

Introduction

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Guest editor

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Introduction

It is our pleasure to present you the fifth issue of *Études Ricoeuriennes/Ricoeur Studies* (ERRS), dedicated to the theme of "Philosophy and Religion". Some of the texts collected here were originally presented at the international conference that was held in Seoul (South Korea) in April 2011 and organized by the Korean Association Paul Ricoeur. The participants were not only Korean, but also Japanese and even Swiss. Pierre Gisel, one of the pioneers on the protestant side of the "postmodern theology", gave a lecture that was then integrated into his recent book: *Du religieux, du théologique et du social: Traversées et déplacements* (Cerf, 2012)). However, this special issue should not be taken to be a mere publication of proceedings. As was the case with the previous issues, the call for papers for the present issue sought to be much wider, and the texts published here underwent a rigorous selection and revision process.

It is a well-known fact that Paul Ricoeur is a thinker who takes great care to respect the strict demarcation between philosophical discourse and religious discourse. In his long intellectual itinerary, there are however some crucial moments when his reflection touches the very point where these two domains cross each other. In his earlier period of the "philosophy of the will", the ultimate horizon of his thought is called a "poetics of the will" heralding, under the sign of a "second Copernican revolution", what is beyond the philosophical. At the origin of his hermeneutic turn, the philosopher let himself deliberately guided by the symbolic expressions rooted very often in "religious" or biblical resources. This is probably the reason why, though respecting the distinction between philosophical and biblical hermeneutics, he insists upon their mutual implication. It should also be noticed that towards the end of his life, in works such as *Memory, History, Forgetting* and *The Course of Recognition*, Ricoeur returns to the idea of an "eschatological" horizon of his philosophy, an idea developed through the problems of donation and forgiveness.

This does not mean that Ricoeur is unfaithful to his own promise to respect the essential autonomy of philosophical thought. But, it does not mean either that the examples enumerated above are only exceptional cases. The philosopher engages himself in this way when the "conviction" which motivates him profoundly is challenged by aporias or enigmas which are inextricably connected to "limit-experiences" such as evil, suffering or socio-historical injustice. This is the very moment when Ricoeur assumes the risk of exploring the "borders of philosophy" where the philosophical can find a source of inspiration in the religious without falling into a simple mixture of genres.

This intellectual gesture in Ricoeur's thought does not only provide a particular tension analogous to a certain "schizophrenia", according to the philosopher's own expression but also the fertility which allows his philosophical hermeneutics to be continually renewed. This results from a sincere modesty, specific to this always patient philosophy, which keeps us from short-circuiting hastily the philosophical and the theological, as sometimes occurs in certain currents of recent French thought. It goes without saying how much this attitude of Ricoeur "gives rise to thought" for theologians and exegetes, not only by bringing them new conceptual and methodological tools, but also and especially by inviting them to see in a new light what they do in their own discipline.

The six contributions which compose the thematic portion of the present issue cannot, of course, exhaust all the questions which we could be encountered under this topic, but readers

will find certainly that each of them to represent a significant approach. In order to make them into a sort of constellation, we would like to present them under the form of the following three pairs.

The first pair consists of the articles of Christina M. Gschwandtner and Yasuhiko Sugimura. The contribution of Gschwandtner ("Paul Ricoeur and the Relationship between Philosophy and Religion in Contemporary French Phenomenology") tries to approach the theme of this issue by comparing Ricoeur with some representatives of what we call "the theological turn of French phenomenology", including Michel Henry, Jean-Luc Marion, and Emmanuel Falque. In this way, the author brings to light the originality of the position taken by Ricoeur: this results from his commitment in a hermeneutics fundamentally affected both by the multiplicity of various aspects of life and by the patient mediation between its philosophical and theological aspects. Clarifying what constitutes the originality of the Ricoeurian approach concerning the relationship between the philosophical and the religious is the aim of the article by Sugimura ("Demeurer vivant jusqu'à...": la question de la vie et de la mort et le "religieux commun" chez le dernier Ricoeur "). The author draws the attention to the way Ricoeur incorporates into his hermeneutics of the self the Heideggerian idea of attestation (*Bezeugung*) by replacing the formula "being-toward-death" with that of "remaining alive until...". This makes clear what is at stake when Ricoeur mentions "the religious in common" in *Living Up to Death*.

The second pair, which comprises the articles of Joél Z. Schmidt and that of Myung-Su Yang, emphasizes the important role of the question of evil in Ricoeur. The article of Schmidt ("Generous to a Fault: A Deep, Recapitulative Pattern of Thought Within Ricoeur's Philosophical and Theological Works ") goes through various topics, philosophical and theological, of Ricoeurian thought - such as prophecy, ideology and utopia, the symbolism of evil, psychoanalytic sublimation - in order to reveal a fundamental pattern which dominates them all. This pattern recapitulates every negative moment of our life and thought up to the point to being "generous even to a fault ". Obviously, this "generosity" characterizing the Ricoeurian way of thinking must not be confused with the "anything goes" attitude. As for the question of the evil, it is only after accepting the absolute impossibility of justifying it that Ricoeur "recapitulates" it through such eschaological motifs as hope and forgiveness. The contribution of Yang (" Représentation religieuse chez Kant et la philosophie kérygmatique de la religion de Ricoeur") offers a precious clarification of this aspect by proposing a systematic confrontation between Kant and Ricoeur, around the idea of the "philosophy of religion" commanded by their respective conceptions of evil.

The third and final pair, composed of the articles of Daniel Frey and Gilbert Vincent, consists in approaching the theme of this issue through the prism of the Ricoeurian reading of the Bible. The article by Frey (" Lecture philosophique et lecture théologique de la Bible chez Paul Ricoeur ") analyzes in a meticulous way not only the relationship which the philosophy of Ricoeur maintains with biblical hermeneutics, but also draws attention to the recurring recourse to "theological" schemas in his "philosophical" reading of the Bible. In doing so, the author manages to show the uncomfortable but productive situation where Ricoeur finds himself as a reader of the Bible. The contribution of Vincent ("Métaphores, paraboles et analogie: L'équivoque de la référence à la théologie dans la pensée de Paul Ricoeur") approaches a similar problem by insisting upon the ambiguity of the reference to the onto-theological idea of the *analogia entis* in the last chapter of *The Rule of Metaphor*. Ricoeur's thought on religious language consists of two aspects apparently in contradiction - the attention to parables as "limit-expressions", on the one hand and recourse to theological concepts, such as *analogia entis*, which tend to stabilize the

surplus of meaning, on the other hand. Here the author underlines that the first aspect resists being absorbed by the last one. This resistance is for Ricoeur the source of trust in the revelatory power of religious language.

To close this introduction, we would like to express our gratitude towards all those involved in the preparation of this issue. Our sincere gratitude goes especially to Johann Michel and Scott Davidson, editors-in-chief of the journal. Their comments have been very precious and their suggestions always relevant. We must also thank all the members of the Editorial Committee in charge of the evaluation of proposed articles, work which takes a lot of time and energy.

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