Ricœur's Own Linguistic Turn

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Abstract:

I want to discuss why it makes sense to speak of a linguistic turn in the philosophy of Paul Ricœur. He early on had said that "the word is my kingdom and I am not ashamed of it" without, at that time, spelling out just what this claim meant as regards a broader philosophy of language. Nor would he have had any difficulty in admitting that his attitude toward language and questions about language changed over time.

Keywords : Analytic Philosophy, Linguistic Turn.

Résumé:

Je souhaite discuter pourquoi il y a un sens à parler de tournant linguistique dans la philosophie de Paul Ricœur. Il avait dit dès le début de son travail "la parole est mon royaume et je n'en ai point honte," sans, à ce moment-là, spécifier ce que cette affirmation signifie au regard d'une philosophie du langage. Et il n'aurait pas eu de difficulté à admettre que son attitude envers le langage et les questions sur le langage a changé au fil du temps.

Mots-clés: Philosophie analytique, Tournant linguistique.

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I want to discuss why it makes sense to speak of a linguistic turn in the philosophy of Paul Ricœur. He early on had said that "the word is my kingdom and I am not ashamed of it" without, at that time, spelling out just what this claim meant as regards a broader philosophy of language.[1] Nor would he have had any difficulty in admitting that his attitude toward language and questions about language changed over time. What is more, for those contingent reasons that led to his teaching for a portion of each year in the United States for over a decade, he came into contact with analytic philosophy and analytic philosophers and their various specialized approaches to language. Ricœur found here the emphasis that had led Gustav Bergmann to introduce the idea that a linguistic turn had occurred in philosophy overall. That this idea gained wide acceptance among English-speaking philosophers was illustrated by the popularity of Richard Rorty's well-known anthology, *The Linguistic Turn*.[2] In his introduction to this collection, Rorty suggested understanding this new emphasis in philosophy as one where "philosophical problems are problems which may be solved (or dissolved) either by reforming language or by understanding more about the language we presently use."[3] My question is whether this notion of a linguistic turn as Rorty interprets it can be said to apply to Ricœur—and whether it sheds light on Ricœur's own philosophy of language. My answer will be that Ricœur can—and should—be read as taking seriously the second half of this statement, especially insofar as it suggests gaining a greater understanding about the language we do in fact use, but that Ricœur never believed that the answer to every philosophical problem came down to finding a way to reform language. My question, therefore, will be in what sense it may make sense to speak of a linguistic turn in Ricœur's thought, and, through this, why Ricœur's own version of a linguistic turn is still important for philosophers working today.

An initial answer to my question about the importance of Ricœur's own philosophy of language for philosophy today will be negative if we simply identify the idea of a linguistic turn and a concomitant focus on language with analytic philosophy.[4] Certainly Ricœur was familiar with a good portion of the literature of this branch of philosophy through his teaching in the United States. This is evident from the many books coming from this school to be found in his library now gathered in the Ricœur Archive in Paris.[5] It would also be apparent were one to look at the syllabi from the courses he taught during his time at the University of Chicago now in the archive. Many names appear in the recommended readings for these courses—Grice, Ryle, Nelson Goodman, Anscombe, H. L. A. Hart, J. L. Austin, for instance—that do not appear at all or are only mentioned in passing in his books and essays written during and after his time in Chicago. Nor can we say that Ricœur ever really adopted the characteristic emphasis typical of analytic philosophy that making sense of the logical proposition is the key to a philosophy of language. There are a number of reasons why Ricœur did not go in this direction. First of all, he was not that interested in logic as a specific topic of inquiry, what is now called classical logic in contrast to more recent developments such as multi-valued logics or even fuzzy logics. Nor did Ricœur ever accept the goal of making sense of ordinary language by showing that it could be

derived from an underlying logical atomism. Nor did he accept Frege's elimination of the problem of predication—I mean especially the problem of existential predication—through the idea of a predicative function.[6] Given his own theory of metaphor, Ricœur might even have seen a kind of concealed metaphor at work here insofar as such a function is generally said by analytic philosophers to map a variable onto a domain. And while he would have respected the insights into the distinction between names and descriptions gained through the analysis of different forms of the logical structure of the proposition, it would have been the question of naming rather than of the possible distinctions to be drawn among kinds of names that he would have seen as posing the more significant philosophical problem.

Ricœur did appropriate certain key terms from the analytic tradition and put them to his own use. One can cite here his use of Frege's distinction between sense and reference in *The Rule of Metaphor* and of Peter Strawson's notion of basic particulars and their role in identifying reference in both *The Rule of Metaphor* and *Oneself as Another*.[7] But he never really discussed these authors' arguments for these ideas, nor would he have claimed to be using them in just the sense meant by their original authors, were that critique to be raised against his use of these notions. In fact, he set aside the emphasis on sense and reference from *The Rule of Metaphor* in favor of the threefold distinction between figuration, configuration, and reconfiguration in *Time and Narrative* and any reference to Strawson pretty well disappears in his subsequent work.[8] This suggests that his use of such terms was more operative and pragmatic, a way of making a point, than meant to reflect a strong commitment to them as unproblematic concepts.

Where then ought to we locate a linguistic turn in Ricœur—and might there, in fact, have been more than one of them? What I want to consider next, therefore, is how it does make sense to apply this idea of a linguistic turn to Ricœur's philosophy, but also to show that we have to understand Ricœur's own linguistic turn not as a simple change of mind but rather as a process that unfolds over time. There are precursor non-analytic influences to be found in the already cited reference to his fascination with the spoken word, *la parole*, and in his interpretative studies of the problem of signification in Husserl.[9] However, to give a more definite specification to Ricœur's own linguistic turn—and to enable us to follow its unfolding—I want to propose that it first clearly occurs at the end of *The Symbolism of Evil* with the declaration, following the hermeneutic turn that occurs in this book, that philosophy needs to attend to the *fullness of language*.[10] Such a philosophy, Ricœur tells us there, is a "philosophy with presuppositions. To be honest, it must make its presuppositions explicit, state them as beliefs, wager on the beliefs, and try to make the wager pay off in understanding."[11] His readers know that this conclusion came from his project of understanding how people in fact seek to make sense of the existence of evil, its origin, and its possible end, through attending to their use of a confessional language when they speak about evil. What Ricœur saw was that this is a kind of language that makes use of the notions of myth and symbol, where a symbol is defined by the fact that it always conveys more than one meaning and a myth is a narrative unfolding some of the possible meanings conveyed through a symbol or a combination of symbols. Hence this is a kind of language that differs from the ideal of the unequivocal logical proposition or the unambiguous scientific assertion—and that cannot be reduced to them.

Following this inquiry into a specific kind of symbolic language—that used to try to make sense of evil—Ricœur turned to an attempt to generalize beyond this specific kind and use of a confessional language, which had to be appropriated by the philosopher though reenacting it using one's imagination in order to understand it, rather than by some form of logical analysis. In doing this, he began to see that a philosophy attentive to the fullness of language and which

sought to think starting from the fullness of language had to acknowledge and take seriously the existence of *figurative language*. Initially, this inquiry took the form of trying to generalize from the implicit theory of symbol and symbolic language used in *The Symbolism of Evil*. As we can see from the essays collected in *The Conflict of Interpretations*, this led to the idea of a symbolic function underlying any general system of signs and, through this, to the claim that any philosophy of language must be one that considered language as one such sign system.[12] From this insight followed the recognition that a philosophical inquiry into language which would lead to a philosophy of concrete reflection must be a philosophy that has to start from both *what* it is people say and *how* they say it. Ricœur's search for the fullness of language therefore had to focus on language in terms of both its structure and its use. This was an enquiry that would be given shape more through his encounter with structuralism and structural linguistics than through his appropriation of analytic philosophy. Indeed, we can say that Ricœur's own linguistic turn from this point on turned out to be more influenced by developments in linguistics than it was by work in philosophical logic or even the ordinary language philosophy associated with Oxford and some American philosophers, although along the way he did draw several key insights from this work.

His next step was the insight that the theory of language coming from Saussure had to be expanded to include not just a focus on the structure of language as a system of signs, what Saussure called *la langue*. It also had to address language as used in speaking, *la parole*. *Langue* as the underlying structure of any language is surely operative in speech, but it is also something abstract, objectified as an atemporal methodological construct rather than derived from any particular natural language as actually used. Saussure's great discovery was to have laid the basis for a general linguistics but not fully to unfold it. He did so through postulating a model for language as a system of signs, where the constitutive basis of this system or structure lay not in independently existing signs but in the differences among its signs. This meant that linguistic signs at the level of the lexicon did not exist independently of one another but only through their relations among themselves. Ricœur accepted this but was less satisfied with the claim that language as thus constituted was a closed system. This claim was derived from the further assumption that the signs in question had an internal structure which divided them into a signifier and a signified. He saw that this meant eliminating any possibility of a referential dimension to language, if reference was to be understood as about something external to and even prior to language. Ricœur took this postulated closure to mean that in language so understood nothing in fact was said, hence there was no meaning either, only perhaps the possibility of meaning if the signs in question could be shown to be put to use by someone to say something about something to someone in some concrete situation. For Saussure, this is what happened at the level of speech, but since speech was temporal and ephemeral, there could be no scientific account of speech because it could not be captured as a fixed object for investigation.

This brings us to the next moment in Ricœur's linguistic turn. Drawing on Émile Benveniste's assertion that an acceptably scientific theory of language as used to say something through speech was in fact possible,[13] Ricœur saw that a philosophy that intends to take seriously the fullness of language has to be a philosophy that includes a theory of *discourse*, where discourse first occurs at the level of a sentence, not at that of words in the dictionary or at that of the signs in what Saussure designated as the formal system of *langue*. Pursuing this insight took Ricœur through a number of subsequent steps that we can summarize as follows. First comes a general characterization of discourse as the use of language by someone to say something about something to someone. Obviously, discourse is where language is meaningful in the sense

Ricœur was seeking. It says something about the world, the people in it, the ways things are or were, and the ways they might be. To this basic characterization of discourse next was added the insight that discourse too has a structure, but it is a structure that differs from and is not reducible to the individual words that compose any sentence. A sentence is not simply a sequence of words. It too has a structure, but this is a structure constituted through the act of predication. Given Ricœur's commitment to the fullness of language, this meant considering predication as operative in every form of discourse, not simply in those assertions that can be analyzed or reformulated as logical propositions. Ricœur was able to draw on analytic philosophy in expanding this point. He drew from the analytic philosophy of action, for example, the insight that "action sentences" are ones that ascribe a meaning to an action or assign the action to an agent rather than ones that predicate a property to a logical subject. The importance of this point regarding the meaningfulness of the wide variety of kinds of discourse that can be expressed already at the level of the single sentence is further evident in Ricœur's work on metaphor. Metaphor, contrary to traditional accounts, and many contemporary accounts, is not simply a question of substitution of one word for another. Metaphor, at least in the case of live metaphor, occurs at the level of the sentence through an act of impertinent predication.[14] Unlike the logical proposition, which by definition is either true or false and must be one of them, a metaphor says something both is and is not the case at the same time. Ricœur drew three important conclusions from this. First, live metaphors can be a source of new meaning, of semantic innovation. This is why, while they can be paraphrased, they cannot be directly translated into a literal, that is, a univocal or single truth-valued logical proposition, without loss. Second, over time, metaphorical expressions can enter ordinary use; they can become familiar ways of saying things, and finally be absorbed into the dictionary through a process of lexicalization that assigns new possible meanings to a word or words found there. In effect, live metaphors can metaphorically die, but dead metaphors do not really reveal the symbolic power of live metaphors to suggest new meaning. Third, because metaphorical discourse is meaningful, intelligible, a philosophy that takes the fullness of language seriously will have to take into consideration the possibility of a metaphorical truth. This is a truth that redescribes reality in a new way, unlike the descriptions that are captured by the logical proposition's ability to assign an existing, already recognizable property or relation to an already known subject term.

Furthermore, metaphors can extend beyond the length of a single sentence, as can any instance of discourse.[15] Hence the symbolic function and possibility of semantic innovation at work in metaphor may also carry over to examples of such extended discourse, discourse that involves more than a single sentence. The next step in Ricœur's exploration of language as discourse, therefore, was to turn to this idea of extended discourse, where such extended discourse may carry the redescriptive capacity found in a live metaphor. Ricœur's discussion of extended discourse places us at the heart of his philosophical hermeneutics and what it has to say about the nature of the text, where it is a text or anything that can be construed as a text that serves as the model of how to fix discourse by inscribing it for investigation, something Saussure failed to see. It also introduces all the problems associated with interpreting the meaning of a text or set of texts that are relevant to any consideration of Ricœur's hermeneutical theory. However, in considering how it is possible to see a linguistic turn in Ricœur, and how this differentiates him from work done in analytic philosophy, I think it better here to keep the focus on what he has to say about the more general idea of discourse, which includes uses of language not written down in texts.

As already stated, discourse first occurs at the level of the sentence, not that of the word. Words in the dictionary are polysemic, they usually have more than one meaning, and those meanings may differ greatly among themselves. It is discourse, the act of saying something that, so to speak, filters these meanings through the act of predication without necessarily producing a univocal statement. Most discourse, in fact, is plurivocal, not univocal, but not for all that unintelligible. Indeed, the idea of a univocal act of discourse may be at best a regulative idea. This is why there is always a question of interpretation that arises. This need for interpretation is further complicated by the use of the same act of discourse to say different things or to say the same thing in different situations. But that there may always be a contextual factor to consider is not what is most important about what Ricœur says about discourse, particularly with regard to work that is yet to be done. What is important for understanding the fullness of meaningful discourse is that the forms of extended discourse can be catalogued in terms of different *genres* or types of extended discourse. Hence a theory of discourse needs to attend to these different forms and what accounts for their specificity as a form of discourse. Of course, it also needs to acknowledge that any instance of extended discourse within such a genre is unique in its own way; it has a *style* that individualizes it which also needs investigation. And genres of discourse can overlap, intersect, and even be intermingled, complicating the act of interpreting their meaning. Obviously, looking ahead, questions remain open about all these points. I mean more still needs to be said about how one recognizes different forms of extended discourse, how one accounts for their specificity, and how one makes sense of what is said through them, either in their pure form or in combination with other forms of extended discourse.

To indicate that these questions remain open, I want to briefly list the six kinds of extended discourse Ricœur considered and to say something about how he characterized them. As we shall see, in no case, except perhaps for narrative, can his characterization be said to be anything like complete. In fact, in every case, more needs to be said about *how* what is identified actually works, even if his insight into *what* is central in that type of discourse is already a useful contribution to our making sense of both the form of discourse in question and the larger question of a general theory of the fullness of language.

Given time, I believe one can distinguish six forms of extended discourse in Ricœur's various discussions of the fullness of language. They are poetic discourse, narrative discourse, religious discourse, political discourse, legal discourse, and, most problematically, philosophical discourse. Poetic discourse is the broadest form, the one closest to what Ricœur thought of as expressing a symbolic function. As such it is discourse in which *semantic innovation*, something new being said for the first time, occurs.[16] In this sense, it can be present in all the other forms I have enumerated insofar as they are all capable saying something new. Narrative discourse is the form discussed at the greatest length by Ricœur and perhaps the form most familiar to his readers. It is constituted by the fact that it has a plot that configures what was already figured in existing language, particularly the language that provides a network of concepts used to identify and talk about human action. Narrative discourse is discourse that configures a series of episodes, where something may or may not happen, into a single story or history, where something meaningful does happen. As such, narrative discourse is a necessary form of discourse in that without it we cannot really make sense of time, in all its complexity, or even the meaning of action over time, even if the solution achieved is practical rather than theoretical, to use the Kantian distinction. Famously, looking at narrative discourse also led Ricœur to the discovery of the idea of a narrative identity, a topic that is not at issue here but that needs to be acknowledged insofar as it is a component of his investigations into the fullness of language.

Religious discourse is a kind of second-order discourse that can make use of many different forms of extended discourse, for example, narrative, law, prophecy, lamentation, praise, wisdom, proclamation. It is a kind of poetic discourse, one whose specificity stems from the fact that at least for the biblical traditions, it serves to name God and to proclaim a message of hope, through what Ricœur calls its logic of superabundance. Political discourse is specified by its fragility owing to its inherent rhetorical nature and its tie to ideology as a way of both resolving and concealing its claim to authority as the power to command others and to make a legitimate use of force and violence.[17] In a word, political discourse is both itself conflictual and a use of language meant to resolve conflicts, where the question as to who should rule and why or even how can always be reopened. At the limit, it is closely tied to the question of what constitutes the social bond that allows people peacefully to live together.

Legal discourse is perhaps the least clearly distinguished form of extended discourse in Ricœur's philosophy of language, but something like at least a first specification of such discourse can be discerned in Ricœur's late essays on the just where he draws on what he had learned about how the trial court operates from his participation in a series of seminars with lawyers and judges.[18] He sees the specificity of this form of discourse to lie in the role assigned to a neutral third party who has to pass judgment when there is a dispute or tort or crime, along with the rules governing what counts as evidence and argumentation in pleading for such a judgment in the setting of the trial court.

Philosophical discourse, finally, is the most problematical form, and the one least directly addressed by Ricœur, although we can find a few hints concerning it in his work. It is problematic because it is the discourse that formulates his theory of discourse. Hence it runs into all the problems that find their analogues on the side of analytic philosophy regarding sets that include themselves; I mean, for instance, Russell's paradox that derailed Frege's attempt to derive mathematics from logic or the still broader question whether a language can contain its own metalanguage or is condemned to an open-ended sequence of such metalanguages.[19] Ricœur suggests two things about such philosophical discourse that are worth noting. First, it is characterized by reflexivity. Philosophical discourse can be discourse about discourse. Ricœur understands this problem of reflexivity in a larger sense than simply a question of how language allows us to use language to talk about language, however. We can see this in those places where he invokes his allegiance to the French tradition of a reflexive philosophy tracing back through Nabert to Fichte and Maine de Biran, where what is at stake is the very fact that human existence is characterized, even constituted by the capacity for self-reflection. That we know that we know, understand that we understand is very puzzling and still something difficult to explain. It is his commitment to this wider problem of reflection or reflexivity that sets a limit to Ricœur's own linguistic turn. It is why he came finally to see that while philosophy must attend to language, that this is a necessary and unavoidable step for contemporary philosophy, simply paying attention to language, even to the fullness of language is not sufficient for what is at stake in philosophy. It is why he could say that "not everything is language… but… nothing in experience arrives at *meaning* unless it is *borne by language*."[20] It is also why he was willing to say that at the limit philosophical discourse is finally a kind of speculative discourse, albeit one that does not make a claim to being absolute, why any ontology will itself be a hermeneutic ontology.

More could and should be said about all this, of course, but the limits of space impose themselves. Let me conclude therefore by suggesting that in looking back at the philosophy produced by Paul Ricœur over the course of a long life, there is a philosophy of language to be found there that has much to contribute to questions that have been raised about language over

the last century or more, that what he has to say about the nature of language and its use is a significant contribution to this topic in that he takes seriously the wide range of problems involved in acknowledging the fullness of language. I would especially emphasize here what he has to say about the fact of linguistic change, semantic innovation, new meaning, something not really addressed in the analytic tradition. Taken to its limit, this insight leads me to conclude that Ricœur's own linguistic turn with its emphasis on taking seriously the fullness of language, including figurative language, sets us the task of reopening the question what do we mean by *literal* language?[21] This is language that we philosophers may take too much for granted, if not as simply given and unproblematic.[22]

[1] Paul Ricœur, *History and Truth*, trans. Charles A. Kelbley (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1965), 5.

[2] Richard Rorty, ed., *The Linguistic Turn: Recent Essays in Philosophical Method* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1967). Bergmann's presentation of the idea occurs in his essay "Logical Positivism, Language, and the Reconstruction of Metaphysics," included in this volume (64).

[3] Rorty, "Introduction," to *The Linguistic Turn*, 3.

[4] Defining analytic philosophy from a historical perspective is not an easy task. Han-Johann Glock has shown that given almost any supposed central defining characteristic, some self-defined, or generally recognized analytic philosophers will be left out. *What is Analytic Philosophy?* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008). For our purposes in this paper, analytic philosophy, broadly speaking, will be taken as depending on a notion of method, called analysis, applied to one of three levels: concepts, where the goal is finding a definition, perhaps in terms of necessary and sufficient conditions; propositions, where the emphasis is on different possible forms of a more basic logical structure, defined in terms of a propositional function and a bivalent definition of truth—the proposition must express an assertion that is either true or false; and arguments, where these are to be formulated or reformulated as a sequence of propositions and evaluated in terms of their deductive validity and possible consistency.

[5] If one is willing to spend some time searching online, the website for the Faculté Protestant library, which is where the archive is located, lists the titles of books that belonged to Ricœur that are now in the archive collection. One must not overestimate this evidence, however. Ricœur often purchased volumes he needed for his teaching when in the States, but then sometimes left them behind or gave them away when he returned to France.

[6] Ricœur would not have accepted Frege's basic hypothesis, for example, that "a distinction of *subject* and *predicate* finds *no place* in my way of representing a judgment." "Begriffsschrift," in *Translations from the Philosophical Writings of Gottlob Frege*, ed. Peter Geach and Max Black (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1970), 2. For Frege's notion of a logical predicative function, see *ibid.*, 12–15, and the essays "Function and Concept" (21–41) and "What is a Function?" (107–16).

[7] Frege, "On Sense and Reference," in *ibid.*, 56–78; Peter F. Strawson, *Individuals: An Essay in Descriptive Metaphysics* (London: Methuen, 1959).

[8] But see Paul Ricœur, "Approaching the Human Person," trans. Dale Kidd, *Ethical Perspectives* 6 (1999): 48, where Ricœur speaks of the reference of language to persons in the lifeworld by drawing on Strawson's work. Even here, though, he subordinates this conceptual analysis to a pragmatics focused on what happens in speech acts where one designates oneself and others through referring to the world and to action and interaction in that world: "someone addressing someone else is the difference between effective speech and a simple logical proposition" (49).

[9] Paul Ricœur, *Husserl: An Analysis of His Phenomenology*, trans. Edward G. Ballard and Lester E. Embree (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1967).

[10] Paul Ricœur, *The Symbolism of Evil*, trans. Emerson Buchanan (New York: Harper and Row, 1968), 349. See also, Paul Ricœur, *Freud and Philosophy: An Essay on Interpretation*, trans. Denis Savage (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1970), 30–31.

[11] Ricœur, *The Symbolism of Evil*, 357.

[12] Paul Ricœur, "The Question of the Subject," in *The Conflict of Interpretations* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1974), 258; see also 261, 266.

[13] Émile Benveniste, *Problems in General Linguistics*, trans. Mary E. Meek (Coral Gables, FL: University of Miami Press, 1971); cf. Ricœur, *Conflict of Interpretations*, 86, 254–55; *Rule of Metaphor*, 71–72, 102, 129, 175, 217.

[14] It is worth noting that Ricœur saw that theories of metaphor at some point all had to make use of metaphor. See Paul Ricoeur, *The Rule of Metaphor*, trans. Robert Czerny with Kathleen McLauglin andJohn Costell, SJ (Toronto and Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 1977), 18, 52.

[15] Ricœur likes to cite as an example of an extended metaphor the following passage from Shakespeare, which he found cited in Marcus B. Hester, *The Meaning of Poetic Metaphor* (The Hague: Mouton, 1967), 164:

Time hath, my lord, a wallet at his back
Wherein he puts alms for oblivion,
A great-sized monster of ingratitude.
Those scraps are good deeds past, which are devoured
As fast as they are made, forgot as soon
As done.
    Troilus and Cressida, III, 3, 11, 145–50.

[16] One open question here is how much novelty to attribute to what is new here. Is it simply a previously unseen arrangement of what was already present in existing language, perhaps through an instance of what Ricœur called rule-governed deformation? Or can it be radically new, in a sense that we might associate, for example, with a new word of God?

[17] See, for instance, Paul Ricœur, "The Fragility of Political Discourse," trans. David Pellauer, *Philosophy Today* 31 (1987): 35–44. Bernard P. Dauenhauer, *The Politics of Hope* (New York: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1986), is still the best available extended discussion of Ricœur's political thought and political language.

[18] Paul Ricœur, *The Just*, trans. David Pellauer (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000); *Reflections on the Just*, trans. David Pellauer (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007).

[19] I mean that the discourse that says L_m is the metalanguage that applies to language L, is not contained in either L_m or L, leading to a version of Aristotle's third man argument.

[20] Ricœur, "Approaching the Human Person," 48*.*

[21] To the best of my knowledge, Ricœur only directly addresses this question in one place in *The Rule of Metaphor*, trans. Robert Czerny with Kathleen McLaughlin and John Costello, SJ (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1977): "We did admit of course that the metaphorical use of a word could always be opposed to its literal use; but literal does not mean proper in the sense of originary, but simply current, 'usual'" (290–91). An attached endnote refers to Aristotle, *Poetics*, 1457b, where Aristotle says, "By the ordinary *(kurion)* word I mean that in general use in a country." Ricœur adds that, for Aristotle, the "proper" *(idiom)* sense has nothing to do with "some sort of primitive sense (*etumon*)" (362–63n66).

[22] Earlier versions of this paper were presented to the session on "Ricœur at 100" at the 2013 World Congress of Philosophy held in Athens, Greece, and to the 2013 Annual Meeting of the Society for Ricoeur Studies, held in Eugene, Oregon. I wish to thank those present on those occasions for their helpful comments which led to this final version of this paper.