level of the entire statement, an innovation obtained through the 'twist' of the literal meaning of the words. It is this<sup>3</sup> innovation in meaning that constitutes living metaphor.

Hence, it is not simply the challenge of historical criticism, but, in addition, that of linguistics that suggests that we must look with greater rigour at what is occurring in/with this symbol and myth(s).

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<sup>1</sup>See W. Bedell Stanford, Greek Metaphor Studies in Theory and Practice (London: Johnson Repr. Corporation, 1972).

<sup>2</sup>Douglas Berggren, "The Use and Abuse of Metaphor: I" in The Review of Metaphysics, 16, No. 2 (December 1962): 243.

<sup>3</sup>Ricoeur, The Rule of Metaphor, p. 230. I understand Ricoeur to be speaking metaphorically when he says of the literal interpretation that its meaning is "abolished" (or that poetic discourse seeks its "abolition"). A tension theory of metaphor, as Ricoeur says elsewhere (see, for example, Ibid., p. 199), holds/maintains the literal meaning (die literalische Bedeutung wird aufgehoben), but simultaneously there is a pointing beyond to what cannot be expressed literally.



The discussion turns now, then, to an investigation of metaphor, symbol and myth assisted by the insights of linguistic analysis and primarily the work of Paul Ricoeur. What is a symbol?; how do symbols function?; what can they suggest about ontological claims in understanding? Such are the questions that motivate the turn to the current discussion of metaphor within linguistics in the search for an understanding of this particular symbol in this particular language that constitutes the symbol of the Kingdom of God in the primary language of our tradition.

### The Problem of Sign and Symbol

I wish to suggest that it is only when we turn to the work of Paul Ricoeur that we obtain an adequate indication of what symbols are as distinguished from signs and metaphors. It is common, when the discussion turns to symbols, to quote Paul Tillich's now famous assertion:

Special emphasis must be laid on the insight that symbol and sign are different; that, while the sign bears no necessary relation to that to which it points, the symbol participates in the reality of that for which it stands.

The problem with this definition is the meaning of the word "participates." If one's ontological (or "anti-ontological") reflections are informed by the "transcendent" character of Being (by the event character of the Being-of beings) or, linguistically articulated, given the claim that language itself is the "house of Being,"<sup>2</sup> how is it possible to say of any one element of language

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<sup>1</sup>Tillich, Systematic Theology, p. 239

<sup>2</sup>See, for example, Martin Heidegger, "Über den 'Humanismus'" in Platons Lehre von der Wahrheit: Mit einem Brief über den 'Humanismus' (Bern: Francke Verlag, 1975), p. 60: "Die Sprache

that it "bears no necessary relation to that to which it points?" All language participates in the event character of the Being-of beings necessarily, even when it is not directly articulated as its referent, i.e., it is then presupposed. We learn from Ricoeur, however, that a symbol is not to be defined in terms of its referent, but in terms of its function. Assuming for now that a symbol may be understood as a special case of metaphor, it is instructive to take Ricoeur's pointing to a distinction between a nominal and a real definition seriously:

The present Study /"Metaphor and the Semantics of Discourse"<sup>7</sup> is devoted to a direct examination of the role of the statement, as the carrier of 'complete and finished meaning' . . . , in the production of metaphorical meaning. Hence, we will speak from now on of the metaphorical statement.

Does this mean that the definition of metaphor as transposition of the name is wrong? I prefer to say that it is nominal only and not real, using these terms as Leibniz does. The nominal definition allows us to identify something; the real definition shows how it is brought about. . . . Thus, a theory of the metaphorical statement will be a theory of the production of metaphorical meaning (partial emphasis added).

The "uniqueness" and "priority" of symbols are to be sought not in terms of their having a special relationship with that to which they refer, but has to do with their way of functioning in language: a symbol "gives rise to thought" and is the "exception" in language that betrays the "rule," i.e., metaphor/symbol insist for their

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verweigert uns noch ihr Wesen: daß sie das Haus der Wahrheit des Seins ist." See, further, p. 79: "Der Mensch . . . ist nicht nur ein Lebewesen, das neben anderen Fähigkeiten auch die Sprache besitzt. Vielmehr ist die Sprache das Haus des Seins, darin wohnend der Mensch ek-sistiert, indem er der Wahrheit des Seins, sie hütend, gehört."

<sup>1</sup>Ricoeur, The Rule of Metaphor, p. 65.

meaning that the linguistic event is more than a nominalistic event --it/they require(s) an "extra-linguistic referent" for their meaning to occur. If we are to speak of a preferential role of symbols in terms of their referent, then we have moved to the level of specifically "religious" symbols, and not to a priority of "participation" but to a priority of intention: religious symbols are intentionally concerned with "limit experiences" as "limit expressions." Ricoeur suggests the importance of the intentionality of religious symbols when he writes:

The primary symbols clearly point out the intentional structure of symbol. Symbol is a sign in this, that like every sign it intends something beyond and stands for this something. But not every sign is a symbol. Symbol conceals in its intention a double intentionality, which, like any meaningful intentionality, implies the triumph of the conventional sign over the natural sign: . . . words which do not resemble the things signified. But upon this first intentionality is built a second intentionality, which . . . points to a certain situation of man in the Sacred. . . . Thus, in distinction to technical signs, which are perfectly transparent and say only what they mean by positing the signified, symbolic signs are opaque; the first, literal, patent meaning analogically intends a second meaning which is not given otherwise than in the first. This opaqueness is the symbol's very profundity, and inexhaustible depth.

In the Introduction to the present project it was suggested that the "inexhaustible depth" of metaphor/symbol cannot be articulated analogically (and elsewhere Ricoeur agrees in the inability of analogy to articulate this "referent"<sup>2</sup>), but here the important

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<sup>1</sup>Paul Ricoeur, "The Hermeneutics of Symbols and Philosophical Reflection: I" in The Conflict of Interpretations: Essays in Hermeneutics, ed. by Don Ihde (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1974), pp. 289-290.

<sup>2</sup>See Ricoeur, The Rule of Metaphor, pp. 270, 272, 288, and the discussion below, pp. 122-123.

observations are: 1) symbol is spoken of exactly as Ricoeur later speaks of metaphor; and 2) he calls attention to the intentionality of symbols; something that he says more adequately, in this author's opinion, in his work The Rule of Metaphor, i.e., there is fundamentally a "split reference" to metaphor/symbol, and it is this split reference that draws symbols to our attention as having a priority over other linguistic phenomena. As Ricoeur suggests, there is a "still more" to all discourse,<sup>1</sup> but some forms of discourse have as their intention the opening up of experience to limits and beyond:

The concept "limit" implies not only and even not primarily that our knowledge is limited, has boundaries, but that the quest for the unconditioned puts limits on the claim of objective knowledge to become absolute. "Limit" is not a fact, but an act.

. . . It is because Kant had no idea of language which would not be empirical, that he had to replace metaphysics by empty concepts. But if we give to poetic language the function of redescription through fictions, then we can say that the logical space opened by Kant between Denken and Erkennen, between "Thought" and "Knowledge," is the place of indirect discourse, of symbol, parables, and myths, as the indirect presentation of the Unconditioned.<sup>2</sup>

If Paul Tillich's distinction between a sign and a symbol, resting upon a difference of "participation" in terms of its referent, is taken to be inadequate, so must be pointed out that Martin Heidegger's treatment of symbol, as well as Hans-Georg Gadamer's, are also inadequate. I wish to suggest, again, that it is a

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<sup>1</sup> See Ricoeur, Semeia 4, p. 126: ". . . the properly religious moment of all discourse, including political discourse is the 'still more' that it insinuates everywhere, intensifying every project in the same manner, including the political project."

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., pp. 142-143.

turning to Paul Ricoeur that allows for a more adequate development of the cryptic suggestions of Heidegger concerning symbol than Gadamer's discussion of symbol in Wahrheit und Methode.

Of the three points in Sein und Zeit where Heidegger mentions symbol, only one, i.e., in par. 7 in the Introduction, where he discusses the meaning of "phenomenon," is of value for an adequate understanding of symbol. His cryptic suggestion concerning the meaning of a symbol appears in his presentation of the distinctions in the way of "showing." Phenomenon is said to be "that which shows itself, the manifest." This can occur, however, in many ways, and Heidegger proceeds to distinguish between "seeming" and "appearing."

"Seeming" is the manner in which something shows itself "as something which in itself it is not." In this manner of something showing, it is a "looking like" ("In diesem Sichzeigen 'sieht' das Seiende 'so aus wie . . .'.") We are told that such "seeming" presupposes the idea of "phenomenon" as manifesting, i.e.,

Only when the meaning of something is such that it makes a pretension of showing itself--that is, of being a phenomenon--can it show itself as something which it, is not; only then can it 'merely look like so-and-so.'<sup>1</sup>

Then Heidegger suggests: "But what both of these terms phenomenon and seeming<sup>7</sup> express has completely nothing to do with what one calls 'appearance' or simply 'mere appearance.'<sup>2</sup> What "appears" is a not showing:

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<sup>1</sup>Heidegger, Being and Time, p. 51.

<sup>2</sup>Martin Heidegger, Sein und Zeit (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 1979), p. 29. This is my translation of: "Was aber beide Termini ausdrücken, hat zunächst ganz und gar nichts zu tun mit dem, was man 'Erscheinung' oder gar 'bloße Erscheinung' nennt."

Appearance as the appearance "of something" says accordingly straightforwardly not: to show itself, but /sondern/ the announcing of itself of something that itself is not shown, by means of/through what is shown. Appearing is a not-showing-of-itself. . . . What in this manner is not shown, as in the case of appearing, can also never seem.

Heidegger then says immediately: "All indications, presentations, symptoms, and symbols have this above mentioned, basic, formal structure of appearing, even though they differ among themselves."<sup>2</sup> Symbol is, then, a form of appearing, i.e., a not showing itself by means of something that is shown. This is what Ricoeur names as the split reference of the metaphor/symbol, i.e., the "is"/"is not." In fact, Heidegger names this the "double signification" of appearing:

The expression "appearance" can have itself, again, a double signification: once as appearing in the sense of announcing itself as a not-showing-of-itself, and then the announcing itself--which in its showing of itself announces something which is a not-showing-of-itself.<sup>3</sup>

Heidegger adds, however, that this "is"/"is not" of appearing is a manner in which the phenomenon as a showing-of-itself can occur,

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 29. This is my translation of: "Erscheinung als Erscheinung 'von etwas' besagt demnach gerade nicht: sich selbst zeigen, sondern das Sichmelden, von etwas, das sich nicht zeigt, durch etwas, was sich zeigt. Erscheinen ist ein Sich-nicht-zeigen. . . . Was sich in der Weise nicht zeigt, wie das Erscheinende, kann auch nie scheinen."

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 29: This is my translation of: "Alle Indikationen, Darstellungen, Symptome und Symbole haben die angeführte formale Grundstruktur des Erscheinens, wenngleich sie unter sich noch verschieden sind."

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 30. This is my translation of: "Der Ausdruck 'Erscheinung' kann selber wieder ein Doppeltes bedeuten: einmal das Erscheinen im Sinne des Sichmeldens als Sich-nicht-zeigen und dann das Meldende selbst--das in seinem Sichzeigen etwas Sich-nicht-zeigendes anzeigt."

i.e., appearing can be a phenomenon if not all occasions of the phenomenon will be an appearing. Appearing is a manner in which the Being-of beings can "itself" be disclosed. Hence, the "is"/"is not" of the appearing can be the appearing of the "is"/"is not" of the Being-of beings. The metaphor/symbol announcing in its negation of the literal meaning something which it is not, can, at the same time, be understood as the disclosing of the Being-of beings as the "is"/"is not" of the copula ("is"). (The relational function in the sentence of the copula indicates a function of the copula as "referent" to "what is.") As will be discussed in Chapter III of this project, the "is" has the double signification of the ontological difference (of identity in/and difference). Being is always to be thought as the Being-of beings;<sup>1</sup> the "is" is both the sameness of a thing (Seiende) as well as the occasion for the announcing of the transcendent Being-of being (Sein des Seienden). (In the metaphor, the "is"/"is not" is announced in the tension between the literal naming of the metaphorical statement and the new semantic pertinence that arises precisely because it cannot otherwise be articulated; in addition, there is an announcing of the "ontological" "is" by means of the "is not" of the metaphor.)

Returning to Heidegger, however, when appearing, then, is a "mere appearing," it completely conceals the not-showing-of-itself in the appearing. This is the Kantian meaning of appearance:

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 6: "Sofern das Sein das Gefragte ausmacht, und Sein besagt Sein von Seiendem, ergibt sich als das Befragte der Seinsfrage das Seiende selbst."

According to him /Kant appearing is, first, the "object of empirical perception," that which in the appearing is shown. This showing-of-itself (Phenomenon in the correct original sense) is at the same time 'appearing' as the announcing emanation of something, which is concealed in its appearing.

We are now told that appearing can be "semblance;" where at the beginning of this discussion of phenomenon we were told that semblance and phenomenon were, in fact, something "completely" different from appearing.

The many ways in which showing occurs can be summarized as follows:

- 1) phenomenon: the showing-of-itself of manifesting; the announcing of the Being-of beings;
- 2) semblance: the "looking like . . ." of something;
- 3) the double signification of appearing: a) the announcing of that which does not show itself; and
- 4) b) the very showing itself of that which does not show itself; and
- 5) mere appearing: the showing that conceals.

Symbols are placed in the category of the double signification of appearing: as a function of an "is"/"is not."

Heidegger makes, further, a contribution to the clarification of the meaning of a sign in par. 17: "Reference and Signs." Reference is somehow constitutive for "worldhood." The "equipment"

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 30. This is my translation of: "Erscheinungen sind nach ihm /Kant einmal die 'Gegenstände der empirischen Anschauung', das, was sich in dieser zeigt. Dieses Sichzeigende (Phänomen im echten ursprünglichen Sinne) ist zugleich 'Erscheinung' als meldende Ausstrahlung von etwas, was sich in der Erscheinung verbirgt."



(Zeuge) of reference in its many meanings are "signs" (Zeichen). Signs have the "equipment characteristic" of showing. Showing is in turn a kind of referring. Referring is a kind of relating, but as referring it is a relating in terms of a "hanging together." As his example of the function of a sign, Heidegger uses the turn signal of an automobile. He suggests that the sign is not simply the "thingness" of the turn signal. It is also not the mere pointing/indicating of the turn signal. The sign involves an orientation within a world. It opens up the "hanging together" of world.

A sign is not a Thing which stands to another Thing in the relationship of indicating; it is rather an item of equipment which explicitly raises a totality of equipment into our circumspection so that together with it the worldly character of the ready-to-hand announces itself. . . . Signs always indicate primarily 'wherein' one lives, where one's concern dwells, what sort of involvement there is with something.

This is the meaning of the relating/relationship that occurs with the sign. Hence, relating is not something occurring between two "things" such that relating could then be thought of as a genus in which different species of relating might be subsumed, e.g., sign, symbol, expression, meaning. Relating is rather the hanging together of things that constitute a world. Such relating is disclosed by the referring of the sign.

The relation between sign and reference is threefold.  
1. Indicating, as a way whereby the "towards-which" of a serviceability can become concrete, is founded upon the equipment-structure as such, upon the 'in-order-to' (assignment). 2. The indicating which the sign does is an equipmental character of something ready-to-hand,

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<sup>1</sup>Heidegger, Being and Time, pp. 110-111.

and as such it belongs to a totality of equipment, to a context of assignments or references. 3. The sign is not only ready-to-hand with other equipment, but in its readiness-to-hand the environment becomes in each case explicitly accessible for circumspection. A sign is something optically ready-to-hand, which functions both as this definite equipment and as something indicative of /was . . . anzeigt/ the ontological structure of readiness-to-hand, of referential totalities, and of worldhood.

Regrettably, Heidegger does not pursue the distinction himself between a sign and a symbol.

Prior to our turning to Gadamer's discussion of the distinctions between allegory and symbol; sign, picture, and symbol, it must be pointed out that Heidegger's analysis of sign is not that of the sign of semiotics. Ricoeur presents the distinction between semiotics and semantics in the work of Emile Benveniste in one of the central essays of The Rule of Metaphor: First, he suggests that there are "two different kinds of linguistics which refer respectively to the sign and to the sentence, to language and to discourse."<sup>2</sup> ". . . Benveniste gave these two forms of linguistics the names 'semiotics' and 'semantics.' The sign is the unit of semiotics while the sentence is the unit of semantics."<sup>3</sup> Ricoeur then quotes Benveniste:

"Proper to every sign is that which distinguishes it from other signs. To be distinctive and to be meaningful are the same thing'. . . . Circumscribed in this manner, the order of the sign leaves out the order of discourse."

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid., pp. 113-114.

<sup>2</sup> Ricoeur, The Rule of Metaphor, p. 68.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 69.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., p. 69.

He proceeds, further:

In effect, semiotics has the generic or universal function and semantics the view to the singular: 'The sign's value is always and only generic and conceptual. Therefore, it has nothing to do with any particular or contingent signified, and anything individual is excluded; circumstantial factors are to be regarded as irrelevant'. . . . This characteristic proceeds from the very notion of 'instance of discourse'; it is language, as used and in action, which can take circumstances into account and have particular applications (emphasis added).

This is certainly not the conclusion of Heidegger's discussion of signs. The sign is described by Heidegger not nominally but functionally, i.e., it is a "real definition" in the sense of Leibniz quoted by Ricoeur.<sup>2</sup> Perhaps it is dangerous to try to combine "ontological" and "linguistic" analyses, but I believe careful attention to Heidegger's description of the sign will lead to the conclusion that his sign is Ricoeur's metaphor. I would argue this as follows:

As indicated above, it is the reference character of signs that interests Heidegger. This becomes clearer when we see that the subsequent paragraphs (beginning with 18: "Involvement and significance: the worldhood of the world") are concerned with the clarification of the concept of "world," and this whole discussion rests on "reference." World is not here understood as the mere objective correlate of a subject; nor is it to be understood as the empirical/positivistic referent of language. Dasein (the human

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 72.

<sup>2</sup>See above, p. 81.

as Being-there, i.e., placed/thrown into world) is described as "familiarily" in world.

That wherein /Worin/ Dasein understands itself beforehand in the mode of assigning itself is that for which /das Worauffin/ it has let entities be encountered beforehand. The "wherein" of an act of understanding which assigns or refers itself, is that for which one lets entities be encountered in the kind of Being that belongs to involvements; and this "wherein" is the phenomenon of the world. And the structure of that to which /worauffin/ Dasein assigns itself is what makes up the worldhood of the world.

That wherein Dasein already understands itself in this way is always something with which it is primordially familiar. This familiarity with the world does not necessarily require that the relations which are constitutive for the world as world should be theoretically transparent. However, the possibility of giving these relations an explicit ontologico-existential Interpretation, is grounded in this familiarity with the world; and this familiarity, in turn, is constitutive for Dasein, and goes to make up Dasein's understanding of Being. This possibility is one which can be seized upon explicitly in so far as Dasein has set itself the task of giving a primordial Interpretation for its own Being and for the possibilities of that Being, or indeed for the meaning of Being in general.

There appear to be two manners in which this "familiarity with the world" is announced: deficiencies and signs.

The characteristic of deficiency disclosing entities as "within the world" is initially described in paragraph 16: "How the Worldly Character of the Environment Announces itself in Entities Within-the-world." Here Heidegger suggests the functioning of "conspicuousness," "obtrusiveness," and "obstinacy" as three modes in which the failing of something forces the broader announcement of world as worldhood. These deficiencies are an announcing of references:

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<sup>1</sup>Heidegger, Being and Time, p. 119.



In conspicuousness, obtrusiveness, and obstinacy, that which is ready-to-hand loses its readiness-to-hand in a certain way. But in our dealings with what is ready-to-hand, this readiness-to-hand is itself understood, though not thematically. It does not vanish simply, but takes its farewell, as it were, in the conspicuousness of the unusable. Readiness-to-hand still shows itself, and it is precisely here that the worldly character of the ready-to-hand shows itself too.

The structure of the Being of what is ready-to-hand as equipment is determined by references or assignments. . . . When equipment cannot be used, this implies that the constitutive assignment of the "in-order-to" to a "towards-this" has been disturbed. The assignments themselves are not observed; they are rather 'there' when we concernfully submit ourselves to them. . . . But when an assignment has been disturbed--when something is unusable for some purpose--then the assignment becomes explicit. Even now, of course, it has not become explicit as an ontological structure; but it has become explicit ontically for the circumspection which comes up against the damaging of the tool. When an assignment to some particular "towards this" has been thus circumspectively aroused, we catch sight of the "towards-this" itself, and along with it everything connected with the work--the whole 'workshop'--as that wherein concern always dwells. The context of equipment is lit up, not as something never seen before, but as a totality constantly sighted beforehand in circumspection. With this totality, however, the world announces itself.

How is the familiarity with the world "lit up?" Through the "breaks:"

Being-in-the-world . . . amounts to a non-thematic circumspective absorption in references or assignments constitutive for the readiness-to-hand of a totality of equipment. Any concern is already as it is, because of some familiarity with the world. In this familiarity Dasein can lose itself in what it encounters within-the-world and be fascinated with it. What is it that Dasein is familiar with? Why can the worldly character of what is within-the-world be lit up? The presence-at-hand of entities is thrust to the fore by the possible breaks in that referential totality in which circumspection 'operates;' . . .

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid., pp. 104-105.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 119.

It is not simply the events of "deficiency" or the "breaks" that announce this referential totality. Again, it was to analyse the meaning of reference that Heidegger turns to a discussion of "sign." The example that Heidegger employs to suggest what a sign is is instructive here. He suggests that the meaning of sign is represented by the directional indicator of an automobile. Such a turn signal, as we saw above, is more than a mere thing; is more than a pointing; it is disclosive of a "hanging together of things" constituting a world. Perhaps we lose the significance of this example, because automobile turn signals are no longer novelties for us. The turn signal, in fact, which Heidegger uses as his example, however, would yet be "novel" were we still to encounter it: it is not merely a blinking light; it is an arrow that physically points. Such an arrow introduced an element of "surprise" into the context, so long as it was a "living metaphor," i.e., so long as it is not perceived only "literally" as a mere thing or a mere pointing, but as a disclosing of world (and perhaps only Heidegger has ever experienced the turn signal as a living metaphor).

Is this not what Jean Ladriere is suggesting to be the power and function of metaphor, however, as Ricoeur represents his thought?:

. . . what Jean Ladriere has termed the power of signifying, in order to stress its operative and dynamic character, is the intersection of two movements. One movement aims at determining more rigorously the conceptual traits of reality, while the other aims at making referents appear (that is, the entities to which

the appropriate predicative terms apply). This circularity between the abstractive phase and the concretizing phase makes this power of signifying an unending exercise, a 'continuing Odyssey.'

To which Ricoeur adds concerning the tension theory of metaphor:

On this groundwork the tension theory we applied to three different levels of metaphorical utterance can then be located: the tension between the terms of the statement, the tension between literal interpretation and metaphorical interpretation, and the tension in the reference between is and is not. If it is true that meaning, even in its simplest form, is in search of itself in the twofold direction of sense and reference, the metaphorical utterance only carries this semantic dynamism to its extreme. As I tried to say earlier drawing upon a poorer semantic theory, and as Jean Ladriere says much better on the basis of the more subtle theory we have just summarized, the metaphorical utterance functions in two referential fields at once. This duality explains how two levels of meaning are linked together in the symbol. The first meaning relates to a known field of reference, that is to the sphere of entities to which the predicates considered in their established meaning can be attached. The second meaning, the one that is to be made apparent, relates to a referential field for which there is not direct characterization, for which we consequently are unable to make identifying descriptions by means of appropriate predicates.<sup>2</sup>

Or as Ricoeur later says of metaphor:

Metaphor is living not only to the extent that it vivifies constituted language. Metaphor is living by virtue of the fact that it introduces the spark of imagination into a 'thinking more' at the conceptual level. This struggle to 'think more,' guided by the vivifying principle, is the 'soul' of interpretation.<sup>3</sup>

As will be discussed below, the tension theory of metaphor rests fundamentally on the "is"/"is not" of the copula. At the point

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<sup>1</sup>Ricoeur, The Rule of Metaphor, p. 298.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., pp. 298-299.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 303.



where he initially suggests the three applications of the idea of tensions (given above), Ricoeur writes of the copula:

These three applications of the idea of tension remain at the level of meaning immanent to the statement, even while the second involves a function external to the statement and the third already concerns the copula (but in its relational function). Our new application concerns reference itself and the claim of the metaphorical statement to reach reality in some particular manner. In the most radical terms possible, tension must be introduced into metaphorically affirmed being. . . . The copula is not only relational. It implies besides, by means of the predicative relationship, that what is is redescribed; it says that things really are this way. This is something we learned from Aristotle's treatise On Interpretation.

Are we now falling into a trap prepared for us by language, which, as Cassirer reminds us, does not go so far as to distinguish between two senses of the verb to be, the relational and the existential? This would be the case if we were to take the verb to be itself in its literal sense. But is there not a metaphorical sense of the verb to be itself, in which the same tension would be preserved that we found first between words . . . , then between two interpretations, . . . and finally between identity and difference?

In order to elucidate this tension deep within the logical force of the verb to be, we must expose an 'is not,' itself implied in the impossibility of the literal interpretation, yet present as a filigree in the metaphorical 'is' . . .

The question may be formulated in the following manner: does not the tension that affects the copula in its relational function also affect the copula in its existential function? This question, contains the key to the notion of metaphorical truth.<sup>1</sup>

Not only does Ricoeur's analysis of metaphor help us to see what Heidegger is attempting to describe as a sign (and Ricoeur's analysis is, in the opinion of this author, much more adequate than Heidegger's discussion of "difficiency" and sign "lighting up world"), but I suggest Ricoeur allows us access to the "ontological difference" from the "upper side" of language, i.e., as

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., pp. 247-248.

the "is"/"is not" of the metaphor (or as Ricoeur writes: ". . . metaphor is that place in discourse where . . . the identity and the difference do not melt together but confront each other."<sup>1</sup>

At another point he suggests:

Metaphor raises this reciprocity /of the inner and the outer/ from confusion and vagueness to bipolar tension. The intropathic fusion that precedes the conquest of subject-object duality is something different, as is the reconciliation that overcomes the opposition of subjective and objective.<sup>2</sup>),

where Heidegger provides us with access to the identity and difference of the copula from the "under side" of language, i.e., the Being-of beings. Heidegger, too, insists on maintaining the "tension" that allows the disclosure, by insisting that Being is always to be thought as the "Being-of beings:" "Sofern das Sein das Gefragte ausmacht, und Sein besagt Sein von Seiendem, ergibt sich als das Befragte der Seinsfrage das Seiende selbst."<sup>3</sup> "Sein ist jeweils das Sein eines Seienden."<sup>4</sup> The tension serves disclosure for both Ricoeur and Heidegger (the disclosure occurring by means of the identity and difference of the copula), but the copula is approached from different dimensions of language understood as event. I take this to be the suggestion of Ricoeur's question:

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid., p. 199. This is perhaps the most important sentence in this work.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 246.

<sup>3</sup> Heidegger, Sein und Zeit, p. 6.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., p. 9.

Would not a more subversive thought than Heidegger's be one that would support the universal suspicion of Western metaphysics with a more heightened suspicion directed at what in metaphor itself is left unsaid?<sup>1</sup>

Ricoeur's turn to the "existential" meaning of the copula announced in the metaphor (over against the mere "relational" meaning of the copula immanent within language) does, indeed, suggest that his work is more than a mere complement to Heidegger's, and does more than merely presuppose Heidegger's "anti-ontology." His work not only helps clarify the meaning of sign as opposed to the metaphor/symbol at the level of discourse, it clarifies, as well, the proper priority of poetic language for philosophical/speculative discourse.

Before turning to this contribution of Ricoeur's more directly, the distinctions made between allegory, sign, picture, and symbol in Gadamer's Wahrheit und Methode deserve attention. It will become clear that here, also, Ricoeur offers the more subtle and adequate understanding of symbol; and a more adequate manner of distinguishing between signs and symbols.

Although Gadamer insists that the similarities and differences between sign, picture, and symbol rest upon the phenomenon of reference, and he even footnotes at the beginning of the discussion Heidegger's analysis of reference and worldhood of the world in paragraphs 17 and 18 of Sein und Zeit (which I have just reviewed above),<sup>2</sup> his own analysis makes little if any use of Heidegger's discussion. We find no similarity outside of the appeal to

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<sup>1</sup>Ricoeur, The Rule of Metaphor, p. 284.

<sup>2</sup>See Gadamer, Wahrheit und Methode, p. 144 including n. 1.

reference as the distinguishing characteristic of signs, and Gadamer's presentation of reference is quite other than Heidegger's three meanings (see above, pp. 88-89 and Being and Time, pp. 113-114). Even Gadamer's use of "establishing" (Stiftung) to distinguish symbols and signs from pictures only minimally recalls Heidegger's analysis of "Zeichenstiftung" in these paragraphs. The differences between Gadamer and Heidegger here are ones perhaps more of emphasis than total dissimilarity.

Heidegger's analysis serves to indicate the function performed by the sign in conjunction with its referential character, i.e., in the opening up of world. It is in this sense that a sign is a "showing" or an "indicating." In a description of the function of a sign for "primitive man," Heidegger suggests that in this case:

. . . the sign coincides with that which is indicated.  
. . . This 'coinciding' is not an identification of things which have hitherto been isolated from each other: it consists rather in the fact that the sign has not<sup>1</sup> as yet become free from that of which it is a sign.

We could conclude, then, that ontically the sign is distinguished, for "non-primitive" man, from that which it indicates. This distinguishing, however, is certainly only ontical, and the ontological character of the sign in relationship to what it indicates is always and already a "belonging to," i.e., a "coinciding."

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<sup>1</sup>Heidegger, Being and Time, p. 113. Does this not suggest, if not deliberately reflect, the judgment of an "inferior developmental stage of consciousness" for "primitive man" similar to what was claimed in the "mythic school?" See below, pp. 167f.

The sign for Gadamer, on the other hand, serves, above all, the function of pointing/showing/referring away from itself to something else.

It /the sign/ is not permitted to indicate itself in that it stays by itself, because it should only make something present that isn't present in a way that the "not present" alone is what is meant.

Such a distinction between the sign and that which it indicates becomes the criterion for distinguishing a sign from a picture:

The distinction between a picture and a sign has . . . an ontological foundation. The picture does not disappear into its referring function, but participates in its own Being in that which it portrays.<sup>2</sup>

Such an ontic distinguishing between the sign and that to which it refers fails to include the ontological function of referring, serving as the main interest of Heidegger's discussion in paragraph 17: "Reference and Signs." This ontological character of reference fails in Gadamer's analysis, and becomes the reason for (or enables) his distinction between a picture and a sign in terms of an "ontological participation /or lack of participation/ in the Being of what is portrayed." This is, again, the unsatisfactory distinguishing between a sign/picture and what it points to/portrays in terms of "participation" in Being that we find in Paul

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<sup>1</sup>Gadamer, Wahrheit und Methode, p. 145. This is my translation of: "Es darf nicht so auf sich ziehen, daß es bei sich verweilen läßt, denn es soll nur etwas gegenwärtig machen, das nicht gegenwärtig ist, und so, daß das Nichtgegenwärtige allein das Gemeinte ist."

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 146. This is my translation of: "Der Unterschied von Bild und Zeichen hat also ein ontologisches Fundament. Das Bild geht nicht in seiner Verweisungsfunktion auf, sondern hat in seinem eigenen Sein teil an dem, was es abbildet."

Tillich's distinction between a sign and a symbol.<sup>1</sup> Do not both the sign and the picture ontologically "participate" in the Being of that to which they point? As with Tillich's definition, here there is an attempt to limit distinctions ontically without seeing the role of functioning. In order to function, the sign must be an event of referring, hence, as Heidegger's analysis shows, it must have an ontological relationship with that to which it points.

I have taken the analysis too quickly into Gadamer's without first indicating, as well, the distinction between his and Heidegger's discussion of Stiftung (establishing). The difference in analysis here is similar to that in their respective analyses of the sign and reference: it is a distinction of emphasis. Heidegger concentrates on the opening up of world that occurs in the establishing of a sign, while Gadamer emphasizes "conventionality" in the establishing of a sign. Conventionality becomes the key, according to Gadamer, for distinguishing between a symbol and a picture.

Under establishing we understand the origin of the sign, or the symbol, respectively. . . . The sign is here consummated/fulfilled by means of convention, and language names this originally giving act, through which<sup>2</sup> the convention is introduced, establishing Stiftung.

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<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 80.

<sup>2</sup> Gadamer, Wahrheit und Methode, p. 147. This is my translation of: "Unter Stiftung verstehen wir den Ursprung der Zeichennahme bzw. der Symbolfunktion. . . . Hier vollzieht sich die Zeichennahme durch Konvention, und die Sprache nennt den ursprungsgebenden Akt, durch den sie eingeführt werden, Stiftung."

The relationship between "establishing" and a symbol is determinative for the understanding of a symbol, according to Gadamer:

. . . the symbol has its origin in an establishing, which confers to the symbol at the beginning its representational character. For it is not the ingredients of its own Being that confers to the symbol its meaning, rather precisely an establishing, investiture, consecrating which gives meaning to that which in itself is meaningless.

The word "conventionality" does not occur in Heidegger's analysis. He does suggest that ". . . that which gets taken as a sign must first have become accessible in itself and been apprehended before the sign gets established,"<sup>2</sup> but he continues to ask ". . . how entities are discovered in this previous encountering . . . ,"<sup>3</sup> i.e., prior to their being taken as a sign. He insists that they are not to be understood "as bare Thinghood," i.e., they are not to be understood merely ontically. The emphasis, for Heidegger, is on the "how" of the sign, and not on the "what" (as is the concern of Gadamer). This distinction between focussing upon "how" in the understanding of the meaning of a sign or symbol rather than on the "what" distinguishes and determines the difference in emphasis between the analyses of Gadamer and Heidegger. I wish to suggest that Gadamer's analysis of sign, picture, and symbol is

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 148. This is my translation of: ". . . geht das Symbol auf Stiftung zurück, die ihm erst den Repräsentationscharakter verleiht. Denn es ist nicht sein eigener Seinsgehalt, der ihm seine Bedeutung verleiht, sondern eben eine Stiftung, Einsetzung, Weihung, die dem an sich Bedeutungslosen . . . Bedeutung gibt."

<sup>2</sup>Heidegger, Being and Time, p. 112.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 112.

ontologically inadequate, and that the distinctions available in linguistics (above all, in the work of Paul Ricoeur) are more helpful. These latter distinctions rest upon a concentration upon the functioning of a sign or a symbol, i.e., on the "how," and not on nominalistic (ontic) distinctions.

Gadamer first presents a discussion of symbol in his attempt to rescue allegory from the limiting confines of the romantics in the 19th century. What allegory and symbol had in common was that:

In both words there is something signified whose meaning does not consist in adhesion to its appearance, its look or its wording. Rather its meaning /Sinn/ consists of its reference /Bedeutung/ which goes outside of itself. Their similarity is<sup>1</sup> that something in this manner stands for something else.

What distinguished them was that the allegory was "tied" to dogmatism or mysticism for its meaning; where the symbol was "free." The ". . . concept and thingness of allegory is bound tightly with dogmatics. . . ." <sup>2</sup> In contrast, however:

Because the aesthetic consciousness<sup>3</sup>--over against the mythic-religious--knows freedom, the symbolism, that loans it everything, is also 'free.' . . . The perfect

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<sup>1</sup>Gadamer, Wahrheit und Methode, p. 68. This is my translation of: "In beiden Worten ist etwas bezeichnet, dessen Sinn nicht in seiner Erscheinungshaftigkeit, seinem Anblick bzw. seinem Wortlaut besteht, sondern in einer Bedeutung, die über es hinaus gelegen ist. Daß etwas derart für ein anderes steht, macht ihre Gemeinsamkeit aus."

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 75. This is my translation of: ". . . Begriff und Sache der Allegorie ist mit Dogmatik fest verknüpft. . . ."

<sup>3</sup>Gadamer describes "aesthetic consciousness" in this way: "Aesthetic experience is not only one kind of experience next to others, but it represents the essential kind of all experience. . . . In the experience of art there is present a fullness of meaning, which doesn't only belong to this particular content or object, but much more, it represents the whole meaning of life. An aesthetic experience always contains the experiencing of (encountering of) an endless whole. Precisely because it itself does



agreement between appearance and idea is now thought --with Schelling--in the concept of the symbol, while non-agreement was reserved for the allegory (or the mystical consciousness).

Gadamer asks if this is an adequate understanding of symbol and allegory, and suggests that the absolute distinction between the two (maintained in the 19th century) must be relativized.

The foundation of aesthetics in the 19th century was the freedom of the symbolizing activity of the spirit. But is this a supporting base? Is this symbolizing activity still today limited through the living on of a mystical-allegorical tradition? When one recognizes that, one must relativize again the contrast between symbol and allegory, which appears to be absolute given the prejudices of an experiencing aesthetic. Just as well, the distinction between an aesthetic and a mystical consciousness will hardly be able to count as absolute.

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not merge with others into the unity of an open encountering advance, but represents immediately the whole, is its meaning unlimited" (Ibid., p. 66). This is my translation of: "Das ästhetische Erlebnis ist nicht nur eine Art von Erlebnis neben anderen, sondern repräsentiert die Wesensart von Erlebnis überhaupt. . . . Im Erlebnis der Kunst ist eine Bedeutungsfülle gegenwärtig, die nicht diesem besonderen Inhalt oder Gegenstand allein zugehört, sondern die vielmehr das Sinnganze des Lebens vertritt. Ein ästhetisches Erlebnis enthält immer die Erfahrung eines unendlichen Ganzen. Gerade weil es sich nicht mit anderen zur Einheit eines offenen Erfahrungsfortgangs zusammenschließt, sondern das Ganze unmittelbar repräsentiert, ist seine Bedeutung eine unendliche." The careful reader notices here a play with very "loaded" words, i.e., Sinn and Bedeutung; Erlebnis and Erfahrung. These suggest the simultaneity in "experience" of subject and object claimed in Phenomenology, and the claim is made that in the experience of the work of art we have the "fullness" of this simultaneity including the "totality" of passive as well as active genesis of meaning.

<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 76. This is my translation of: "Da sich das ästhetische Bewußtsein--gegenüber dem mythisch-religiösen--frei weiß, ist auch die Symbolik, die es allem leiht, 'frei'. . . . Es ist die vollendete Übereinstimmung von Erscheinung und Idee, die nun--mit Schelling--im Symbolbegriff gedacht wird, während die Nichtübereinstimmung der Allegorie bzw. dem mythischen Bewußtsein vorbehalten sei."

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 76. This is my translation of: "Die Grundlage der Ästhetik des 19. Jahrhunderts war die Freiheit der symbolisierenden Tätigkeit des Gemüts. Aber ist das eine tragende Basis? Ist

The discussion, then, serves to the restitution of allegory in the current understanding of the hermeneutical event:

The new appreciation of allegory of which we are speaking, shows that in truth also in aesthetic consciousness a dogmatic moment maintains its importance. And when the distinction between mystical and aesthetic consciousness should not be absolute, isn't the concept of art itself questionable which, as we saw, is a creation of aesthetic consciousness?

It is clear that this initial discussion of symbol by Gadamer is meant to serve the restitution of allegory as soon as it is recognized that a "dogmatic moment" is justified, i.e., we cannot ever get free of our presuppositions (we can only attempt to clarify them) and that the distinction, therefore, between mystical and aesthetic consciousness (mystical and empirical consciousness, as well) is relative and not absolute. In the course of this discussion, however, two characteristics of symbol are articulated that occur again in Gadamer's more direct discussion of the distinctions between sign, picture and symbol. These two characteristics, already found here, are: 1) that the meaning of the symbol does not consist in what it literally says or presents, but that meaning

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diese symbolisierende Tätigkeit in Wahrheit nicht auch heute noch durch das Fortleben einer mythisch-allegorischen Tradition begrenzt? Wenn man das erkennt, muß sich aber der Gegensatz von Symbol und Allegorie wieder relativieren, der unter dem Vorurteil der Erlebnis-ästhetik ein absoluter schien; ebenso wird der Unterschied des ästhetischen Bewußtseins vom mythischen kaum als ein absoluter gelten können."

<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 77. This is my translation of: "Die neue Schätzung der Allegorie, von der wir sprachen, weist darauf hin, daß in Wahrheit auch im ästhetischen Bewußtsein ein dogmatisches Moment seine Geltung behauptet. Und wenn der Unterschied zwischen mythischem und ästhetischem Bewußtsein kein absoluter sein sollte, wird dann nicht der Begriff der Kunst selber fragwürdig, der, wie wir sahen, eine Schöpfung des ästhetischen Bewußtseins ist?"

rests outside of it, i.e., the symbol stands for (appears for) something else. 2) The symbol has an inner unity with that which it symbolizes ("Only because an inner unity between the symbol and what it symbolizes is implied, could this concept arise to become the universal foundation concept of aesthetics."<sup>1</sup>). Though these are conclusions of the 19th century, Gadamer, as will be seen, preserves them in his own definitions.

How does Gadamer distinguish between sign, picture, and symbol? His analysis is succinctly summarized as follows:

The essence of the picture stands in the middle equidistant from two extremes. These extremes of presentation /Darstellung/ are pure reference--the essence of the sign--and pure "appearing-for"--the essence of the symbol. The essence of the picture contains something from both.<sup>2</sup>

A sign for Gadamer, as we have already seen,<sup>3</sup> makes no reference to itself whatsoever, but points to something else that isn't

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 73. This is my translation of: "Nur weil im Symbolbegriff die innere Einheit von Symbol und Symbolisiertem impliziert ist, konnte dieser Begriff zum universalen ästhetischen Grundbegriff aufsteigen."

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 144. This is my translation of: "Das Wesen des Bildes steht gleichsam zwischen zwei Extremen in der Mitte. Diese Extreme von Darstellung sind das reine Verweisen--das Wesen des Zeichens--und das reine Vertreten--das Wesen des Symbols. Von beidem ist etwas im Wesen des Bildes da." It is to be noted that I have translated "Vertreten" here as "appearing-for." The English translation from Seabury Press uses representation. Later, however, the Seabury translation uses "to take the place of something" (p. 136). Given Gadamer's development of the meaning of a symbol, I find it best to stress the symbol's function of "taking the place of" by saying that it is an "appearing-for." The noun "Vertreter" means "to represent" in the sense of representing, for example, a firm, or to speak for someone. One "hears" this meaning in the German use of the verb, as well. Gadamer plays on this meaning when he says that symbols ". . . are mere representatives" ("... sind bloße Stellvertreter" (p. 147)). See, further, Gadamer's play on this word, p. 147.

<sup>3</sup>See above, p. 99.

present in the sign. In addition, we have already encountered Gadamer's distinction between a sign and a picture.<sup>1</sup> Where the sign disappears in its referring to something else, the picture, on the other hand, participates in its own Being in that which it portrays. This "ontological participation" in that to which it refers applies to the symbol, as well:

Such ontological participation belongs, to be sure, not only to the picture, but also to what we call a symbol. It applies to the symbol as for the picture, that it does not refer to something which is not at the same time present in itself.<sup>2</sup>

This characteristic of that which is represented somehow at the same time being present in the representing is what distinguishes, as well, the symbol from the sign:

The presentation function of the symbol is not that of a mere referring to a "not present" /Nichtgegenwärtiges/. More importantly, the symbol allows something to be thrown in bold relief as present, that fundamentally is always present.<sup>3</sup>

The symbol allows to be present what is fundamentally always present in that it represents ("appears-for") what is not present. This sounds like the definition of the sign again, but the symbol represents directly rather than indirectly:

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<sup>1</sup>See above, p. 99.

<sup>2</sup>Gadamer, Wahrheit und Methode, p. 146. This is my translation of: "Solche ontologische Teilhabe kommt nun freilich nicht nur dem Bilde zu, sondern auch dem, was wir ein Symbol nennen. Für das Symbol gilt wie für das Bild, daß es nicht auf etwas verweist, das nicht zugleich in ihm selber gegenwärtig ist."

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 146. This is my translation of: "Die Darstellungsfunktion des Symbols ist nicht die einer bloßen Verweisung auf Nichtgegenwärtiges. Das Symbol läßt vielmehr etwas als gegenwärtig hervortreten, was im Grunde stets gegenwärtig ist."

A symbol not only refers, but it presents in that it "appears-for." To "appear-for" means to let something be present that is not present. So the symbol "appears-for" in that it presents, that means, lets something be directly present. It is only because the symbol presents the presence of that which it "appears-for," that to it /the symbol/ itself is testified the veneration which belongs to that which it symbolizes.<sup>1</sup>

The distinctions Gadamer makes between a sign and a symbol are then clear. A sign refers only; it does not in any way participate in the reality to which it refers; it makes present what is not present. A symbol refers, i.e., it does make present what is not present, but the symbol is an "appearing-for," i.e., in the symbol itself appears what is being symbolized. This is because the symbol participates in the reality of that for which it "appears-for." There is a directness (Unmittelbarkeit) to the symbol which the sign does not possess.

Gadamer then proceeds to distinguish the symbol from the picture:

In both is itself present what they present. Yet a picture as such is not a symbol. This is not only because the symbols do not need to be graphic /Bildhaft/: they accomplish their representing /Vertretung, in the sense of speak for, or appear for/ function through their pure presence and showing of itself, but they say nothing from themselves about the symbolized. One must know them, just as one must know a sign, when one wishes to follow its referring. To that extent, they result in no increase of Being for the represented. Of course, it belongs to its Being to let itself be made present in the

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 146. This is my translation of: "Ein Symbol . . . verweist nicht nur, sondern es stellt dar, indem es vertritt. Vertreten aber heißt, etwas gegenwärtig sein lassen, was nicht anwesend ist. So vertritt das Symbol, indem es repräsentiert, das heißt, etwas unmittelbar gegenwärtig sein läßt. Nur weil das Symbol so die Gegenwart dessen darstellt, was es vertritt, wird ihm selbst die Verehrung bezeugt, die dem von ihm Symbolisierten zukommt."

manner of symbols. But in that way, that the symbols are there and are shown, results in no increased determination with regard to the contents of its own Being. It /Being/ is not there more, when they /the symbols/ are there. They /the symbols/ are mere representatives. . . . They /the symbols/ are representatives and receive their representative function of Being from that, which they are supposed to represent. The picture, on the other hand, represents, of course, also, but through itself, through the more of meaning /Bedeutung/ that it presents. But that means, that in it /the picture/ that which is represented--the 'archetype'--is more present, more exactly, thus, as it truly is.

This is the key for distinguishing signs and symbols from pictures for Gadamer. The picture receives its functional meaning out of itself, i.e., contributes to the meaning of what it is. The sign and the symbol do not. The sign and the symbol must be established /gestiftet werden/, the picture does not rest upon conventionality. The symbol, in itself meaningless, obtains its meaning through the conferring upon it of a conventional meaning. This we have already encountered above:<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 147. This is my translation of: "In ihnen beiden ist selbst gegenwärtig, was sie darstellen. Gleichwohl ist ein Bild als solches kein Symbol. Nicht nur, daß Symbole gar nicht bildhaft zu sein brauchen: sie vollziehen ihre Vertretungsfunktion durch ihr reines Dasein und Sichzeigen, aber sie sagen von sich aus nichts über das Symbolisierte aus. Man muß sie kennen, so wie man ein Zeichen kennen muß, wenn man seiner Verweisung folgen soll. Insofern bedeuten sie keinen Seinszuwachs für das Repräsentierte. Zwar gehört es zu seinem Sein, sich derart in Symbolen gegenwärtig sein zu lassen. Aber dadurch, daß die Symbole da sind und gezeigt werden, wird nicht sein eigenes Sein inhaltlich fortbestimmt. Es ist nicht mehr da, wenn sie da sind. Sie sind bloße Stellvertreter. . . . Sie sind Repräsentaten und empfangen ihre representative Seinsfunktion von dem her, was sie repräsentieren sollen. Das Bild dagegen repräsentiert zwar auch, aber durch sich selbst, durch das Mehr an Bedeutung, das es darbringt. Das aber bedeutet, daß in ihm das Repräsentierte--das 'Urbild'--mehr da ist, eigentlicher, so, wie es wahrhaft ist."

<sup>2</sup>See above, pp. 100-101.

. . . the symbol has its origin in an establishing /Stiftung/, which confers to the symbol at the beginning its representational character. For it is not the ingredients of its own Being that confers to the symbol its meaning, rather precisely an establishing, investiture, consecrating which<sup>1</sup> gives meaning to that which in itself is meaningless.

Hence, sign, symbol and picture are thus defined by Gadamer:

- a) Sign: a pure referring to something not present which must be established, i.e., through conventionality it acquires its referential meaning;
- b) Symbol: participates itself in the reality of that which it "appears-for;" not only refers, but makes present what is already present in the symbol something that is not present; the meaning of a particular symbol, like that of a sign, must be established, i.e., through conventionality it acquires its meaning; the symbol in itself, however, contributes nothing to the Being of that for which it "appears," i.e., it in itself contributes nothing to an increase of meaning--there is nothing "more" to the meaning of what is "appeared-for" contributed by the symbol itself;
- c) Picture: participates itself in the reality of that which it presents; its meaning is not to be reduced to a conventionality; it itself contributes to an ever increasing meaning of that which it presents.

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<sup>1</sup>Gadamer, Wahrheit und Methode, p. 148. German original is given above, p. 101, n. 1.

Gadamer concludes: "Hence, the picture stands in fact in the middle between a sign and a symbol. Its presenting is neither a pure representing nor a pure 'appearing-for.'"<sup>1</sup>

It is the position of this author that such a schematic definition is, in fact, not adequate. It is not simply a problem, as suggested above,<sup>2</sup> of the meaning of "participation." The problem is one of defining in terms of "naming," i.e., "essence," what can only be distinguished in terms of function. This is, again, the important distinction between the nominal and the real definition pointed out by Ricoeur: "The nominal definition allows us to identify something; the real definition shows how it is brought about."<sup>3</sup>

If the "essence" of something is that which it "is," then all "things" are fundamentally the same (otherwise we must speak of essence as some form of Platonic Idealism: outside of history, i.e., non-changing and eternal). If meaning is defined as "sameness,"<sup>4</sup> then the meaning of the essence of something is, in fact, the meaning of the Being-of beings, i.e., the identify and difference of the ontological difference announced by the copula. Hence, things differ not in essence, but in function, i.e., "how"

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 147. This is my translation of: "So steht das Bild in der Tat in der Mitte zwischen dem Zeichen und dem Symbol. Sein Darstellen ist weder ein reines Verweisen noch ein reines Vertreten."

<sup>2</sup>See above, pp. 99-100.

<sup>3</sup>Ricoeur, The Rule of Metaphor, p. 65.

<sup>4</sup>See Ibid., pp. 70, 130, and 301.



they dis-close. The "essence" of things, then, means that there is an ontological participation between all things. To seek to define/identify sign, symbol and picture as a difference of ontological participation in that which they present, is meaningless.

I suggest that we are helped more by turning to the observations of hermeneutic phenomenology informed by linguistics in the work of Paul Ricoeur when it comes to pointing out distinctions between signs and symbols. I wish to define the following position consisting of three claims:

- 1) a sign is a function of naming, arising by means of conventionality and serving to reduce the polysemic character of words. It is, hence, generic and conceptual.
- 2) a metaphor presupposes the naming of signs, but as a consequence of the "twist," resulting from split reference, creates polysemy by disclosing new meaning precisely by maintaining a tension between the literal meaning of the sign and the non-literal application of the metaphor which not only surprises, but creates.
- 3) a symbol is a metaphor, but, where the metaphor functions at the level of the sentence in discourse (living speech), the symbol functions, in addition, always within a greater narrative, i.e., a myth. A symbol functions, then, within the horizon of a myth.

These introductory comments, suggesting the lack of an adequate understanding of symbol, indicate that the remainder of this Chapter requires the following structure:

- 1) the presentation of Paul Ricoeur's tension theory of metaphor, in order that we might obtain a more adequate understanding of the "how" of metaphor;
- 2) a brief pursual of the idea of symbol as a metaphor functioning within the horizon of a myth with specific attention to be paid to religious symbols;
- 3) an all too cryptic presentation of a "vitalistic" understanding of myth over against the limited understanding of myth arising in the "mythic school" in Germany at the end of the 18th century which continues to shape, to a very broad extent, the understanding of myth in our century.

#### Paul Ricoeur's Tension Theory of Metaphor

Much of this theory has already been discussed and presented in the analysis of sign and symbol thus far, but a more systematic description of metaphor (and particularly Ricoeur's understanding of metaphor) is still necessary. I wish to suggest that metaphor be approached as a "general case" with symbol being understood as a "particular case" of metaphor. Of course, metaphor itself is a particular case of the event of meaning that occurs in language generally. This is a particularly important claim of Ricoeur's, i.e., metaphor is not an exception it is an exemplar.

Speaking of language as a lexical system, Ricoeur writes:

We need a lexical system that is economical, flexible, and sensitive to context, in order to express the spectrum of human experience. It is the task of

contexts to shift the variations of appropriate meanings and, with the help of polysemic words, to devise discourse that is seen as relatively univocal. . . .

The polysemic character of words generally suggests the "open" character of all linguistic events:

The vague character of the word, the indecision about its frontiers, the combined action of polysemy, which disseminates the meaning of the word, and of synonymy, which discriminates the polysemy, and above all the cumulative power of the word, which allows it to acquire a new meaning without losing its previous meanings--all these traits indicate that the vocabulary of a language is 'an unstable structure in which individual words can acquire and lose meanings with the utmost ease.' This renders meaning 'of all linguistic elements . . . /the one which<sup>2</sup> is probably the least resistant to change.'

Hence, it is not enough to say that the enigmatic character of metaphor suggests the open horizon of language, for all language shares in the breaking open of horizon by its polysemic character:<sup>3</sup>

. . . what allows changes of meaning is the nature of the lexical system, namely the 'vague' character of meaning, the indeterminacy of semantic boundaries, and, above all, the cumulative character proper to the meaning of words. . . . This cumulative capability is essential for understanding metaphor, in that it possesses the character of double or stereoscopic vision. . . . More than anything else, this cumulative character of the word opens language to innovation. . . . Let us now establish just one key characteristic: polysemy,

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<sup>1</sup>Ricoeur, The Rule of Metaphor, p. 115.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 127.

<sup>3</sup>See Ibid., pp. 113f. for a discussion of polysemy, especially p. 127: ". . . polysemy is simply the possibility of adding a new meaning to the previous acceptations of the word without having these former meanings disappear. Thus the open structure of the word, its elasticity, its fluidity, already allude to the phenomenon of change of meaning."

the descriptive fact par excellence,<sup>1</sup> makes change of meaning possible; and within polysemy, it is the phenomenon of accumulation of meaning that does this. Polysemy attests to the quality of openness in the texture of the word: a word is that which has several meanings and can acquire more. Thus it is a descriptive trait of meaning that leads into the theory of change of meaning--namely, that there can be more than one sense for a name and more than one name for one sense (partial emphasis added).<sup>2</sup>

Though metaphor shares in the polysemic character of all language, its power rests not on its enigmatic character alone (i.e., that the metaphor as a word has many meanings and that the word's application as a metaphor involves "surprise"), we are often told by Ricoeur,<sup>3</sup> but that its "double" or "stereoscopic vision" results

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<sup>1</sup>Just as definition in Ricoeur's work has shifted from naming to function, so explanation shifts from causality to description (see Ibid., p. 116): ". . . while changes of meaning are always innovations, the foundation of the explication of innovations lies in the descriptive point of view."

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., pp. 116-117. Polysemy is, of course, the word's ability to have more than one sense. Metonymy is the substitution ability of words, i.e., that there can be more than one name for one sense. The question becomes: is metaphor the same as metonymy? Ricoeur responds (Ibid., pp. 132-3): "Metaphor prevails over metonymy not because contiguity is less fruitful a relationship than resemblance, or again because metonymic relationships are external and given in reality whereas metaphorical equivalences are created by the imagination, but because metaphorical equivalences set predicative operations in motion that metonymy ignores" (emphasis added). This indicates the importance of Ricoeur's suggestion that metaphor is not a function of naming but of discourse. Later he concludes concerning metonymy and metaphor: "Metonymy--one name for another name--remains a semiotic process, perhaps even the substitutive phenomenon par excellence in the realm of signs. Metaphor--unusual attribution--is a semantic process, in the sense of Benveniste, perhaps even the genetic phenomenon par excellence in the realm of the instance of discourse" (Ibid., p. 198).

<sup>3</sup>See Ibid., pp. 190, 194, 214, and 237. For example, p. 214: "Metaphorical meaning . . . is not the enigma itself, the semantic clash pure and simple, but the solution of the enigma, the inauguration of the new semantic pertinence."

in a resolution of the enigma (in a way, yet to be discussed, that it depends upon an "extra-linguistic" ontological reference for the success of the resolution).

The power of metaphors (including symbols and the extended metaphorical narratives, i.e., myths) is that they speak of what cannot be objectively (in the positivist sense) expressed in language, i.e., they refer to dimensions of experience and understanding that cannot be literally expressed. Following Ricoeur, it is necessary for the event of meaning in metaphor (symbol and myth) to speak of both an "inner-" and "extra-linguistic" character to their functioning process in which a new semantic (or narrative) pertinence arises out of a semantic (or narrative) impertinence which breaks open (even explodes) the horizon of objectivity to world. Though different in terms of an exaltation of inter-relatedness and complexity, I will claim for symbol and myth what Ricoeur claims for metaphor:

Two claims will be made: (a) that metaphor is more than a figure of style, but contains semantic innovation; (b) that metaphor includes a denotative or referential dimension, i.e., the power of redefining reality.

This "redefining of reality," however, is more than a nominalistic process of "ontological vehemence" (i.e., a naive descriptive ontological belief as a metalinguistics or metapoetics) contained "within" language. Speaking of the referential power of metaphor, Ricoeur writes:

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<sup>1</sup>Ricoeur, Semeia 4, p. 75.

In the metaphorical discourse of poetry referential power is linked to the eclipse of ordinary reference; the creation of heuristical fiction is the road to re-description; and reality brought to language unites manifestation and creation.

Hence, "Metaphorical meaning . . . is not the enigma itself, the semantic clash pure and simple, but the solution of the enigma, the inauguration of the new semantic pertinence."<sup>2</sup> Metaphor is, then, a particular case of the event of meaning that occurs in language generally (perhaps "the genetic phenomenon par excellence in the realm of the instance of discourse"<sup>3</sup>).

Ricoeur's tension theory of metaphor points beyond the purely rhetorical treatment of metaphor (which concludes ". . . that metaphor teaches or says nothing new and serves only to ornament language. . . ."; a conclusion reached by the tradition of rhetoric because of ". . . the initial decision to treat metaphor as an unusual way of naming things"<sup>4</sup>) to an understanding of the metaphorical statement facilitating the production of metaphorical meaning. "The working hypothesis underlying the notion of metaphorical statement is that the semantics of discourse is not reducible to the semiotics of lexical entities."<sup>5</sup> Ricoeur maintains that ". . . metaphor invokes a 'tension' theory more than a theory

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<sup>1</sup>Ricoeur, The Rule of Metaphor, p. 239.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 214.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 198.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 47.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. 66.

of substitution."<sup>1</sup> What is this tension theory? The "how" of metaphor (the real definition describing how the metaphor works) will show that its intention is different from other events of meaning in language, but not as exception, rather as exemplar (or rather the exception that confirms the "rule"). Referring to the work of I.A. Richards, Ricoeur writes:

. . . contrary to Aristotle's well-known saying that the mastery of metaphor is a gift of genius and cannot be taught, language is 'vitaly metaphorical,' as Shelly saw ver well. If to 'metaphorize well' is to possess mastery of resemblances, then without this power we would be unable to grasp any hitherto unknown relations between things. Therefore, far from being a divergence from the ordinary operation of language, it is 'the omnipresent principle of all its free action'. It does not represent some additional power, but the constitutive form of language. . . . /M/etaphor<sup>2</sup>, penetrates to the very depths of verbal interaction.

In his own words Ricoeur writes:

The dictionary contains no metaphors; they exist only in discourse. For this reason, metaphorical attribution is superior to every other use of language in showing what 'living speech' really is; it is an 'instance of discourse' par excellence.<sup>3</sup>

This investigation of Ricoeur's tension theory of metaphor proceeds on the basis of clarifying the distinctions between semiotics and semantics. If metaphor is "an instance of discourse par excellence," then our understanding of the "how" of metaphor (hence, of symbol) depends upon an understanding of the meaning of discourse.

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 48.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 80. If Ricoeur does not agree with I.A. Richards that rhetoric is the discipline on which metaphor depends (p. 80), he does appreciate the "double" or "stereoscopic" vision, understood as "tenor" and "vehicle" (p. 80), in Richard's work dependent upon a contextual theory of meaning (p. 77).

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 97.

### Two Kinds of Linguistics

Ricoeur's linguistic theory of metaphor is deeply dependent upon the distinction between two kinds of linguistics made by Emile Benveniste. As stated above,<sup>1</sup> there is a linguistics of semiotics concerned with the sign as the basic unit of meaning, and there is a linguistics of semantics/discourse which claims that the sentence is the occasion for meaning.<sup>2</sup>

Semiotics maintains that meaning is immanent to language as a result of the naming or identifying role of the sign.

'Proper to every sign is that which distinguishes it from other signs. To be distinctive and to be meaningful are the same thing'. . . Circumscribed in this manner, the order of the sign leaves out the order of discourse.<sup>3</sup>

Ricoeur does not deny that signs (or lexical entities) are important to a semantics of discourse,<sup>4</sup> but, again, ". . . the semantics of discourse is not reducible to the semiotics of lexical entities."<sup>5</sup> The identification function of signs is only one of the six distinctive traits of discourse identified by Ricoeur. Quoting Benveniste he writes:

In effect, semiotics has the generic or universal function and semantics the view to the singular: 'The sign's value is always and only generic and conceptual. Therefore, it has nothing to do with any particular or contingent signified, and anything individual is excluded;

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<sup>1</sup> See above, pp. 89-90.

<sup>2</sup> See Ricoeur, The Rule of Metaphor, pp. 68f.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 69.

<sup>4</sup> See Ibid., p. 66.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., p. 66.



circumstantial factors are to be regarded as irrelevant' ('La Forme' 35). This characteristic proceeds from the very notion of 'instance of discourse'; it is language, as used and in action, which can take circumstances into account and have particular applications. Benveniste goes further: 'The sentence, the expression that belongs to semantics, is only concerned with the particular' (ibid. 36).

This distinction between universal (the identifying function) and particular (the predicative function)--a distinction indicating the difference between semiotics and semantics--is the second of the six distinctive pairs of traits characterizing discourse.

The first of these pairs of traits is that discourse is understood as event and meaning, i.e., a linguistic system has only a "virtual" not an "actual" existence.<sup>2</sup> Only in discourse does a linguistic system become actual. As such, discourse is an "event." Yet this event is not simply transitory; ". . . it can be identified and reidentified as 'the same'; thus, meaning is introduced, in its broadest sense, at the same time as the possibility of identifying a given unit of discourse."<sup>3</sup>

The third trait pair of discourse is that of locution and illocution. Locution is understood as the "act of saying." Illocution is the "force" of saying.

What is one doing, in effect, when one speaks? One is doing several things at several levels. There is, first of all, the act of saying or the locutionary act. This is what we are doing when we bring the predicative and identifying functions together. But the same act of

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 72.

<sup>2</sup>This distinction, as well, comes from Benveniste. See Ibid., pp. 70 and 129-130.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 70.

combining the action of 'closing' with the subject 'door' can be accomplished as a statement, command or wish, with regret, etc. These diverse modalities of the same propositional content have nothing to do with the propositional act itself, but with its 'force,' namely, what one does in saying (hence the prefix illocution). In saying, I make a promise, or give an order, or submit a statement.

The fourth pair is the distinction between sense and reference from Gottlob Frege.

This trait, more than others perhaps, marks the fundamental difference between semantics and semiotics. Semiotics is aware only of the intra-linguistic relationships, whereas semantics takes up the relationship between the sign and the things denoted--that is, ultimately, the relationship between language and world.<sup>2</sup>

Ricoeur adds: "It is really only the sentence that makes this distinction possible. Only at the level of the sentence, taken as a whole, can what is said be distinguished from that of which one speaks."<sup>3</sup> A sentence may have sense (Sinn) internally, but meaning (Bedeutung) only if it "meets up" (is fulfilled) in a referent. Ricoeur's example is that "evening star" and "morning star" have the same reference, but not the same sense.<sup>4</sup>

. . . the transcendence-function of the intended captures perfectly the meaning of the Fregean concept of reference. At the same time, Husserl's phenomenological analysis based on the concept of intentionality is completely justified: language is intentional par excellence; it aims beyond itself.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 73.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 74.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 74.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 217.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. 74.

The fifth pair differentiates between a reference to reality and a reference to the speaker.

To the extent that discourse refers to a situation, to an experience, to reality, to the world, in sum to the extra-linguistic, it also refers to its own speaker by means of procedures that belong essentially to discourse and not to language.<sup>1</sup>

There are several levels to this "auto-referential" character of discourse: personal pronouns, the tenses of verbs

(. . . they are anchored in the present. For the present, like the personal pronoun, is auto-designative. The present is the very moment at which the discourse is being uttered. This is the present of discourse. By means of the present discourse itself qualifies itself temporally.<sup>2</sup>),

and the demonstratives. "In so far as it is auto-referential, discourse establishes an absolute this-here-now."<sup>3</sup>

The sixth, and last, pair of traits is concerned with two "spheres," that of the paradigmatic and that of the syntagmatic (the syntagmatic is "the specific formation in which the meaning of the sentence is achieved"). Paradigmatic relations "concern the signs in the system."

The reason why this trait is so important for our investigation is that, if the paradigm is semiotic and the syntagma semantic, then substitution, a paradigmatic law, belongs on the side of semiology. Consequently, it will be necessary to say that metaphor as treated in discourse--the metaphorical statement--is a sort of syntagma. It follows that the metaphorical process can no longer be put on the paradigmatic side and the metonymic process on the syntagmatic side /Metaphor is, then,

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid., p. 75.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 75.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 75. It is possible to understand this as the "absolute now" of the ego in Husserl's Phenomenology.

syntagmatic; metonymy is paradigmatic.<sup>7</sup> . . . it is as syntagma that the metaphorical statement must be considered if it is true that the meaning-effect results from<sup>1</sup> a certain interaction of the words within the sentence.

It is remembered that till now the analysis has been a "descriptive" explanation of discourse. To assert these six traits of discourse is one thing; to make a truth claim is something else again. Ricoeur wishes to do the latter:

. . . we must go beyond the simple opposition between the semiotic and the semantic viewpoint, and clearly subordinate the former to the latter. Not only are the two planes of the sign and of discourse distinct, but the first is an abstraction of the second; in the last analysis, the sign owes its very meaning as sign to its usage in discourse.<sup>2</sup>

Semiotics is subordinate to semantics, but as Ricoeur reminds us: ". . . semantics can only allege the relation of language to reality but cannot think this relation as such."<sup>3</sup> The truth claim of semantics/discourse, the extra-linguistic reality of semantics/discourse, is concerned with our "primordial belonging to a world:"

Poetic discourse brings to language a pre-objective world in which we find ourselves already rooted, but in which we also project our innermost possibilities. We must thus 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, . . . which at once precedes us and receives the imprint of our works.<sup>4</sup>

The path to "reality" is not analogy, but metaphorical utterance:<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid., p. 76. There is a theological consequence here, as well. The task is not to seek the paradigm, it is to seek the movement and what enables it.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 217.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 303.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., p. 306.

<sup>5</sup> See Ibid., pp. 288 and 294.

. . . the 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 of metaphorical utterance brings being as actuality and as potentiality into play.

The key to ontological reference for semantics is what Ricoeur names the "split reference" of metaphor. What is split reference?

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 307. At this point reference must be made to the work of Eberhard Jüngel, Director of the "Besonderer Arbeitsbereich Hermeneutik" of the protestant faculty at the university in Tübingen, who understands metaphor (particularly Aristotle's "metaphor of the fourth kind," analogy) to be central to theological reflection and articulation. It is precisely at the point of his discussion of metaphor and analogy, however, that the naivete of an "ontological vehemence," lacking speculative discourse/philosophical reflection to clarify the grounding of his metaphor/analogy, is betrayed. In fact, he argues that philosophy and theology do not belong in the same conversation: "Evangelische Theologie unterscheidet sich also von philosophischer Theologie dadurch, daß sie nicht voraussetzungslos sein will, sondern in ihrem Ansatz als evangelische Theologie bereits bestimmte Entscheidungen /See the material from Ricoeur concerning "decision" at the end of this footnote./ impliziert. Ein Gespräch mit der philosophischen Theologie, das wohl nur als Streitgespräch denkbar ist, aber auch eine Auseinandersetzung mit dem Atheismus hat dementsprechend mit der Darlegung dieser hermeneutischen Entscheidungen evangelischer Theologie anzufangen. So allein verfährt sie wissenschaftlich sauber. So allein ist sie vor sich selber ehrlich.

Evangelische Theologie expliziert ihre Grundentscheidungen aber sofort als solche des Denkens, also nicht nur als solche des Glaubens. Es ist ein Unterschied, ob der Glaube glaubt oder ob das Denken dies auch versteht. Indem das Denken sich auf den Glauben einläßt, wird es aber auch verstehen, daß Gott ohne Glauben nicht gedacht werden kann. Eben davon geht evangelische Theologie aus. Eberhard Jüngel, Gott als Geheimnis der Welt: Zur Begründung der Theologie des Gekreuzigten im Streit zwischen Theismus und Atheismus, 3. durchgesehene Auflage (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1978), pp. 205-6 (partial emphasis added). (The task is, of course, not one of proceeding without presuppositions, but of clarification and defense of presuppositions /See the quote, above, from Gadamer, p. 22 marked as note 1./.) Jüngel, as indicated, wishes to speak analogically about the divine: "Ohne Analogie käme es zu keiner verantwortlichen Rede von Gott" (Gott als Geheimnis, p. 384). He had said the same earlier in his essay "Metaphorische Wahrheit. Erwägungen zur theologischen Relevanz der Metapher

als Beitrag zur Hermeneutik einer narrativen Theologie" in Paul Ricoeur and Eberhard Jüngel, Metapher: Zur Hermeneutik religiöser Sprache (München: Chr. Kaiser Verlag, 1974), p. 110: "Die Sprache des Glaubens ist durch und durch metaphorisch." This switch of terminology from metaphor to analogy is, however, for Jüngel no change of meaning, for he understands metaphor primarily, if not exclusively, in terms of analogy following Aristotle's division in the Poetics (Metapher, p. 88). To be sure, this is not the metaphorical process of Ricoeur's tension theory of metaphorical truth being referred to here by Jüngel. Hence, he explicitly denies the applicability of Heidegger's statement concerning analogy in Schellings Abhandlung über das Wesen der menschlichen Freiheit: "Von der so--als Analogie des Advent--verstandenen analogie fidei gilt folglich nicht, was M. Heidegger (Schellings Abhandlung über das Wesen der menschlichen Freiheit /1809/, 1971, 233) im Blick auf die Analogie des Seienden bemerkt: 'Das Seiende "entspricht", leistet in dem, was und wie es ist, Folge, fügt sich unter die beherrschende Ursache als Verursachtes . . . Die Analogie gehört zur Metaphysik, und zwar in dem doppelten Sinne:

1. daß das Seiende selbst dem höchsten Seienden 'entspricht,'
2. daß auf Entsprechungen hin, Ähnlichkeiten, Allgemeinheiten gedacht und erklärt wird.

Wo dagegen vom Seyn selbst aus gedacht wird, hat die Analogie keinen Anhalt mehr.' Wo von Gott her gedacht wird, entsteht demgegenüber ein ganz neues Verständnis von Analogie, das den Begriff des 'höchsten Seienden' liquidiert" (Gott als Geheimnis, p. 390, n. 12, partial emphasis added). (See my comments in the Introduction concerning Heidegger's analysis of analogy.) What is this "new understanding of analogy" that one finds when one thinks "from God?" Jüngel maintains that God and the world/humanity are infinitely separated: "Es wird . . . durch diese Rede von Gott . . . der unendliche Unterschied zwischen Gott selbst und dem von Gott redenden Menschen, der unendliche Unterschied mithin zwischen Gott selbst und der menschlichen (anthropomorphen) Rede von Gott nicht verschwiegen, verdeckt oder übersprungen, sondern gerade mit zur Sprache gebracht" (Ibid., p. 361, n. 15). Jüngel has, again, made this assertion earlier: "Zunächst ist davon auszugehen, daß für den christlichen Glauben nur dann von Gott geredet wird, wenn dabei eine fundamentale Differenz von Gott und Welt mitgesagt ist" (Metapher, p. 111). In order to speak "analogically" about the one "place" where God, in his infinite difference, comes to the world (this is, of course, a "coming to language"), i.e., in the crucified and risen Christ, he manipulates the structural form of analogy (normally expressed--a:b::c:d): "Der zur Welt kommende Gott (x --> a) bedient sich des Selbstverständlichen dieser Welt so, daß er sich als der ihm gegenüber Selbstverständlichere erweist. . . . Diese Selbstverständlichkeit erscheint aber in einem völlig neuen Licht, wenn sie als Gleichnis für die sich findende lassende Gottesherrschaft zur Sprache kommt. Denn dann rückt ja auch der Schatz im Acker in die Reihe dessen ein, demgegenüber der

zu findende beziehungsweise gefundene Gott der Mehrwert ist. Das kann aber wiederum nur erfahren werden, wenn Gott die weltliche Selbstverständlichkeit (b:c) sozusagen erobert und sich in ihr und mit ihrer Hilfe als der Selbstverständlichere durchsetzt, wenn also von b:c so erzählt wird, daß es dem Verhältnis Gottes zur Welt ( $x \rightarrow a$ ) entspricht und Gott eben dadurch aufhört, unbekannt (x) zu sein. Im Ereignis der Analogie  $x \rightarrow a = b:c$  /This is either no analogy or a non sequitur./ hört Gott gerade auf, x zu sein. Er stellt sich vor, indem er ankommt. Und dieses sein Ankommen gehört selbst zu seinem Sein, das er ankommend offenbart" (Gott als Geheimnis, p. 390). That God comes to the world through the linguistic event of the crucified and risen Christ is, again, as "revelation," the presupposition of theology for Jüngel. It is not the task of theology to question or "verify" this claim: "Die formale Struktur der Analogie, die als hermeneutische Ermöglichung und als ontologische Freigabe Gott entsprechende Rede von Gott in Frage kommt, läßt sich nicht aus allgemeinen Prinzipien--wie etwa dem Widerspruchsprinzip--herleiten, sondern nur aufgrund einer Analyse schon geschehener Rede von Gott freilegen. Dabei ist der Anspruch solcher Rede, Gott zu entsprechen, im Sinne einer Hypothese vorauszusetzen. Die Verifikation des Anspruches selbst kann ohnehin nicht Aufgabe wissenschaftlicher Theologie sein. Wohl aber ist es Aufgabe der Theologie, die Bedingungen zu nennen, unter denen ein solcher Anspruch überhaupt nur sinnvoll sein kann. . . . Methodisch ist also aus der materialen Eigenart christlicher Rede von Gott das formale Strukturgesetz freizulegen, dem nach dem Anspruch dieser Rede alle Gott entsprechende Rede zu genügen hat" (Ibid., pp. 390-391, emphasis added). Analogy becomes the justification for theology's avoidance of verification claims even when what it says violates the law of contradiction. In such a claim Jüngel is more than willing to positively quote Heidegger: "Heidegger selbst weiß jedenfalls sehr genau, daß für den christlichen Glauben /Are we really to let Heidegger decide for us what the Christian faith is?/ das 'primär . . . Offenbare und als Offenbarung den Glauben allererst zeitigende Seiende . . . Christus, der gekreuzigte Gott', ist (Phänomenologie und Theologie, 1970, 18)" (Ibid., p. 284 in the footnote n. 45 beginning on p. 283; Jüngel likes this phrase so well from Heidegger that he quotes it again on p. 409. It is very revealing for Jüngel's work that he quotes positively this dogmatic principle from Heidegger's essay "Phänomenologie und Theologie," and then rejects Heidegger's judgment on the use of analogy in speaking of Sein.). This "presupposition" of theology, that is free from examination on the basis of the law of contradiction and not in need of "verification," is God's becoming flesh in Jesus Christ. See Ibid., pp. 393-394, but this claim is most clearly stated on p. 407: ". . . was der christliche Glaube als wahr behauptet: daß Gott als der Mensch Jesus unter Menschen war. Diese im Glauben bekannte einmalige Identität von Gott und Mensch schließt zwar in ihrer Einmaligkeit aus, daß man von Gott beliebig ebenso wie von Menschen reden darf, wehrt sich aber zugleich gegen das

Verbot, von Gott als einem--nämlich diesem bestimmten--Menschen zu reden" (Ibid., p. 394). Jesus, the man, is the "parable of God." The parables of Jesus are not an adequate ground for, but are the hermeneutical preparation for, the kerygmatic speaking of Jesus as the Son of God (Ibid., p. 400). They, in turn, however, presuppose the dissimilarity between God's reign and the world (See Ibid., pp. 395 and 406). Despite this dissimilarity, Jüngel claims (certainly intentionally calling on the overtones that this phrase suggests in Heidegger's Being and Time) that: "Am Ende ist sie /Gottesherrschaft/ mir sogar näher, als ich mir selbst nahe bin. . . ." (Ibid., p. 404). But then we are told that this is not because of an ontological claim based upon the Being-of beings, but a dogmatic claim for Jesus as the Christ: "Gilt von den Gleichnissen Jesu, daß Gott in ihnen den menschlichen Hörern näher kommt, als sie sich selber nahe sind, so gilt von Jesus als dem Gleichnis Gottes, daß Gott in ihm der Menschheit näher gekommen ist, als dieses sich selber nahe zu sein vermag" (Ibid., p. 407). Jüngel recognizes that this entails an ontological claim, but his answer ("God is love!") is (and remains) an unclarified metaphor that is susceptible to the same charge of being a naive metaphysics as Wheelwright's understanding of metaphor (See below, p. 138): "Was sich hermeneutisch im Blick auf die Rede von Gott als je immer größere Ähnlichkeit in noch so großer Unähnlichkeit erweist, muß sich deshalb auch ontologisch im Blick auf das Sein Gottes angeben und formulieren lassen. Wie ist dasjenige Sein zu nennen, das in noch so großer Unähnlichkeit auf je immer größere Ähnlichkeit in noch so großer Ferne auf je immer größere Nähe, in noch so hoher Hoheit auf je immer größere Kondenszendenz, in noch so großer Unterschiedenheit auf je immer intensivere Beziehung bedacht ist? Oder um paulinisch zu fragen . . .: wie ist dasjenige Sein zu nennen, das der sich mehrenden Sünde mit noch mehr Gnade begegnet (Röm 5,20)?"

Die Antwort braucht nicht gesucht zu werden. Sie ist sowohl anthropologisch als auch theologisch evident und heißt: Liebe" (Ibid., pp. 407-408). Here we find the key to Jüngel's hermeneutics of analogy/metaphor: "Die hermeneutische Grundstruktur evangelischer Rede von Gott, nämlich die Analogie als je immer größere Ähnlichkeit inmitten noch so großer Unähnlichkeit zwischen Gott und Mensch, ist der sprachlogische Ausdruck für das Sein Gottes, das sich als die inmitten noch so großer Selbstbezogenheit immer noch größere Selbstlosigkeit vollzieht und insofern Liebe ist. Liebe aber drängt zur Sprache. Zur Liebe gehört die Liebeserklärung und die Liebesbestätigung /the crucified and risen Lord/. Weil Gott nicht nur ein Liebender, sondern die Liebe selber ist, muß von ihm nicht nur, sondern kann von ihm auch geredet werden. Denn die Liebe ist der Sprache mächtig: caritas capax verbi" (Ibid., p. 408). Jüngel, despite his encounter with the work of Ricoeur; despite his "hermeneutics;" despite his use of metaphor (but because metaphor for Jüngel equals analogy) in theology, remains, precisely because of his complexity of thought, a bitter



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disappointment. He separates philosophy and theology (Although in his essay in Metapher he claimed to be open to dialogue (p. 110), by the time he reached Gott als Geheimnis der Welt he had entered not only a one-way street, but a dead-end (nicht nur eine Einbahnstraße, sondern eine Sackgasse). For, despite his declaration of willingness to be addressed and to respond, there is only one source from which he is really addressed, and he betrays this in the very next paragraph in his Metapher article: "Die geglückte Metapher, deren Eindeutigkeit schärfer und treffender sein kann, als uns lieb ist, kann und braucht sich nicht zu beweisen. Sie hat axiomatische Kraft und axiomatische Würde" (Metapher, p. 110)); and has completely missed the subtlety and profundity of Ricoeur's analysis in the same book concerning both the relational function of the copula and the "existential" claim of the same. Jüngel desperately needs to reconsider his animosity to philosophy, and to allow his presuppositions to be placed in question by himself (recognizing that we, of course, don't even "do philosophy" without presuppositions--as Gadamer says, we don't escape presuppositions, we attempt to clarify them or otherwise we are blindly manipulated by them).

It is tempting to conclude these comments by quoting Jüngel himself in reference to Jürgen Moltmann (on the same faculty with Jüngel in Tübingen): "Was sollen wir nun dazu sagen?" (Ibid., p. 298, n. 65). Jüngel, in effect, accuses Moltmann of stealing his ideas. Such theological in-fighting is not only superficial, it is ludicrous. More adequate would be to say to both Jüngel and Moltmann (if not many others) that what we need today is a theology that dares to attempt to clarify its presuppositions, rather than a presuppositionless theology, or a theology that merely screams its metaphors louder, assuming that they are literal truths, or hides behind turgid language and verbosity. We don't need a theology of the name--that is a theology of signs; we need a theology of metaphor/symbol that opens up rather than closes off!

Both Jüngel and Moltmann are in need of a second-order reflection of speculative discourse/philosophy. In fact, Ricoeur has placed the whole contemporary theological scene in Germany in question when he writes (again, in his book with Jüngel): "Wir haben gesehen, daß die metaphorische Sprache ihre Funktion der Neubeschreibung von Wirklichkeit nur mit Hilfe einer Sinnfindung ausübt, die den Wert einer Fiktion hat. Diese Verbindung von Fiktion und Neubeschreibung ist sehr erhellend für die biblische Sprache selbst. Sie bedeutet, daß sich die Grenzmetaphern zunächst an unsere Einbildungskraft und erst dann an unsern Willen wenden; für sie eröffnet diese Sprache Möglichkeiten der Erneuerung und der Kreativität. Ich muß sagen, daß dies eine beträchtliche hermeneutische Konsequenz darstellt. Denn die sogenannte existentielle Interpretation der biblischen Sprache wurde allzuoft als ein Appell zur Entscheidung aufgefaßt. Wenn nun aber die metaphorische Sprache die Neubeschreibung nur durch den Umweg über die Fiktion erreicht, so schließt das ein, daß diese Sprache unsere Leitbilder auf einer

Split Reference and the Tension Theory of Metaphor

What Ricoeur calls the "split reference" of metaphor (named by others as the "double vision" or the "stereoscopic vision" of metaphor) becomes the key to his tension theory of metaphor. It is, in fact, present in all three interpretative hypothesis offered at the very beginning of The Rule of Metaphor:

First, in all metaphor one might consider not only the word alone or the name alone, whose meaning is displaced, but the pair of terms or relationships between which the transposition operates. . . . This has far-reaching implications. As the English-language authors put it, it always takes two ideas to make a metaphor. If metaphor always involves a kind of mistake, if it involves taking one thing for another by a sort of calculated error, then metaphor is essentially a discursive phenomenon.

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nicht voluntaristischen Existenzebene zu verwandeln sucht. Während also die existentielle Interpretation den Akzent vorwiegend auf die Entscheidung für die neue Existenz legt, möchte ich sagen, daß die durch die Grenzmetaphern erzeugte metanoia zuallererst eine Umkehr der Einbildungskraft bedeutet.

In dieser Weise muß alle Ethik, die sich an den Willen richtet, um ihm eine Entscheidung abzuverlangen, einer Poetik untergeordnet sein, welche unserer Einbildungskraft neue Dimensionen eröffnet" (Metapher, p. 70). (For an English translation of this text, see below, pp. 174-175) This, of course, is not an imagination of "free association" or mere phantasy. It is the recognition that ". . . before all theology and all speculation, even before any mythical elaboration, we . . . still encounter symbols" (Ricoeur, The Conflict of Interpretations, p. 289). It is symbols which "give rise to thought." Unfortunately, the theological world in Germany today still wishes to treat its metaphors/symbols/myths as literal claims. We must, once again, turn "to the things themselves."

This is not meant to deny, either, that our choice is eventually going to be a choice between metaphor(s)/symbol(s) even when we move from first-order religious language to second-order speculative discourse. Not only, however, are definite metaphors/symbols more or less adequate, but so is our understanding of what a metaphor/symbol actually "is." Hence, a metaphor/symbol must be argued for, and not simply assumed.

<sup>1</sup>Ricoeur, The Rule of Metaphor, p. 21.

Not only is there (in Gilbert Ryle's sense) a kind of "category mistake" to metaphor, but this "kind of mistake" in metaphor is what generates its meaning:

A second line of reflection seems to be suggested by the idea of categorical transgression, understood as a deviation in relation to a pre-existing logical order, as a dis-ordering in a scheme of classification. This transgression is interesting only because it creates meaning; . . . metaphor destroys an order only to invent a new one; . . . metaphor bears information because it 're-describes' reality. . . . /T/his cannot be brought to light without prior recognition not only of the statement-character of metaphor, but also of its place within the order of discourse and of the work.

A third, not only "more venturesome," but fundamentally radical, hypothesis suggests that metaphor, already seen to function by "a kind of mistake," i.e., as a disruption of categorial order, is in fact what generates all order, i.e., is "at work at the origin of logical thought, at the root of all classification." Metaphor, it is claimed, is not something one does with language (in that we experience a world by means of the order preserved in language, and metaphor is the "disrupting" simply of order), rather metaphor has already done something with us. Order is not the "origin" of world; it is dis-order that creates which is fundamental about world and is announced in metaphor(s). This becomes extremely important for a most radical understanding of the symbol of the Kingdom of God in the teaching material of the historical Jesus.

A third, more venturesome hypothesis arises on the fringe of the second. If metaphor belongs to an heuristic of thought, could we not imagine that the process that disturbs and displaces a certain logical order, a certain conceptual hierarchy, a certain classification scheme,

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 22.

is the same as that from which all classification proceeds? Certainly, the only functioning of language we are aware of operates within an already constituted order; metaphor does not produce a new order except by creating rifts in an old order. Nevertheless, could we not imagine that the order itself is born in the same way that it changes? Is there not, in Gadamer's terms, a 'metaphoric' at work at the origin of logical thought, at the root of all classification? This is a more far-reaching hypothesis than the others, which presuppose an already constituted language within which metaphor operates. . . . The idea of an initial metaphorical impulse destroys these oppositions between proper and figurative, ordinary and strange, order and transgression. It suggests the idea that order itself proceeds from the metaphorical constitution of semantic fields, which themselves give rise to genus and species.

Later Ricoeur suggests that we never forget that the lexicalized meaning of words is one of conventionality. This is a typical illusion informing all attempts to maintain an opposition between the figurative and the proper meaning of words. Then

. . . one attaches to the opposition between the figurative and the proper a meaning that is itself metaphysical, one which a more precise semantics dispels. In fact, this shatters the illusion that words possess a proper, i.e., primitive, natural, original (*etimon*) meaning in themselves. Now nothing in the earlier analysis has authorized this interpretation. We did admit of course that the metaphorical use of a word could always be opposed to its literal use; but literal does not mean proper in the sense of originary, but simply current, 'usual.' The literal sense is the one that is lexicalized. There is thus no need for a metaphysics of the proper to justify the difference between literal and figurative. It is use in discourse that specifies the difference between the literal and metaphorical, and not some sort of prestige attributed to the primitive or the original. Moreover, the distinction between literal and metaphorical exists only through the conflict of two interpretations. One interpretation employs only values that are already lexicalized and so succumbs to semantic impertinence; the other, instituting a new semantic pertinence, requires a twist in the word that

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid., pp. 22-23.

displaces its own meaning. In this way, a better semantic analysis of the metaphorical process suffices to dispel the mystique of the 'proper,' without any need for metaphoricity to succumb along with it.

In fact, it is metaphor's character of split reference that demonstrates what language really is. This is what Ricoeur calls the "circularity of language."

The circle can be described in the following manner. Initial polysemy equals 'language,' the living metaphor equals 'speech,' metaphor in common use /dead metaphor/ represents the return of speech towards language, and subsequent polysemy equals 'language.'

The creative power of the metaphor is what living speech really is. ". . . /M/etaphorical attribution is superior to every other use of language in showing what 'living speech' really is; it is an 'instance of discourse' par excellence."<sup>3</sup>

If it is true that metaphor adds to polysemy, then the operation of discourse set in motion by metaphor is the inverse of that which we have just described. For a sentence to make sense it is necessary . . . that all the acceptations of the semantic potential of the word under consideration be eliminated except one, that which is compatible with the meaning, itself appropriately reduced, of the other words of the sentence. In the case of metaphor, none of the already codified acceptations is unsuitable; it is necessary, therefore, to retain all the acceptations allowed plus one, that which will rescue the meaning of the entire statement. The theory of the statement-metaphor puts the accent on the predicative operation.

The creation of polysemy by metaphor occurs by means of the metaphor's ability to suggest identity in difference (the "is" in the

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid., pp. 290-291.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., pp. 121-122.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 97.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., p. 131.

"is not"). If the term "split reference" as applied to metaphor does not explicitly occur until Study 7 in The Rule of Metaphor, it has already been encountered, in fact, in the analysis of metaphor and resemblance in Study 6:

. . . metaphor reveals the logical structure of 'the similar' because, in the metaphorical statement, 'the similar' is perceived despite difference, in spite of contradiction. Resemblance . . . is the logical category corresponding to the predicative operation in which 'approximation' (bringing close) meets the resistance of 'being distant.' In other words, metaphor displays the work of resemblance because the literal contradiction preserves difference within the metaphorical statement; 'same' and 'different' are not just mixed together, they also remain opposed. Through this specific trait, enigma lives on in the heart of metaphor /This is in fact the tension of the metaphor/. In metaphor, 'the same' operates in spite of 'the different.'

This indicates the "Phenomenological" character of metaphor even more strongly than the positive reference to Husserl above.<sup>2</sup>

The "idea" is constituted in the experience, and is not a transcendence of a concept that is a mere abstraction (as in Platonic Idealism or semiotics). It is metaphor, for Ricoeur, that betrays this "truth:"

. . . if it is true that one learns what one does not yet know, then to make the similar visible is to produce the genus within the differences, and not elevated beyond differences, in the transcendence of the concept. . . . Metaphor allows us to intercept the formation of the genus at this preparatory stage because, in the metaphorical process, the movement towards the genus, which is checked by the resistance of difference, is captured somehow by the rhetorical figure. . . . A family resemblance first brings individuals together before the rule of a logical class dominates them.

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 196.

<sup>2</sup>See above, p. 120.

Metaphor, a figure of speech, presents in an open fashion, by means of a conflict between identity and difference, the process that, in a covert manner, generates semantic grids by fusion of differences into identity.

This "fusion of differences into identity" becomes central to the understanding of "split reference," an idea Ricoeur obtains from Roman Jakobson:

. . . let us not leave Roman Jakobson without accepting a valuable suggestion from him. . . . The semantic equivalence brought about by phonic equivalence brings with it an ambiguity that affects all the functions of communication. The addresser is split (the 'I' of the lyrical hero or of the fictitious narrator), and so too the addressee (the 'you' as supposed addressee of dramatic monologues, supplications, epistles). The most radical consequence of this is that what happens in poetry is not the suppression of the referential function but its profound alteration by the workings of ambiguity: 'The supremacy of poetic function over referential function does not obliterate the reference but makes it ambiguous. The double-sensed message finds correspondence in a split addresser, in a split addressee, and what is more in a split reference, as is cogently exposed in the preambles to fairy tales of various peoples, for instance, in the usual exordium of the Majorca storytellers: "Aixo era y no era" (It was and it was not)'.<sup>1</sup>

Let us keep this notion of split reference in mind, as well as the wonderful 'It was and it was not,' which contains in nuce all that can be said about metaphorical truth.

Ricoeur makes a detour before returning to this idea of split reference in order to suggest the power of a presupposed logical positivism functioning in literary criticism/linguistics, which has discredited the claim of reference for figurative language.

I would be loath to leave this case against reference without pointing to the epistemological argument, which, while augmenting the linguistic argument (for

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<sup>1</sup>Ricoeur, The Rule of Metaphor, p. 198. See below, Chapter III and the discussion "On Intentional Consciousness."

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 224.

example, Jakobson) and the argument of literary criticism (for example, Frye), at the same time reveals their hidden presupposition. Critiques shaped by the school of logical positivism state that all language that is not descriptive, in the sense of giving information about facts, must be emotional. Furthermore, the suggestion is that what is 'emotional' is sensed purely 'within' the subject and is not related in any way whatsoever to anything outside the subject. Emotion is an affect which has only an inside, and not an outside.

This argument . . . did not arise originally in the course of consideration of literary works; it is a postulate imported from philosophy into literature. And this postulate decides on the meaning of truth and reality. It says that there is no truth beyond the pale of possible verification (or falsification), and that in the last analysis all verification is empirical, as defined by scientific procedure. This postulate functions in literary criticism as a pre-judgment.

Ricoeur's work on metaphor explodes this prejudgment of literary criticism: "My whole aim is to do away with this restriction of reference to scientific statements."<sup>2</sup>

The thesis to be argued . . . proposes that the suspension of reference in the sense defined by the norms of descriptive discourse is the negative condition of the appearance of a more fundamental mode of reference, whose explication is the task of interpretation. At stake in this explication is nothing less than the meaning of the words reality and truth, which themselves must vacillate and become problematical.<sup>3</sup>

This "suspension of reference" and "appearance of a more fundamental mode of reference" is the function of split reference in the metaphorical statement:

. . . the way in which metaphorical meaning is constituted provides the key to the splitting of reference. . . . The meaning of a metaphorical statement

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid., pp. 226-227.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 221.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 229.



rises up from the blockage of any literal interpretation of the statement. . . .

But this is only the first phase, or rather the negative counterpart, of a positive strategy. Within the perspective of semantic impertinence, the self-destruction of meaning is merely the other side of an innovation in meaning at the level of the entire statement, an innovation obtained through the 'twist' of the literal meaning of the words. It is this innovation in meaning that constitutes living metaphor.

Split reference is precisely this "blockage" and "innovation" of meaning occurring in the metaphorical statement:

. . . metaphorical seeing is a 'seeing as.' Indeed, the former classification, linked to the previous use of words, resists and creates a sort of stereoscopic vision in which the new situation is perceived only in the depths of the situation disrupted by the category mistake.

Such is the schema of split reference. Essentially, it sets up a parallel between metaphORIZATION of reference and metaphorization of meaning.<sup>2</sup>

The schema of split reference (of the "is" which "is not") becomes the foundation of the tension theory of metaphor:

. . . I will discuss the meaning of the expression in truth, and will propose a tensional conception of metaphorical truth itself. It is enough for now to say that the poetic verb metaphorically 'schematizes' feelings or emotions only in depicting 'textures of the world,' 'non-human physiognomies,' which become actual portraits of our inner life. . . . Poetic feeling in its metaphorical expressions bespeaks the lack of distinction between interior and exterior. The 'poetic textures' of the world . . . and the 'poetic schemata' of interior life . . ., mirroring one another, proclaim the reciprocity of the inner and the outer.

Metaphor raises this reciprocity from confusion and vagueness to bipolar tension. The intropathic fusion that precedes the conquest of subject-object duality is something different, as is the reconciliation that overcomes the opposition of subjective and objective.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 230.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 231.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 246.

Or, as was said earlier: ". . . metaphor is that place in discourse where . . . the identity and the difference do not melt together but confront each other."<sup>1</sup>

Ricoeur speaks of tension in three senses, but as we will quickly see, the tension of split reference, ultimately resting on the copula (the "is"), becomes the fundamental tension of metaphorical meaning and truth. It is here that the implicit ontology of metaphor becomes clear.

Three applications have in fact been given to the idea of tension:

(a) tension within the statement: between tenor and vehicle, between focus and frame, between principle subject and secondary subject;

(b) tension between two interpretations: between a literal interpretation that perishes at the hands of semantic impertinence and a metaphorical interpretation whose sense emerges through non-sense;

(c) tension in the relational function of the copula: between identity and difference in the interplay of resemblance.<sup>2</sup>

It is the functioning of the copula not only relationally but ontologically that moves the discussion of tension beyond the immanence of the statement to reality.

These three applications of the idea of tension remain at the level of meaning immanent to the statement. . . . Our new application concerns reference itself and the claim of the metaphorical statement to reach reality in some particular manner. In the most radical terms possible, tension must be introduced into metaphorically affirmed being. When the poet says that 'nature is a temple where living columns . . .' the verb to be does not just connect the predicate temple to the subject nature along the lines of the threefold tension outlined above. The copula is not only

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 199.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 247.

relational. It implies besides, by means of the predicative relationship, that what is is redescribed; it says that things really are this way.

This, again, is the function of split reference in the metaphorical statement:

. . . split reference . . . signifies that the tension characterizing metaphorical utterance is carried ultimately by the copula is. Being-as means being and not being. Such-and-such was and was not the case. Within the framework of a semantics of reference, the ontological import of this paradox could not be seen; 'to be' operated there only as an affirmative copula, as being/apophansis.<sup>2</sup>

This "is"/"is not" of metaphor's split reference is a "setting before the eyes," Aristotle says:

What does it mean for living metaphor 'to set (something) before the eyes'? Setting before the eyes, Rhetoric 3 replies, is to 'represent things as in a state of activity' (1411 b 24-5). And the philosopher specifies: when the poet infuses life into inanimate things, his verse 'represents everything as<sub>3</sub> moving and living; activity is movement' (1412 a 8).<sup>3</sup>

Hence, there is a correspondence between the dynamism of meaning in the metaphorical statement and the dynamism of movement which is reality.

. . . the reference of the metaphorical statement could itself be considered a split reference. . . . This is what we meant when we lodged metaphorical tension right within the copula of the utterance. Being as, we said, means being and not being. In this way, the dynamism of meaning allowed access to the dynamic vision of reality which is the implicit ontology of the metaphorical utterance.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., pp. 247-248.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 306.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 302.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 297.

The claim of metaphorical truth becomes: ". . . every gain in meaning is at one and the same time a gain in sense and a gain in reference."<sup>1</sup> It becomes the task of hermeneutics to move from the work to its world.

It would seem enough at first glance to reformulate the Fregean concept of reference just by substituting one word for another: instead of saying that we are not satisfied with the sense /Sinn/ and so presuppose reference /Bedeutung/ besides, we would say that we are not satisfied with the structure of the work and presuppose a world of the work. The structure of the work is in fact its sense, and the world of the work its reference. . . . Hermeneutics then is simply the theory that regulates the transition from structure of the work to world of the work. To interpret a work is to display the world to which it refers. . . . I contrast this postulate with the romantic and psychologizing conception of hermeneutics originating with Schleiermacher and Dilthey, for whom the supreme law of interpretation is the search for a harmony between the spirit of the author and that of the reader. To this always difficult and often impossible quest for an intention hidden behind the work, I oppose a quest that addresses the world displayed before the work.<sup>2</sup>

The split reference takes us not only to the heart of metaphor, but it, thereby, takes us to the heart of living speech, i.e., discourse. The recognition that the "is"/"is not" of the copula in split reference is "more" than the relational function immanent to language, but in some way reaches reality, i.e., makes a truth claim, leads us to the "ontological vehemence" of the metaphorical statement (but as "more" than the naive ontological vehemence of Wheelwright's tensive theory of the mere "it is"<sup>3</sup>).

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid., p. 297.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 220

<sup>3</sup> See Ibid., p. 251: "It is astonishing that Wheelwright should be brought quite close to a tensional conception of truth itself by his semantic conception of the tension between diaphor and epiphor

In the metaphorical discourse of poetry referential power is linked to the eclipse of ordinary reference; the creation of heuristic fiction is the road to re-description; and reality brought to language unites manifestation and creation.

Ricoeur is well aware that the re-description of reality occurring in the heuristic fiction is indeed fiction (even if it is analogous to models in science,<sup>2</sup> where it belongs to the logic of discovery not to the logic of justification or proof<sup>3</sup>).

. . . what earlier we called heuristic fiction is not an innocent pretence. It tends to lose sight of its nature as fiction. . . . This is why a critical instance must be applied to the statement in order to flush out the unmarked 'as if,' that is, the virtual mark of the 'pretence' immanent within the 'believe' and the 'make-believe.'<sup>4</sup>

In the final Study 8 of his work The Rule of Metaphor Ricoeur reminds us that we cannot be satisfied with an implicit ontology for the metaphorical claim.

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/"epiphor juxtaposes and fuses terms by means of immediate assimilation at the level of the image, whereas diaphor proceeds mediately and through combination of discrete terms. Metaphor is the tension between epiphor and diaphor" (p. 250)<sup>7</sup>. But the dialectical inclination of his theory is dissipated by the intuitionist and vitalist tendency that takes him finally into the meta-poetics of the 'What Is.'" Douglas Bergren in "The Use and Abuse of Metaphor: I," pp. 250-251, suggests that Wheelwright: ". . . fails to distinguish poetic truth from mere mythic absurdity." Myth is here understood as failure to see the tensive character of metaphor, i.e., taking the metaphor merely literally (see p. 244).

<sup>1</sup> Ricoeur, The Rule of Metaphor, p. 239.

<sup>2</sup> See the description and analysis of this aspect of Max Black's work in Ibid., pp. 239f., especially p. 240: ". . . metaphor is to poetic language what the model is to scientific language."

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 240: "The model belongs not to the logic of justification or proof, but to the logic of discovery."

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., p. 252.

I shall . . . be undertaking two tasks at once: to erect a general theory of the intersections between spheres of discourse . . . , and to propose an interpretation of the ontology implicit in the postulates of metaphorical reference that will fit this dialectic of modalities of discourse.

The dialectic outlined here considers self-evident the need to abandon the naive thesis that the semantics of metaphorical utterance contains ready-made an immediate ontology, which philosophy would then have only to elicit and to formulate.

This interpretation of the ontology of metaphorical reference requires speculative discourse. He reminds us, however, of the circularity of language,<sup>2</sup> that ". . . speculative discourse has its condition of possibility in the semantic dynamism of metaphorical utterance, and that, on the other hand, speculative discourse has its necessity in itself, in putting the resources of conceptual articulation to work."<sup>3</sup> These are two distinct fields of discourse: "Between the implicit and the explicit there is all the difference that separates two modes of discourse, and that cannot be eliminated when the first is taken up into the second."<sup>4</sup> ". . . the semantic shock [of metaphor] produces a conceptual need, but not as yet any knowledge by means of concepts."<sup>5</sup> Knowledge by means of concepts is what is gained by the turn to speculative discourse. Hence, in the "ontological vehemence" of the metaphor we

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid., p. 295.

<sup>2</sup> See above, p. 131.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 296.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., p. 296.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., p. 296.

encounter "hints of meaning" which must then "be reconciled with the requirements of concepts."<sup>1</sup>

Speculative discourse serves as a second-order discourse that is the condition of the possibility of the conceptual, i.e., it expresses the systematic character of the conceptual.

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<sup>2</sup> is indeed first discourse in the order of grounding.

Speculative discourse provides grounding. If the imagination of the metaphor provides the shock, speculative discourse provides the ontological grounding for the metaphorical reference.

If the imaginatio is the kingdom of 'the similar,' the intellectio is that of 'the same.' In the horizon opened up by the speculative, 'same' grounds 'similar' and not the inverse.<sup>3</sup>

A little later Ricoeur writes: "Imaginatio is a level and an order of discourse. Intellectio is another level and another order. Here metaphorical discourse encounters its limit."<sup>4</sup> Metaphor's limit is what drives speculative thought.

Ricoeur remains only sketchy about the ontology that this speculative thought engendered by metaphor and the split reference of the copula (the "is"/"is not"). Though he has characterized his work as a "post-Hegelian return to Kant,"<sup>5</sup> he quite often

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid., p. 300.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 300.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 301.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., p. 302.

<sup>5</sup> Ricoeur, Semeia 4, pp. 36 and 139. I find suggestive an analogy that must wait subsequent work to document its claim: Husserl:Heidegger::Kant:Hegel.

refers to the possibilities of a speculative discourse informed by the work of Husserl and Heidegger. Again, in Semeia 4 he writes:

. . . the ordinary reference of language is abolished by the natural strategy of poetic discourse. But in the very measure that this first-order reference is abolished, another power of speaking the world is liberated, although at another level of reality. This level is that which Husserlian phenomenology has designated as the Lebenswelt and which Heidegger has called "being-in-the-world." It is in an eclipsing of the objective manipulable world, an illumining of the life-world, of non-manipulable being-in-the-world, which seems to be to be the fundamental ontological import of poetic language.

In Chapter III of this present project I seek to develop the implication of Ricoeur's cryptic comment. Such an "anti-ontological" ontology will serve as the speculative framework for an attempt to understand the functioning of the symbol of the Kingdom of God in this primary linguistic material of the Christian tradition. It is necessary first, however, to look more carefully at symbol as a special case of metaphor functioning within the horizon of myth. As such, a symbol becomes an occasion for metaphorical truth as a "tensional theory of truth" involving several semantic fields concerned with the literal and the speculative. Or as Ricoeur himself concludes:

On the one hand, poetry, in itself and by itself, sketches a 'tensional' conception of truth for thought. Here are summed up all the forms of 'tensions' brought to light by semantics: tension between subject and predicate, between literal interpretation and metaphorical interpretation, between identity and difference. Then these are gathered together in the theory of split reference. They come to completion finally in the paradox of the copula, where being-as signifies being and not being. By this turn of expression, poetry, in combination with other modes of discourse, articulates

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<sup>1</sup>Ricoeur, Semeia 4, p. 87.



and preserves the experience of belonging that places man in discourse and discourse in being.

Speculative thought, on the other hand, bases its work upon the dynamism of metaphorical utterance, which it construes according to its own sphere of meaning. Speculative discourse can respond in this way only because the distanciation, which constitutes the critical moment, 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. Finally, the splitting of reference and redescription of reality submitted to the imaginative variations of fiction strike us as specific figures of distanciation, when they are reflected and rearticulated by speculative discourse.

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.

This analysis of metaphor has resulted in some startling observations:

- 1) Metaphor is no mere ornamentation of language, but functions by means of the disruption of the literal "is" of the statement achieved by the semantic impertinence of the "is not" reaching to a new understanding of "what is."
- 2) Metaphor has the priority in language that it is the new innovation of meaning that becomes watered down to conventionality and order. Metaphor's semantic innovation creating new pertinence suggests not the exception of a linguisticity, but is the "rule" that enables all linguisticity. The living metaphor is living speech, discourse, par excellence.
- 3) This leads beyond the semantic field of poetics to ontological claims of the semantic field of speculative (philosophical)

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<sup>1</sup>Ricoeur, The Rule of Metaphor, p. 313.

discourse. These are not two completely separated or contradictory semantic fields. Poetics provides the shock which causes speculative thought to "think more." In doing so, speculative discourse provides the conceptuality grounding poetics. We will see this more clearly in Ricoeur's analysis of symbols.

Metaphor/symbol, then, have two "priorities over other forms of discourse:

- a) the temporal priority as providing the "shock" to "think more;"
- b) the ontological priority that is announced by the "is"/"is not" of the copula's split reference, i.e., metaphor/symbol fundamentally disclose the ontological in the copula, going beyond nominalism to world.

#### A Tension Theory of Symbol at the Level of Myth

As indicated in the above analysis, what I take to be an invaluable contribution from the meditations of Paul Ricoeur both for religious and philosophical language is succinctly articulated in the observation: ". . . before all theology and all speculation, even before any mythical elaboration, we . . . still encounter symbols."<sup>1</sup> Further,

I am convinced that we must think, not behind the symbols, but starting from symbols, according to symbols, that their substance is indestructible, that they constitute the revealing substrate of speech which lives among men. In short, the symbol gives rise to thought.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Ricoeur, The Conflict of Interpretations, p. 289. Though I wish to suggest that a symbol functions as a metaphor, but not at the level of the sentence rather always within the horizon of a myth.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 299.

The priority of poetics is a temporal priority, i.e., the Anstoß (shock), the objective/non-objective event, that itself demands interpretation or the use of conceptual language.<sup>1</sup> It is what insists that there is an inexhaustable depth to experience not to be reduced to the objective. "Beyond the wastelands of critical thought, we seek to be challenged anew."<sup>2</sup>

. . . the possibility of speculative discourse lies in the semantic dynamism of metaphorical expressions, and yet . . . 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 own constitution.

"Post-critical naivete" is, however, what saves us from becoming "lost" in speculative discourse; in fact, it is what insists that the philosopher/theologian can/must still worship. We must never lose sight of the priority of poetics! "The iconoclast movement does not proceed first from reflection, but from symbolism itself. . . ." <sup>4</sup> ". . . the second naivete that we are after is accessible only in hermeneutics; we can believe only by interpreting."<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>See Ibid., p. 317: "Why, then, is there a problem for the philosopher? The reason is that there is something astonishing and even scandalous about the use of symbols." See, in addition, The Rule of Metaphor, p. 296: ". . . speculative discourse has its condition of possibility in the semantic dynamism of metaphorical utterance, and . . . on the other hand, speculative discourse has its necessity in itself, in putting the resources of conceptual articulation to work."

<sup>2</sup>Ricoeur, The Conflict of Interpretations, p. 288.

<sup>3</sup>Ricoeur, The Rule of Metaphor, p. 259.

<sup>4</sup>Ricoeur, The Conflict of Interpretations, p. 291.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. 298.

Hermeneutics, child of "modernity," is one of the ways in which this "modernity" overcomes its own forgetfulness of the Sacred. I believe that being can still speak to me, no longer indeed in the precritical form of immediate belief but as the second immediacy that hermeneutics aims at. It may be that this second naivete is the<sub>1</sub> postcritical equivalent of the precritical hierophany.

Or as Ricoeur writes later in The Rule of Metaphor:

'The poetic image places us at the origin of the speaking being.' The poem gives birth to the image; the poetic image 'becomes a new being in our language, expressing us by making us what it expresses; in other words, it is at once a becoming of expression, and a becoming of our being. Here expression creates being . . . one would not<sub>2</sub> be able to meditate in a zone that preceded language.'

Ricoeur warns, however, against the danger of speculative thought, i.e., against a new gnosis.<sup>3</sup> Philosophy/theology can never forget the temporal sequence of its search for the "unconditioned." As we have already pointed to: "If, in the order of discovery, the speculative surfaces as a second-level discourse . . . , it is indeed first discourse in the order of grounding."<sup>4</sup> The circle must not be broken. The initial "wonder" is the challenge of poetics as inexhaustible depth. Whatever the "speculative thought" employed to point to this inexhaustible depth, it itself must never forget its "provisionalness," its subservience to the hermeneutical process. Absolute, unconditioned truth is only sand slipping away between the fingers of experience, i.e.,

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid., p. 298.

<sup>2</sup> Ricoeur, The Rule of Metaphor, pp. 214-215.

<sup>3</sup> See Ricoeur, The Conflict of Interpretations, p. 300.

<sup>4</sup> Ricoeur, The Rule of Metaphor, p. 300.

there is no absolute, unconditioned objective truth that would lift us out of history. There are only provisional attempts to point to "more" in experience than the objective. This only betrays the circularity of the hermeneutical process.

Experience is in itself a circular happening through which what lies within the circle becomes exposed (er-öffnet). This open (Offene), however, is nothing other than the between (Zwischen)--between us and the thing.

This recalls Heidegger's suggestion in Being and Time:

But if we see this circle as a vicious one and look for ways of avoiding it, even if we just 'sense' it as an inevitable imperfection, then the act of understanding has been misunderstood from the ground up. . . . What is decisive is not to get out of the circle but to come into it in the right way. . . .

The 'circle' in understanding belongs to the structure of meaning, and the latter phenomenon is rooted in the existential constitution of Dasein--that is, in the understanding which interprets. An entity for which, as Being-in-the-world, its Being is itself an issue, has, ontologically, a circular structure.<sup>2</sup>

That the circularity is not an objective circularity, but a circularity at the "level" of the Being-of beings (understanding), there is an inexhaustible openness of its disclosive possibilities. The primordial equivalence of the Being-of beings and time, or the 'need' of the Being-of beings to be disclosed for it to have meaning, and the condition of the possibility for that disclosure/concealment through multiplicity, i.e., the "necessity" of particularity) and simultaneity (the fullness of "what is" as world/life-world), suggests that gnosis is/would be as false as a claim for objective truth. The symbol is what gives rise to

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<sup>1</sup>Martin Heidegger, What is a Thing?, trans. by W. B. Barton, Jr. and Vera Deutsch (Chicago: Gateway, 1970), p. 242.

<sup>2</sup>Heidegger, Being and Time, pp. 194-195.

thought. Thought can never/will never replace the symbol. Poetics precedes thought even when thought, in interpretation, points to the grounding of poetics. Ricoeur says:

If the imaginatio is the kingdom of 'the similar,' the intellectio is that of 'the same.' In the horizon opened up by the speculative, 'same' grounds 'similar' and not the inverse. In fact 'wherever things are "alike," an identity in the strict and true sense is also present.'

But then adds:

Interpretation is then a mode of discourse that functions at the intersection of two domains, metaphorical and speculative. . . . On the one side, interpretation seeks the clarity of the concept: on the other, it hopes to preserve the dynamism of meaning that the concept holds and pins down. . . . /W/here the understanding 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.<sup>2</sup>

The task at hand, then, is to answer the question: what is a symbol, and how does the symbol "give rise to thought?" My thesis is that the symbol is a metaphor that functions not in the mere context of the sentence, but within the horizon of a narrative, i.e., a particular myth.

My thesis arises out of suggestions in the work of Paul Ricoeur on symbol and metaphor and a claim of Norman Perrin's concerning the symbol of the Kingdom of God in the teaching material of the historical Jesus that it evokes an ancient myth for it to function.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Ricoeur, The Rule of Metaphor, p. 301.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 303.

<sup>3</sup>See, for example, Perrin, Jesus and the Language of the Kingdom, p. 202.

Ricoeur writes in Semeia 4:

The theory of metaphor which I advocated . . . still requires some qualifications in order to expand the metaphorical process not only from words to sentences, but from sentences to narrative structures and in general to discursive modes of discourse.

Metaphors as they are constructed in a tension theory remain local events of discourse. In spite of --or rather thanks to--their new affiliation with sentences rather than with isolated words, they still remain connected to the use of words in a sentence, therefore according to a specific strategy which takes as its starting point the polysemy of the words. Tension metaphors make sense at the level of the sentence because they "twist" the meaning of the words.

But then adds:

Of course, metaphors are not always these isolated events of discourse which we described for the sake of simplicity. There are often clusters or networks of metaphors underlying either a whole poem, or the entire work of a poet, or even a culture and--why not?--the poetic expressions of mankind taken as a unique poet.<sup>2</sup>

He then suggests that fictional narratives are a class of metaphorical processes:

Fictional narratives seem to constitute a distinctive class of metaphorical processes. The bearers of the metaphor are not the individual sentences of the narratives, but the whole structure, the narratives as a whole,<sup>3</sup> what Aristotle had called the mythos in the poem.

This recalls Ricoeur's discussion of mimesis, muthos, and phusis in Study I of The Rule of Metaphor. I wish to suggest, that, when the narrative as a whole becomes the "bearer of the metaphor," we have a special case of metaphor, i.e., a symbol; and when the symbol is taken literally, rather than metaphorically, it is a mere

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<sup>1</sup>Ricoeur, Semeia 4, pp. 92-93.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 94.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 94.

sign in the lexical system (or in Wheelwright's sense it is a "steno symbol"). A symbol functions as a symbol, however, when it functions in terms of the tension of a metaphor between "is" and "is not." It preserves its literalness, but accrues "more." In the case of a religious symbol, this "more" is in reference to the Sacred, as we learn from Ricoeur:

Symbol is a sign in this, that like every sign it intends something beyond and stands for this something. But not every sign is a symbol. Symbol conceals in its intention a double intentionality. There is, first, the primary or literal intentionality, which, like any meaningful intentionality, implies the triumph of the conventional sign over the natural sign: . . . words which do not resemble the thing signified. But upon this first intentionality is built a second intentionality, which . . . points to a certain situation of man in the Sacred; . . . /I/n distinction to technical signs, which are perfectly transparent and say only what they mean by positing the signified, symbolic signs are opaque: the first, literal, patent meaning analogically intends a second meaning which is not given otherwise than in the first. This opaqueness is the symbol's very profundity, an inexhaustible depth.

Drawing on Ricoeur's discussion of analogy in The Rule of Metaphor discussed above,<sup>2</sup> a symbol/metaphor making the ontological claim of Being (the Being-of beings) no longer functions analogically. Metaphor in the fourth sense for Aristotle, i.e., analogy, cannot function when both sides of the analogical relation (that is, both proportionalities) are the same--in this case they would both be concerned to express the same, i.e., "is." This project, on the other hand, understands the Sacred to be articulated in the second-order discourse of philosophy in the philosophical metaphor of the

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<sup>1</sup>Ricoeur, The Conflict of Interpretations, pp. 289-290.

<sup>2</sup>See above, pp. 122f. and The Rule of Metaphor, pp. 288 and 294.



Being-of beings. Hence, a symbol functioning as a religious symbol in relationship to the Sacred (the Being-of beings) functions not analogically, but by means of the double intentionality of the copula (by means of the "is"/"is not" of the ontological difference).

In speaking of the bearer of the metaphor in terms of its being the narrative as a whole and not the sentence, Ricoeur referred to Aristotle's understanding of mythos as the structure of narrative. This is not myth as we commonly (when naively and fully inadequately) understand it today. For example, Douglas Berggren defines the "abuse" of metaphor in terms of its being "reduced" to myth. He employs Turbayne's definition of myth:

Turbayne defines a myth as an extended metaphor whose apparent or face-value assertions are interpreted univocally. Myth, in other words, is a believed absurdity, believed because the absurdity goes unrecognized.

This is, in fact, as will be discussed below, not myth at all. It is literalism failing to see the tensiveness of metaphor/symbol. Its purpose here, however, is to demonstrate that a common understanding for myth today is quite different from what Aristotle understood myth to be. I follow Ricoeur's presentation here, again, carefully:

It is in terms of an analysis of the tragic poem that lexis (the level at which the metaphor works) and muthos function together for Aristotle. "The fundamental trait of muthos is its

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<sup>1</sup>Berggren, "The Use and Abuse of Metaphor: I," p. 244.

character of order, of organization, of arranging or grouping."<sup>1</sup>  
Lexis is ". . . that which exteriorizes and makes explicit the internal order of muthos."<sup>2</sup> Here mimesis enters the analysis in the sense that "/t/here is mimesis only where there is a 'making /faire/'."<sup>3</sup>

. . . it is only through a grave misinterpretation that the Aristotelian mimesis can be confused with imitation in the sense of copy. If mimesis involves an initial reference to reality, this reference signifies nothing other than the very rule of nature over all production. But the creative dimension is inseparable from this referential<sup>4</sup> movement. Mimesis is poiesis, and poiesis is mimesis.

This is the point where mimesis and muthos come together for Aristotle.

. . . muthos is not just a rearrangement of human action into a more coherent form, but a structuring that elevates his action; so mimesis preserves and represents that which is human, not just in its essential features, but in a way that makes it greater and nobler. There is thus a double tension proper to mimesis: on the one hand, the imitation is at once a portrayal of human reality and an original creation; on the other, it is faithful to things as they are and it depicts them as higher and greater than they are.<sup>5</sup>

Lexis (hence, metaphor) serves muthos in its subordination to mimesis in the tragic poem.

. . . the subordination of lexis to muthos already puts metaphor at the service of 'saying,' of 'poetizing,' which takes place no longer at the level of the

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<sup>1</sup> Ricoeur, The Rule of Metaphor, p. 36.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 37.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 38.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., p. 39.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., p. 40.

word but at the level of the poem as a whole. Then the subordination of muthos to mimesis gives the stylistic process a global aim. . . . Considered formally, metaphor as a deviation represents nothing but a difference in meaning. Related to the imitation of our actions at their best, it takes part in the double tension that characterizes this imitation: submission to reality and fabulous invention, unaltering representation and ennobling elevation. This double tension constitutes the referential function of metaphor in poetry.

Ricoeur's conclusion:

In the last analysis, the concept of mimesis serves as an index of the discourse situation; it reminds us that no discourse ever suspends our belonging to a world. All mimesis, even creative--nay, especially creative--mimesis, takes place within the horizons of a being-in-the-world which it makes present to the precise extent that the mimesis raises it to the level of muthos. The truth of imagination, poetry's power to make contact with being as such--this is what I personally see in Aristotle's mimesis. Lexis rooted in mimesis, and through mimesis metaphor's deviations from normam lexis belong to the great enterprise of 'saying what is.'

But mimesis does not signify only that all discourse is of the world; it does not embody just the referential function of poetic discourse. Being mimesis phuseos, it connects this referential function to the revelation of the Real as Act. This is the function of the concept of phusis in the expression mimesis phuseos, to serve as an index for that dimension of reality that does not receive due account in the simple description of that-thing-over-there. To present men 'as acting' and all things 'as in act'--such could well be the ontological function of metaphorical discourse, in which every dormant potentiality of existence appears as blossoming forth, every latent capacity for action as actualized.<sup>2</sup>

Mimesis as poiesis, grounded in Being-in-the-world by "signifying nothing other than the very rule of nature over all production," unites lexis/metaphor, the creative twisting of the meanings of lexis, with muthos. Lexis exteriorizes the internal order and

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid., p. 40.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 43.

structure of muthos. The double tension of mimesis and of metaphor become understood as the referring/creating of order, arranging, organization; not, to be sure, as stasis, but as act. We find here again in this language from Aristotle the thesis that the circularity of language rests upon the dynamic metaphor as the exemplar par excellence of living discourse,<sup>1</sup> i.e., expressing everything as moving, activity, dynamic.<sup>2</sup>

Metaphor--or, better, to metaphorize, that is, the dynamic of metaphor--would rest, therefore, on the perception of resemblance. This brings us very close to our most extreme hypothesis, that the 'metaphoric' that transgresses the categorial order also begets it.<sup>3</sup>

Maintaining the primary aim of this analysis of mimesis/poiesis, lexis/metaphor, and muthos, i.e., that there is an ontological function/priority occurring in the metaphor, I would like to increase the precision of the distinctions by suggesting that not all metaphor intends to, or is able to, work at the level of the narrative if all narratives perform this ontological function. I would like to speak of myth as narrative at a more complex (in terms of semantic fields) level when it is/has the "character of order, of organization, of arranging or grouping" with the effect of elevating and enobling action. This is not to suggest that metaphor does not work at the level of the narrative! In fact it does, but here we

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<sup>1</sup> See above, pp. 129-130.

<sup>2</sup> See Aristotle's comment above, p. 137.

<sup>3</sup> Ricoeur, The Rule of Metaphor, p. 24. See, also, p. 197: ". . . the power of metaphor would be to break an old categorization, in order to establish new logical frontiers on the ruins of their fore-runners."

have a particular case of metaphor, the case that only has meaning within the horizon of a narrative, i.e., symbol. Metaphor itself is then understood as the dynamic functioning of the twisting of literal meaning to the disclosure of what cannot be articulated in any literal fashion, i.e., the function of split reference with the force of ontological vehemence demanding the use of a second-order of reflection to conceptually articulate the ontological grounding of the ontological vehemence in the split reference. A symbol, on the other hand, performs the same function, but is caught up in the literal/non-literal split reference of poiesis at the level of the narrative assisting in the elevating and ennobling character of the myth. Even if the narrative of the "myth" is told in terms of the "every-day," it is attempting to articulate something else than merely the literal "everydayness" of the narrative. Here the semantic impertinence breaks the narrative open to seek a new semantic pertinence. The symbol at the core of the narrative, if nothing else in the narrative, is the metaphor indicating that here "more" is occurring than merely the literal meaning.

. . . myth is not only pseudo-history, it is a revealing. As such, it unearths a dimension of experience which otherwise would have remained without expression and which would have aborted precisely as lived experience.<sup>1</sup>

Thus, the definitions are "real" definitions, i.e., they speak of "how" metaphor, symbol, and myth function (as opposed to being "nominal" definitions, i.e., which in fact would be to reduce them

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<sup>1</sup>Ricoeur, The Conflict of Interpretations, p. 285.

to signs). Focus is placed on the tension that occurs within them which becomes their driving force for the creating of meaning/world. These tensions occur at the level of the sentence; at the level of the narrative; and at the level of reference. They include the tensions of interpretation which seek the world "in front of" the text/work participating/announcing the "event" character of meaning. They, in addition, presuppose/create the horizon of life-world that serves as the silent reservoir of meaning out of conventionality and experience that informs the new event. They announce/confirm that, rather than conventionality being the "ultimate" characteristic of "what is," it is the dynamic opening of new possibilities of meaning/understanding that is before, in, and ahead of conventionality.

In order to obtain a more adequate understanding of this dynamic character functioning in myth, I wish to briefly examine the contrasting understandings of myth between the "mythic school" in Germany and the "vitalistic" understanding of myth in the work of Karl Jaspers. What is myth?, i.e., "how" does myth function?

#### Myth as Horizon of Symbol

There is certainly no unanimous agreement concerning what myth is! I have already suggested two fundamentally contradictory understandings of myth in the work of Turbayne/Berggren<sup>1</sup> and Paul Ricoeur.<sup>2</sup> Unfortunately, an extensive investigation of the multiple

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<sup>1</sup>See above, p. 151.

<sup>2</sup>See above, pp. 151-155.

understandings of myth with any adequacy goes beyond the limits of the present project. In order to suggest the variety while attempting to maintain coherence within the present work, I will engage, in addition to the above work by Ricoeur on myth, that of Karl Jaspers as standing over against the "mythic school" in Germany (What may be identified as the initial application of a "science" of myth to the biblical texts, having its own roots in two initial catalytic moments, i.e., Lowth's "De sacra poesi Hebraeorum" in 1738-48 and Christian Gottlob Heyne's work on myth beginning in 1763.<sup>1</sup>) which began with Johann Gottfried Eichhorn and his student, Johann Philipp Gabler, with the former's anonymous publication of the article "Urgeschichte" in 1779 (later reissued with notes by Gabler between 1790-1793).<sup>2</sup> According to Christian Hartlich and Walter Sachs this "mythic school" came to its end with David Friedrich Strauß,<sup>3</sup> but I wish to suggest that it continued to have

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<sup>1</sup>See Christian Hartlich and Walter Sachs, Der Ursprung des Mythosbegriffes in der modernen Bibelwissenschaft (Tübingen: Mohr (Siebeck), 1952), pp. 6 and 11. The following presentation is heavily indebted to this work by Hartlich and Sachs on the "mythic school."

<sup>2</sup>See Ibid., p. 1: ". . . J.G. Eichhorn, --de/r/ erste/ Exeget/, der auf Grund einer umfassenden und wissenschaftlich begründeten Anschauung vom Wesen der mythischen Vorstellungs- und Ausdrucksformen bestimmte Teile der Bibel als 'mythisch' qualifiziert. . . ."

<sup>3</sup>In contrast to Hartlich and Sachs, I wish to suggest that the mythic school in Germany did not terminate with D.F. Strauß. See, Der Ursprung, p. 1: ". . . D.F. Strauß, in dessen kritischer Bearbeitung des Lebens Jesu der mythische Gesichtspunkt seine durchgreifendste Anwendung auf das Neue Testament findet." See, in addition, p. 5: "Die geschichtliche Stoßkraft dieser Schule ist so bestimmend, daß sie ein Vierteljahrhundert hindurch in der Exegese führend bleibt, zumal ihre Träger zugleich zu den Vorkämpfern der historisch-kritischen Methode in den biblischen Einleitungswissenschaften gehören. Mehr noch: die mit der Einführung des

its (even today) unabated influence into our century, above all, in the work of Rudolf Bultmann by informing his de-mythologizing project.

The contrast (between Ricoeur/Jaspers and the mythic school, including in this case Turbayne/Berggren) to be observed is, on the one hand, that between an understanding of the functioning of myth as presenting in language what objective language cannot articulate, i.e., a breaking open of horizon, and, on the other hand, an understanding of myth as an external/literal "form" at whose kernel is an "existential claim" (according to Bultmann); or either an historical event or a philosophical idea (according to Strauß and the mythic school). This latter understanding of myth is already to be found in Christian Gottlob Heyne: "A mythis omnis priscorum hominum cum historia tum philosophia procedit."<sup>1</sup>

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Mythosbegriffes gesetzte Problematik und die von der 'mythischen Schule' angesetzten Methoden und Kriterien zu ihrer Bewältigung erweisen sich--vermehrt um die von dem jungen de Wette geleisteten hermeneutischen Fortschritte--bis D.Fr. Strauß als leitend, dessen 'Leben Jesu'--den Mythosbegriff auf das Neue Testament in umfassender Weise zur geäußerten Ansicht, daß Strauß' Kritik in enger Abhängigkeit von Hegel zu sehen sei, ergibt unsere Untersuchung, daß Strauß gerade in Abwehr der unklaren Hegelschen Spekulation über das Verhältnis von Idee und Geschichte im Christentum und ihrer exegetischen Konsequenzen auf die Linie der 'mythischen Schule' zurücklenkt." The influence of this school, of course, did not last for only a quarter of a century, for we must speak of its continued presence into our century. Not only may it be argued that Bultmann is dependent upon Strauß (and the mythic school) for his understanding of myth, but he is also indebted to Hartlich and Sachs' description of this school. See H.W. Bartsch, ed., Kerygma und Mythos, vol. 2 (Hamburg: Herbert Reich-Evangelischer Verlag, 1952), pp. 113-149 and Schubert Ogden in Christ Without Myth, p. 96, n. 1, where he refers to Hartlich and Sachs and reports: "The several essays of Hartlich and Sachs, which Bultmann spoke of in 1952 as 'the best things written' . . ."

<sup>1</sup>Hartlich and Sachs, Der Ursprung, p. 13.



Of which Hartlich and Sachs tell us: "Es gibt wohl keinen Autor von Eichhorn bis Strauß, der diesen Satz nicht zitierte."<sup>1</sup>

A further indication of the contrast to be represented here in the understanding of myth, i.e., what may be understood cryptically as the contrast between myth as stasis and myth as dynamis, can be seen in the natural sciences' use of "heuristic fictions" as instruments of re-description,<sup>2</sup> and the recognition that

Recourse to metaphorical redescription /in the natural sciences' use of models/ is a consequence of the impossibility of obtaining a strictly deductive relationship between explanans and explanandum--one can hope at most for an 'approximate fit.'

This suggests an entirely different approach to myth/models as necessary to the process of understanding and not, as in the judgment of the mythic school, as an inferior form of consciousness.

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 13, n. 1. See Strauß, The Life of Jesus, p. 52.

<sup>2</sup>See Ricoeur, The Rule of Metaphor, pp. 239f. and Semeia 4, pp. 84f.

<sup>3</sup>Ricoeur, The Rule of Metaphor, p. 242. See, also, Douglas Berggren, "The Use and Abuse of Metaphor: II" in The Review of Metaphysics, 16, No. 3 (March, 1963): 462: ". . . the truth of the paradigms and theories of science must be just as irreducibly tensional as is the truth of poetic metaphors. By the interaction of formal theory with experimentally determined fact, both are transformed and yet preserved. . . . In other words, neither scientific nor poetic metaphors can reveal except by creating, precisely because they partially create what they in fact reveal." Or, again, as Ricoeur writes in The Rule of Metaphor, p. 239: "To my mind, this is the place to part ways with . . . nominalism. Does not the fittingness, the appropriateness of certain verbal and non-verbal predicates, indicate that language not only has organized reality in a different way, but also made manifest a way of being of things, which is brought to language thanks to semantic innovation? It would seem that the enigma of metaphorical discourse is that it 'invents' in both senses of the word: what it creates, it discovers: and what it finds, it invents."

That which follows has, then, the following structure:

1) an analysis of myth in David F. Strauß' The Life of Jesus Critically Examined; indicating both its roots in the mythic school and the roots of Bultmann's de-mythologizing project in the understanding of myth found here;

2) a presentation of Karl Jasper's understanding of myth in dialogue with Rudolf Bultmann;

3) and, finally, the suggestion that symbol is a metaphorical process at the core of myth in terms of this new understanding of myth present in the work of Ricoeur and Jaspers.

#### The Mythic School

Two definite illusions, at least, must be dispelled in the following analysis: 1) The first is the idea that David F. Strauß was the one ". . . to introduce the idea of the New Testament narratives as myth. . . ." <sup>1</sup> 2) The second is that the understanding of myth itself, on the part of the mythic school, was a negative judgment, i.e., that myth is mere fable and that its presence in the biblical material indicates deliberate falsehood in the intention of the writer(s). Although it is necessary to arrive at a more adequate understanding of myth, e.g., revealed in the mythic school's judgment that myth ". . . has no analogy in the present

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<sup>1</sup>The judgment of Norman Perrin in The New Testament: An Introduction, p. 21. See Strauß, The Life of Jesus, pp. 61-63. It is more accurate to say with Hartlich and Sachs that Strauß was "the most thorough (durchgreifendste)" in the application of myth to the New Testament. See Hartlich and Sachs, Der Ursprung, p. 1. See, also, Ibid., p. 121.

mode of thinking,"<sup>1</sup> this initial attempt here to understand the place and function of myth in the biblical accounts is not to be discounted.

Johann Gottfried Eichhorn (1752-1827), who taught in Göttingen with Christian Gottlob Heyne (1729-1812), published his "Urgeschichte" in 1775. In this early work on the role of mythology in the Judaic-Christian tradition a clear distinction is maintained between myth and fable:

"Myths are not fables. . . . According to Heyne's excellent explanation, myths are not fables or fairy tales, but old sagas; and mythology is not the teachings of fables, but actually the oldest history and the oldest philosophy--they are in essence sagas of origins and clan lineage written in the raw and meaningful language of the ancients; they provide us, therefore, with the oldest representations and opinions of a people" (emphasis added).<sup>2</sup>

Speaking of the Old Testament Wilhelm Martin Leberrecht de Wette, as early as 1806/7, wrote:

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<sup>1</sup>The judgment of D.F. Strauß in The Life of Jesus Critically Examined, p. 81: ". . . the mythical images were formed by the influence of sentiments common to all mankind; and . . . the different elements grew together without the author's being himself conscious of their incongruity. It is this notion of a certain necessity and unconsciousness in the formation of the ancient mythi, on which we insist. . . . It is however very possible that this notion of necessity and unconsciousness, might appear itself obscure and mystical to our antiquarians (and theologians), from no other reason than that this mythicising tendency has no analogy in the present mode of thinking." We need only recall Gadamer's hermeneutic theory and Ricoeur's analysis of Black's Models and Metaphors to recognize the analogies today.

<sup>2</sup>Hartlich and Sachs, Der Ursprung, p. 31. This is my translation of: "Mythen sind nicht Fabeln. . . . Nach diesen vortrefflichen Heyneschen Aufschlüssen sind Mythen nicht Fabeln und Märchen, sondern alte Sagen; und Mythologie ist nicht Fabellehre, sondern an und für sich die älteste Geschichte und die älteste Philosophie, der Inbegriff der alten Volks- und Stammesagen, in der rohen und sinnlichen Sprache des Altertums; sie liefert uns also die ältesten Vorstellungsarten und Meinungen der Völker."

"I call the entire /Old Testament/ . . . an epos: admittedly, it is a Hebraic epos, that, given the yardstick of the Greek epos form, does not compare, but in its own manner is splendid and beautiful. It call it an epos, however, because it is a poem not history, and, of course, organized and developed according to a comprehensive plan. It is a real Hebraic national epos stemming from true national interests and completely in the spirit of Judaism; it is an epos of Hebraic poetry."<sup>1</sup>

He writes further:

"What I propose in relation to Hebraic myth is only what we commonly understand to be occurring in Greek and Roman myths. One reads Homer and feels/admires its beauty, but it never occurs to anyone (thanks to the power of its genius) to understand the story that he tells, however tremendous it is, as natural, i.e., to call it historical by the canons of historical criticism: even though at the core of Homer we find true history. Why do we not want to allow the Pentateuch the same right? It is a product of the same poetic<sup>2</sup> consciousness, only in this instance Hebraic not Greek."

It was Heyne who developed the classification of myths into "historic," "philosophical," and "poetic," used by the entire mythic school, including Strauß, who, following Johann Friedrich

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid., p. 92. This is my translation of: "Ich nenne das Ganze, das wir herzustellen versuchen, ein Epos; freilich ist es ein hebräisches, das den Maßstab der griechischen Kunstregeln nicht aushält, aber in seiner Art vortrefflich und schön. Epos nenne ich es aber, weil es ein Gedicht ist, nicht Geschichte, und zwar nach einem gewissen durchgreifenden Plane gearbeitet. Es ist ein echt hebräisches National-epos, von wahren Nationalinteresse, ganz im Geiste des Hebraismus; es ist das Epos der hebräischen Poesie."

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., pp. 92-93. This is my translation of: "Was ich für die Behandlung der hebräischen Mythen fordere, ist nur das, was den Mythen der Griechen und Römer noch immer widerfährt. Man liest den Homer und fühlt und bewundert seine Schönheit, aber es fällt--dank der Allmacht seines Genius--niemandem ein, die Geschichte, die er erzählt, und die ebenfalls wunderbar ist, natürlich, d.h. historisch, kritisch, wie man sagt, zu deuten: und doch liegt auch dem Homer wahre Geschichte zugrunde. Warum will man doch dem Pentateuch nicht dieselben Rechte zugestehen? Er ist ein Produkt derselben Poesie, nur hebräisch, nicht griechisch."

Leopold George, for all intents and purposes dismisses the poetic from playing a role in the New Testament.<sup>1</sup> This is not to suggest that the mythic school did not contain within it different interpretations of myth. In terms of the understanding of myth that plays the significant role in D.F. Strauß' work, and as an example of amendment in the classification schema is de Wette:

Not of less importance in de Wette's conclusions was . . . a change in opinion concerning what in a myth in terms of historical appearance is to be taken as content and as form. According to the classification of the 'mythic school,' the content of a 'historical myth' was the fact underlying one or more natural events; the form the mythical ornamentation. This was different by de Wette: In his view the content consisted of the mythical idea in a myth of historical appearance, i.e., the form consisted of the presentation of this idea in the manner of a coherent 'story.' In short: the 'historical facticity' was one of appearance<sub>2</sub> and to be placed on the side of the mythical form.

It is claimed by Hartlich and Sachs that

This position arrived at by de Wette concerning the interpretation of biblical myths and the philosophy of religion view of myth generally must be held in

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<sup>1</sup>For Heyne's classification, see Ibid., pp. 32-33. Strauß' presentation of these types is found in The Life of Jesus Critically Examined, p. 53. See, as well, J.F. L. George, Mythus und Sage: Versuch einer wissenschaftlichen Entwicklung dieser Begriffe und ihres Verhältnisses zum christlichen Glauben (Berlin: Schroeder Verlag, 1837).

<sup>2</sup>Hartlich and Sachs, Der Ursprung, p. 119. This is my translation of: "Nicht weniger bedeutsam an de Wettes Ergebnissen war . . . eine veränderte Ansicht über das, was an einem Mythos von historischem Anschein als Inhalt und als Form anzusprechen war. Für die Auffassung der 'mythischen Schule' war bei einem 'historischen Mythos' der Inhalt das zugrunde liegende Faktum eines oder mehrerer natürlicher Ereignisse, die Form das mythische Rankenwerk. Anders bei de Wette: Seiner Anschauung nach machte an einem Mythos von historischem Aussehen die mythische Gesamtidee den Inhalt, die Darstellung dieser Idee in der Weise einander folgender 'Geschichten' die Form aus. Kurz: die 'historische Faktizität' war eine scheinbare und auf die Seite der mythischen Form zu schlagen."

view when one wishes to appreciate properly the achievement of Strauß' Life of Jesus as a historical problem.

Strauß attempts himself to classify (or schematize) these different forms of mythic material. As referred to above, he presents Heyne's distinctions between historical, philosophical and poetic myths concluding that "the poetical mythus is the most difficult to distinguish."<sup>2</sup>

1st. Historical mythi: narratives of real events coloured by the light of antiquity, which confounded the divine and the human, the natural and the supernatural.

2nd. Philosophical mythi: such as clothe in the garb of historical narrative a simple thought, a precept, or an idea of the time.

3rd. Poetical mythi: historical and philosophical mythi partly blended together, and partly embellished by the creations of the imagination, in which the original fact or idea is almost obscured by the veil which the fancy of the poet has woven round it.

To classify the biblical mythi according to these several distinctions is a difficult task. . . . These critics however laid down rules by which the different mythi might be distinguished. The first essential is, they say, to determine whether the narrative have a distinct object, and what that object is. Where no object, for the sake of which the legend might have been invented, is discoverable, every one would pronounce the mythus to be historical. But if all the principal circumstances of the narrative concur to symbolize a particular truth, this undoubtedly was the object of the narrative, and the mythus is philosophical. The blending of the historical and philosophical mythus is particularly to be recognised when we can detect in the narrative an attempt to derive events from their causes. In many instances the existence of an historical

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid., p. 120. This is my translation of: "Diesen bei de Wette erreichten Stand der Auslegung biblischer Mythen und der religionsphilosophischen Auffassung des Mythos überhaupt muß man sich vor Augen halten, wenn man die Leistung von Strauss' Leben Jesus problemgeschichtlich richtig einschätzen will."

<sup>2</sup> Strauß, The Life of Jesus Critically Examined, p. 53.

Foundation is proved also by independent testimony . . . : so that the critic, while he rejects the external form, may yet retain the groundwork as historical. The poetical mythus is the most difficult to distinguish, and Bauer gives only a negative criterion. When the narrative is so wonderful on the one hand as to exclude the possibility of its being a detail of facts, and when on the other it discovers no attempt to symbolize a particular thought, it may be suspected that the entire narrative owes its birth to the imagination of the poet.

Strauß seems, in fact, though to follow J.F.L. George:

George . . . has recently attempted not only more accurately to define the notions of the mythus and of the legend, but likewise to demonstrate that the gospel narratives are mythical rather than legendary. Speaking generally, we should say, that he restricts the term mythus to what had previously been distinguished as philosophical mythi; and that he applied the name legend to what had hitherto been denominated historical mythi. He handles the two notions as the antipodes of each other; and grasps them with a precision by which the notion of the mythus has unquestionably gained. According to George, mythus is the creation of a fact out of an idea: legend the seeing of an idea in a fact, or arising out of it.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 53.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 62. See J.F.L. George, Mythus und Sage, p. 78: "Da greift dann die mythische Thätigkeit . . . ein, und sucht den verloren gegangenen Zusammenhang auf ihre Weise wieder herzustellen. Indem aber das natürliche Kausalitätsverhältnis nicht wieder aufgefunden wird, so tritt das der Mythe eigenthümliche, die schöpferische Thätigkeit Gottes, wieder ein, und das Resultat davon ist das Wunder.

Unter Wunder versteht man gewöhnlich eine Gegebenheit, die aus den Naturgesetzen nicht erklärt werden kann. Die Naturgesetze sind aber nichts anders, als die Art und Weise, wie die Erscheinungen unter einander im Kausalzusammenhang stehen; tritt daher eine Idee in die Erscheinung, abgesehen von diesem Zusammenhang, so ist damit das Wunderbare gesetzt, und es läßt sich daher das Wunder richtiger definieren als das Eintreten einer einzelnen Idee in die Erscheinung, ohne Berücksichtigung des Totalzusammenhangs." Myth and fable are then distinguished, p. 96: "Es läßt sich nämlich im Allgemeinen sagen, daß die Kriterien der Sage nur eine rein verständige Betrachtung erfordern, während die Kriterien des Mythus auf eine spekulative Entscheidung hinweisen." Finally, for the purposes of the present analysis, his distinction between myth and legend, p. 105: "Am nächsten dem

Strauß concludes his discussion of the mythical point of view with a classification of the poetic, myth, and legend:

If the form be poetical, if the actors converse in hymns, and in a more diffuse and elevated strain than might be expected from their training and situations, such discourses, at all events, are not to be regarded as historical. . . .

If the contents of a narrative strikingly accords with certain ideas existing and prevailing within the circle from which the narrative proceeded, which ideas themselves seem to be the product of preconceived opinions rather than of practical experience, it is more or less probable, according to circumstances, that such a narrative is of mythical origin. . . .

The more simple characteristics of the legend, and of additions by the author, after the observations of former section, need no further elucidation.

Hence, we arrive at a classification in Strauß' work distinguishing between poetic, as the product of the author's imagination; mythic, as the embedding in narrative form of a philosophical idea; and legend, as the ornamentation in miraculous narrative form an idea based on historical fact.

This classification is in no way meant to suggest that these forms of discourse are the result of deliberate falsehood on the part of their author(s). As a matter of fact,

. . . an inventor of the mythus in the proper sense of the word is inconceivable. This reasoning brings us to the conclusion, that the idea of a deliberate and

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Mythus steht die Legende. Denn man versteht darunter solche Erzählungen, die sich über das Leben heiliger Personen gebildet haben, ohne geschichtliche Wahrheit und Grundlage zu haben. Es ist auch hier der Grund der Bildung die Idee, unter der man das Leben dieser auffaßte . . . ; man könnte sie daher auch ebenso gut fromme christliche Mythen nennen, indem aber der Begriff des Mythus zu sehr an das Heidnische erinnerte, so übertrug man ihn nicht, sonder wählte einen besondern Ausdruck dafür, der mehr der Sage entspricht." A legend stands between a myth and a fable in that it is controlled by an idea.

<sup>1</sup> Strauß, The Life of Jesus Critically Examined, p. 89.



intentional fabrication, in which the author clothes that which he knows to be false in the appearance of truth, must be entirely set aside as insufficient to account for the origin of the mythus.

In this analysis and understanding of myth, do we not find roots leading to Bultmann's de-mythologizing project? These roots include both the judgment that mythical consciousness is an inferior form of consciousness over against "science" (Wissenschaft); and that fundamental to myth, i.e., at its kernel, can be a philosophical idea.

The identification of myth as an inferior form of consciousness, if it did contain the first articulations of history and philosophy, is clear in the "mythic school." They understand consciousness to be epochal/developmental, i.e., that there is a development of conscious ability by the human species as a whole that we can trace in history, and, therefore, at its earliest stages of development, consciousness, unable to engage in abstraction, substitutes pictures and story for facts and their causes:

Heyne identified myth as the representation- and expression-form of the human species at a stage belonging to youth and rawness, i.e., psycho-genetically observed. Infantia generis humani is to be characterized, according to Heyne, through a three-fold defect (imbecillitas): a defect of knowledge, a defect in the ability to articulate, and through the inability to advance from unmediated sense-impression to distanced contemplation, a defect which goes hand in hand with an escalated attachment to the sentient.

As a result of these defects, which determines its mental, developmental stage, mythical representation and manner of articulation by the humans of this early epoch was unavoidable and necessary, as Heyne incessantly emphasized. Humans in the condition of childhood do not yet know the truth of events and their causes. Unable to

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 81. See, also, pp. 83 and 85.

engage in abstract thinking, they grasp what falls in their range of sense perception. But that is actually only the singular. . . .

Defection in the ability to articulate . . . is constitutive for the sermo mythicus . . ., which is characterized by the inability to designate by generalization and abstraction. As a consequence of this failure of articulation, the concrete is used for the abstract, i.e., what is mental is taken to be separate and rendered perceptible to the senses through the telling of story, which is actually able to be reproduced adequately only by means of concepts. . . .

Strauß concurs in this judgment that mythical consciousness is the indication of an "unscientific and infant age."

. . . they /"the ancient records"/ are the production of an infant and unscientific age; and treat, without reserve of divine interventions, in accordance with the conceptions and phraseology of that early period. So

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<sup>1</sup>Hartlich and Sachs, Der Ursprung, pp. 14-15. Such an arrogant judgment can only be made from the perspective of blind faith in a possession of the truth (either absolutely or at least as an absolute confidence that one knows how one arrives at the truth) on the part of an author/epoch. This is my translation of: "Heyne kennzeichnet den Mythos als die Vorstellungs- und Ausdrucksform, die dem Menschengeschlecht im Zustande der Kindheit und Roheit eigentümlich ist, also psychologisch-genetisch. . . . Die infantia generis humani ist nach Heyne durch einen dreifachen Mangel (imbecillitas) charakterisiert: einen Mangel des Wissens, einen Mangel des Ausdrucksvermögens und durch das Unvermögen, sich zu einer von den unmittelbaren Sinneseindrücken distanzierenden Kontemplation zu erheben, ein Mangel, mit dem eine gesteigerte Affizierbarkeit durch das Sinnliche Hand in Hand geht.

Infolge dieser Mängel, die mit seiner geistigen Entwicklungsstufe gesetzt sind, ist dem Menschen der Frühzeit, wie Heyne unablässig betont, die mythische Vorstellungs- und Redeweise notwendig und unvermeidlich. Im Zustande der Kindheit kennt der Mensch die wahren Vorgänge und deren Ursachen noch nicht. Unfähig zu einem abstrahierenden Denken faßt er nur auf, was in den Bereich seiner Sinne fällt. Das aber ist jeweils nur Einzelnes.

. . . .  
Der Mangel im Ausdrucksvermögen . . . ist konstitutiv für den sermo mythicus . . ., welcher gekennzeichnet ist durch die Unfähigkeit zur Bezeichnung von Allgemeinem und Abstraktem. Infolge dieser Ausdrucksnot setzt er *concreta pro abstractis*, d.h. er vereinzelt und versinnlicht, und drückt Gedankliches, was angemessen nur im Medium des Begriffes wiedergegeben werden könnte, in der Weise erzählter Geschichten aus. . . ."

that, in point of fact, we have neither miracles to wonder at, on the one hand, nor deceptions to unmask on the other; but simply the language of a former age to translate into that of our own day.

It is not possible not to hear a distant echo, at least, of Bultmann here and right in the very first sentence of D.F. Strauß'

Life of Jesus Critically Examined:

Wherever a religion, resting upon written records, prolongs and extends the sphere of its dominion, accompanying its votaries through the varied and progressive stages of mental cultivation, a discrepancy between the representations of those ancient records, referred to as sacred, and the notions of more advanced periods of mental development, will inevitably sooner or later arise. In the first instance this disagreement is felt in reference only to the unessential--the external form: the expressions and delineations are seen to be inappropriate; but by degrees it manifests itself also in regard to that which is essential: the fundamental ideas and opinions in these early writings fail to be commensurate with a more advanced civilization. . . . hence the discrepancy between the modern culture and the ancient records, with regard to their historical portion, becomes so apparent, that the immediate intervention of the divine in human affairs loses its probability.<sup>2</sup>

Following careful and extensive analysis of the gospels in terms of the three possible routes of understanding, i.e., the supernaturalist, the rationalist, and the mythical, he then suggests: ". . . at the conclusion of the criticism of the history of Jesus, there presents itself this problem: to re-establish dogmatically that which has been destroyed critically."<sup>3</sup> If he sees an other philosophical principle working in these texts, his approach to

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<sup>1</sup> Strauß, The Life of Jesus Critically Examined, p. 48.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 39. Though, of course, Bultmann wishes to maintain that the "essential" idea(s) at the core need only be "translated" for them to have continued power in the present.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 757.

the myths as in need of "de-mythologizing" them in order to reach a philosophical principle remains the same as what we find in Bultmann's work:

Those first Christians needed in their world, for the animating of the religious and moral dispositions in the men of their time, history and fact, of which, however, the inmost kernel consisted of ideas: to us, the facts are become superannuated and doubtful, and only for the sake of the fundamental ideas, are the narratives of those facts an object of reverence.

And what are these "fundamental ideas" for Strauß?

Science has perceived that to convert ideas simply into an obligatory possibility, to which no reality corresponds, is in fact to annihilate them; just as it would be to render the infinite finite, to represent it as that which lies beyond the finite. Science has conceived that the infinite has its existence in the alternate production and extinction of the finite; that the idea is realised only in the entire series of its manifestations; that nothing can come into existence which does not already essentially exist; and, therefore, that it is not to be required of man, that he should reconcile himself with God, and assimilate his sentiments to the divine, unless this reconciliation and this assimilation are already virtually effected.<sup>2</sup>

This suggests for Strauß, implicitly, a Christology:

As man, considered as a finite spirit, limited to his finite nature, has not truth; so God, considered exclusively as an infinite spirit, shut up in his infinitude, has not reality. The infinite spirit is real only when it discloses itself in finite spirits; as the finite spirit is true only when it merges itself in the infinite. The true and real existence of spirit, therefore, is neither in God himself, nor in man by himself, but in the God-man; neither in the infinite alone, nor in the finite alone, but in the interchange of impartation and withdrawal between the two, which on the part of God is revelation, on the part of man is religion.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid., p. 776.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 777.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 777.

The God-man, who during his life stood before his contemporaries as an individual distinct from themselves, and perceptible by the senses, is by death taken out of their sight; he enters into their imagination and memory: the unity of the divine and human in him, becomes a part of the general consciousness; and the church must repeat spiritually, in the souls of its members, those events in his life which he experienced externally. The believer, finding himself environed with the conditions of nature, must, like Christ, die to nature--but only inwardly, as Christ did outwardly--must spiritually crucify himself and be buried with Christ, that by the virtual suppression of his own sensible existence, he may become, in so far as he is a spirit, identical with himself, and participate in the bliss and glory of Christ.<sup>1</sup>

Though for Strauß this is not an exclusive Christological claim for one person at one point in time only:

If reality is ascribed to the idea of the unity of the divine and human natures, is this equivalent to the admission that this unity must actually have been once manifested, as it never had been, and never more will be, in one individual? This is indeed not the mode in which Idea realizes itself; it is not wont to lavish all its fullness on one exemplar, and be niggardly towards all others--to express itself perfectly in that one individual, and imperfectly in all the rest: it rather loves to distribute its riches among a multiplicity of exemplars which reciprocally complete each other--in the alternate appearance and suppression of a series of individuals. And is this no true realization of the idea? is not the idea of the unity of the divine and human natures a real one in a far higher sense, when I regard the whole race of mankind as its realization, than when I single out one man as such a realization? is not an incarnation of God from eternity, a truer one than an incarnation limited to a particular point of time.<sup>2</sup>

Our age demands to be led in Christology to the idea in the fact, to the race in the individual: a theology which, in its doctrines on the Christ, stops short at him as an individual, is not properly a theology, but a homily.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid., p. 778.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., pp. 779-780.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 781.

Is this not the same kind of process of engaging the text, or the text's engagement of us, that Bultmann attempts in his own work?<sup>1</sup> Bultmann confronted the same dilemma: he found myth in the text that, according to his judgment, hindered rather than facilitated understanding in our contemporary age. From his own tradition in Germany he had a well molded understanding of myth as husk and kernel, and he had the example of Strauß' attempt to articulate the "philosophical principle" as the kernel of the myth. The differences in German Idealism from the 19th to the 20th centuries could not permit his embracing the 19th century version, but he did embrace a form of the 20th century. What remains for the purposes of this project is to briefly sketch Bultmann's understanding of myth to show its parallels with that of this "mythic school."

Following the direction established by his own German discussion and understanding of myth, Bultmann's definition of myth rests clearly on the perception of myth as containing a philosophical idea: "Die mythologie ist der Ausdruck eines bestimmten Verständnisses der menschlichen Existenz."<sup>2</sup> Further, "Der Mythos objektiviert das Jenseitigen zum Diesseitigen."<sup>3</sup> Such an understanding involves the judgment, as well, that this is an inferior form of articulation and understanding.

The modern man cannot accept these mythological presentations of heaven and hell any longer; because any talk of an "above" and "below" in the universe has lost

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<sup>1</sup>See above, pp. 39f.

<sup>2</sup>Rudolf Bultmann, Jesus Christus und die Mythologie: Das Neue Testament im Licht der Bibelkritik, trans. by Ursel Gwynnie Richter (Hamburg: Furche-Verlag H. Renneback KG, 1964), p. 17.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 17.

lost any meaning for scientific thinking, but the idea of a transcendent God and evil continues to have meaning.<sup>1</sup>

Or as Bultmann has said on another occasion:

Man's knowledge and mastery of the world have advanced to such an extent through science and technology that it is no longer possible for anyone seriously to hold the New Testament view of the world--in fact, there is hardly anyone who does.<sup>2</sup>

Hence, the need for demythologizing:

If the truth of the New Testament proclamation is to be preserved, the only way is to demythologize it. But our motive in so doing must not be to make the New Testament relevant to the modern world at all costs. The question is simply whether the New Testament message consists exclusively of mythology, or whether it actually demands the elimination of<sup>3</sup> myth if it is to be understood as it is meant to be.

To be understood as they are "meant to be" means to dispense with the offensive form, and to reach the challenge of "a genuine existential decision" at their core:

The mythology of the New Testament is in essence that of Jewish apocalyptic and the Gnostic redemption myths. . . .

The meaning of these two types of mythology lies once more not in their imagery with its apparent objectivity but in the understanding of human existence which both are trying to express. In other words, they need to be interpreted existentially. . . .

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 18. This is my translation of: "Der moderne Mensch kann diese mythologischen Vorstellungen von Himmel und Hölle nicht mehr annehmen; denn für das wissenschaftliche Denken hat ein Reden von 'oben' und 'unten' im Universum jede Bedeutung verloren, aber die Idee der Transzendenz Gottes und des Bösen ist immer noch bedeutungsvoll."

<sup>2</sup>Hans Werner Bartsch, Kerygma and Myth: A Theological Debate, trans. by Reginald H. Fuller (London: S.P.C.K., 1957), p. 4.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 10.

And that is why we have to discover whether the New Testament offers man an understanding of himself which will challenge him to a genuine existential decision.

The contemporary discussion of metaphor, symbol and myth in hermeneutic phenomenology would, to the very contrary say that the "apparent objectivity" of this kind of language precisely is what prevents us from taking it as an objective, literal claim. Bultmann, along with the "mythic school" and others, is treating myth as ordinary language in which the polyvalent character of words is reduced to one literal (i.e., conventional) meaning. In fact, myth is part of the enrichment not only of ordinary language, but of life as betraying the fundamental ontological character of the openness of all horizons, including the horizon of meaning. Ricoeur has pointed this out to the German theological world in his essay "Stellung und Funktion der Metapher in der biblischen Sprache:"

We have seen, that metaphorical language exercises its function of re-description of reality only with the assistance of a discovery of sense (Sinnfindung), which has the value of a fiction. This combining of fiction and re-description is very revealing for the biblical language itself. It means, that the limit-metaphors direct their energy first on our imagination and only then on our will; because they open up these linguistic possibilities of renewal and creativity. I must say that this presents an important hermeneutical consequence. The so-called existential interpretation of biblical language is all too frequently apprehended as a call to decision. If, however, metaphorical language arrives at the re-description only by means of the detour into fiction, so does this include, that this language seeks to convert our model on a non-voluntaristic existence level. While the existential interpretation lays the accent above all on the decision for the new existence, I would like to say, that the metanoia, produced by means of the limit-metaphors, means first of all a turn of the imagination.

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., pp. 15-16.



In this way all ethics, which concern themselves with the will, in order to demand a decision, must be subordinated to a poetics, which opens up new dimensions to our imagination.

This, in principle, represents a judgment at the level of the metaphor (i.e., the sentence). Is it possible to understand myth (i.e., the narrative) as more than the "ordering" muthos, which elevates and enobles, within which the sentence (metaphor) functions? Can myth itself be understood as the attempt to articulate, through fiction, the dynamic movement (act, event) of "what is?" Even when the myth appears in the form of a story of the "everyday" and a language of conventionality? In order to suggest this dynamic "vitalism" of myth, I turn to the writings of Karl Jaspers on myth.

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<sup>1</sup>Paul Ricoeur, "Stellung und Funktion der Metapher in der biblischen Sprache" in Paul Ricoeur and Eberhard Jüngel, Metapher: Zur Hermeneutik religiöser Sprache (München: Chr. Kaiser Verlag, 1974), p. 70. This is my translation of: "Wir haben gesehen, daß die metaphorische Sprache ihre Funktion der Neubeschreibung von Wirklichkeit nur mit Hilfe einer Sinnfindung ausübt, die den Wert einer Fiktion hat. Diese Verbindung von Fiktion und Neubeschreibung ist sehr erhellend für die biblische Sprache selbst. Sie bedeutet, daß sich die Grenz-metaphern zunächst an unsere Einbildungskraft und erst dann an unsern Willen wenden; für sie eröffnet diese Sprache Möglichkeiten der Erneuerung und der Kreativität. Ich muß sagen, daß dies eine beträchtliche hermeneutische Konsequenz darstellt. Denn die sogenannte existentielle Interpretation der biblischen Sprache wurde allzuoft als ein Appell zur Entscheidung aufgefaßt. Wenn nun aber die metaphorische Sprache die Neubeschreibung nur durch den Umweg über die Fiktion erreicht, so schließt das ein, daß diese Sprache unsere Leitbilder auf einer nicht voluntaristischen Existenzebene zu verwandeln sucht. Während also die existentielle Interpretation den Akzent vorwiegend auf die Entscheidung für die neue Existenz legt, möchte ich sagen, daß die durch die Grenzmetaphern erzeugte metanoia zuallererst eine Umkehr der Einbildungskraft bedeutet.

In dieser Weise muß alle Ethik, die sich an den Willen richtet, um ihm eine Entscheidung abzuverlangen, einer Poetik untergeordnet sein, welche unserer Einbildungskraft neue Dimensionen eröffnet."

### Karl Jaspers on Myth

Karl Jaspers offers us a "real" definition of myth as opposed to a "nominal" definition, i.e., his concern is not the "whatness" of myth, but its "how."

He speaks of an unlimited horizon of un-understanding (not mis-understanding) on both the "objective" and "subjective" sides of experience which are not two separate realms (the subjective and the objective) but inseparable.<sup>1</sup> This un-understanding on "both sides" rests upon a distinction that he makes between understanding in a "primordial" sense and understanding at the level of encounter with a world of things. What is "primordial" understanding?

It is the essence of spirit to come forth in relationship to itself. It nourishes itself out of what is understood in its primordial understanding. It (Geist) itself is history; spirit is through tradition. When it is primordial it never begins. It (Geist) has always and already the presupposition of the understood (Hegel).<sup>2</sup>

Primordial understanding is distinguished from mere "understanding-of:"

Between that, which is actually primordial itself in understanding, and that, which only understands what is already understood, remains a leap. Observing understanding can perhaps demand more, comprehending more than the one who is and does. But the more of discernment/

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<sup>1</sup>Karl Jaspers and Rudolf Bultmann, Die Frage der Entmythologisierung (München: R. Piper & Co., Verlag, 1954), pp.38, 99. See "On Intentional Consciousness" in Chapter III below, pp. 231f.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 27. This is my translation of: "Es ist das Wesen des Geistes, sich im Rückbezug auf sich selbst hervorzubringen. Er nährt sich aus dem Verstandenen in seinem ursprünglichen Verstehen, er selber ist Geschichte, ist Geist durch Überlieferung. Er fängt nie an, wenn er ursprünglich ist. Er hat stets schon Voraussetzungen des Verstandenen (Hegel)."

intelligence is had at the price of bloodlessness and therefore still at the price of a fundamental limitation; in the essential moment of discerning there must always be an encountering of that which it is not; what is encountered. And it is easy for us to confuse this grasping in the understanding of the understood as understanding in its actuality. In the normality of such a case, we fall into a self delusion, our own existence is displaced through the appearance of the understanding of experience of possibility; to maintain the un-connectedness<sup>1</sup> of an aesthetic standard of living for our actuality.

Whether primordial or merely an understanding-of, understanding has an unlimited horizon on "both sides:"

Both ways lead into the unlimited: explanation leading to knowledge of the laws of events, that does not reveal its interior, and which in terms of its aspect of knowledge has no interior--understanding leading to knowledge/recognition of the meaning context, which points constantly to an innermost/deepest. Here there becomes clear in the experience of knowing/recognizing always decisively a darkness, an absolute, the accidental character of it-is-so; here there becomes clear a pressing on of the coming into the light of a totally fundamental revelation.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid., pp. 28-29. This is my translation of: "Zwischen dem, der im Verstehen selbst ursprünglich wirklich ist, und dem, der nur versteht, was schon verstanden wurde, bleibt ein Sprung. Der zusehende Verstehende kann vielleicht weiter gelangen, mehr einsehen als irgendeiner von denen, die es selber tun und sind. Aber die Weite der Einsicht hat er um den Preis der Blutlosigkeit und dazu noch um den Preis einer grundsätzlichen Beschränkung: Überall müssen wesentliche Momente seiner Einsicht entgehen gerade dadurch, daß er nicht selber ist, was er einsieht. Und leicht führt uns die Ergriffenheit im Verstehen des Verstandenen zu der Verwechslung, solches Verstehen schon für eigene Wirklichkeit zu halten. Bei Gewöhnung an solches Verhalten geraten wir in die Selbsttäuschung, die eigene Existenz durch den Schein des verstehenden Erlebens von Möglichkeiten zu ersetzen, die Unverbindlichkeit einer ästhetischen Lebenshaltung für eigene Wirklichkeit zu halten."

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 29. This is my translation of: "Beide Wege führen ins Unendliche: das Erklären zur Erkenntnis der Gesetze des Geschehens, das sein Inneres nicht enthüllt und das für diesen Erkenntnisaspekt auch kein Inneres hat--das Verstehen zur Erkenntnis der Sinnzusammenhänge, die stets auf ein Tieferes weisen. Dort wird im Verfahren des Erkennens immer entschiedener das Dunkel ein

Here, in the accidental character of the it-is-so and the pressing on of the coming into the light of a totally fundamental revelation, is the encountering of the un-understanding:

The meaning of all great understanding conceals in itself the coming up against un-understanding on both sides. . . .

Only on one side was the limit fundamental: here it becomes only more dark, insurmountable, the more decisively it is knowledge; still in terms of spirit in its nature is the immutability of the not-hearing noticed; the obstinacy in the inaccessible for ground, the rupture/breaking off of understanding itself, the self-recognition of the un-understandable (which still in apparent understanding conceals as its foreground). On the other side, stands the depth of the unlimited progressive understanding free as an opening up of reasonable existence.

The will to understanding (which is not satisfied with a knowledge from outside) shows in its coming up against the un-understandable either this itself in mythical forms and speculative ideas (then it is as if it wanted to show, but is concealed in fact in grandiose and ambiguous language) or the un-understandable opens itself in the unlimited communication of existence between persons.

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absolutes, die Zufälligkeit des So-seins, hier das Hellwerden-können eines grundsätzlich ganz und gar zur Offenbarkeit Drängenden deutlich." See, again, the analysis of Husserl's intentional consciousness in Chapter III, pp. 235f.

<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 30. This is my translation of: "Der Sinn alles großen Verstehens birgt in sich die Berührung des Unverständlichen nach beiden Seiten. . . .

Nur nach der einen Seite war uns die Grenze grundsätzlich; hier wird sie nur immer dunkler, un-überwindlicher, je entschiedener das Erkennen ist; noch am Geiste ist das Merkmal seines Natur-seins die Unbeweglichkeit des Nicht-hörens, die Starre in der Unzugänglichkeit für Gründe, der Abbruch des Verstehens selber, die Selbstbehauptung eines Unverständlichen, das sich noch im scheinbar Verständlichen als in seinem Vordergrund verbirgt. Nach der anderen Seite liegt die Tiefe der unendlich fortschreitenden Verstehbarkeit frei, das sich-offenbaren-wollen der vernünftigen Existenz.

Dem Willen zum Verstehen (das sich nicht mit dem Erkennen von außen benügt) zeigt im Schlagen an das Unverständliche entweder dieses selber sich in mythischen Gestalten und spekulativen Begriffen; dann ist es, als ob es sich zeigen wollte, aber es verbirgt

It is faith that is able to encounter this un-understanding on both sides, and it presents them in myth or speculative discourse:

Faith sees the un-understandable on both sides as one through its primordial understanding in myth and then in the concept, without really understanding it. It /faith/ comes up against the un-understandable; it makes present understanding in this manner. This faith announces itself in unity between itself and the other. Faith that announces itself makes a claim to understanding. Announcing itself is understandability.

Jaspers has an appreciation of tradition that is echoed in Gadamer,<sup>2</sup> i.e., the priority of the particular over the abstract. It is in the particular that the transcendent (universal) is announced, i.e., the un-understandable from "both sides." This is accomplished through the apparent objectivation of myth seeking clarification through (but never to be substituted by) speculative thought:

Liberalism . . . grasps the meaning of historicity and the necessity of historical origin and its language for faith. For it /liberalism/ is decisive, that the power of faith is not weakened, when all humanity seizes upon the absolute importance of historicity in its objectifications, i.e., when the objective guarantee in the world ceases to be. Philosophical reflection . . . ,

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sich doch in der großartigen und vieldeutigen Sprache. Oder das Unverständliche öffnet sich der unendlichen Kommunikation der Existenz zwischen Menschen."

<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 31. This is my translation of: "Glaube sieht das Unverständliche beider Seiten in eins durch sein ursprüngliches Verstehen im Mythos und dann im Begriff, ohne es wirklich zu verstehen. Es schlägt an das Unverständliche, es vergegenwärtigend in dieser Weise des Verstehens. Dieser Glaube teilt sich mit, in eins sich selbst und dem andern. Glaube, der sich mitteilt, macht Anspruch auf Verstandenwerden. Mitteilbarkeit ist Verstehbarkeit."

<sup>2</sup>See above, pp. 21-22.

which is necessary for liberal faith, can be helpful, not in that it is able to give the content of faith, but in that it frees one for this content. It /philosophical reflection/ opens the space and allows the confirming of the truth of the content of faith over against unfaith and against orthodoxy.

For the tradition is valid as possible language and is not true language in a universal, but rather in the historical situation of existence, which /existence/ comes to itself in it /the tradition/. In the medium of the mythical itself begins the historical grappling/struggle of beings with each other. This occurs behind the fore-ground of the rational and mystical presenting through the present-at-hand, in the confirming, illuminating, and setting down of discussion of an unending, ongoing understanding.

Hence, myth is the particular (the historical event) in which the transcendent, the spiritual, comes to expression. Jaspers stresses the historical, event character of myth precisely over against the abstract and universal, i.e., the unchanging. Myth touches the openness of the horizon both at the level of primordial understanding and at the level of the world of the understanding-of things in that it attempts to speak the former through the latter.

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., pp. 46-47. This is my translation of: "/Die Liberalität/ . . . begreift die Bedeutung der Geschichtlichkeit und die Unumgänglichkeit der geschichtlichen Herkunft und deren Sprache für den Glauben. Für sie kommt alles darauf an, daß die Kraft des Glaubens nicht geschwächt wird, wenn der Geschichtlichkeit die absolute Geltung ihrer Objektivationen für alle Menschen genommen ist, das heißt, wenn die objektive Garantie in der Welt aufhört. Die philosophische Besinnung . . . , die dem liberalen Glauben eine Notwendigkeit ist, kann hilfreich sein, zwar nicht dadurch, daß sie als solche schon Glaubensgehalte zu geben vermöchte, aber dadurch, daß sie für diese freimacht. Sie öffnet den Raum und läßt das in den Glaubensgehalten liegende Wahre gegen Unglauben und gegen Orthodxie vergewissern.

Denn alles Überlieferte gilt als mögliche Sprache und wird wahre Sprache nicht in einer Allgemeinheit, sonder in geschichtlichen Situationen für Existenz, die in ihr zu sich kommt. Im Medium des Mythischen selber findet das geschichtliche Ringen der Existenzen miteinander statt. Das geschieht hinter den Vordergrund der rationalen und mythischen Vergegenwärtigung durch das Existieren in seiner selbst sich vergewissernden, erhellenden, absetzenden Erörterungen eines unendlich fortschreitenden Verstehens."

Much more, I understand under historicality the possibility of existence, the unity of time and eternity in the moment as reality to be fulfilled and experienced. This possibility is grasped out of the freedom of existence /"Object and subject belong together. This fundamental phenomenon of our Being-there (Dasein), of our consciousness and our possibility of existence I call the encompassing (Umgreifende). . . . /T/o Being-there (Dasein) belongs the environment (Umwelt), to freedom of existence belongs transcendence."<sup>1</sup> First in this historicality can the otherwise merely historical win an existential (existentielle) meaning.

How does Jaspers define myth?

One asks, what is myth, what is mythical. It is a speaking in pictures, the graphic, representation, in form and experience, what has a spiritual meaning. This spiritual is not alone so present in these pictures that the pictures could be interpreted through exhibiting their meaning. A translation into mere thoughts makes the actual meaning of myth disappear. In addition, the symbols/ciphers of myth do not have an arbitrary meaning, but rather one with existential (existentielle) weight as distinct from empirical realities, which endure on the whole with agreement for consciousness. Finally, myth concerns us not above all as the object of historical research, rather as present, setting me free and as justified and as possibility.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid., p. 99. This is my translation of: "Objekt und Subjekt gehören zusammen. Dieses Grundphänomen unseres Daseins, unseres Bewußtseins und unserer möglichen Existenz nenne ich das Umgreifende. . . . zum Dasein gehört die Umwelt, zur Freiheit der Existenz die Transzendenz."

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 101. This is my translation of: "Vielmehr verstand ich unter Geschichtlichkeit die Möglichkeit der Existenz, die Einheit von Zeit und Ewigkeit im Augenblick als Wirklichkeit zu vollziehen und zu erfahren. Diese Möglichkeit erfaßt sich aus der Freiheit der Existenz. Erst in dieser Geschichtlichkeit kann das sonst bloß Historische einen existentiellen Sinn gewinnen."

Jaspers makes a distinction between existentielle and existentiale. The latter is what one obtains concerning existence as a result of an objective method of investigation; the former is the living of experience "from out of the source." See, Ibid., pp. 31, 33, and 98.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 89. This is my translation of: "Man fragt, was Mythos sei, was mythisch heiße. Es ist das Sprechen in Bildern, Anschaulichkeiten, Vorstellungen, in Gestalten und Ereignissen,

To the understanding of myth and the meaning of experience as a whole belongs the task of philosophy:

Philosophy is an act of freedom and determines itself, not out of the caprice of humor, but out of the necessity of an articulating faith content<sup>1</sup> in its thought, of a seeing and willing in totality.

In a proleptic manner I find an understanding of myth in Jaspers that coheres with Ricoeur's analysis of metaphor and my suggestion of the meaning of symbol in the above analysis. We encounter in myth not objective language that can be the mere object of an empirical (literal) investigation. Myth is itself a tensive language employing picture, the graspable, presentation in form and experience to present what cannot be objectively articulated. Hence, myth is not concerned with the abstract; it is historical. It is not simply an idea buried in the ornamentation of a story. It seeks in narrative, in the use of conventional language, to articulate the limit experience of the human. In so doing, it employs symbol ("the language of transcendence

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die übersinnliche Bedeutung haben. Dieses Übersinnliche aber ist allein in diesen Bildern selber gegenwärtig, nicht so, daß die Bilder interpretiert werden könnten durch Aufzeigen ihrer Bedeutung. Eine Übersetzung in bloße Gedanken läßt die eigentliche Bedeutung des Mythos verschwinden. Weiter haben die Chiffren der Mythen diese Bedeutungen nicht als beliebige, sondern als solche von existentiellen Gewicht, im Unterschied von empirischen Realitäten, die übereinstimmend für das Bewußtsein überhaupt bestehen. Schließlich gehen uns Mythen an nicht zuerst als Gegenstand historischer Forschung, sondern als gegenwärtige, mir selbst erlaubte und gerechtfertigte und mögliche."

<sup>1</sup> Ibid., p. 108. This is my translation of: "Philosophie ist ein Akt der Freiheit und bestimmt sich selbst, nicht aus der Willkür einer Laune, sondern aus der Notwendigkeit eines sich in ihrem Denken aussprechenden Glaubensgehalts, eines Sehens und Wollens im Ganzen."



is symbol"<sup>1</sup>), and it seeks to break open the static world of understanding to experience the dynamic movement of possibility in life.

#### Summary

The task of this Chapter was to obtain an understanding of the meaning of symbol. This meant that the investigation had to proceed first to obtain a distinction between a symbol and a sign. Rather than following the distinctions of Tillich and Gadamer (which mean to suggest that the definition of a symbol and a sign occurs in terms of their relationship to the reality which they represent), I suggested that Heidegger's analysis was more illuminating in that the definition concerned itself with the functioning (the "how") of signs. I concluded, however, that Heidegger's analysis of sign was in fact an attempt to articulate what Ricoeur accomplishes in his analysis of metaphor. Hence, the distinction between a sign and symbol moved directly into linguistics, and a sign is then to be understood as the distinguishing function immanent within language concerned with the generic and the conceptual. It is the fundamental concern of semiotics. On the other hand, I wanted to suggest that a symbol is a case (a special case) of metaphor, i.e., it functions not merely at the level of the sentence (as does the metaphor), but within the horizon of a narrative (myth). This means that metaphor and symbol are the concern of semantics according to Benveniste's classification of linguistics.

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 44.

Since symbol is understood to be a kind of metaphor, it was particularly important to follow Ricoeur's analysis of the tensive theory of metaphor. Metaphor is not to be understood as mere ornamentation to language (as a kind of after-thought), on the contrary, it is the very exemplification of living speech itself. In the circularity of language from polysemy to conventionality and back to polysemy (or the circle of the categorial order to new meaning resulting in the new categorial order), it is metaphor that performs the decisive function of enabling emergent meaning. Ricoeur observes that it is precisely the metaphorical utterance with its split reference, and all the levels of tension that this split reference entails, that breaks language open from the immanent order of nominalism. This occurs through its split referential function; through the semantic impertinence (the "is not") generating the new semantic pertinence (the "is") while holding the two in tension. At the same time the copula of the metaphorical utterance goes beyond the mere relational function immanent to language and breaks language open to the "is"/"is not" of "what is." The metaphorical utterance has an ontological vehemence that demands ontological descriptions, i.e., speculative (philosophical) discourse.

The discussion then turned to symbol itself, and the claim from Ricoeur that "the symbol gives rise to thought." This is to be understood as poiesis in general, for I wish to maintain, or suggest, distinctions between metaphor, functioning at the level of the sentence, and symbol (a special case of metaphor)

functioning within the horizon of a narrative (myth). The specificity of religious symbols is their concern to articulate limit-experiences, i.e., as limit-expressions. This understanding of "limit" also requires speculative (philosophical) discourse to provide an adequate meaning for its claim.

Finally, the analysis turned to myth. It was maintained that myth is not to be understood as literal, objective language. The understanding of myth in the "mythic school" from Heyne to Strauß to Bultmann (as well as the understanding of myth in Turbayne and Berggren) was contrasted with the understanding of myth by Ricoeur and Jaspers. Myth is not an inferior stage of consciousness' attempt to articulate, by means of the ornamentation of story, abstract ideas. Just as the metaphor announces the fundamental movement of reality, so does myth as it "twists" objective language to announce the "transcendent," i.e., to the elevating and ennobling of the human. The "transcendent"/myth occurs only as history; the meaning of experience which the myth seeks to articulate occurs only in the particular encounter of the individual as an all-encompassing of subject and object, time and eternity, past and present in the moment. The myth addresses us with/in the fullness of the dynamic event character of life. Again, however, the "transcendent" requires speculative (philosophical) discourse to clarify its meaning.

The following Chapter, therefore, is an attempt to engage a speculative, second-order reflection to clarify the meaning of the copula as the ontological difference, and the meaning of

intentional consciousness with its life-world (including temporality). It is an attempt to suggest and understanding of the copula, "limit," and "transcendence" informing metaphor, symbol, and myth. This is followed by a concluding Chapter returning in "post-critical naivete" to the symbol of the Kingdom of God in the language of the historical Jesus to speak of soteriological possibilities in the functioning of this symbol.