VICTIMIZED BY BAD ACCUSATION BUT SET FREE IN THE LIGHT OF HOPE

An introduction to Paul Ricoeur's thinking with a difference in his anthology titled The Conflict of Interpretations (1969)

Thesis

written by

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Hélas! Nous savons encore à peine aimer,

Et nous voudrions penser juste !

O.V. de L. Milosz

Introduction: Evil, a Challenge

My first contact with Paul Ricoeur's work was my reading of an essay entitled "Evil, a Challenge to Philosophy and Theology" (1986). This essay fascinated me in many ways. Maybe first of all because for me, as for Ricoeur, evil has always been a challenge, that against which I had to fight. Then, at the level of feelings, it seemed to me that Ricoeur had worked and reworked his thinking, had struggled against himself many times before he reached this stage of thought. But, even more, the essay itself breathed the pastoral and loving motivation of the author.

From the very first lines, Ricoeur asks the question of how we receive the challenge of evil? "Do we find an invitation to think less about the problem or a provocation to think further about it, or to think differently about it?" (345) These mysterious possibilities are then explained in the body of the text:

The invitation to think less follows Ricoeur's criticism of the desire for systematic totality in theodices (356). By "theodicy" is meant a kind of philosophy in which evil plays a valuable role for the coherence of the whole system. For instance, the principle of retribution, according to which all suffering punishes some moral evil, is already an elemen-

tary theodicy. But this kind of thinking, Ricoeur claims, is unsatisfactory for three reasons: Above all, theodices tend to reduce to silence the lamentations of the ones who suffer[1]. Secondly they are rooted in grounds where philosophy and theology are superimposed in an unjustifiable fashion (345-356). And thirdly they don't take into account the fact that the task to think may not be fulfilled by our reasoning and our systematic totalizations (345).

The provocation to think further about the challenge of evil arises because of the failure of theodices (357). Better ideas are required. In fact the formula "to think further" is borrowed by Ricoeur from Kant. For the latter, the imagination occasions much thought (viel zu denken) for that of which is no proper concept; "Hence what the imagination thus confers on thought is the ability to think further." (1977,36)

How to think further than the classical theodices? By thinking differently. Yes, but how is it possible? "By see-

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1. It is so with the friends of Job who try to culpabilize him (349-350). It is so with both Augustine and Pelagius who, with two strictly moral versions of the theme of evil, leave without answer the protestation of victims of unjust sufferings (350-352). It is so in those theodices which pretend to establish "a positive total for the weighing of good and bad on the basis of a quasi aesthetics that fails as soon as we are confronted with bad things, misfortunes, whose excess cannot be compensated for by any known perfection." (353) It is so, finally, in hegelian dialectics, in which "negativity is on every level what constrains each figure of the Spirit to invert itself into its contrary and to engender a new figure that both supresses and conserves the preceding one." (354) For when a dialectics lets the tragic coincide with the logical in everything, what does the suffering of victims become? (354-356)

king the doctrinal nexus for this thought in Christology," answers Ricoeur (1986,357); that is, by seeking in the affirmation that the Christ suffered, died and is risen from the dead the keystone on which to ground the different way to think. Hence this different thinking is to blossom in moral and political action for and with the victims, and in a spiritual transformation of our feelings and emotions about our own sufferings (358). Outlining some possible avenues for these actions and transformations, Ricoeur concludes the essay on the pastoral and loving note to which I was sensitive.

Ricoeur's concern

What strikes me in "Evil a Challenge to Philosophy and Theology" (1986) is Ricoeur's major thesis: namely that the speculative mode of thinking commonly used in theodices needs to be abandoned for it renders no justice to the complaints of the victims. By repeating this thesis time and again Ricoeur focusses the essay almost exclusively on evil as suffering. Enacted, moral evil seems secondary to him. He evokes the presentiment that "sin, suffering, and death express in different ways the human condition in its deepest unity;" (347) then he adds about culpability that it "contains within itself the feeling of having been seduced by higher forces, which myth has no difficulty in demonizing." (347) Thus it seems to me that to give voice to sufferings in life and even in the experience of guilt is Ricoeur's distinctive concern in this essay.

Why is this perspective distinctive? In what does it differ from the perspective commonly adopted in theodices? In this: In theodices, suffering and moral evil are always thought in opposition to one another, in order to balance the weight of the one by the weight of the other. But Ricoeur breaks the charm of the balance; he underlines the disparity between suffering and moral evil at the level of experience; he declares suffering and moral evil to be two heterogeneous experiences[2], two experiences which are variously superimposed upon one another within the context of one's life.

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2. Ricoeur is even able to state the difference between suffering and moral evil very precisely, by comparing their phenomenological constitutions:

On the one hand, suffering is an experience which affects us. We don't provoke it. Suffering is painful, anti-pleasurable. It is characterized by a diminution of our physical, psychical and spiritual integrity. Finally, humans are the victims of suffering, thus their lamenting is most legitimate.

On the other hand, moral evil can only be predicated to active subjects susceptible of moral responsibility. Also the accusation of moral evil needs to refer to an ethical code in use. Finally, the accusation is followed by a blame, by which the accused is declared to be guilty and to deserve punishment.

Bringing now both hands together, we can compare (a) being affected by suffering and responsibly enacting moral evil, (b) internal pain and external ethical code, (c) lamenting by the victim and blame sentenced on the accused. The irreducible polarities evidenced by this comparison prove that suffering and moral evil are two heterogeneous experiences.

Under one aspect however, notes Ricoeur, the two experiences intersect. The point of intersection is the moment of blame and punishment. For the punishment itself is already a form of imposed suffering (346). It is therefore true that all moral evil results in some suffering. But the converse proposition is wrong: every suffering is not the result of some moral evil. The experience of suffering is a wider, more encompassing, more fundamental field than the experience of moral evil. Suffering affects the whole of our physical, psychic and spiritual existence; whereas moral evil, in its moments of imputation and accusation affects cultural spheres only; in its moment of blame alone is moral evil felt by the whole of our existence.

Enough evidences of the heterogeneity of suffering and moral evil have been given yet in order to provoke the following question: what leads theodicy thinkers to balance all suffering by moral evil? How are they led to such a confusion?

To give up mythological thinking

Ricoeur suggests an answer to that question in an essay called "Le scandale du mal" (1986*). There he writes: "Myths!" (58) In effect, according to him, myths tend to confuse one's thinking on evil, in at least three different ways: first, myths do not differentiate ethics from cosmos (which means that they always presuppose a common source to both

good and bad); second, their aim is to bring answers to the problem of evil (instead of confessing the scandalous character of all evil); and third, they invite the listener or reader to think in direction of the origin of things (instead of pushing them to think forward and to react against that which is scandalous).

Under the influence of myths, it is almost natural to start thinking in terms of a theodicy. The first step toward it consists in positivising myths, that is to say, in attributing to them an objective, normative value. In a second step we listen to the child in us who asks for comfort; thus we look for a way to justify from guilt the God in whom we believe and to affirm at the same time that She, He, It remains in control of the situation. Finally the last step of this sterile walk is taken by our building a logical system of thought which simulates a reconciliation of the three premises which have been posited, i.e.: evil is a positive reality, God is not guilty, God is in control.

If the way from myth to theodicy is so short, it is maybe because myths on the one hand, though rationally primitive, were to reach the same illusion of comfort as theodices now give. But neither myths nor theodices help us really facing evil. For the illusion they convey is not even a free trip in imagination back to a more hospitable mother nature. Rather, myths and theodices feel much more like "the opium of the people," as Marx said. What I mean is that they

provoke addiction and painful aftereffect: Myths and theodices provoke addiction because once we have adopted a mythological way of thinking --or a theodicy pattern-- the latter, in claiming its primordiality and total inclusiveness, rules out any other way to think. Myths and theodices also provoke after-effects, because whatever happens, given the belief that God is in control of everything but at the same time that God is not guilty of any evil, somebody needs to be held responsible for what happened. This leads frequently to the following dilemma: either to accuse a fellow creature without proof, slanderously, or to accuse oneself, unduly, and to suffer the auto-accusation in silence.

This dilemma is real for many of us. For instance, we who profess a doctrine of original sin are confronted in our thinking with an irreducible ambiguity. We take upon ourselves a share of responsibility in the desastrous consequences of "Adam and Eve's original sin". This is noble of us. But is it fair? If we consider ourselves to be subjects <u>distinct</u> from these proto-historical subjects called Adam and Eve in the well-known narrative of Genesis 2-3, then we are led to denounce the doctrine of original sin as being unfair; for then we would pay for somebody <u>else</u>'s crime. To make sense, the doctrine of original sin requires the positing of a relation between our subjectivity and Adam and Eve's subjectivity. But now if we start objectifying this relation[3], then when things go wrong around

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3. Four metaphors --variously blended together in the various forms of the doctrine-- the biological metaphor of procreation, the economical metaphor of inheritance, the educational metaphor of imitation and the political metaphor of shared responsibility within a federation are usually evoked in support of the doctrine.

us without reason, we too are trapped in the cynical dilemma of either slanderously accusing Adam and Eve, or men, or women, that is the other, or unduly accusing ourselves, and suffering the auto-accusation in silence.

This is why we must qualify the relation between our subjectivity and Adam and Eve's subjectivity more precisely. This relation is not actualized by the passing of an object, i.e. guilt, from them to us, but resides in the similarity of the inner constitution and functioning of our subjectivity and will with theirs. The only legitimate starting point of speculations about the original sin is then in a theory of the subject.

From the angle of subjectivity, the various attempts to understand guilt as the passing of an object appear to falsify and increase the problem of our guilt[4]. Thus I will contend in

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But they provide no satisfactory explanation; The ideas of seminally, genetically transmitted guilt, of inherited guilt, of guilt by imitation, or of federal transhistorical guilt distort rather than explain the meaning of "guilt"; for guilt consists in the inner conviction of an active responsible agent that he or she has done evil; guilt has to do with the individual will and its vicissitudes; guilt cannot be received from outside, passively.

4. For instance in a book review titled "Morale sans péché ou péché sans moralisme" (1954), Ricoeur declared: "We know... that a major part of our conscience is archaic; that frequently coincide in the same being an hyper-adult intelligence and an infantile affective and moral sensitivity;" and a few lines below, "...the problem of the discovery of a properly adult culpability." (303) Eleven years later, Ricoeur wrote an essay called "Psychoanalysis and Contemporary Culture" (1965***). There again he declared: "Are we acquainted with what would be an adult feeling of guilt?" (156) and "It is useless to demand an immediate ethic from psychoanalysis without first having changed human consciousness. Man is an unjustly accused being." (157, my emphasis)
This message is so important for Ricoeur that he wrote at least four major papers about it: "Original Sin: A Study in Meaning" (1960*), "The Demythization of Accusation" (1965**), "Interpretation of the Myth of Punishment" (1967) and "Guilt, Ethics, and Religion" (1969). These essays are now gathered in Ricoeur's Conflict of Interpretations (1969).

the first part of my thesis that we are often victimized by bad accusation. This diagnosis will be reached with the help of Freudian psychoanalysis, whose hermeneutics aims at disclosing the genealogy, inner constitution and functioning of our subjectivity. Psychoanalysis will provide the invitation to think less, to give up mythological thinking and patterns of theodices.

Next, in the second part of my thesis, I will suggest the way of a further, different thinking grounded in our desire to be. I will even contend that this desire is set free in the light of hope, hope for the Resurrection.

Psychoanalysis, a diagnosis

About his book Freud and Philosophy (1965), Ricoeur recently told a journalist,

> For me this book has been sort of an abstract auto-analysis which liberated me from evil conceived as culpability. There are many more victims than guilty persons in history. Humans act and suffer; the element of passivity-suffering, which I call "pathique" has permeated through my thinking more and more.[5]

This statement implies that if I want to follow Ricoeur in his thinking further and differently, I need first to join him on the way to "abstract auto-analysis". Thereby remnants of mythological thinking and theodicy patterns will be uprooted, clearing the ground for renewed imagination. At this point, an important problem needs to be raised: We all know that Freud considered religion to be nothing but an illusion, indeed a patho-

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5. Contat M., "L'honnête malice de Paul Ricoeur" in Le Monde (Paris/February 7th, 1986), page 17.

logical one. How can Ricoeur then learn from psychoanalysis and afterwards start thinking differently "by seeking the doctrinal nexus for this thought in Christology?" (1986,357) Does Ricoeur leave a religious illusion --mythology and theodicy-- for another religious illusion --Christology? In this case he wouldn't be better off. He would only uproot a kind of weed and immediately afterwards plant another kind of weed on the same spot.

In this regard, Ricoeur explained his strategy when he was invited to give an introductory lecture on his Freud and Philosophy (1965) at a meeting of La Société française de philosophie on January 22nd, 1966. At this occasion he said:

> There is a necessary progression in the succession of steps which I posit: the positing of the subject[5], the renewal of psychoanalysis as an archaeology of the subject[6], the dialectical positioning of archaeology and teleology[7], and the vertical irruption of the Wholly Other, as the alpha and the omega in the twofold question of archaeology and teleology[8]. (1966,171)

And further,

> Philosophy is not a puzzle of ideas or a heap of scattered themes which can be arranged in just any order. The way that philosophy proceeds and makes connections is all that is pertinent. Its architecture commands its theses. (171)

Why is the succession of these four philosophical moments important? This can be best explained retrospectively, by looking at the succession from end to beginning, i.e. from the believing subject back to the dialectical reflection, to the archaeology of the subject, and finally to the conscious subject. In this way the earlier moments of this progression will appear to be necessary foundations for the later ones. Let us examine that in detail.

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5. In Freud and Philosophy (1965) pages 42-47 are central to the positing of the subject; note 3 page 46 refers for more details to Ricoeur's "Nabert on Act and Sign" (1962).
6. (1965:344-458)
7. (1965:459-524)
8. (1965:524-551)

First, faith concerns the horizon of our limited reflection. In order to avoid reducing faith to an object of reflection, we need to work out reflection first. In this way, faith remains the other of reflection, that at which reflection points, that which reflection cannot objectify.

Next, reflection always starts "somewhere" and aims at getting "elsewhere". If the starting point was forgotten as soon as the destination was reached, then reflection would be mere intellectual wandering. Reflection needs therefore to be dialectical, so that it can keep tracks of its previous moves.

Now, the better the starting point is, the more fruitful reflection will be. To find this best starting point is therefore our priority. Though consciousness itself is the birthplace of reflection, consciousness may not be the ultimate starting point, because we are living bodies before we are consciousnesses; then it may be wise to presuppose an archaeological, or "prenatal", starting point of reflection in our subjective bodily life, prior to consciousness. Such archaeological exploration of the conscious subject is the task fulfilled by psychoanalysis.

This exploration, however, could lead to nonsense if, after the discovery of a primordial starting point "behind" consciousness, we tried to conclude that consciousness is only an effect, a product of this starting point. For then the conscious enterprise of exploring an archaeology of the subject would itself be an effect, an illusion, an absurdity. This is why, first of all, we need to reflect on the articulations of a theory of the subject which honours both the signs gathered "behind" our consciousness and our consciousness itself.

I have now all reasons to follow in the four chapters of my thesis the order of Ricoeur's four philosophical moments.

In the first chapter I will be concerned with the question of the subject. In his introductory lecture on Freud and Philosophy (1965), Ricoeur indicated where his theory of the subject had its root: "It is in Nabert that I found the best formulation of the close relationship between the desire to be and the signs in which desire is expressed, projected, and explained. I stand fast with Nabert in saying that understanding is inseparable from self-understanding and that the symbolic universe is the milieu of self-explanation." (1966,169) Therefore, in my first chapter, I will concentrate on Nabert's theory of the subject.

In the second chapter, which will be expository, I shall explore psychoanalysis as an "archaeology of the subject." I will do so by successively paying attention to three stations on what I shall call "the psychoanalytic Via Dolorossa" in order to stress the humiliating character of our findings at these stations. The three stations are:

a) Becoming a more genuine moral conscience through dream interpretation;

b) Becoming me, from narcissism to superego;

c) Dying for internal reasons.

In the third chapter, dealing with the "dialectical positioning of archaeology and teleology", I shall show that both archaeology and teleology are interpretations of symbols and

myths, but that they are so in opposite directions. Archaeology is concerned with the origin of symbolic meaning whereas teleology is concerned with their power to open up reality. This is what Ricoeur calls the "double meaning of symbols." My task will be to understand how I can dialogue with psychoanalysis while trying to renew my thinking on suffering and moral evil.

And in the fourth and last chapter, heading back from the psychoanalytic Via Dolorossa, I will make my way through a different thinking about suffering and moral evil based on Christology. Three new stations will face the ones I stopped at on the psychoanalytic Via Dolorossa:

a) The demythization of accusation;

b) A new interpretation of the myth of punishment;

c) Freedom in the light of hope

This is why I call my last chapter "On our way to recovery."

Chapter I: The Subject, Act and Sign

"Cogito ergo sum," wrote Descartes. Thereby he put aside all his previous doubting and petrified Cogito (I-think) into a res cogitans (a thinking thing). In identifying thus the subject, Cogito, with its consciousness, he joined the massive crowd of those philosophers who identified the subject with its soul, spirit, psyche or reason, that is, with a non physical thinking thing.

Other philosophers looked at subjectivity and consciousness from another angle. These philosophers would also argue for a subjective conscious life, but not without it being driven by effort (Spinoza), appetite (Leibnitz), will (Schopenhauer), will to power (Nietzsche) or libido (Freud). For them, I am not confined in my consciousness; I drive it; If I am a subject, it is due to my effort and desire. For them, consciousness becomes what needs to be understood in view of my desire if I want to understand myself.

Finally, a third group of philosophers radicalized their views on effort and desire and thought not in terms of a subject, but in terms of economics, dynamics or genetics only. According to them, acts --also acts of consciousness-- are shaped within "me", grow out of "me", are born of "me", enacted by "me"; but "I" is not authoring them, "I" is an effect of consciousness, and consciousness is the final product of non subjective elements.

Jean Nabert, whose theory of the subject Ricoeur borrowed[1], belongs to the second group of philosophers above. For Nabert the question of the subject concerns "the relationships between the act whereby consciousness posits and produces itself and the signs wherein consciousness represents to itself the meaning of its action." (1962,211)

Nabert's philosophical argumentation uses rational categories --those shaped by Kant. Nevertheless Nabert expands the limits of rationalism by working at reconciling various points of view rationally, yet without reducing them to reason. His philosophy is called "reflective" because in it thinking becomes reflection.

In regard to the theory of the subject, Nabert embraces successively three points of view: first the psychological viewpoint of act and motive; second the rational viewpoint of act and value; and third the existential viewpoint of desire and imagination, in which the full relation of act and sign is finally disclosed. Ricoeur reviewed this theory of the subject in "Nabert on Act and Sign" (1962), an article which I shall study in detail now.

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1. Ever since Faillible Man (1960**) and The Symbolism of Evil (1960), which are dedicated to Jean Nabert, Ricoeur discretly but steadily acknowledged his debt to the bright, difficult and not well-known French philosopher. Some good notes on Ricoeur's indeptedness have recently been gathered by Colin P., "L'héritage de Jean Nabert" in Esprit (1988), special issue "Paul Ricoeur", No 7-8 July-August, pages 119-128. Besides, Ricoeur's interpretation of Kant is very similar to Nabert's. See in this regard Roviello A.-M., "L'horizon kantien" in the same issue of Esprit, pages 152-162.

Act and motive

From his first perspective of act and motive Nabert works out a careful analysis of how free acting and psychological determinism tie together. He attempts to point at an active freedom despite the seemingly contradictory evidence of psychological determinism.

Nabert starts with the act and looks backward: what does precede the act? Beginnings of act, inchoative acts, or, to use a metaphor which is found in neither Ricoeur nor Nabert, fetal or prenatal acts. How is it possible then that the making of a decision looks afterwards like a series of psychological motives? It is so because we never see the fetal acts, but only logical pictures of them. What we call "motive" are not live fetal acts but inert logically organized pictures of them.

So objectified in inert, logical pictures, decision making "appears to us like a body of necessity in which we no longer know where to fit a spirit which is free." (214) But the motives themselves are motives only because they follow and trace a prior and free fetal act. It is then the process of transposing fetal acts into motives which provokes a withdrawal of responsibility; responsibility, focusing on the ultimate act only, abandons its previous course to what Nabert calls "the law of representation". Though the free spirit cannot ever be seen, its existence must be affirmed nevertheless.

It appears that "motive" is the ambiguous concept on which the duality of free acting and psychological determinism rests[1]: an act first existentially shares in active life as fetal act, but then it is objectified in logical motives and fitting into a psychological determinism. We cannot resurrect acts from motives and bring them back to their former state of fetal acts. But at least we can be suspicious of the determinism of motives and try to reconstitute in imagination their economical, dynamical and biological genealogy. This movement from motive to fetal act is called by Nabert "recovery". Indeed this is also what Freud does in psychoanalysis.

But Nabert, not satisfied yet, still wonders about the psychic law of representation: "What is this expressive power whose strange virtue consists in deploying the act in representation? We understand, of course, that in becoming a spectacle the act is made recognizable for us. By our motives we know what we have willed. But why is this knowledge presented,

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1. This ambiguity of motives was not clearly detected by Ricoeur in his doctoral thesis, Freedom and Nature (1950). There he wrote, "our acts depend on our judgements, but our judgements depend on our attention. Thus we are masters of our acts because we are masters of our attention. This libertas judicii is what moves in the examination of motives and becomes resolved in choice." (184-185) In this passage, Ricoeur's overtrust in the freedom of attention, which is typical of Husserlian phenomenologists, drew him very close to the thinking thing of Descartes.

not in its signs as knowledge of an actual willing, but as knowledge of a willing which is abolished in an inert given?" (215) Ricoeur reports the following response on Nabert's behalf:

> The possibility of reading the text of consciousness under the law of determinism exactly coincides with the effort of clarity and sincerity we need in order to know what we want. Moreover, if they were not enclosed in an uninterrupted narrative, our acts would be only momentary flashes and would not make a history or even a duration. Hence the moment the act is grasped again in its own verbalization, the tendency is strongest to forget the act in its sign and to exhaust the meaning of psychological causality in determinism. (215)

However, because of psychological causality there is also a frustration: we cannot ever contemplate any fulfilled act. For we are always forced to stare backward at pictures, not of our actual act, but of prenatal stages of it. The baby is supposed to be born, but we cannot ever see it. The lack of identity of our own acts with our own selves is therefore our lasting psychological condition (217).

In sum, psychological determinism refers back to another kind of causality --an active causality. Though we were able to disentangle these two kinds of causality from one another, the bond between them has not been made clear yet. At present we can only say with Nabert that psychological determinism is grasped as "the mould of another kind of causality." (quoted by Ricoeur, 216) If the relation between psychological determinism and the "other kind of causality" is not thought further,

the philosopher hesitates between the profession of an exiled freedom (first group of philosophers at the beginning of the chapter) and that of an empirical explication, faithful only to the law of representation (third group of philosophers at the beginning of the chapter). But Nabert is pleased with neither alternative.

Act and value

This is why Nabert also explored the relationship between active causality and laws of reason, "at the very heart of active consciousness, between its pure power of positing itself and its laborious production by the mediation of psychological elements." (217) The argumentation is no longer psychological. Instead we join Kant on his field of expertise, in order to have in scope the entire breadth of the relation between freedom and reason. Nabert writes,

> Reason can furnish norms only. It is the synthesis between these norms and freedom which produces values. Values require a contingent adherence of consciousness to the norms of a thinking stamped with impersonality. (quoted by Ricoeur, 218)

Ricoeur adds,

> The objectivity of values expresses the resistance of norms to our desire; their subjectivity expresses the consent without which value would be a force only. (218)

Indeed, in moving from psychology to reason we haven't lost the duality of act and motive we had discovered. But

the acts without identity of the psychological point of view are now gathered as the acts of a subject. Likewise, the psychological motives belong now in the more numerous (psychological, aesthetical, ethical, religious etc) values. Likewise, the withdrawal of responsibility which characterized psychological motives has now become the forgetfulness of the subjective initiative which sustains values. Likewise, the mixed character of psychological motives is now apparent in the more general concept of value; for the concept of value is the hinge between freedom and reason, as motives were the hinge between prenatal acts and actual understanding. Likewise finally, the benefit from motive's "textuality" historywise becomes now the benefit from reference to a body of already-acknowledged norms in order to judge one's own self rightly.

But what appears clearly in view of reason alone is the active causality, the subject. From the viewpoint of psychology we could only perceive shadows of it. But now active causality can be thematized as the subject who freely adheres to values. This is our gain in moving to reason. However this gain is accompanied by a loss: the rational subject is not Descartes' I-think, but rather his thinking thing. How then can we benefit at the same time from both the subject we found at the level of reason and the tracing of live acts we found at the level of psychology? Nabert's solution consists in reflecting from a third point of view, i.e. existence.

Desire and imagination

From psychological understanding to existence, the path is straight. In fact we glimpsed existence already, when we evoked the psychological frustration of not being able to contemplate any fulfilled act. On that occasion we concluded that the lack of identity of our own acts with our own selves is our lasting psychological condition. This frustration is existential too. For existence itself is constituted by a double relation: "between an affirmation which institutes it and surpasses its consciousness, and a lack of being, which is attested to by the feelings of fault, failure, and solitude[2]." (219) It is this inadequation of existence to itself, this lack of identity, which "puts at the center of philosophy the task of appropriating to itself the originary affirmation through the signs of its activity in the world or in history." (219)

Reaching existence is also possible from reason: the only perspective which changes in this case is that norms of reason loose their objectivity; they become but values which I choose existentially.

Therefore existence appears to be the one root common to values of reason and psychological motives. Values and motives are produced by the same existential desire. In view of exis-

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2. In Jaspers' philosophy, fault, failure and solitude are ciphers of the existence whose validity Ricoeur had difficulty to recognize in the fifties, because of his belief in the priority of innocence over guilt. The evolution of Ricoeur's thinking in this regard is carefully analyzed by Vansina D.F., "La problématique épochale chez P. Ricoeur et l'existentialisme" in Revue Philosophique de Louvain 70 (1972), pages 587-619.

tence, acts are both lively and subjective, and motives and values can be fused in one unique category Nabert calls "sign".

Why are signs produced, existentially? Because of my lack of identity with myself, I exist by an "alternation" between two movements, between a concentration of my ego at its source and its expansion in the world. To use an image of my own, I am existentially alive by ceaselessly breathing in and out. Self-consciousness happens when I breathe out "toward the world to become the principle or rule of (my) action" and, at the same time breathe in, for the world to become "the measure of satisfaction of my concrete consciousness." (220) I exist as self-consciousness by creating out of the world signs for myself. A value's "essence is born when (my) creative act withdraws itself from its creations, from its rhythms of intimate existence, which are henceforth offered to contemplation." (220) Essences are the objectification of my existential creation of values. This is why, in Nabert's precise wording,

> the ideality of value-essences is nothing more than the ideality of creations, of permanent directions born of productive imagination which have become rules for action and evaluation for the individual consciousness. They are clothed, certainly, in an authority which transcends the contingent movements of an individual consciousness. However, only the twofold character of the human spirit, capable at once of creating and of affecting itself by its own creations, gives a specious character to the transcendence of essences. (quoted by Ricoeur, 220-221)

This citation implies, with major consequence for my thesis, that the assumption that ethical values would be contemporaneous with the creation of the world, before and outside human life, is a deceptive illusion due to our "forgetfulness of the fact that it is characteristic of the human spirit to be affected by its own creations." (220) There is no absolute Law because of which our guilt would be a fate. If I am victimized by bad accusation, it is due to the body of laws I have created in myself.

A very clear similitude with psychoanalysis is also to be deduced from the above citation of Nabert: Psychoanalysis traces the formation of consciousness from desire to its transformation into symbols and further into an oppressive ideal. Likewise Nabert speaks of an existential desire producing values, to which is then mistakenly attributed a transcendent origin. This movement from desire to thought is also echoed in Ricoeur's philosophy, in which the heightening of desire by value is the passage from the real and from life to the symbol, and often to undue objectification of the symbol.

For Ricoeur, as well as for Nabert and earlier for Kant, it is the productive imagination which works existentially the transition between desire and signs. The productive imagination has a double power of expression: on the one hand it elevates desire to symbol by <u>representing</u> the desire; and on the other hand it brings together symbol and value by <u>verifying</u> the value. The productive imagination, says Nabert,

"creates the instrument, the matter of value, as much as the value itself." (quoted by Ricoeur, 221) The productive imagination relates "the act whereby consciousness posits and produces itself and the signs wherein consciousness represents to itself the meaning of its action." (211) Finally we reached this philosophy of the subject as desire and consciousness we had been looking for since the beginning of this chapter.

An archaeology of the subject

Thanks to Nabert's philosophy of the subject, Ricoeur claimed he could interpret philosophically psychoanalysis as an archaeology of the subject. What does it mean? Couldn't he do so with the help of another philosophy of the subject as well? In order to answer this question, let me assess the three groups of philosophers I defined at the outset of this chapter.

In the first group, the subject is said to be identical with consciousness. Because of this identity, self-knowledge is obtained by the subject through direct intuition. But in return, the archaeological digging beneath immediate consciousness must be declared void and in vain. For in these philosophies whatever doesn't belong in immediate consciousness doesn't belong in the subject's identity either. Therefore, given their logical subject without arche, the philo-

sophers of this group cannot but condemn Freud's discourse on a subjective desire --the libido-- prior to consciousness.

In the third group, the subject is supposed to be an effect of consciousness. The archaeological digging in order to find the savage side of instinctual existence causes no problem to the philosophers of this group. However in this operation the effect of subjectivity is deconstructed and finally these philosophers are left with an archaeology without subject. Ricoeur never agreed with this philosophical loss of the subject. This is why he questioned and argued against the ultimate philosophical consequences of Lévi-Strauss' structural anthropology[3] and Lacan's structural psychoanalysis[4].

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3. See the discussion between Lévi-Strauss and Ricoeur in Esprit 31 (1963) no 322, pages 628-652. There Ricoeur repeated three times to Lévi-Strauss: "But if I don't understand myself better in understanding myths, can I still speak of meaning? If meaning is not a segment in self-understanding, I don't know what it is." (636,640,641) Then, finding Lévi-Strauss' answers unsatisfactory, Ricoeur concluded: "...you are in the despair of meaning; but you save yourself by the thought that, if people have nothing to say, at least they say it so well that it is possible to submit their discourse to structuralism. You save the meaning, but it is the sense of non-sense, the admirable syntactical arrangement of a discourse which says nothing. I see you at this conjunction of agnosticism and of an hyper-intelligence of syntaxes. Thereby you are at the same time fascinating and disquieting." (652)

4. See the discussion between Lacan and Ricoeur in Archivio di filosofia (1964) 55-57; or Ricoeur's comment on Lacan in Freud and Philosophy (1965) 390-418; Reviewing this book, Schérer, "L'homme du soupçon et l'homme de la foi" in Critique 21 (1965) no 223, pages 1052-1067, has a very fine analysis of the relation of Ricoeur to Lacan (1064); And for a more recent and detailed study of Lacan by Ricoeur, see Ricoeur's "Image and Language in Psychoanalysis" (1978).

For philosophers of the second group only does the idea of an archaeology of the subject make philosophical sense. For they hold that the subject is neither confined in or identical with consciousness, nor a mere illusion in an essentially material world. For them, subjectivity arises from our bodily freedom to act according to our own limited subjective causality and is manifested in consciousness by our ability to evaluate our freedom and direct it accordingly; and indeed, to evaluate our freedom is exactly what an archaeology of the subject tries to do.

In such a theory of the subject, present, existential, consciousness is seen to be an act without representational identity with itself. This implies that present, existential, consciousness contains either signs of the past or future-oriented imagined signs, aims, wishes or hopes, but never self-contained beatifying identity.

Concerning the signs of the past, the motives, we discovered with Nabert that our conscious representations of the past were always irrealized and logicized through what he called the "law of representation". Up to now, this theme of the law of representation was left undeveloped. But it will become an important theme in my second chapter, because the theory of psychoanalysis aims precisely at formulating the transformation and distortion of the life of our desire into dream representations and finally conscious texts to be interpreted.

Chapter II: Three Stations on the Psychoanalytic Via Dolorossa

Psychoanalysis can rightly be called an "archaeology of the subject", since Freud precisely studied the aspects of the subject's desire prior to immediate consciousness.

Three "sites" can be explored in Freud's archaeology of the subject: The first (unconscious, pre-conscious, consciousness), reached by dream interpretation, leads to the discovery that consciousness is not a given, but rather a task. The second (ego, id, superego), reached by culture interpretation, leads to the discovery that the ego is not its own master. The third, surrounding the two previous sites, displays marks of death-instincts within desire itself; according to Freud, these marks witness to a mythical fight between Eros and Thanatos, Desire and Death.

Let us now "walk" from the first to the second and finally third site of this archaeology of the subject. I call this walk a "psychoanalytic Via Dolorossa" because each of the sites visited causes increasing feelings of humiliation, as each of the stations of the cross increased the sufferings of Jesus-Christ.

a) Becoming a more genuine moral conscience through dream interpretation

A physician would diagnose the sickness of his patient by interpreting his pulse, the colour of his tongue or some similar signs. Freud diagnoses desire by interpreting dreams. Why dreams? Because while dreaming we are less impermeable to the expression of our desire than while awake. In dreams one's thinking passes in a threefold "regression": logical thought returns to pictorial representation; man returns to childhood; the flow of an idea, which is barred from ending in motor activity returns back toward the perceptual pole and ends in hallucination (1965,160).

Yet Freud noticed that dreams don't give straight pictures of one's desire either. Dreams feature transpositions, condensations, substitution of pictorial images for verbal expressions and secondary distortions of meaning which render them unintelligible. The task of the interpreter then consists in undoing the confusion in dream texts and in reconstituting the history of the desire which produced them.

Freud first thought that the history of desire obtained by dream interpretation would correspond exactly with the history of charge exchanges between neurones in biology. But soon he had to abandon this theory because it didn't fit the practice. In replacement he had to find another setting where

he could tell, maybe not the history, but at least the story of one's desire. This is why he constituted a fictive threefold topography: The first field (topos) in it is consciousness; consciousness is so rational that there is no place in it for pure desire; on the other hand consciousness is what enables us to interpret. The second field in the topography is the pre-conscious; dream is its language; in dream desire is represented. The third field in the topography is the unconscious; the unconscious has no language, apart from life and desire themselves; Freud made up for this lack by creating a language par défaut, a language in which pseudo-biological instincts and their life are the replica of the hidden reality of one's desire. This threefold topography happened to be a flexible theoretical model with the help of which Freud could clearly "display" the results of his psychoanalytic practice.

One of Freud's first clinical conclusions then was that consciousness always avoids being conscious of real desire. Similarly, I never interpret my own dreams accurately; I need somebody else's help to set me on the right tracks; and this never happens without being painful for me. Freud interpreted this phenomenon in his topography as barriers giving strong resistance to any passage from one field to another --especially from the unconscious to consciousness. Dreams, however, were seen to be the fulfillment of repressed wishes. This is why they could be used by Freud to overcome the barriers between the three fields; or, more exactly, to provide the basis on which, after interpretation, the analyst could formulate hypotheses about what goes on in the unconscious of the analyzed.

Very briefly described, we have here the elements Ricoeur wants to make hermeneutical sense of in Chapter II of the Dialectic in Freud and Philosophy (1965). Thanks to Nabert's philosophy of the subject, Ricoeur's task is made simple. Nabert's analysis of act and motive in particular proves to be very fruitful. For when Nabert tries to recover in imagination the fetal act beneath the motives by deconstructing them, his attempt is not different from Freud's tracing the life of one's unconscious desire with the help of his topography. Ricoeur can write then that in psychoanalysis,

> the place of meaning is displaced from consciousness toward the unconscious... Consciousness ceases to be what is best known and becomes problematic. Henceforward there is a question of consciousness, of the process of becoming-conscious (Bewusstwerden), in place of the so-called self-evidence of being-conscious (Bewusstsein). (423,424)

But on the other hand, the unconscious

> cannot be reified as a region of the world. Consequently, the first task --the displacement-- cannot be separated from the second task --the recapture of meaning in interpretation. This alternation of relinquishing (déprise) and recapture (reprise) is the philosophical basis of the entire metapsychology. If it is true that the language of desire is a discourse combining meaning and force, reflection, in order to get at the root of desire, must let itself be dispossessed of the conscious meaning of discourse and displaced to another place of meaning. This is the moment of dispossession, of relinquishing. But since desire is accessible only in the disguises in which it displaces itself, it is only by interpreting the signs of desire that one can recapture in reflection the emergence of desire and thus enlarge reflection to the point where it regains what it had lost. (423-424)

As Nabert honored both act and motive, likewise psychoanalysis, when viewed as an archaeology of the subject, honors both desire and consciousness.

I would even suggest that the similarity of Nabert's treatment of act and motive and Freud's first topography can be shown in more details. Although Nabert was concerned with a theoretical psychology of the will and Freud with the clinical reading of actual desire, both thinkers played on the same distinction of life --act for Nabert and desire for Freud-- and representative --motive for Nabert and dream for Freud. Of course Freud's hermeneutics is much more complex than Nabert's schema; but I think that because of its extreme sobriety, Nabert's basic schema cannot but also implicitly be the skeleton of Freud's topography.

I would then describe the similarity as follows: Nabert's motives and their mixed character --representation of fetal acts in static pictures-- correspond to Freud's dreams and their own mixed character --dream-work translated into texts. Next, Nabert's law of representation corresponds to Freud's barrier between the unconscious and the pre-conscious, to his dream censorship. Next, the withdrawal of responsibility which is characteristic of Nabert's motives corresponds to our inability to interpret correctly our own dreams evoked by Freud. Finally, the textuality of motives which, according to Nabert, is valuable historywise corresponds to the dream texts which can be used by Freud in order to work out an analysis of the desire which produced them.

I can maybe even go one step further, in suggesting that the lack of identity of our own acts with our own selves, which is, according to Nabert, our lasting psychological condition (1962,217) justifies rationally the theoretical constitution by Freud of an active desire "behind" and "prior to" our consciousness.

In sum, though Freud asks --and rightly so-- the question of consciousness, nevertheless his hermeneutic is not an hermeneutic of the absurd. On the contrary, thanks to it Freud collects information which are more genuine for my desire to understand myself than that of my moral conscience. The problem with my conscience is that it is always object-oriented, toward wished-for, hated, loved or feared objects. This orientation masks my desire and misleads me in my quest for self-understanding. By contrast, in Freud's hermeneutic the object is only considered as "a mere variable of the aim of an instinct." (424) In psychoanalysis there is no possibility to seek refuge behind objects, values or works. The psychoanalytic focus on my desire is always right on target insofar as my self-understanding is concerned.

Here is the first humiliation on the psychoanalytic Via Dolorossa: My consciousness is underinformed. In consciousness I try to disguise the truth of my instincts. I prefer to hide behind objects rather than to face my instincts.

Shall I then confess with Hamlet, Freud and Ricoeur: "Thus does conscience make cowards of us all?..." (quoted by Ricoeur, 190)

b) Becoming me, from narcissism to superego

Freud's topography --unconscious, pre-conscious, conscious-- remained tied to a story starring my instincts exclusively. But Freud also constituted a second topography, better called "personology", in order to tell another story, where my desire is subject to something other than itself, to external constraints which create a new life situation. Hence the personology sets into play not a series of fields for solipsistic instincts but a series of roles --ego/personal, id/impersonal, superego/suprapersonal-- assumed by my desire situated within culture (156).

Man in culture cannot fulfill all his wishes. The family, the mores of a group, tradition, explicit or implicit education, political and ecclesiastical power, penal and, in general social sanctions hinder him in doing so. Faced with such hindrances, one starts developing a repressive agency within himself. "With his desires one effects the ideal... Desire is no longer by itself; it has its 'other', authority." (178) This thought is not foreign to we who discovered with Nabert the human tendency to transform values into norms. Then the true problematic of the ego, as Freud sees it, is expressed basically in the alternative of dominating or being dominated, of being master or slave (181). To become me is to find my role, to master my superego, to dominate. My ego has a genetic history in which I learn to be myself.

This is why we cannot understand Freud's personology apart from a history of ego development. This history starts with narcissism, continues through identification, and knows a crisis with the Oedipus complex and its resolution into a superego. This history, as we shall see, is humiliating for our feeling that we are good-natured nicely sociable persons.

Narcissism is the primordial landmark of one's instincts. It represents the primal confusion between thing-love and self-love. The object is an aim of the instinct; but likewise and more fundamentally so, the ego itself is an aim of the instinct. The ego is primarily narcissistic. In a second phase only, "the process of distinguishing between the external and the internal, between the world and the ego, is a process of economic division between what the ego can incorporate into itself and prize as the possession of the 'pleasure-ego' (Lust-Ich) and what it rejects as hostile, as the source of unpleasure." (126) Among the various marks of this primary narcissism (enumerated by Ricoeur, 127) let me notice in particular the egoism of sleep. For in sleep dreams are a pure manifestation of the primary narcissism; this explains why in his first topography Freud could concentrate on the libido alone and didn't need to pay attention to the libido's other. In sum, narcissism is the original form of desire, from which all object-libido depart, but to which one always returns. The narcissistic ego is the "reservoir" of libido.

In "Mourning and Melancholia", Freud tells us how the libido returns to our narcissistic ego when we are separated from love-objects. A melancholic facing, let's say, a friend's death reacts by heightening self-criticism. "In melancholic's self-reproaches the ego has been substituted for the loved object against whom the reproaches had originally been directed... What has happened is this: instead of being displaced onto another object the libido was withdrawn into the ego and employed in establishing an identification of the ego with the abandoned object." (quoted by Ricoeur, 130-131) Freud called this process "narcissistic identification with the object", that is to say the substitution of identification for the object-love. An important part of our identity, probably most of it, is constituted in this manner.

Further, in Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality, Freud intended to show the weight of prehistory in man's sexual history. According to Freud, "Civilization is built up at the expense of the sexual instincts, through the restriction of their use and in reaction against the threat of their potential perversity." (quoted by Ricoeur, 194) Before being educated the toddler sees everything as natural objects of sexual pleasure. Hence, precises Ricoeur,

> institutionalization is necessarily painful: man is educated only by "renouncing" archaic practices, by "abandoning" former objects and aims; institutionalization is the counter-part of that "polymorphously perverse" structure. Because the adult remains subject to the infant he once was, because he can lag behind and regress, because he is capable of archaism, conflict is no mere accident which he might be spared by a better social organization or a more suitable education; human beings can experience entry into culture only in the mode of conflict. Suffering accompanies the task of culture like fate, the fate illustrated by the Oedipus tragedy. (196)

But this cultural explanation of desire and repression is not sufficient for Freud. He still needs to interpret it with the help of his topography, in terms of instincts exclusively. Thus he asks: how can the internalization of authority be a differentiation of instincts? Focussing on the Oedipus complex, he notices that the parents are the model to be imitated and that at the same time each of them is an obstacle to the child's desire for the other one[1]. The tension of the Oedipus complex arises then because of a double identification, positive by imitation, negative by rivalry. Freud comments,

> The broad general outcome of the sexual phase dominated by the Oedipus complex may, therefore, be taken to be the forming of a precipitate in the ego, consisting of these two identifications in some way united with each other. This modification of the ego retains its special position; it confronts the other contents of the ego as an ego ideal or superego. (quoted by Ricoeur, 225)

Still this doesn't answer Freud's question, since it doesn't explain how the positive identification --which is narcissistic-- and the negative identification --which is the result of an object-libido for the other parent-- are united with one another outside narcissism. The answer is to be found in Freud's "The dissolution of the Oedipus complex". In this

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1. Here I slightly depart from source texts since I apply to both parents that which is commonly spoken of the father only, i.e. frightening authority. However this freedom I take is not alien to Freud's thinking. In effect, his theme of bisexuality and of the feminine reversed Oedipus complex go in the same direction. (See Ricoeur's note 88, 234)

essay we understand that the object-libido for one parent is abandoned because the child fears repression (castration) by the other parent. Ricoeur comments:

> By thus emphasizing the aggressive and severe character of the parental threat of punishment, Freud improves his interpretation on several counts. For one thing, he strengthens the connection between narcissism and the giving up of the libidinal cathexis of the parental object; indeed, it is in order to save its narcissism that the child's ego "turns away" from the Oedipus complex... Thus this object-cathexis is "given up" and "replaced" by identification. By connecting the abandonment of the object and narcissism, Freud reinforces his theme: "The ego ideal is... the expression of the most powerful impulses and most important libidinal vicissitudes of the id." Secondly, one sees more clearly that the superego is opposed to the rest of the ego, for it "takes over" (entlehnt) the severity of the father and perpetuates within the ego his prohibition against incest. (227)

Insofar as the life of instincts is concerned, Freud's question is now answered. Nevertheless there remains in the repression of the Oedipus complex an element of self-aggressivity which cannot be accounted for in a simple story of the libido alone. It seems that negative powers are also in action. Freud called them "death instincts". We shall hear about them in more detail at the third station on our psychoanalytic Via Dolorossa.

But at present, as we pay attention to the history of ego and superego genesis, I want to draw our attention particularly to the place morals are given in the psychoanalytic theory. To imagine it is not difficult: according to the psychoanalytic theory, man's relation to ethical obligation is primarily a situation of weakness, of nondomination. The ethical man, like the neurotic, is essentially one who is not "master in his own house", one whose real personality is

underdeveloped. One who is smothered by his ethical superego, by his system of norms[2]. (182-183)

In the interpretation of psychoanalysis as an archaeology of the subject, this underdevelopment of the personality is a sign that the subject swallows values without digesting them, or acknowledges norms without responsibly adhering to them. So that the one who has a very developed ethical system has not necessarily a better sense of justice than the one he calls amoral. On the contrary, it seems that the objectivity of an

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2. Twenty years before he wrote his book on Freud, Ricoeur wrote about a similar theme in his study of "the law of the day and the passion of the night" in Jaspers' philosophy of existence. Here is an excerpt of this study:

> The law of the day is that existence manifests itself in the world, and constructs it with order and clarity. Under this law dim forces need to be subdued: the obscure feelings stemmed from childhood, the voices of the earth and of blood are received but transmuted into the clarity of filial devotion and national feeling; sexuality in particular finds its balance only when it symbolizes the closest communication...
>
> Yet in the bosom of happy consciousness under the law of the day the voice of sacrified powers protests... Something tells us that the way of destruction leads to the Transcendence too: This is the passion of the night. It is passion for it has no tasks, no aims, no genuine clarity, not even a language. It is a passion especially because it goes to the night.
>
> The passion is accomplice of all obscure forces. It rushes back toward origins, toward the maternal breast, toward earth and race... Eros is more than sex, more than a language for communication: it is the passion for a unity without law, in margin of all communication, a way to sink beyond lucidity and the patient construction of language, yet without returning to elementary agitation. Finally, the touch-stone of this passion is its affinity with death; death is its grand finale... The priviliged form of this passion is the death for love... (1947,276-278)

ethical system is often a place where one who is afraid of his subjective responsibility seeks refuge. But what the subject really finds "there" is his death as subject, and his new life as slave.

To be called "slave of our superego", this is the second humiliation for us, ethical men and women on our psychoanalytic Via Dolorossa. Shall we then be courageous enough in order to listen to Freud's following advice ?

> You feel sure that you are informed of all that goes on in your mind if it is of any importance at all, because in that case, you believe, your consciousness gives you news of it. And if you have had no information of something in your mind you confidently assume that it does not exist there. Indeed, you go sofar as to regard what is "mental" as identical with what is "conscious" --that is, with what is known to you-- in spite of the most obvious evidence that a great deal more must constantly be going on in your mind than can be known to your consciousness. Come, let yourself be taught something on this one point! ... You behave like an absolute ruler who is content with the information supplied him by his highest officials and never goes among the people to hear their voice. Turn your eyes inward, look into your own depths, learn first to know yourself! Then you will understand why you were bound to fall ill; and perhaps, you will avoid falling ill in the future. (quoted by Ricoeur, 426-427)

c) Dying for internal reasons

In the first topography we were informed by Freud about our potential desires. In the personology we saw how these potential desires were actualized while one tries to survive the coercive power of civilization. On both occasions, Freud was able to read the instincts thanks to his hermeneutic, based on the equivalence of two systems of reference, a life story of instincts on the one hand, and a clinical observation of their representatives on the other. However it happened that some representatives, such as aggressiveness, masochism and so on, couldn't satisfactorily be paralleled by any story about instincts. The instincts presupposed by those representatives remained mute in regard to Freud's hermeneutic. This is why all the theories he developed about them are but speculations. Freud admitted this when he said that he was only putting forward a plausible hypothesis, that he had no proof to offer. (mentioned by Ricoeur, 297)

This being said, here is his hypothesis: Freud posited the reality of death instincts despite the fact that he couldn't isolate pure representatives of them. To make up for this lack Freud thought of death instincts as parasitic or cancerous instincts fused with standard instincts of the id, and hence reaching the ego and superego. "Henceforth," Ricoeur explains, "instead of considering death face to face in a dogmatic mythology, we will

approach them in the density of the id, ego and superego." (296) Practically, this means turning first to Freud's theory of sadism.

Ever since the Three Essays on Sexuality, sadism for Freud covers three sets of phenomena:

> First, it designates a more or less perceptible component in any normal and integrated sexuality; second it designates a perversion, sadism proper, i.e. a mode of being that has become independent of that sexual component; and last, it also stands for a pregenital organization, the sadistic stage, in which that component plays a dominant role. (295)

Sadism echoes an instinct of the id directed toward a libidinal object; but whereas libidinal instincts aim at sexual possession, the instinct involved in sadism aims at the destruction of the object. This is why sadism seems to be a representative of death instincts. Yet sadism becomes a perversion only when death instincts are defused from the object-libido.

From sadistic perversion one moves very easily next to erotogenic masochism (pleasure in pain). In the case of erotogenic masochism, the surplus of the death instincts "remains inside the organism and with the help of accompanying sexual excitation... becomes libidinally bound there." (298) Freud calls such masochism "primary masochism" for it accompanies the libido throughout its entire development[3].

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3. Such masochism "appears as the most primitive 'coalescence'

Later on, primary masochism also plays a major role in how the ego receives and accepts the constitution of the superego. In The Ego and the Id (chapter 5), Freud reinforces major articulations of his theory of the superego constitution simply by introducing the death instincts of primary masochism. Here is how: we remember that the superego was derived from the fear of enduring a repression by the father (or the mother). But what was left without explanation was the cruelty of the superego and the severity of the moral conscience resulting from this fear. In effect, psychoanalysis is only interested in how these cruelty and severity are generated from inside one's desire; but neither the theory of the libido nor the theory of identification could account for such a generation. Thus Freud put forward the hypothesis that cruelty and severity only find their psychoanalytic explanation with reference to primary masochism. This hypothesis occasions a perspicacious comment about the moral superego and death instincts by Ricoeur who writes,

> The instinctual character of the superego implies not only that the superego contains libidinal residues from the Oedipus complex, but that it is charged with destructive rage thanks to the defusion of the death instinct. This goes very far, even to the point of diminishing the importance of instruction or reading, of the "things heard" --in short, of word-presentations-- in the development of conscience, to the profit of the great obscure forces rising from below... What is now holding sway in the superego is, as it were, a pure culture of the death instinct. (298-299)

(Legierung) of love and death. Masochism accompanies the libido through all its developmental phases and derives from them its successive 'coatings' (Umkleidung): the fear of being eaten up (oral stage), the wish to be beaten (sadistic-anal stage), castration fantasies (phallic stage), fantasies of being copulated with (genital stage)." (298)

At stake here is the dependence of the moral law on death. With the help of Nabert and Freud, we became aware that it is the ego which transforms the real and life into values, and that these values, in becoming a body of norms (a superego), could lead us to passive slavery; on the other hand, nevertheless, Nabert also emphasized the importance of this body of already-acknowledged norms in order to judge one own self rightly. But now it appears that even this self-justice is not righteous, that it is entailed by a sadism prior to all rules and therefore to the rulership of the subject. Doesn't this discovery throw a new light on Paul's saying, that "before the law was given, sin was in the world. But sin is not taken into account when there is no law"? (Romans 5,13) At least it certainly throws some light on Ricoeur's feeling, quoted in my introduction, that culpability "contains within itself the feeling of having been seduced by higher forces..." (1986,347)

Returning to our study of Freud, let us now focus on what the implication of death instincts in Freud's interpretation of culture are. Apart from death instincts, the process of civilization was best described as "uniting separate individuals into a community found together by libidinal ties." (1965,303) Why then does man fail to be happy? Why is man as cultural being dissatisfied? Freud answers,

> Men are not gentle creatures who want to be loved, and who at the most can defend themselves if they are attacked; they are, on the contrary, creatures among whose instinctual endowments is to be reckoned a powerful share of aggressiveness. As a result, their neighbor is for them... someone who tempts them to satisfy their aggressiveness on him, to exploit his capacity for work without compensation, to use him sexually without his consent, to seize his possessions, to humiliate him, to cause him pain, to torture and to kill him. Homo homini lupus. (quoted by Ricoeur,304)

Because death instincts are anti-cultural,social ties can no longer be regarded as a mere extension of the individual libido.

Thus Freud concludes,

> Man's natural aggressive instinct, the hostility of each against all and of all against each, opposes this program of civilization. This aggressive instinct is the derivative and the main representative of the death instinct which we have found alongside of Eros and which shares world-dominion with it. And now, I think, the meaning of the evolution of civilization is no longer obscure to us. It must present the struggle between Eros and Death, between the instinct of life and the instinct of destruction, as it works itself out in the human species. This struggle is what all life essentially consists of, and the evolution of civilization may therefore be simply described as the struggle for life of the human species. And it is this battle of the giants that our nursemaids try to appease with their lullaby about Heaven. (quoted by Ricoeur,305)

Ricoeur explains very well why at this point Freud replaces the individual libido by a mythic supraindividual Eros:

> If the living substance goes to death by an inner movement, what fights against death is not something internal to life, but the conjugation of two mortal substances. Freud calls this conjugation Eros; the desire of the other is directly implied in the emergence of Eros; it is always with another that the living substance fights against death, against its own death, whereas when it acts separately it pursues death through the circuitous paths of adaptation to the natural and cultural environment. Freud does not look for the drive for life in some will to live inscribed in each living substance: in the living substance <u>by itself</u> he finds only death. (291)

This reversal of perspective --from individual desire to supra-individual Eros-- on the destiny of life brings on new elements for our assessment of the sense of guilt. Whereas in <u>The Ego and the Id</u> guilt was presented under its pathological aspect, now the functional necessity of a sense of guilt for the sake of civilization is brought to light. It is the sense of guilt which finally puts limits to the expression of the desires of an individual; and in doing so the sense of guilt also works for

the sake of the supraindividual Eros. "The sense of guilt is now seen as the instrument which culture uses, no longer against the libido, but against aggressiveness. The switch of fronts is important. Culture now represents the interests of Eros against myself, the center of deathly egoism; and it uses my own self-violence to bring to naught my violence against others." (306) The severity of the superego is necessary for the general interests of humanity. I am victimized by my superego for the sake of the collectivity, which otherwise would be endangered by my aggressivity.

We reach here the third humiliation on our psychoanalytic Via Dolorossa: our sense of guilt doesn't even stem from a positive sense of responsibility. On the contrary, guilt is a judo trick played by cultural powers on our death instincts in order to neutralize them with the help of their own energy. Freud says that "the price we pay for our advance in civilization is a loss of happiness through the heightening of the sense of guilt." (quoted by Ricoeur, 309) The shame in all this is that we are so well-trained that we feel guilt not only about our aggressiveness --as required by the society-- but also about our most legitimate intimate desires. Isn't a feeling of guilt about the latter stupid and ridiculous? Yes. How much more ridiculous then are our clever intellectual constructions in order to hide our intimate desires and also the feelings of guilt which we generate about them!

In short, I conclude that psychoanalysis considered as an archaeology of the subject points at three real problems, which are not to be underestimated in our further thinking: our consciousness is underinformed, our personality underdeveloped and our sense of guilt distorted and often inappropriate.

Can we really trust our judgmental conscience and our sense of justice? Does it still make sense to value suffering as a retribution for moral evil? Don't we do better to acknowledge our ignorance, rather than to stick to mythological thinking and patterns of theodices, like the "friends" of Job?

To explore psychoanalysis as an archaeology of myself is a good means in order forgiving up mythological thinking and patterns of theodices, because such exploration doesn't lead to the opposition of objective arguments to objective arguments, but rather leads to the opening up of my consciousness to consciousness of myself and thereby to overcome my addiction to myths.

But after this exploration, is it still possible to avoid religious agnosticism?

Chapter III: The Crossroad of Double Meaning

The question of religious agnosticism is also Ricoeur's. All the more so, in fact, that in an earlier book, The Symbolism of Evil (1960), Ricoeur had developed at length the theme of symbolic meaning in religious confessions of guilt. Hence De Waelhens is very perspicacious when he pinpoints that,

> Freud resolutely denied any symbolical meaning irreducible to desire, whereas Ricoeur never stopped until now to acknowledge such symbolical meaning and, furthermore, to thematize it. Is symbolical meaning illusory? If it is not, and if, on the other hand, we are to concede to Freud that his reduction of symbol to the language of desire isn't illusory either, we are then obliged to show that the illusion concerns the alternative and that human symbolism makes total sense only if we consider it as being at the same time regressive and prospective; but this demonstration, whether successfully achieved or not, is contrary to the letter of the Freudian texts and would therefore stand as the "un-thought" in Freud's thought. [1]

If Ricoeur doesn't want to embrace religious agnosticism, nor to discredit psychoanalysis without valuable reasons, then his task is complex: he needs to coordinate the regressive, psychoanalytic and prospective, teleological, religious interpretations of symbols and myths by thematizing aspects of Freud's thinking which Freud didn't think through himself. This task is the "dialectical positioning of archaeology and teleology" mentioned in my introduction as the third step, after the "positing of the subject" (my first chapter) and the "renewal of psychoanalysis as an archaeology of the subject" (my second chapter).

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1. De Waelhens, "La force du langage et le langage de la force", review of Ricoeur's De l'interpretation : Essai sur Freud (1965), in Revue Philosophique de Louvain 63 (1965), page 592.

What Ricoeur's dialectical positioning of archaeology and teleology involves for him and Freud is nicely put by Albano, as he writes:

> Ricoeur methodologically proceeds not by confrontation as cancellation but by encounter as dialectical in which the other as implicitly present in oneself is made explicit and oneself as implicitly present in the other is made manifest. The other is thought as within oneself; oneself as within the other in a moment of mutual recovery and correction, a transformation as the intensification and radicalization of understanding. [2]

In his dialectical encounter with Freud Ricoeur already made explicit the presence of Freud in himself when he transformed his reading of Freud into self-understanding, by interpreting psychoanalysis as an archaeology of the subject, his. Now then, though with the restriction that he shouldn't at any time forget his import of Freud, Ricoeur can venture to export his understanding of symbolic meaning into psychoanalysis. Doing so would be to think through the "un-thought" in Freud's thinking.

Ricoeur is well aware that psychoanalysis is an analysis and that there is no reason to "complete" it with a synthesis. But he also thinks he can show that "this analysis cannot be <u>understood</u>, in its strictly 'regressive' structure, except by contrast with a teleology of consciousness which does not remain external to the analysis but which analysis intrinsically refers to." (1965,473).

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2. Albano P.J., <u>Freedom, Truth and Hope</u>, (Lanham M.D.:University Press of America/1987), page 103.

Archaeological theory and teleological practice

What really qualifies the psychoanalytic theory to be called an "archaeology of the subject" is Freud's positing of the unconscious (pre-pre-conscious), impersonal, undivided, originary, solipsistic desire. But this desire would only be a mere hypothesis if it was not supported by clinical verifications, that is, by the accumulation of evidences that the psychoanalytic diagnosis and therapy help people to overcome their psychological problems. Thus psychoanalysis, as an archaeology of the subject, involves in fact a twofold movement: First, the digging beneath consciousness, against resistances, in order to diagnose what is going on at the originary level of our desire; and second, the come back to reality, through a better consciousness and acceptance of ourselves, in order to face life more courageously and responsibly. These two movements, which we can call archaeological theory and teleological practice, are interdependent: the accuracy of the archaeological diagnosis can only be confirmed by the psychological development of the analyzed. Conversely, the therapy is entirely dependent on the possibility to perform the ascesis of all conceptual, objective beliefs and wishes.

Ricoeur's difficult task starts right here: What teleological meaning does survive this ascesis? The answer to this question is: Those making the ascesis itself possible. Hence if Ricoeur wants to list those teleological meanings, he needs to understand the process of this ascesis, its conditions of possibility and, consequently, its sphere of validity too. Ricoeur reflected on three teleologically meaningful elements,

without which this ascesis is not possible, and which are implied by the ascesis itself. These are: (1) the interpretive consciousness, (2) identification, and (3) sublimation.

(1) The first element, which could easily be overlooked, is related to the nature of the unconscious desire posited in psychoanalysis. This unconscious desire doesn't belong to the observable world. Its nature cannot be dissociated from the act of interpreting. It is a "being-interpreted". Therefore the possibility of an archaeological unconscious desire depends on a teleologically interpretive consciousness. To be sure, this consciousness is not a house in which one dwells but a task without end. Freud, unlike some of his radical followers, didn't underestimate the teleological orientation of consciousness. The clearest indication of Freud's awareness of it is his meticulously chosen vocabulary. Instead of using the common German noun for consciousness, Bewusstsein, which literally means "being-conscious", he used to use a verbal form, bewusstwerden, which literally means "becoming-conscious". Hence we can say that Freud's reduction of all objective meanings to desire is his attempt to liberate desire from its objects but not from any meaningful teleology. True, cold-blooded logically-ruled universalistic ideals cannot escape Freud's critique. But on the other hand, a passionate, ecological, personalistic, self-disclosing, developmental teleology not only survives Freud's critique but is even a necessary condition of its possibility.

(2) Let us assess now Freud's concept of identification. We remember that, according to Freud, identification occurs when I reintegrate an object-libido into my ego because of the inaccessibility of the object. The inaccessibility of the object seemed to be the reason why the object-libido was reintegrated into the ego. Although this "reason" highlights the most probable itinerary covered by my desire, it doesn't explain the how and why of identification: How is the consciousness of the other generated in the same? Where does the desire for identification come from? Why does the child want to be like his/her parents? Because of these unsolved questions, Ricoeur claims that,

> What psychoanalysis recognizes under the name of identification is simply the shadow, projected onto the plane of an economics of instincts, of a process of consciousness. (1965,480)

The limited focus of Freud's explanation is not worthless, for it enables him to discover that,

> the energy made available by the dissolution of the object-libido, and hence by the regression of that libido, is what enables us to progress toward affectionate trends of feeling and to invest our emotions in cultural objects. (480)

But it must be said that the core meaning of identification is overlooked by Freud. Even in his cultural analysis, Freud limited his descriptions to an archaeological aggregate of solipsistic libidos; because of the constraints of his topography he couldn't take into account the reciprocal interaction of my desire with other desires; in a word, Freud neglected the fact that desire is from the outset found only in an intersubjective situation. Hence he missed the core meaning of identification. In effect, identification makes sense only when I

desire to be like somebody else because I desire to be desired like him or her; and this can happen only in an intersubjective situation.

Further, while agreeing with Freud that identification results from the loss of an object-libido, Ricoeur claims, against Freud, that the loss of object-libido is not "always and fundamentally a regressive process, a return to narcissism," (481) but that it is, on the contrary, "an educative transformation of human desire, a transformation related to the process of reduplication of consciousness not in an accidental but in a fundamental and founding manner." (481)

In sum, the proper meaning of identification cannot be disclosed in Freud's archaeological aggregate of solipsistic libidos but implies the teleological formation of a community of consciousnesses.

(3) We turn now to the meaning of sublimation. Freud never wrote any thematic essay on it. Neither did I refer to it in my psychoanalytic Via Dolorossa, because Freud's teaching on sublimation doesn't disclose any dark sides of our personality which we try to hide to ourselves. For Freud, there are two ways we can deal with instincts which cannot be satisfied: either to renounce them in the name of religious principles and be neurotically oppressed by our superego; or to divert the impulse of these instincts off the original sexual aim to other esthetic, cultural, artistic aims. The latter option is sublimation. Freud's basic description of sublimation can be found in his Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality. In substance, it says that,

> Sublimation is a deviation with respect to the aim of the libido and not a substitution of an object. This deviation is connected with the "preparatory activities" that precede the normal sexual act; more precisely, it is connected with the sensual pleasure resulting from the preparatory acts of touching, seeing, concealing, revealing; such acts can become separate aims that take place of the normal one. This deviation places sublimation in the field of the esthetic, i.e. of cultural phenomena. (484)

The difficulty with Freud's conception of sublimation is that he is not able to explain how or why the "preparatory activities" are valued to the point of becoming worth sublimating the instincts altogether. In a word, Freud couldn't explain the ethical, prizing, character of sublimation. His concept of the solipsistic libido prevented him from doing so. Ethics, in its broadest sense of valuation, is meaningful only on the basis of a dialectic of desire, of the desire to be desired. This was demonstrated by Hegel. But such a desire to be desired cannot be inscribed in a topography calibrated so that it only takes into account the simple instincts of a solipsistic libido. The desire to be desired can only appear from the point of view of a teleological consciousness.

At this point, let us try to think more concretely what a "teleological consciousness" means. We will do so by following Ricoeur's reinterpretation of sublimation. The origin of sublimation in desire, its ethical character, its dialectic constitution and its cultural and artistic outcome are not different from the characteristics of what Ricoeur in his study of Nabert called the passage from the real and from life to the symbol. The comparison between sublimated instincts and symbols is worth being detailed here:

- First, the process of symbolization (Ricoeur) or valuation (Nabert) takes place in the existential desire and imagination; likewise sublimation (Freud) occurs when desire is desexualized and aims at cultural and artistic expression.

- Next, the productive imagination (Ricoeur and Nabert) has a double power of expression; on the one hand it elevates desire to symbol by representing the desire, and on the other hand it brings together symbol and value by verifying the value. The productive imagination seems to correspond to Freud's dream-work, because the dream-work is the process by which repressed desires are fulfilled and represented symbolically. The similitude between sublimation, in dream-work, and symbolization seems evident. But on one point Freud's theory of sublimation is short of a theory of symbolization, i.e. valuation. On this point Ricoeur corrects Freud by pointing at the fact that valuation is an implicit and necessary component of sublimation.

- Next, symbols and values are created by the existential dialectic of the ego and the world which is to become value for it (Nabert). The same dialectic also occurs in sublimation (as redefined by Ricoeur after Freud) between narcissism, the original form of desire from which all object-libido--and sublimated instincts as well--depart but to which one always returns, and what the sublimated instincts produced.

- Finally, once the creative act withdraws itself from its creations, the latter are offered to contemplation (Nabert). Likewise art works are the outcome of sublimated instincts (Freud).

In sum, Ricoeur's comparison of sublimation and symbolization resulted in the identification of the two. This identification

of sublimation with symbolization becomes even central to his attempt to coordinate archaeology and teleology, because the symbol becomes the very articulation of, on the one hand, its origin in individual desire and, on the other hand, its destination as value-bearer in a teleological consciousness of the world.

Giving now a conclusion to this entire section, we can say that in Freud's archaeology of the subject the unconscious, identification and sublimation implicitly call for a teleological complement. Because of his premises Freud never formulated this complement. But in fact, since the task of psychoanalysis is to set our ego free from the id and from the superego, free in its interaction with others, free in its valuation of the world, I would say that psychoanalysis matches an archaeological theory with a teleological practice. Ricoeur comes to the same conclusion when, about Freud's famous "Wo Es war, soll Ich werden" (Where id was, there ego shall be), he writes,

> Ultimately, the task of becoming I, of becoming the ego, a task set within the economics of desire, is in principle irreducible to the economics. But this task remains the unspoken factor in Freud's doctrine; the empty concept of sublimation is the final symbol of this unspoken factor. (492)

Myths and psychoanalytic interpretation

Stimulated by Ricoeur's study of the dialectic between archaeology and teleology within psychoanalysis, I want now to reflect on the relation of psychoanalysis to myths --as source of non objective meaning. This will draw us back to my original questioning about myths and thinking about evil.

In this section I will start by sorting three different definitions of "myth" within the psychoanalytic theory, but then I will observe that the psychoanalytic theory itself is dependent on myth-interpretation. Thereby I shall show that the archaeological psychoanalytic interpretation, however useful it is, is not the only arbitrator in what Ricoeur called "the conflict of interpretations".

Here are the three meanings of "myth" I found in Freud's work:

(1) "Myth" was first understood by Freud as the cultural analogue of private dreams. Ricoeur tells us that, for Freud, "ever since 1900 the Traumdeutung has proposed that dreams are the dreamer's private mythology and myths the waking dreams of people, that Sophocles' Oedipus and Shakespeare's Hamlet are to be interpreted in the same way as dreams." (1965,5)

In his practice of dream interpretation Freud was further convinced that the dreamer borrows symbols and myths from the traditions and folklore of his/her people and reshapes this material in order to reflect his/her own desire. Myth, in this first instance, is thus the ciphered message of one's desire. What Freud called "dream-work".

(2) Although Freud had tried to ground his analyses of desire on a biological basis, he was quickly forced to renounce this project, because it was impossible to make sense of phenomenons simultaneously and parallelly at the biological and linguistic levels; there is no one to one regular correspondence between these two fields of knowledge. Therefore, taking his stand on the linguistic level, Freud had no other solution but to project hypothetical instincts and their economy back into a fictional biology. This operation implied that he couldn't ever verify his guesses about instincts with the help of biological data. This is why Freud even confessed that "the theory of instincts is so to say our mythology." (Quoted by Ricoeur, 1965,136) To that Ricoeur adds: "We do not in fact know what instincts are in their own dynamism. We do not talk of instincts in themselves; we talk of instincts in their psychical representatives; and by the same token we speak of them as a psychical and not as a biological reality." (1965,136)

The adventurous character of Freud's speech about instincts is all the more obvious when he speculates about death instincts. For, to the latter correspond no distinct psychical representatives. Instead death instincts are supposed to be parasitic instincts, sometimes fused with, sometimes defused from desire in-

stincts. Freud couldn't speak about death instincts otherwise than by direct speculation. And, as Ricoeur reminds us, "all direct speculation about the instincts apart from their representatives, is mythical." (311) This led Ricoeur to wonder about what the foundation of psychoanalysis truly is:

> Under a scientific surface, or rather under the coating of a scientific mythology, there arises the Naturphilosophie which the young Freud admired in Goethe. But then, must it not be said that the whole libido theory was already under the control of Naturphilosophie and that Freud's entire doctrine is a protest on the part of nature-philosophy against the philosophy of consciousness? The patient reading of desire in its symptoms, its fantasies, and in general its signs never equaled the hypothesis of the libido, of instincts, of desire. Freud is in line with those thinkers for whom man is desire before being speech; man is speech because the first semantics of desire is distortion and he has never completely overcome this initial distortion. If this is so, then Freud's doctrine would be animated from beginning to end by a conflict between the "mythology of desire" and the "science of the psychical apparatus" --a "science" in which he always, but in vain, tried to contain the "mythology", and which, ever since the "Project", was exceeded by its own contents. (313)

(3) Building on the analogy between dreams and popular myths, Freud thought he had to find the historical reason why a myth like Oedipus is rooted so deeply in our unconscious and so universally in our cultures. The answer he finally gave was that there must have been a real patricide very long ago in history, which would be remembered by everybody, but unconsciously so. He pleaded in favour of this historical event in Totem and Taboo. Unfortunately, the ethnographical and anthropological data he relied upon are very fragile and artificially positivized by post-Darwinian historicists. Thus Ricoeur argues that "one does psychoanalysis a service not by defending its scientific myth as a science, but by interpreting it as myth. At the end of Totem and Taboo, Freud thinks he can derive Greek tragedy from the his-

toric totem meal. The truth of the matter is just the reverse: the Freudian myth is the positivistic transposition, in terms of the ethnography of the beginning of the twentieth century, of the tragic myth itself." (208-209) Myth, in this third instance, is thus a linguistic fiction about the historical origin of psychic vicissitudes.

If we reread now the three meanings of "myth" I sorted out with the help of Freud's hermeneutical topography, it will become clear that the theme of "myth" pervades the whole of Freud's hermeneutic. Here is the topographical rereading:

	Unconscious (biotic)	Pre-conscious (psychic)	Consciousness (linguistic)
Types of myths in psychoanalysis	myth as instincts	myth as dream-work	myth as fiction about the historical origin of psychic vicissitudes

In viewing them in parallel, this rereading suggests that the different definitions of "myth" within psychoanalysis are in fact complementary aspects of what I would call "the psychoanalytic myth", that is, the myth pervading the whole of psychoanalysis. I agree totally then with Ricoeur's suggestion that psychoanalysis from beginning to end is an exploration of a "mythology of desire." (quoted above, 1965,313)

Beware mythologizing psychoanalysis

What can annihilate the richness of psychoanalytic interpretation is versions of it --sometimes by Freud himself-- which

hypostasize one of the mythical aspects of psychoanalysis and argue for its being the genuine form of objective knowledge. The one mythical aspect so hypostasized would then become a mythology, that is, a useless description of reality in some kind of mechanicistic terms. Let us see what happens when each of the three aspects of myth I sorted out is mythologized:

(1) When pre-conscious, psychic dream activity is mythologized, then it is impossible to account for a conscious subject. For the conscious subject doesn't enact the dream-work. On the contrary, in this mythologizing, the subject is played by dreams, is merely an extension of them, is a waking illusion continuing the dream-work; at best the conscious subject can organize structurally the content of dreams, as in Lacan's structuralist psychoanalysis.

(2) When instincts are mythologized, then arises a kind of biological mechanicism. In this type of mythology, history is not ours, history is played by two giants, Eros and Thanatos, who fight against each other; in this mythology, we are nothing but the battle field.

(3) When the linguistic fiction about the origin of psychic vicissitudes is mythologized in a historical patricide, then there arises a kind of pan-tragic view of history. By introducing the real event of a patricide as the beginning of our history[3],

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3. What could it mean that the Bible has in its first chapters a myth of fratricide (Cain and Abel), not of patricide (Oedipus)? Is the myth of Cain and Abel less tragic than the myth of Oedipus? Would Freud's personology be any different if based on the myth of Cain and Abel? This would need to be thought through.

Freud "breaks with any view of history that would eliminate from history what Hegel called 'the work of the negative'." (209-210)

Because of these three "traps", Ricoeur is very wise when, explaining how to move from a study of desire to a philosophy of existence, he gives us the following warning:

> It is in deciphering the tricks of desire that the desire at the root of meaning and reflection is discovered. I cannot hypostasize this desire outside the process of interpretation; it always remains a being-interpreted. I have hints of it behind the enigmas of consciousness, but I cannot grasp it in itself without the danger of creating a mythology of instinctual forces, as sometimes happens in coarse conceptions of psychoanalysis. It is behind itself that the cogito discovers, through the work of interpretation, something like an archaeology of the subject. Existence is glimpsed in this archaeology, but it remains entangled in the movement of deciphering to which it gives rise. (1965*,21)

The other way of interpreting

Ricoeur's analysis of sublimation revealed that by the symbol archaeology and teleology were articulated to one another. Then in my analysis of myth and psychoanalysis I concluded that psychoanalysis from beginning to end is an exploration of myths. Now I ask a double question: Are a teleological and a religious interpretations of myths also legitimate ones?

First, the question of a teleological interpretation of myths is not superfluous because myths are not simple symbols. Freud convincingly interpreted them as made of symbols gathered together in dream-work. If the plot of myths itself is shaped to represent repressed instincts, isn't then the interpretation in terms of

instincts the only valid one? The way it is asked, this question overlooks the fact that though myths have their roots in dream-work, not every dream can be called a myth; thus Ricoeur answers that,

> If dreams remain a private expression lost in the solitude of sleep, it is because they lack the mediation of the artisan's work that embodies the fantasy in a solid material and communicates it to a public. This mediation of the artisan's work and this communication accrue only to those dreams that at the same time carry values capable of advancing consciousness toward a new understanding of itself. If Michelangelo's Moses, Sophocles' Oedipus Rex, and Shakespeare's Hamlet are creations, they are so in proportion as they are not mere projections of the artist's conflicts, but also the sketch of their solution. (1965,521)

Therefore myths can also be interpreted teleologically, by discussing the sketch of their solution to the conflict they tell about.

Second, the question of a religious interpretation of myths needs to be separated from the question of a teleological one because the problematic of religion cannot be assimilated to any anthropological and societal teleology. In Freud and Philosophy(1965) Ricoeur spends 8 pages (524-531) explaining why teleology and religion need to be distinguished from one another. Here are two of his reasons: Because of evil, God always appears as the Wholly Other. Further, as was taught by Kant, illusion is the necessary structure of our thought of the unconditioned. In view of these two reasons, our tendency to think about the Wholly Other as an object is a natural inertia of our thinking which needs to be resisted against. If not, we give birth to both these metaphysical and sacred objects which were successfully demystified by Freud.

Can then myth be interpreted religiously? Ricoeur seems to

answer "yes" when he writes,

> By contrasting Eros with death, Freud recaptured a certain mythical basis preserved by the German romantic tradition; through the latter he was able to go back to Plato and Empedocles and describe Eros as "the power which holds everything together." But he never suspected that this mythology of Eros might concern an epigenesis of religious feeling, nor that Eros might be another name for the Johannine God, ... (1965,536)

In this passage, Ricoeur is able to derive from the myth itself, in parallel, both the psychoanalytic and the religious interpretations. On the one hand, the "power which holds everything together" is interpreted by Freud as the "power which holds everything to my desire, or, more generally, to the desire to possess"; whereas, on the other hand, the same mythical sentence can be interpreted religiously as the "power which holds me related to the world as kingdom of God by a thirst for sharing."

That the world as kingdom of God appears to our thinking as an illusion cannot be avoided. This is why the religious interpretation of myths needs to be taken one step further than the teleological one. Bultmann called this extra step "demythologization". While demythologizing, our questioning reason leaves its place to a listening meditation; we are divested of our pretension to determine sovereignly the meaning of our own existence. Hence the myths in which we look for the solutions to our conflicts appear "as a work wherein man determines God instead of receiving from God his justification." (1968*,393) Unless they are also stripped off their inner rationality, myths cannot be interpreted religiously; but when it is the case, then religious interpretation becomes preaching of the Word of the Wholly Other, preaching of the Wholly Other's loving grace in Jesus Christ.

Chapter IV: On our Way to Recovery

Though this chapter is my last one, it is by no means a conclusion. For two reasons: First, it is the chapter where I will try to follow Ricoeur in his different thinking about evil, on which the "Wholly Other"has a fundamental influence. The previous chapters were but a springboard; now I will dive. And second, I'd like this chapter to open up my thinking, not to close down a new set of beliefs. This is why I shall offer suggestions rather than conclusions.

The three sections of this chapter are named after the titles of three essays by Ricoeur gathered in his Conflict of Interpretations (1969):

a) "The demythization of accusation" (1965**) responds to my "becoming a more genuine moral conscience through dream interpretation" to the extent that our conscience is the first of our accusers.

b) A new "interpretation of the myth of punishment" (1967) responds to my "becoming me, from narcissism to superego" to the extent that our superego results from our fear of being punished by our father.

c) "Freedom in the light of hope" (1968) responds to my "Dying for internal reasons" to the extent that our hope is hope in the one who was risen from the dead.

a) The demythization of accusation

Accusation is based on a mythical understanding of the world. The example of the Oedipus myth within psychoanalysis helps us

to understand correctly the mythical basis of accusation and its impact on our existence. The Oedipus myth is a good example, but it has no exclusivity in regard to the meaning of accusation. For instance, the biblical myth of the judgment of Adam and Eve or the biblical myth of Cain and Abel are probably as meaningful about accusation as the Oedipus myth is. Indeed the most fruitful approach to myths of accusation is by cross-pollinating their meaningful seeds together. Ricoeur did so in his fascinating Symbolism of Evil (1960).

As a second parenthesis before really getting any further into the demythization of accusation, I think it is useful here to refresh our vocabulary about myths:

- Myths are narratives which cannot be directly annexed by philosophy because their internal coherence doesn't satisfy the requirements of any philosophical epistemologies. Yet they disclose another kind of wisdom, which is maybe best described as being poetical.

- Demythization is the reduction of myths to philosophical language. There are two tasks on the agenda of a proper demythization: To demystify and to demythologize.

- To demystify is to recognize myth as myth with the purpose of renouncing it; and thereby to free our existence from external objective constraints.

- To demythologize is to recognize myth as myth with the purpose of freeing its symbolic meaning; and thereby to provide our existence with the symbolically meaningful basis of "a word which founds it." (1965**,336) This "word which founds" is called by Bultmann and Ricoeur "kerygma", with reference to the evangelical proclamation of God's grace.

Keenly aware of this vocabulary, we understand that the demythization of accusation involves two tasks: (1) Ricoeur first plans to demystify the transcendence of the accusation, that is, any source of accusation outside existence. For us, this will echo Nabert's claim that all laws are laws only to the extent that we ourselves chose and valued them in the first place. (2) Ricoeur then intends to free a basic ethical kerygma from the myths of accusation but in accord with our existential desire. For us, again, this task is not a total surprise, since we already glanced, though very quickly, at Nabert's existential coordination of desire and imagination (chapter I); and also since we discovered that the coordination of desire and ethics was a major unsolved problem in psychoanalysis (chapter III).

(1) Freud is of great help in order to demystify the accusation. First because he was able to diagnose clinically the convergence of "ethical fear and taboo fear, between scrupulosity and obsessional neurosis, between moral vigilance and observed madness, between remorse and melancholy, between moral strictness and masochism." (338) These convergences point to an irrefutable pathology of accusation. And if accusation can become a sickness, then its internal development within the accused --self-accusation-- is the originating place of this sickness. Freud thus rightly demystifies the abstract, juridical, external aspects of accusation by reading the accusation in terms of instincts. What really matters is the internal growth of the accusation within the accused. Further,

Freud demystifies the illusive dichotomy we have created between passion and judgment: The superego has its origin in the id, Freud would say; this means that our judgments are made of passion too. Or to put it in still another way, Nietzsche's, when we say "justice", we really mean "revenge".

These arguments are more than sufficient in order to demystify all moralisms, all systematic accusation. This doesn't mean, to be sure, that ethics is meaningless; psychoanalysis also calls for an ethics. But what the demystification of moralisms really denounces is the sacralization of interdictions and accusations. It is through faith, not by his works, that man knows God. Ricoeur thus suggests --and I agree with him-- that:

> The attempt to think the religious core of ethics as a commandment which has its beginning or commencement in a divine event --perhaps this is the myth of moral religion, the myth which must be demystified. (342)

And that,

> So long as religion is linked to accusation, so long as it is limited to sacralizing interdiction, evil remains itself transgression, remains disobedience to the divine commandment. The demystification of accusation must go all the way, to the demystification of transgression. (347)

This demystification is not different from Paul's preaching to the Romans, when he writes, "But sin, seizing the opportunity afforded by the commandment, produced in me every kind of covetous desire. For apart from the law, sin is dead. Once I was alive apart from law; but when the commandment came, sin sprang to

life and I died. I found that the very commandment that was intended to bring life actually brought death." (Romans 7.8-10) Here, in effect, our attention is called by the facts that sin is no transgression apart from the pair desire-law; but that the economy desire-law itself energizes sin in the form of deathly transgressions; and that therefore the Good News is the "sublimation" of the desire-law economy into a desire-faith economy.

(2) How can we articulate an ethics which does not sacralize law or accusation? How can I "sublimate" my basic patterns of accusation into an ethics springing from my most fundamental desire in life? To ask the question this way is to enclose the question what-ought-I-to-do? into the broader question for-what-can-I-hope? [1]. I stand now at the very heart of my existential desire and productive imagination which, according to Nabert, is the occasion of creating new values for me. Ricoeur, and I too, seek these values in our imagination of the Christ. These new values, being created by my desire and imagination of the Christ, belong in a meditation which is disconnected from all preconceptions about good and evil, from all theodices. Ricoeur writes,

> Evil is not the first thing that we understand but the last; it is the last article of the creed and not the first. A prior reflection on the origin of evil is not religious because it seeks out a radical evil behind evil maxims. Nor is it religious because it discerns something inscrutable which can be expressed only mythically. What qualifies this meditation as religious is a complete reinterpretation, on the basis of the kerygma, of our notions of evil and of guilt. This is why I am speaking of a kerygmatic interpretation of evil. (347)

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1. This enclosure is justified theoretically by Kant in his Religion within the bounds of reason alone.

The kerygma Ricoeur speaks of is, to be sure, the kerygma of love, Jesus Christ's renewal, reinterpretation and sublimation of the Old Covenant.

Yet this emphasis on the kerygma would be worthless if it disconnected us from what we learned with Freud about our primitive instincts. This is why there is, according to Ricoeur, a path leading from the most primitive fantasies of human desire --archaeologically explored in psychoanalysis and culturally displayed in primitive myths-- to ever more sublimated reinterpretations of these fantasies in religious and cultural writings, and to Jesus Christ's ultimate reinterpretation in "Truth and Love".

If we want to explore this path, we need then to coordinate two methods of thinking together: the archaeology of the subject and the teleology of the subject, psychoanalysis and textual interpretation of religious texts.

Our failure to coordinate the two methods would hinder our explorations of this path: On the one hand, if we pay attention to textual interpretation of religious texts only, we will only create an idealism, as those religious illusions so heavily criticized by Freud. As Ricoeur says, "the symbol is a phantasm disavowed and overcome but not at all abolished. It is always on some trace of archaic myth that the symbolic meanings appropriate to reflective interpretation are grafted." (350) On the other hand, if we single out psychoanalysis, then we will only repeat Freud's error in Moses and Monotheism, where "he thought he could economize on biblical exegesis, that is, on the texts in which biblical man formed his faith, and proceed directly to the psycho-

logical genesis of religious representations while contending himself with several analogies furnished by clinical experience. Because he did not link the psychoanalysis of the symbol with the exegesis of the great texts in which the thematic of faith is constituted, he found, at the end of his analysis, only what he knew before undertaking it --a personal God, who, according to his Leonardo da Vinci and a Memory of his childhood[2], is only a transfigured father." (349)

But when we happen to coordinate psychoanalysis and exegesis of religious confessions of guilt, as suitable in our case, we then see how the instincts which usually feed our superego and our sense of accusation can be sublimated, not only once, but twice! Once "in spite of" the instincts themselves, and once "how much more" than just the first sublimation. Thanks to these two sublimations it becomes possible to think further.

"In spite of" was first thematized in Ricoeur's "Negativity and Primary Affirmation" (1956). There, Ricoeur meditated upon his "own reservations regarding philosophies which, since Hegel, have made negation the proper activity of reflection." (305) His reservations were founded in his belief that reflection starts with "the acts and operations in which we become aware of our finitude by going beyond it." (306) Hence, after an epistemological justification of his point of view, he concluded,

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2. Here the standard English translation reads: "...according to Leonardo da Vinci's phrase, ..." It is misleading in attributing the phrase to Da Vinci instead of Freud.

> The thought which aims at meaning beyond finite perspective, the taking up of a position which aims at validity beyond the point of view of the will itself, is, in comparison with the negation of finitude, in a specific relation which is stated rather well in an expression such as this: I think, I want, in spite of my finitude. (318)

This statement seems also applicable to Freud's concept of sublimation since in sublimation the instincts whose possibility of sexual fulfilment are limited are upheld and aimed at some other form of expression beyond their limitations.

"How much more" became a theme in Ricoeur's philosophy in his Symbolism of Evil (1960,272). There Ricoeur pointed to the biblical usage of this formula in Romans 5.12-21 and to Barth's interpretation of it: "how much more" qualifies the economy of superabundance in God's grace, initiated by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

Later, in the conclusion of the 1961 essay titled "The Hermeneutics of Symbols and Philosophical Reflection: I" the categories of "in spite of" and "how much more" were brought together as a possible direction for meditation. Thereby "in spite of" received a new meaning, as a category of hope; its new sphere of validity became a history, not a logic, an eschatology, not a system; it was based on signs, not on proofs. (314)

Last, Ricoeur wrote in "Freedom in the Light of Hope" (1968) about the Christian freedom resulting from hope for the Resurrection that,

> It can be expressed in two categories, on which I have reflected and worked several times, which explicitly tie freedom to hope: the category of "in spite of" and that of "how much more". They are the obverse and reverse of each other, just as are, with Luther, "freedom from" and "freedom for". For the "in spite of" is a "free from", but in the light of hope; and the "how much more" is a "free for", equally in the light of hope. (409)

How then do the categories of "in spite of" --in its epistemological and its religious meanings-- and "how much more" help us articulating psychoanalysis, its implicit teleology and Jesus Christ's kerygma of love together? My hypothesis is that:

1) "in spite of" indicates the possibility of a sublimation;

2) the two meanings of "in spite of" refer to two different sublimations, the teleological and the religious;

3) the religious sublimation cannot occur outside the teleological one;

4) the "how much more" indicates that the religious sublimation is sublimation of the teleological one.

This formulation of my hypothesis is based on the psychoanalytic concept of "sublimation". But the same hypothesis can also be formulated on the basis of a concept come from the exegesis of religious texts, namely "demythologization". Then the hypothesis becomes:

1) "in spite of" indicates the possibility of a less objective but more meaningful reading of the text;

2) the two meanings of "in spite of" refer to two different demythologizations, the existential one by which I understand

the meaning of the text for my life, and the trusting one in which I surrender, beyond the limits of the text itself, to the world of the text, i.e. the Kingdom of God;

3) the trusting demythologization cannot occur outside the existential one;

4) the "how much more" indicates that the trusting demythologization is demythologization of our sovereignty as demythologizer; we are no more in control of the operation, we experience grace.

Let me give examples of these two sublimations-demythologizations, first with respect to my sense of injustice and justice, and then with respect to my being victim of injustice and awaiting consolation.

My sense of injustice and justice is sublimated a first time when I stop acting because of taboo fears, or because of my fear to be "castrated", but start instead behaving responsibly because of my desire not to be unjust to others. This sublimation would be read psychoanalytically as the emancipation of the ego from the pressure of the superego. The second sublimation then occurs with my understanding that I am not better because of my justice. The second sublimation has to do with overcoming my pride and narcissism, with giving up self-justification; it has also to do with resisting my tendency to project the matter of my renouncements onto others and thus with not regressing to infantile object-libido. Theodicy thinkers and pharisees are examples of people not experiencing the second sublimation for

they are satisfied by their justice. By contrast, "grace" is that by which the second sublimation happens, without us being able to say why or how or give any rationale other than love. The signs of this second sublimation are our desire to belong in the world, to suffer and to rejoice with it.

With respect to our being victims of unjust accusation and our desire for consolation, it is more difficult to speak of a sublimation of instincts because our reaction to such situation involves, psychoanalytically speaking, the defusion of death instincts. These death instincts need to be dealt with if we don't want to be poisoned by them. If they passed into the ego and were narcissistically internalized, then, like in melancholia, I would increase the yoke of my self-criticism with the weight of recriminations originally addressed against an object of my libido. The destination of these death-instincts toward the outside must therefore not be changed, if I don't want them to become pathological. But at least the way they are manifested toward the outside can be sublimated. Instead of bursting out in a violent action of revenge, these death-instincts can eventually reach consciousness and be manifested verbally. This would ease the tensions without provoking major physical, maybe irreversible, damage. The passage from violent retaliatory action, and self-internalized recrimination, to spoken complaint would be the first sublimation of our feeling that we are victims. I can be greatly helped in this first sublimation by psychoanalysis because many tricks and lies of my moral conscience need to be undone.

Reading the Old Testament we can observe a similar evolution

from the "instinctual" physical revenge related in stories like the ones of Lamech and Judges to the verbal complaints found in the numerous psalms of lament. In the latter it is evident that the complaint is also a call for consolation. Yet biblical wisdom shows that even this call for consolation can be sublimated, that a second sublimation of my suffering as victim of unjust accusation can occur when I drop the recrimination and the desire for consolation altogether. But in order it to be a real second sublimation, it needs to be the transformation of consciously lived lament into praise. In this regard, the structure of the Book of Psalms, which starts with psalms of lament and ends with psalms of praise, is very interesting. But praise never replaces lament. The second sublimation cannot occur apart from the first one. I need to be conscious of my anger, and also of its subtle developments, before it can be sublimated in faith and praise. Ricoeur writes:

> It is faith itself that fulfills the task that Freud called "renunciation of the father". Job in fact receives no explanation of the meaning of his suffering. His faith is simply removed from every moral vision of the world. In return, the only thing shown to him is the grandeur of the whole, without the finite viewpoint of his own desire receiving a meaning directly from it. A path is thus opened: that of nonnarcissistic reconciliation. I renounce my viewpoint; I love the whole as it <u>is</u>. (351)

In sum the demythization of accusation is a necessary aim for the sake of abandoning our idolatry of the law, all its pathological effects and our pharisaic narcissism. Instead we can learn to act not because of our fear of the law but because of our care for our neighbor. Grace happens when we do so not for the sake of a reward. Further, we can learn to deal verbally with our reactions when we are victimized. Grace happens when our laments become praises.

b) A new interpretation of the myth of punishment

First of all, I cannot call punishment a myth without explaining why. Explanations are required because the rationality of justice and punishment seems to be beyond doubt: that evil deeds are to be compensated for by some punishment is a basic principle according to which our parents brought us up; this is also what we heard in church, "the wages of sin are death"; this is, finally, the foundation of our entire penal system. Nevertheless, for the thinker, this equivalence between sin and punishment shouldn't be admitted that easily. Ricoeur asks two questions which need to be answered before we accept this equivalence:

1) "What is there in common... between the suffering of punishment and the commission of wrongdoing? How can a physical evil equal, compensate for, and cancel out a moral evil?" (1967,355)

2) What is there in common between the accused and the judge? In virtue of what right can a judge force the accused to submit to and suffer punishment?

It is the rationale of punishment, if any, which needs to overcome "this double fracture by the thought of an equivalence, tne equivalence of crime and punishment." (356) But this thought of an equivalence is not self-evident and cannot be understood right away. Its logic is of a different kind; it is mythical: "What the understanding divides, the myth thinks as one in the sacred." (356) What needs to be understood now is how the thought of an equivalence of crime and punishment draws its rationality from myth.

The original form of myths of punishment, or more exactly of expiation, is the ritual of cleansing, supposedly making up for certain pollutions: When a symbolic taboo had been transgressed, the sacred coherence of everything was believed to be polluted; but it was also believed that the coherence could be restored pure by the performance of a symbolic "recycling" act, the expiation. There have been codifications for such cleansing rituals in almost all religions. Though the codifications were usually accompanied by a narrative telling how the ritual had first been instituted, the codes of sacred rituals were essentially in the form of laws, of ratio. This is why they appear to be mythical and rational at the same time. "Thus punishment," writes Ricoeur, "puts us face to face with a mythology, with an indivisible unit of mythology and rationality." (357)

Through time the same myths of punishment have become the root of our judicial system, where their rationality has been refined, and the root of our religions, where they have been given credentials by being said to express the "righteousness of God". Christianity in particular has been deeply affected by myths of punishment, among others because the church almost universally acknowledged dogmas about expiation and justification as the essential core of their christology. Hence christianity has become, according to Ricoeur's word, a "penal theology". Yet, recently, because of the increasing gap between culture and church dogmas christian penal theology is slowly dying, for lack of believers. Ricoeur comments that,

> Modern man no longer understands what one is talking about when one defines original sin as a juridically imputable crime in which humanity is implicated collectively. To belong to a massa perdita, guilty and punishable according to the juridical terms of the crime, to be condemned to death according to the juridical law of punishment --that is what we no longer understand. (359)

We have become far too individualistic in order to understand even a word of it. It is thus about time to demythize the myth of punishment.

Can Freudian psychoanalysis help us in this enterprise? I don't think so. For though the psychoanalytic hermeneutic can diagnose pathological forms of self-accusation, self-repression, or self-punishment, it cannot do away with the internalized instance of repression and punishment. However healthy and emancipated the ego might be, it cannot wipe out the punishing superego from its super-structure. Freud was able to demystify the myth of accusation, but not the myth of punishment. As a consequence he set up a static personology, directly and exclusively drawn from the tragic myth of Oedipus. This --the tragic itself-- explains why Freud's psychoanalysis is blind in front of the economy of grace, the superabundance of love, or what Ricoeur calls the "how much more". But Freud's blindness is not the result of his atheism! Rather it is the result of his Oedipian religion. Freud could have been "more" atheistic by also demystifying the myth of punishment. Amazingly enough, in doing so, he would also have cleared the ground for the possible recognition of various personologies --and maybe also for a personology, at least a theoretical one, in which there would be no repressive agency[3].

If not with the help of psychoanalysis, how can we demythize the myth of punishment? And first, what does it mean to demystify it?

Our answer will necessarily be conditioned by the reality of our times. In particular, we are to note that the myth of punishment provides a kind of rationality which is not outdated at all; on the contrary, the myth of punishment is still the ultimate basis of the rationality of our penal systems. This implies that at present we are not in a position whence we could demystify the content of the myth of punishment. What needs to be demystified today, however, is our belief that the myth of punishment applies to everything, always. We need "to reconnect the logic of punishment with its sphere of validity and thus deprive it of its onto-theological bearing." (360) Thus our first task is to distinguish what the myth of punishment means in the court from what it means in the church. Where can it be validly applied? That the myth of punishment cannot be validly applied most of the time appears with the fact that we cannot answer Ricoeur's two questions --about the equivalence of physical with moral evil and about the judge's right to force the submission of the accused. Conversely, the myth of punishment

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3. This opening up of psychoanalysis is maybe not totally irrealistic. For instance, Irigaray, the Parisian feminist psychoanalysit, has created openings for a renewal of Freud's personology with her emphases on the relation mother-daughter and on the irreducible différance between women and men in their sexual, psychic and religious (!) experiences and development.

Myself, I would be interested to think through a dynamic personology which would channel the representation of law, repression and culpability along the lines of the various myths of Genesis 1-11 rather than along the lines of the myth of Oedipus alone.

would be valid in a sphere where these two questions would be answered. But where is it the case?

According to Ricoeur, this is the case only in what Hegel, in his Philosophy of Right, called "abstract right". I won't enter here into Hegel's technical demonstration (repeated by Ricoeur, 360-363). Here I will only highlight two of the conditions of validity of the equivalence of crime and punishment:

- This equivalence only makes sense at "the level of abstract right, that is, of the will not yet reflected in its subjectivity." (363) At that level, no particular existence is taken into account; everybody is considered to be but an anonymous person among others. Abstract right is not concerned with real situations, but furnishes the subterranean root for the development of laws applying to real situations.

- The equivalence of crime and punishment only makes sense with "reference to a contractual right which binds wills that are external to one another." (363) In history, the form of this contract has varied from the fear of a leader, the fear of ancestors, the fear of God, tacit communal peace, etc... to our modern constitutional texts, voted by majorities.

Under these two conditions only can the fracture between judge and accused, in particular, be overcome. Under any other circumstances, for instance with regard to one's moral values --created in subjective existence as Nabert has shown--, the relation between judge and accused becomes impure, becomes the matter of a revenge. This is why we "can neither moralize nor divinize punishment." (363) Or, as Ricoeur concludes, "myth begins whenever the moral consciousness attempts to transpose into the

sphere of interiority a logic of punishment which has only a juridical meaning." (367)

Such a demystification makes an important difference for our understanding of Christianity. With Ricoeur we need to ask: If the myth of punishment makes sense only in the sphere of abstract right, what is the value of our religious creeds about Jesus Christ expiating for our sins? Does it make sense? What kind of sense? How? With these questions we come to the task of demythologizing the myth of punishment, that is, of searching for what in it can be a good news.

Seeing Jesus Christ's expiation for our sins as a mere symbol doesn't satisfy the thinker. The thinker also wants to understand the internal logic of the symbol. Yet the danger of this particular endeavour is to take the logic of equivalence of crime and punishment from the sphere of abstract right and to import it, mistakenly, into a christology which then becomes a penal christology. For in a penal christology the myth of punishment undergoes a distortion, in order to account for the substitution of expiatory victim, such that its logic is broken. The symbolic logic of Jesus Christ's sacrifice must be different from the logic of the equivalence of crime and punishment. Ricoeur finds this other logic, which he calls logic of super-abundance --by opposition to equivalence-- or also logic of the "how much more", in his reading of the Pauline doctrine of justification. In order to see how this new logic is set in place of the logic of punishment, it is worth paying attention

to Ricoeur's exegesis of the great text about grace and law in Paul's Epistle to the Romans 1.16-5.21 [4].

The principal articulations of this text are evident: after a preamble about the gospel revealing the justice of God 1.16-17 comes a compact section on law and the wrath of God without reference to the gospel 1.18-3.20, and then only, starting with the words "but now", comes the development of what was announced in the preamble, namely the justice of God according to the gospel 3.21-4.25!. These articulations leave no doubt about Paul's rethoric. His style is paradoxical. For him, it is first necessary to go to the extreme of condemnation in order then to go to the extreme of mercy.

That the extreme of mercy is the final destination of his discourse is already made clear in the preamble, which says:

> For I am not ashamed of the Gospel: it is the power of God saving all who have faith --Jews first, but Greeks as well-- since this is what reveals the justice of God to us: it shows how faith leads to faith, or as the scripture says: the just man finds life through faith.

What puzzled many commentators and needs to be highlighted in this passage is that the "justice of God", under Paul's pen, is an hyperjuridical conception. The justice of God is revealed by grace and mercy, not by juridical judgment.

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4. Ricoeur, following most editions of the Bible, sets the end-limit of his pericope in 5.21 (372). Thereby he encloses the "how much more" of chapter 5, which he uses to articulate the antithesis to the thesis.

Following Rolland P., Epitre aux Romains: Texte grec structuré (Rome:Institut Biblique Pontifical/1980), I would rather set the end-limit of the pericope in 4.25, in order to respect the transition from Paul's first thesis to his second one. For chapters 1.16 to 11.36 are in fact organized in three theses developed on the same rethorical pattern: Justification by faith 1.16-4.25, Life in the Spirit 5.1-8.39, and Election offered to all, Jews and Greeks as well 9.1-11.36.

Even in the section about the law and the wrath of God outside grace, God's justice is not depicted in strictly penal terms. In it Paul combines the logic of punishment with the tragic metaphor of the wrath of God (1.18; 2.5; 2.8-9; 3.5). Those two, however, need not be confused. Ricoeur writes,

> by reason of its nocturnal side, it (the wrath of God) would appear to lean toward terror and to be enlisted on the same side as the logic of punishment. But it differs profundly from this by its character of theophany. As distinct from the anonymous law of punishment, of the impersonal demand for a restoration of order, the symbol of the "wrath of God" brings in the presence of the living God. (1967,370)

And further,

> I am quite aware that in ancient Israel this theme of God's wrath was heavily moralized by contact with the law and the commandments. But its irrational side surged up again when the "wisdom" of Babylon and Israel was confronted with another problem than transgression, namely the problem of the failure of theodicy. If the course of history and of individual destinies escapes the law of retribution, then the moral vision of the world collapses; it is necessary to accept, in resignation, confidence, and reverence, an order which is in no way transcribable into ethical terms. The tragic God arises again from the ruins of retribution, in the same measure that the ethical God has been juridicized on the path of the law and innumerable ordinances. This is why the return to the theme of God's wrath forms part of the dejuridicization of the sacred... (370-371)

In using the metaphor of the wrath of God, Paul goes beyond pharisaistic or juridical reasoning to show that man outside grace not only deserves human punishment, but more fundamentally so, that man outside grace is disconnected from God, that he is lost. God's wrath is not a manifestation of God's presence. On the contrary, it is when God is absent that we experience a dread without visible cause, an unbearable anguish, which we call

"wrath of God". At the juridical level crime and punishment are distinct from one another. But in the wrath of God crime and punishment are but one. God needs not add punishment to our crime. In our relation to God, our crime is already our punishment. If we understand now with Ricoeur sin and evil in terms of an uprooting, as dreadful as the wrath of God would be, then we won't ask whether God is unjust in bringing his wrath on us. (cf Romans 3.5!) For we will be certain that God's justice contains no trace of revenge.

On the contrary! For, if we turn now to the second section of Paul's text, we can read: "but now, without the law, the justice of God is manifested..." (3.21) Indeed, God's justice is positively known only from the side of his grace.

Henceforth, how are we to interpret Paul's first section, this section which refers to a world without grace? Can it stand as an island of dreadful punishment isolated in the middle of an ocean of grace? Is our justification by God tied to the insular economy of dreadful punishment? Verse 3.25, which says "God presented him (Jesus Christ) as a sacrifice of atonement, through faith in his blood. He did this to demonstrate his justice, because in his forebearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished," could provide a scriptural basis confirming the insular economy of dreadful punishment. But wouldn't this literal interpretation clash with the other insights we gained about God's justice? By accepting this interpretation, aren't we, so to speak, prisoners of words and images? Ricoeur

thinks so and consequently suggests another interpretation. His suggestion seduces me much because it matches very well with my desire voiced above to replace the Oedipus myth by biblical dynamic myths as ground for a flexible inner personology. Here is Ricoeur's suggestion:

> The judicial apparatus plays the role, in the doctrine of justification, of an awesome and grandiose staging, comparable to the primitive "scenes" that the archaeology of the unconscious discovers. One could speak, by way of symmetry, of the "eschatological scene": one drags the accused before the tribunal; the public prosecutor convicts him of crime; he deserves death; and then, here is the surprise: he is declared just! Another has paid; the justice of this other one is imputed to him. (374)

To project this "eschatological scene" in history as a real event, as the real end of history would lead to the same mistake as Freud's when he tried to positivize the myth of Oedipus and project it as the beginning of real history. Besides, this would confuse the issue, because the good surprise in the end of the "eschatological scene" couldn't but point at the fact that this tribunal is a nontribunal, the verdict of acquittal a nonverdict, the imputation a nonimputation, that dice were loaded; we would gain grace by being cheated of a fair trial... Enough! This cannot be. "We cannot treat the logic of punishment as an autonomous logic: It is eliminated in the absurd demonstration of its contrary; it has no internal consistency." (1967,374)

The logic of punishment needs to be entirely supercedded by what Ricoeur after Paul calls the logic of superabundance. There is no island of punishment in the ocean of grace.

In the second section of Paul's text, we shouldn't single out of context the parallel between Adam and Christ (Romans 5.18) and

then use it as a scriptural proof of the equivalence of Adam's crime and Jesus Christ's ransom. It would violate the thrust of Paul's argument. For the parallel is not started in 5.18 but in 5.12, "just as sin entered the world through one man, ..." In 5.12 Paul in fact starts the parallel, then suspends it with a succession of difficulties --"before the law was given","nevertheless death"-- and finally breaks it --"but the gift is not like the trespass", "how much more","again,the gift of God is not like the result of the one man's sin","but the gift", "how much more". Therefore, because of Paul's precaution, it is not possible to read the equivalence of crime and punishment into his parallel between Adam and Christ in verse 18.

The purpose of Paul's parallel is to point at Christ as the founder of a new era, in the same sense as Adam is held to be the founder of the human era. The temporal nature of the difficulties evoked by Paul in 5.12-5.14 --"before the law", "from the time of Adam to the time of Moses", "pattern of the one to come"-- is a strong argument in favour of our interpretation of the parallel.

If the parallel between Adam and Christ is not juridical but temporal, we need then to revise some of our doctrines. Ricoeur, and I agree with him, suggests the following revision:

> Is not the representation of a judgement which would separate the just from the unjust by a kind of method of division which would send some to hell and others to heaven itself surpassed, as non dialectical, as foreign to this logic of superabundance? The ultimate paradox seems to be that of a double destination, each overlapping the other: the justification of all men is superimposed in some way on the condemnation of all, by means of a kind of outbidding at the heart of the same history. The economy of superabundance is there intermixed with the work of death in the midst of the same "multitude" of men. Whoever could understand the "how

> much more" of the justice of God and the "superabundance" of his grace would thereby be finished with the myth of punishment and its logical appearance. (375)

Now, the myth of punishment appears as the memorial of a transcended past, maybe more than an idol to break --until the kingdom of God is completely realized-- but certainly less than a law to idolize. The logic of the equivalence of crime and punishment seems unavoidable in human justice, in order to tame our violence; but it doesn't belong in the justice of the Wholly Other.

c) Freedom in the light of hope

On our psychoanalytic Via Dolorossa we had been left with the bare fact that everything living dies for internal reasons, that there was no reason for the individual to hope, that the best she or he could do was not to oppose the progress of civilization, to be willing to socialize by renouncing some of her or his pretensions, and to try to cope with a life which is hard. Freedom then consisted in freeing our ego in order to live responsibly our desire until we die.

In Ricoeur's different thinking, based on the imagination of the Christ, the message is different. Death is not left out of the picture. But it hasn't the last word over freedom. Ricoeur listens to Freud about the origin of desire but not about freedom. About the latter, Ricoeur prefers to interrogate the religious texts in which immediate desire has been sublimated, once despite itself, and a second time how much more thanks to God's grace.

Here I will pay attention to the centrality of listening in Ricoeur's different thinking, then to his hermeneutic of the Resurrection, next to an hermeneutic of freedom in the light of hope, and finally to Ricoeur's vision of the true preacher of God's grace.

Kant had concentrated his thought on the limits of what can reasonably be hoped for in his Religion within the Bounds of Reason Alone. Ricoeur follows Kant's analysis and dialectic; but in addition, Ricoeur insists on dialogue and listening as being fundamentally constitutive of the relation of the subject

to hope; I ask questions of the religious texts, in function of the answer which can be found in them I modify my questions, and eventually, in the end, roles are interchanged, it is the text itself which asks me questions; hope is no longer my guesses about what world would be best, it becomes the power of a kerygma which sets my freedom free of its isolation, free for responsive action[5].

This is why Ricoeur opens "Freedom in the Light of Hope" (1968) by saying, "I will first of all sketch out what I, as a hearer of the Word, consider to be the kerygma of freedom." (403-404) What Ricoeur first hears is that,

> It is not initially of freedom that the Gospel speaks to me; it is because it speaks to me of something else that it speaks to me also of freedom: "The truth shall make you free," says John. (404)

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5. In "Naming God" (1977*) Ricoeur gives us more precisions about what it means to him to be a hearer of the Word. He writes:

"It is in terms of one certain presupposition that I stand in the position of a listener to Christian preaching: I assume that this speaking is meaningful, that it is worthy of consideration, and that examining it may accompany and guide the transfer from the text to life where it will verify itself fully." (215)

"Listening excludes founding oneself. The movement toward listening requires, therefore, a second letting go, the abandoning of a more subtle and more tenacious pretension than that of ontotheological knowledge. It requires giving up (déssaisissement) the human self in its will to mastery, sufficiency, and autonomy. The Gospel saying "whoever would save his life will lose it," applies to this giving up." (219)

This verse states that freedom is not the end of the road, that freedom becomes meaningful only in the light of truth. Thus Ricoeur is not totally satisfied with those existentialist theologians, like Bultmann and Tillich, who reduce the gospel to its power to provoke an existential free choice in the present of the instant. "The existential interpretation of the Bible," writes Ricoeur, "has not been sufficiently attentive to the specificity of this choice; perhaps it even marks a subtle emptying of the eschatological dimension and a return to the philosophy of the eternal present." (1968,407)

Ricoeur, at the time he wrote "Freedom in the Light of Hope" (1968), had already agreed with Nabert that one's existential identity is not to be found in the present of a decision, but in the past of one's desire and the future of one's imagination. This is why Ricoeur welcomed warm-heartedly Moltmann's "effort to resituate the central preaching of the Resurrection in an eschatological perspective." (405)

Henceforth, in "Freedom in the Light of Hope" (1968), Ricoeur demarcates very clearly the religion of the God who is coming from the religion of the God of present manifestation, and takes position in favour of the first one. For,

> The first engenders a history, while the second consecrates a nature full of Gods. As to this history, it is less the experience of the change of everything than the tension created by the expectation of a fulfillment; history is itself hope of history, for each fulfillment is perceived as confirmation, pledge, and repetition of the promise. This last designates an increase, a surplus, a "not yet", which remains the tension of history. (404-405)

An anthropomorphic God, or even an incarnate God, remains a God of the present and doesn't engender a history. Only the Risen One, the Christ, does engender a history, a history beyond death.

Yet the "identity of the Risen Christ with Jesus crucified is the great question of the New Testament." (409) Because of the empty tomb in the gospel narratives, the identity of Jesus with the Risen Christ cannot be established factually; So that the only evidences of this identity are the words of the Risen Christ and the testimonies of the first believers. These evidences are <u>signs</u>, but not proofs; this is why the identity of Jesus with the Risen Christ remains subject to belief; or belief and hope actually, since his Resurrection points to the Resurrection of all in the end of history. This is why Ricoeur rightly speaks of an "hermeneutic of the Resurrection".

We remember that with Freud, looking "behind us", we were able to collect signs --dreams-- and to interpret them in an hermeneutic of desire, which was called by Ricoeur an "archaeology of the subject". But now, with Moltmann, looking "forward of us", we are able to gather signs of the Resurrection of Christ in an hermeneutic of the Resurrection. This hermeneutic of the Resurrection needs to be called not merely a "teleology of the subject", but an "eschatology of the uni-

verse". Here resides the difference between on the one hand Bultmann, Tillich and their "teleology of the subject", and on the other hand Moltmann, Ricoeur and their "eschatology of the universe". The individual will is Bultmann and Tillich's target; the individual will is Moltmann and Ricoeur's arrow pointed at the eschatological resurrection of the universe as a target.

The task to be completed by an hermeneutic of the Resurrection is then, according to Ricoeur, "to reinstitute the potential of hope, to tell the future of the Resurrection." (406) This could mean to improve our imagination of the new creation, maybe to learn to think beyond exclusivism, beyond addiction, beyond good and evil, and indeed beyond death.

This different thinking, to be sure, has also repercussions on the teleology of the subject, on personal religious freedom. But hope is first, and freedom derived. "Freedom in the light of hope," writes Ricoeur. The relation of freedom to hope could easily be compared to the relation of dream to desire: as an hermeneutic of dreams requires from us that we displace its source of meaning from the conscious to an hypothetical unconscious desire, likewise an hermeneutic of freedom requires from us that we displace its cultural source of meaning from the conscious to an hypothetical supraconscious(?) hope. For example, let us examine how psychological freedom and ethico-political freedom point at their origin in hope.

Psychologically speaking, freedom appears as choice, ultimately as the choice between life and death . Ending up our

thinking at that level, however, presents the "great risk of reducing the rich content of eschatology to a kind of instantaneousness of the present decision at the expense of the temporal, historical, communitarian, and cosmic aspects contained in the hope of the Resurrection." (407) To an ethic of the present, a stoic ethic, to Nietzsche's love of fate, to Freud's invitation to own and suffer responsibly the restrictions imposed on our desire, we need, in order to be really free, to oppose a passion for the possible. Ricoeur affirms,

> hope is diametrically opposed, as passion for the possible, to this primacy of necessity. It is allied with the imagination insofar as the latter is the power of the possible and the disposition for being in a radical renewal. Freedom in the light of hope, expressed in psychological terms, is nothing else than this creative imagination of the possible. (408)

Ethico-politically speaking now, freedom appears in relation with the promotion and observance of a communal system of values in order to facilitate every one's life. Ending up our thinking at that level would leave our freedom caught in the dilemma of being burdened by an ethics of duty for the sake of groups interests, or to express itself without respect to communal values, at the expense of other's freedom. But the picture can be changed and the dilemma overcome if we resituate the ethico-political freedom in the light of the hope of the Resurrection, of the resurrection of all. For then, ethics appears no longer as a duty, but as a mission, the mission to reform continually our culture in function of our ever better deciphering of the signs of the Resurrection (abolition of segregation and patterns of oppression, promotion of diversity, listening to

minorities etc). In this new vision, freedom is not the opposite of ethical duties, but freedom drives ethics in order to open up the future; in two different ways: first by manifesting solidarity with and supporting the claims of those who are deprived of the opportunity to develop themselves; and second by being concerned about reforming and improving the ethical codes currently in use.

In sum, psychological freedom and ethico-political freedom are but two aspects of a more fundamental freedom: hope. Hoping for the resurrection of the universe, we are free in spite of death, how much more free because of the Resurrection.

This fundamental freedom is what needs to be preached in churches. But, according to Ricoeur, this message can only be delivered by a

> prophet who would realize today the message of Exodus that exists prior to all law: "I am the Lord thy God who brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage." ... (A prophet) who would speak only of freedom but would never utter a word of prohibition or condemnation, who would preach the Cross and the Resurrection of Christ as the beginning of a creative life, and who would elaborate the contemporary significance of the Pauline antinomy between the Gospel and the Law. In terms of this antinomy, sin itself would appear less as the transgression of a prohibition than as the opposite of a life ruled by grace. Sin, then, would mean life ruled by law, i.e., the mode of being of human existence which remains caught in the infernal circle of law, transgression, guilt, and rebellion. (1969,448)

It is the kerygma of this preacher that I tried to repeat in my thesis. Hence, although its logical coherence is what matters philosophically, the thesis itself is to be read more as a 'spiritual' journey than as the constitution of a dogmatic philosophy. Even the title sounds to me more like an invitation than like a statement. This is why I shall repeat it here not as a conclusion but as a confession of hope: I am victimized by bad accusation but I am set free in the light of hope...

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