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PAUL RICOEUR'S THEORY OF INTERPRETATION AS AN EPISTEMOLOGICAL FOUNDATION FOR PSYCHOANALYSIS

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PAUL RICOEUR'S THEORY OF INTERPRETATION AS AN EPISTEMOLOGICAL FOUNDATION FOR PSYCHOANALYSIS

by

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INTRODUCTION

Since its inception, psychoanalysis has waged an intensive battle with the philosophy of science in order to become recognized as a science in its own right. Freud himself noted that "the majority of philosophers . . . declare that the idea of something psychical being unconscious is self contradictory" (1940, p. 158). He thus found it necessary to insist that "the processes with which it [psychoanalysis] is concerned are in themselves just as unknowable as those dealt with by other sciences, by chemistry and physics, for example; but it is possible to establish the laws which they obey" (ibid.). Freud believed that if psychology was not regarded as science, it would be regarded as illusion or religious dogma. Thus he spoke of "the struggle of the scientific spirit against the religious Weltanschauung" (1933, p. 169) and stated that "religion alone is to be taken seriously as an enemy" (ibid., p. 160). Freud's fears were well grounded. From the time of its introduction into this country, with our fundamentally empirical scientific approach, psychoanalysis was met with attacks upon its scientific validity. The theoretical terms were too loosely defined, empirical evidence was lacking, the interpretation of the evidence was

spurious (Burnham, 1967). In 1912, in his article on Freudian dream symbolism, Sidis asserts that such a view is "characteristic of decadent thought" like "medieval symbol interpretations of the holy scriptures" (cited in Burnham, 1967, p. 104). The arguments and the passion with which they are given have changed little over the decades. At the symposium on Psychoanalysis, Scientific Method and Philosophy in 1958, philosophers of science made "a general cavil at psychoanalysis as intrinsically unscientific as well as unphilosophical" (Hook, 1959, p. 173). The philosopher Charles Frankel for example states "we also do not know if Freud was not just a sort of alchemist of the soul" (ibid., p. 325) and Arthur Danto states of psychoanalysis that "it sounds rather like casuistry than science" (ibid., p. 318). This issue is summed up well in the entry on psychoanalysis in the Encyclopedia of Philosophy. It begins this way: "Since psychoanalysis fails to conform to currently accepted methodological models, its prominence on the contemporary scene constitutes a challenge to the methodologist. He must either revise his canons or show the psychoanalyst the error of his ways. Both tacks have been tried, but thus far the second has predominated" (Alston, 1967, p. 512). However, the first tack, that of revising scientific canons, has its own history.

There have been a number of psychoanalysts (Klein,

1976; Lorenzer, 1970; Schafer, 1976; Steele, 1979) and philosophers of science (Dilthey, 1962; Habermas, 1971; Rickman, 1967; Taylor, 1971) who have declared that an enterprise such as psychoanalysis is or should be a science of another sort than the natural sciences, a science of the understanding, i.e. a hermeneutics. Hermeneutics is defined in the Oxford English Dictionary as "the art or science of interpretation, especially of Scripture, commonly distinguished from exegesis or practical exposition". In its Greek derivation, it is related to the god Hermes who discovered writing and language and whose job it was to transmit the messages of the gods to mortals. In its ancient usage, it included the notions of speaking, explaining and translating. In modern times, hermeneutics was originally a theory of biblical exegesis. Later it became a philology and a guide to juridical interpretation. As such it no longer applied specifically to understanding biblical texts, but became generalized into a set of rules for the interpretation of any set of signs. Eventually, in the hands of Wilhelm Dilthey, it became an epistemology (Bleicher, 1980; Palmer, 1969). In all its forms it was more or less marked by several features. First, hermeneutics involved deciphering, making clear something that was not immediately clear. Second, it involved deciphering meaning, i.e. it was a method of understanding human products

which, as opposed to natural objects, have meaning. Third, it involved deciphering historical meaning, i.e. the meaning to be understood was not immediate and thus had a history. Fourthly, it involved understanding something by interpreting its parts in relation to the whole. In this regard, hermeneutics is to epistemology what gestalt theory is to perception. Such an epistemology is essentially circular. To understand a part of something in terms of the whole implies that there must be already some understanding of the whole which itself is to be ultimate object of understanding. This hermeneutic circle is not vicious as it "implies a correction based on the feedback between the preliminary understanding of the whole text and the interpretation of its parts" (Thomä & Kächele, 1975, p. 52). In the hands of Dilthey, as we will see later (in Chapter 3), hermeneutics became the epistemological foundation for all sciences which dealt with human beings and their products (the Geisteswissenschaften). As such it claimed to provide a method of investigation and verification comparable to, but different than, the canons of the natural sciences (the Naturwissenschaften).

This methodology as applied to psychoanalysis has been widely used to argue the scientific status of psychoanalysis and as such has done battle with those who attempt to align psychoanalysis with the natural

sciences. Freud's statements have been marshalled by both groups to prove their respective points, and as with all such opposite positions, Freud has served each well. The debate has taken a number of forms which we will pose now as questions. Is psychoanalysis a science which attempts to explain or to understand? Does it give causal explanations or does it deal strictly with motivations? Is psychoanalysis an empirical or an historical discipline? Does psychoanalysis aim at formulating causal laws or explicating meanings? Should psychoanalysis attempt to provide a metapsychology or should it be a strictly clinical theory? Is psychoanalysis a nomothetic or an ideographic science? Lastly, is psychoanalysis a science or an art? In the sixties and early seventies the psychoanalytic literature was replete with answers and counteranswers to these questions (see Eissler 1968; Holt, 1962, 1972; Rubenstein 1967, 1976; Rycroft, 1967; Schaefer, 1972, 1975; Waelder, 1962, 1970; to name only a few examples). Over the past five to ten years the intensity of the interest in this area seems to have declined. Recently, however, Adolf Grunbaum (1984) has launched a new attack on the scientific status of psychoanalysis:

> In short, I shall grant Freud his own canon of scientific status in addressing the following question: Did his clinical arguments vindicate the knowledge claims he made for his evolving theory by labeling it "scientific"? My answer will be twofold. The reasoning on which Freud

> rested the major hypotheses of his edifice was fundamentally flawed, even if the probity of the clinical observations he adduced were not in question. Moreover, far from deserving to be taken at face value, clinical data from the psychoanalytic treatment setting are themselves epistemologically quite suspect. (p. 94)

His conclusion as to the scientific status of psychoanalysis is that "while psychoanalysis may thus be said to be scientifically alive, it is currently hardly well" (p. 278). One can surely anticipate renewed debate and renewed partisanship.

There have always been those who have suggested, softly or loudly, that the questions asked of psychoanalysis have been posed improperly, that somehow or other psychoanalysis attempts both to explain and to understand, gives motivational and causal explanations, uses both empirical and historical methods, is both art and science. Paul Schwaber for example asserts that "it is an old foolishness to ask whether psychoanalysis is an art or a science" (1976, p. 532). David Rapaport states that psychoanalysis has both a "historical clinical approach" and a "nomothetic aim". "The consequence of our method, the clinical-historical method, for our theory is that the theory is of necessity built on the concepts of psychic continuity and meaning, and the effort to create a nomothetic science leads to the postulate of determinism" (1967, p. 189). This implies a recognition of the peculiar nature of psychoanalytic data

and method as compared with that of the natural sciences whose data are more clearly objective and whose method more easily conforms to the hypothetico-deductive model. Many have explicitly recognized this state of affairs. Robert Wallerstein, for example, states that it is "the special peculiarity of psychoanalysis as a science that it pursues its inquiry simultaneously in each of the two realms, the general and the individual, the how and the why" (1976, pp. 225-6). Similar points have been made by Klauber (1968), Modell (1978, 1984, and in Abrams, 1971), Sandler and Joffe (1969), and Eagle (1980) among others.

It is perhaps this very epistemological peculiarity of psychoanalysis that has led philosophers of science from widely diverse perspectives to use psychoanalysis for the purposes of crediting their own notions of science and discrediting others. Habermas uses psychoanalysis as a paradigm for his Critical Theory. "The cognitive interest of this enlightenment theory is declaredly critical; it presupposes a specific experience, which is set down . . . in Freud's psychoanalysis - the experience of an emancipation by means of critical insight into relationships of power" (1973, pp. 253-4). Karl Popper in one of his many attacks upon inductivism, lumps psychoanalysis together with Marxism and states "these theories appeared to be able to explain practically everything that happened, within the fields to which

they referred . . . the world was full of verifications of the theory. Whatever happened always confirmed it" (cited in Hook, 1959, p. 270). Adolf Grunbaum, in order to discredit Popper's attack on inductivism states that "it is precisely Freud's theory that furnishes poignant evidence that Popper has caricatured the inductivist tradition by his thesis of easy confirmability of nearly every theory" (1984, p. 280).

Those psychoanalysts who have recognized the epistemically unique position of psychoanalysis - as partaking of both an historical understanding of the meaning of motivations and of an empirical explanation of the effects of causal laws - have found the separate methodologies of hermeneutics and the natural sciences to be equally insufficient. A number of psychoanalysts have thus pointed to the need for an epistemological and methodological foundation for psychoanalysis that would account for what Wallerstein aptly calls its "double tenancy" (1976, p. 217). Grossman and Simon recognize that "the contrast between 'meaning' and 'causality' also points to a major difficulty in developing psychoanalysis as a general psychology" (1969, p. 109). Thus they assert that "there must be some superordinate conception which would encompass both kinds of discourse. Such a schema has yet to be formulated" (ibid.).

The thesis to be presented here is that the French

philosopher Paul Ricoeur has attempted to formulate just such an epistemological basis for psychoanalysis. Further, it will be held that this has largely gone unrecognized by even those psychoanalysts that have called for such a formulation. For example, Arnold Modell, who states "that psychoanalysis encompasses both forms of knowledge and that this continues to be the central point of its epistemology" (1978, p. 651), also asserts that "this paradox was essentially ignored by Ricoeur" (ibid., p. 648). In what follows, Paul Ricoeur's position on the epistemological foundation of psychoanalysis will be presented and his critics will be reviewed. It will be argued that Ricoeur's critics have largely misinterpreted and misrepresented his position. Further, it will be shown that those of his critics who have more adequately understood Ricoeur's position, and whose challenges of his position are thus more substantive, have not succeeded in showing Ricoeur's formulation to be erroneous.

Chapter 1

THE SEMANTICS OF DESIRE

Basic Concepts of Ricoeur's Interpretation Theory

Paul Ricoeur views psychoanalysis as a "mixed discourse". In this he is in agreement with those psychoanalytic authors, cited in the introduction, who recognize that psychoanalysis has a "double tenancy" which makes it epistemologically unique. According to Ricoeur, what is mixed or combined at the epistemological foundation of psychoanalysis is a hermeneutics and an energetics. Ricoeur's term for this admixture is "semantics of desire" and with this notion he provides the "superordinate conception which would encompass both kinds of discourse" that according to Grossman and Simon (1969, p. 109) is required for psychoanalysis to become a general, scientific psychology. Psychoanalysis is both and at once, a hermeneutics and an energetics, a mixed discourse, a semantics of desire. At the foundation of psychoanalytic theory, hermeneutics with its trappings of understanding, semantics, and motivation never exists apart from energetics with its trappings of explanation, desire and cause.

For Ricoeur, meaning is no longer relegated to hermeneutics or to understanding and is no longer opposed to

causal explanation. "Meaning is determined in the interplay between" (Ricoeur, 1970, p. 257) understanding and explanation. This is true not only for any particular piece of psychoanalytic data, but also true in the general sense for Freud's most speculative concepts. The meaning of a dream and the meaning of a metapsychological term is determined, known, explained insofar as it partakes of this mixed discourse.

Interpretation, too, can no longer be identified with hermeneutics as it is commonly understood. Ricoeur's philosophical position is sometimes called by others hermeneutic phenomenology (see e.g. Ihde, 1971) but he consistently refers to it as a theory of interpretation. His work is marked by a dialectical attempt to resolve apparently conflictual positions. His Conflict of Interpretations (1974a) is an attempt to resolve what could be seen as two contrary hermeneutics, one of suspicion and one of revelation. His book on Freud and Philosophy which is subtitled An Essay on Interpretation (1970), similarly provides a resolution to what in the literature has been seen as two contrary attempts to secure scientific status for psychoanalysis. Ricoeur explicitly defines interpretation as "the overarching term of connection between explanation and understanding" (1981a, p. 36). The meaning which psychoanalysis interprets then is always that of a 'mixed discourse'. Thus

it is inappropriate to ask whether psychoanalysis is a Naturwissenschaft or a Geisteswissenschaft. "Freudianism exists only on the basis of its refusal of that disjunction" (Ricoeur, 1970, p. 68). Similarly, it is inappropriate to ask whether psychoanalysis deals with causes or motives. It "falls outside the motive - cause alternative" (ibid., p. 363).

In order to understand why Ricoeur labels the epistemological position of psychoanalysis a "semantics of desire" it is necessary to clarify his notions of both semantics or symbolization and desire or wish. His use of "desire" is fairly straightforward. Desire, as opposed to a biological need and as opposed to an intentional act, is a transitional concept. It is a limit concept between the biological and the psychological. As such it makes possible "the moving from force to language" (ibid., p. 67), it provides a bridge between the organic and the psychical. However, according to Ricoeur, desire is also "unsurpassable", i.e. psychoanalysis can never be reduced to a pure hermeneutics. With the term desire, Ricoeur indicates both the logical possibility of combining what are considered two logically distinct discourses - i.e. that of biology and psychology or that of force and language - and the logical impossibility of reducing one to the other - i.e. that psychoanalysis cannot be epistemologically grounded

as either a pure hermeneutics or a pure natural science.

Ricoeur's use of "semantics" is less straightforward and its proper understanding requires at least some familiarity with his conception of what a symbol is as well as his ideas about language and the image in psychoanalysis. Ricoeur defines the symbol and the symbolic function in contrast to its usage in two major philosophical traditions. For Ricoeur, on the one hand, the symbol is more specific than, for example, Ernst Cassirer's definition where a symbol is defined as any and all signification, as "the totality of those phenomena in which the sensuous is in any way filled with meaning" (Cassirer, 1957, p. 93). For Ricoeur, on the other hand, the symbol is more general than the traditionally Platonic notion of symbol as a type of analogy. Ricoeur instead defines the symbol as those particular types of significations in which something else is meant other than what is manifestly said. An analogy is just one species of this type of signification. Symbols have multiple meanings, in which one meaning refers to another which is both hidden by and revealed by the first meaning. For example, the relationship between the manifest and latent content of dreams is a symbolic one in that the meaning of the manifest content refers one to the latent content whose meaning is both hidden by and revealed by the manifest content. A symbol is thus

something which requires interpretation. It should also be noted that symbols are not necessarily verbal or even linguistic. They can also be pictorial and, as we will see later, Ricoeur considers the image to be the primary symbolic form in psychoanalysis. The semantic dimension in psychoanalysis "is only partially linguistic and fundamentally figurative, but nevertheless significative" (Ricoeur, 1978, p. 322). "Semantic" thus refers to images or words which require interpretation because they present wishes or "desires" in a disguised manner.

That psychoanalysis is a semantics of desire, that "desire manifests itself in and through a process of symbolization" (Ricoeur, 1970, p. 65) is not, according to Ricoeur, indicative of psychoanalysis being an ambiguous or scientifically unsound theory in need of clarification. Rather Ricoeur wants to show "that there are good grounds for this apparent ambiguity, that this mixed discourse is the raison d'etre of psychoanalysis" (loc. cit.). He has in fact attempted to show this in two major ways: firstly, in a painstaking, scholarly exposition of Freud's opus and secondly, in a detailed discussion of the ways in which psychoanalysis distinguishes itself from both the methods of the natural sciences and linguistic analysis, as well as by spelling out a method of verification appropriate to the discipline. We can now proceed to Ricoeur's interpretation of

Freud's works. A discussion of his second line of argumentation regarding methodology, verification and the allied theme of the relation of theory to practice will be presented in Chapter 2.

Ricoeur's Interpretation of Freud's Texts

In Freud and Philosophy (1970), Ricoeur presents a detailed account of the development of Freud's theorizing in order to show how the epistemological concept of a "semantics of desire" is present throughout, and is necessary for an interpretation of, Freudian theory. Ricoeur's early training in phenomenology leads him to show enormous respect for the material he is presenting and to carefully avoid distorting the material in order to fit his thesis. He attempts to account for each of Freud's major concepts, including those which could appear to contradict his position, such as Freud's affect theory, as well as those which have fallen into general disrepute and are thus often easily passed over by many, such as the death instinct. His style of argumentation is dialectical and a few preliminary comments about this may help to avoid unnecessary misunderstanding. In proper dialectical manner, Ricoeur shows the correlation of energetics and hermeneutics at each point of Freud's theoretical development, then shows the lack of correlation inherent at that point as a problematic which leads

to a further development in Freud's theorizing. The further development is not regarded as disproving the previous theory. What is valuable in the previous position is preserved, albeit in a new form. The new form is seen as more concrete and less abstract in that it takes better account of the facts. In addition, Ricoeur's dialectical approach leads him to posit opposing points of view, arguing initially for each, and only later showing the ways in which the apparent oppositions are synthesized. Further, he tends to show that his view is different than another view by showing first how the two views are similar so that the differences stand out clearly. "It was important that the difference in points of view was first of all stated in its full force on the very basis of the patent similarity" (ibid., p. 391). The value of making this style of argumentation explicit will be more clearly appreciated, not only in later chapters where criticisms of Ricoeur will be addressed, but also in the summary of his interpretation of Freud to which we will now turn.

Ricoeur's exposition of Freud's texts proceeds in the following manner. First, Ricoeur discusses the Project for a Scientific Psychology (Freud, 1895), The Interpretation of Dreams (Freud, 1900) and the Papers on Metapsychology (Freud, 1915) and uses these works to articulate "the epistemological problem in Freudianism"

(ibid., p. 65), i.e. the apparent contradiction involved in the fact that Freud explains psychical phenomena both by an explication of conflicts between forces and by an explication of apparent meaning through latent meaning. He attempts to show the unity of these two types of explanations, dynamic and symbolic, and concludes that "the only possible way for psychoanalysis to become 'interpretation' is by incorporating the economic point of view into a theory of meaning" and that "the economic point of view will appear to us to be irreducible to any other" (ibid., p. 62).

Second, Ricoeur discusses those works of Freud in which the economic explanation is applied to cultural products, i.e. art, religion and ethics. He concludes that this application gives rise to a revision in Freud's theory, i.e. the topographic model gives way to the structural model. From this new vantage point, the topographic model is shown to have been solipsistic, to have been faulty in that it did not take account of the intersubjectivity which is present in the psychoanalytic data. This means that the first model was dialectically abstract not that it was false. Ricoeur would not say that Freud first had an energetics which was solipsistic and then advanced a hermeneutics which was object related. Despite the fact that one could regard Freud's theoretical development as moving from a more mechanistic

to a more object relational model of the psyche, Ricoeur insists that there is a unified epistemological foundation, in which economic and symbolic interpretations are present, but in which the unity of these two types of explanation becomes articulated in a more homeostatic manner over the course of Freud's theoretical development.

Third, Ricoeur explicates Freud's later works, including especially Beyond the Pleasure Principle (1920). Here he examines the consequences of Freud's new instinct theory, that of Eros and Thanatos, on both the earlier theories and on the epistemological problem that he set out initially. He concludes that finally the connection between energetics and hermeneutics is made most stable and (dialectically) most concrete. Whereas Ricoeur feels that he has been able to show in Freud's work prior to Beyond the Pleasure Principle that "the insight proper to psychoanalysis lies . . . in the reciprocity . . . between hermeneutics and economics" (ibid., p. 255), he also recognizes "that the speculation based on the quantitative hypothesis, the equivalence between the pleasure principle and the constancy principle, is not in complete harmony with the actual nature of analytical discourse" (ibid., pp. 255-6). It is only with the introduction of Eros and Thanatos that Ricoeur feels he can show the constancy hypothesis to be integrated into

his semantics of desire.

From the Project to the Topographic Model

In his analysis of the Project for a Scientific Psychology, the Interpretation of Dreams and the Papers on Metapsychology, Ricoeur initially shows how the economic and the hermeneutic dimensions are both necessary to an understanding of these works, then shows the ways in which these two dimensions are not yet unified and finally shows how each implies the other. The Project is clearly the least hermeneutic of Freud's works but nevertheless contains seeds of hermeneutic notions. For example, the quantity of the Project is peculiar in that it is never measured and thus does not obey any numerical law. It is derived from clinical observation. Its intensive aspect, i.e. anxiety, ultimately takes on greater importance than its mechanical aspect. It is "anxiety" which leads Freud to make the transition from physical, sexual tension to psychically elaborated sexual ideas which become charged. Thus in 1894 under the title of How Anxiety Originates, Freud writes that "physical sexual tension above a certain value arouses psychical libido" (p. 192). Further, the mechanisms which Freud elaborates at this point are already correlated with clinical concepts. Melancholia, for example, is already defined as the "mourning over loss of libido" (ibid., p.

201). However, Ricoeur is careful to point out that despite the fact that Freud ultimately gives up the "anatomical translation" (Ricoeur, 1970, p. 85) or what Strachey calls the "neuronal machinery" (intro. to Freud, 1895, p. 293) of the Project, he does not abandon the constancy principle. This is "seriously challenged only by the death instinct" (Ricoeur 1970, p. 86).

Whereas hermeneutics is present only in seminal form in the Project, in the Interpretation of Dreams, Deutung appears at first to be primary and explanation secondary. "The express aim of the explanation is to present a schematic transcription of what goes on in the dream work that is accessible only in and through the work of interpretation. The explanation, therefore, is explicitly subordinate to interpretation" (ibid., p. 88). Here we have one of many alternations of what subordinates what until an equilibrium between the two modes of discourse is reached. It is clear that in this work, unlike the Project, systematic explanation is no longer independent of clinical interpretation. However, "it is impossible to achieve the first task of interpretation - viz. to discover the thoughts, ideas, or wishes that are 'fulfilled' in a disguised way - without considering the 'mechanisms' that constitute the dream-work and bring about the 'transposition' or 'distortion' of the dream-thoughts into the manifest content" (ibid., p. 90).

Insofar as dreams are fulfillments of wishes, meaning is involved and insofar as the wishes are repressed, force is involved. That something is disguised means that it must be deciphered, but that very disguise requires that something is distorted, deformed, disfigured and this requires dream work, i.e. a compromise of forces. Thus Ricoeur states that "dreams, inasmuch as they are the expression of wishes, lie at the intersection of meaning and force" (ibid., p. 91). Having shown the mixed structure of dreams, Ricoeur proceeds to show the presence of this mixed discourse in each aspect of the dream work. Condensation and displacement are compared by Freud to rhetorical procedures (1900, pp. 277-8) as well as to the compression and transference of forces (1900, pp. 307-8). The concept of dream censorship also partakes of this mixed discourse since "censorship alters a text only when it represses a force, and it represses a forbidden force only by disturbing the expression of that force" (Ricoeur, 1970, p. 93). Ricoeur recognizes that Freud's concept of the dream symbol is a considerably more restricted notion than Ricoeur's concept of symbol as "all double-meaning expressions" (ibid., p. 96). In the Interpretation of Dreams, the manifest dream may make use of symbols, in order to represent latent dream thoughts, but it is not the symbol of the latent dream thought as it would be in the context of Ricoeur's definition of the

symbol. Freud's definition here is in fact more restrictive than his own earlier concept of the symbol in the Studies on Hysteria (1893-1895, p. 70, pp. 90-93) where symbols are mnemic substitutes for repressed traumatic events. In the Interpretation of Dreams on the other hand, symbols are merely cultural stereotypes and merely one method of representation. Freud states that "representation by a symbol is among the indirect methods of representation" (1900, p. 351) and that "things that are symbolically connected today were probably united in prehistoric times by conceptual and linguistic identity. The symbolic relation seems to be a relic and a mark of former identity" (ibid., p. 352). This concept of the symbol is ultimately challenged by Ricoeur as it has been by others (e.g. Deri, 1984; Kubie, 1978). In any case, it is important to note that this restricted concept of the symbol does not undermine Ricoeur's argument that hermeneutics and Ricoeur's own notion of symbolization is integral to the explication of The Interpretation of Dreams. For Freud, however, this is, in his own terms, an issue of representability rather than one of symbolization.

In his explication of Chapter VII of The Interpretation of Dreams, Ricoeur notes that while Freud now presents a psychical apparatus which deals with ideas rather than with neurons, this psychical apparatus alternates

between being considered as a real representation, like the machine of the Project, and a figurative representation, like the structural model to come. Ricoeur suggests that it is perhaps Freud's confusion of perception and fantasy, at this early point in his theorizing, that leads him to forego drawing all the possible consequences from his new notion of a "psychical locality". It is only with the structural model, which Ricoeur calls the "second topography", that these places of the mind are construed as "scenes of action" which serve as schemas of representability. He concludes that in the Interpretation of Dreams, there is no perfect coordination of meaning and topography since regression and the spatiality of this model ultimately expresses man's inability to go beyond the constancy and unpleasure principles. Despite wavering "between a realism of things and an auxiliary representation of processes that require a different scene of action than the space of nature" (Ricoeur, 1970, p. 113), Freud here comes down on the side of man as thing. This conclusion is in severe contrast to purely motivational, hermeneutic and structuralist interpretations of Freud where the theory of dreams is taken as the paradigm for the position that psychoanalysis deals essentially with semantics (see e.g. Lacan 1968, 1977; Rosen, 1969, 1974). At this point of Ricoeur's analysis, we have another oscillation between

what aspect of the mixed discourse appears primary and what appears secondary. Initially Deutung seemed superordinate, then both meaning and force seemed to coincide, and now the topography appears to subordinate semantics.

Ricoeur next moves to a discussion of the Papers on Metapsychology of which he says:

> On the one hand, these papers coherently thematize the topographic-economic point of view. . . . on the other hand, they show how the unconscious can be reintegrated into the realm of meaning by a new interrelation - "within" the unconscious itself - between instinct (Trieb) and idea (Vorstellung): an instinct can be represented (repräsentiert) in the unconscious only by an idea (Vorstellung). Our entire discussion will converge on this notion of Vorstellungsrepräsentanz or ideational representative; the interpretation of meaning through meaning and the explanation by means of energies localized in systems intersect and coincide in this notion. (1970, pp. 115-6)

His argument is as follows. The concept of instinct makes the topographic model an economic model. Objects are merely functions of the aims of instincts. The sources of instincts are known only via their aims. The sources of instincts per se are biological and as such not knowable by psychoanalysis. Instinct is thus a limit concept "between the organic and the psychical" (ibid., p. 151). Instincts themselves are representatives of their organic sources. However, due to primal repression, this primary psychical expression of instinctual sources is never known but only postulated. Thus, epistemologically, we are always in a mediate realm in

which what we know is the expression of something which represents or stands for something which we can never know immediately, but only mediately through its representative. "Instincts are knowable only in their psychical representatives" (ibid., p. 137). Instincts are always (and only) given in a psychical representative, in something psychical which stands for them. It is this Repräsentanz which makes possible any transformation between something unconscious and something conscious. All instincts and their derivatives are transformations of this primal Repräsentanz or primal representative. Repräsentanz is not the same as Vorstellung or representation of an idea. This is itself a derived form of Repräsentanz which originally presents instincts, and derivatively represents things, the world, one's own body, fantasy, etc.. Ricoeur regards the hypothesis that "instincts themselves represent or express the body to the mind" (ibid.) as one of the most fundamental hypotheses of psychoanalysis and as such that which distinguishes it from biology. Instincts are representatives of the organic rather than being the organic per se. Thus the unconscious is a psychical unconscious, i.e. it is composed of psychical representatives or instincts. Instinctual derivatives are all more or less remote, more or less distorted, representatives of these psychical representatives of the organic. Here

in this notion of psychical representative or expression, Ricoeur finds the coincidence of economics and hermeneutics. The energic vicissitudes of instincts are also (and always) the vicissitudes of their psychical expressions. "The unconscious appears, then as a . . . . system of psychical expressions, and the whole of analysis lies in the art of interpreting those derivatives in their relation to ever more primitive expressions of instinct, according to the degree of their remoteness and distortion" (ibid., pp. 141-2). Ricoeur does not rest satisfied with this, for although it is clear that when we examine ideas as psychical expressions we reach a coincidence of economics and hermeneutics, ideas are only one sort of psychical expression. As we noted above, Repräsentanz is not equivalent to Vorstellung. Affects are also psychical expressions or representatives of instincts. If they are purely quantitative, as Freud's "quota of affect" (1915, p. 152) makes it appear, what happens to the supposed mixed discourse of the theory of psychoanalytic knowledge? However, according to Ricoeur, affects are always affects of ideas. An affect is always determined by the idea of which it is an affect. In other words, cognitive and emotive processes are inextricably intertwined (see Brenner, 1974; Kernberg, 1976; Spitz, 1972, among many others). "Affects are the charge of ideas" (Ricoeur, 1970, p. 150), and that they can be

separated from ideas is a derivative possibility, an aspect of the "intentional connection [between affects and ideas] which cannot be nullified" (ibid.). Thus, Ricoeur concludes that while it is true that affects are irreducible, i.e. that the economic point of view cannot be reduced to the hermeneutic point of view, it is also true that a pure economics cannot be realized apart from that which can be represented. If a pure economics could be so realized, one would no longer be dealing with psychical representatives of the organic, i.e. with instincts, but rather with the sources of instincts themselves. In this case, one would have moved outside of the realm of psychoanalysis into the realm of biology, upon which Freudian analysis is based, but from which it intends to distinguish itself. Thus Ricoeur asserts that "the specificity of analytical discourse ultimately lies in the relation between instinct as the primary energy concept and instinctual representative as the primary hermeneutic concept; such discourse unites the two universes of force and meaning in a semantics of desire" (ibid., p. 257).

The Structural Model

Ricoeur next turns to an exposition of those Freudian texts in which the economic-topographic model of the Interpretation of Dreams is applied to cultural phenomena such as art, religion and ethics. Ricoeur wants to show

that these applications result in certain theoretical revisions in the model being applied.

> The interpretation of culture is much more than a by-product of psychoanalysis, since it is bound up with the conception of the second topography [i.e. the structural model] . . . . the second topography is not a mere re-working of the first, since it arises from a confrontation of the libido with the non-libidinal factor that manifests itself as culture. The first topography [i.e. the topographic model] remained tied to an economics of instinct, with instinct as the one basic concept; the division of the topography into three systems was made in relation to the libido alone. The second topography is an economics of a new type: here the libido is subject to something other than itself, to a demand for renunciation that creates a new economic situation. (Ricoeur, 1970, p. 156)

Whether or not it is historically the case that such applications led to an expansion or change in Freud's theorizing is not essential to Ricoeur's argument. What is essential is that an application of the dream theory and its economics to cultural manifestations logically requires certain enlargements and changes in that economic-topographic model. Ricoeur argues that in order to account for works of art, morality or religion, the notion of regression must be extended beyond the concept of topographic regression to perception and that the theory of dreams must be integrated with expressions of waking life. The simple hallucinatory type of wish fulfillment must be expanded to account for fantasies which have temporal features (e.g. daydreams or the history of religion) and which imply mastery over absence (e.g. play

or artistic creation). A genetic explanation is required for any interpretation of cultural phenomena as these human products have a history. Repression per se has no history. A repressing agency however does have such a dimension. Thus Ricoeur regards the focus on a repressing agency, such as is presented in the structural model, as a logical repercussion of taking culture into account. Agencies are regarded as 'roles' as opposed to the 'places' of the topographic model. In order to account for the formation of such agencies Freudian economics is faced with a new task. It must account for a historical process of the introjection of authority. The superego is the result of this task. It is an agency which is the result of an internalization of authority, which is also a differentiation of intrapsychical energies. "A new connection is thus set up between hermeneutics and economics" (ibid., p. 212). These two methodologically different processes, identification with the father and the abandonment of object cathexes, are used together to explain the formation of the superego. In this way, with the development of the structural model one is again faced with a mixed discourse.

Ricoeur views Freud's notion of identification as problematic. Following Freud, Ricoeur recognizes that two types of identification must be posited in order to account for superego formation. In addition to

identification as a 'desire to have', which one can see as a result of the oedipus complex, identification as a 'desire to be like' is a necessary precondition of the oedipus complex. However, as Freud (1921) himself admits, this is a problematic for the metapsychology:

> It is easy to state in a formula, the difference between an identification with the father and the choice of the father as an object. In the first case one's father is what one would like to be, and in the second is what one would like to have. . . . The former kind of tie is . . . already possible before any sexual object choice has been made. It is much more difficult to give a clear metapsychological representation of the distinction. We can only see that identification endeavors to mold a person's own ego after the fashion of the one that has been taken as a model. (p. 106)

Ricoeur points out that whereas it is clear how identification as the desire to have is related to the economics of libidinal development, it is not clear how identification as the desire to be like, which is logically prior, can be explained by economics. Ricoeur argues that Freud's attempt to solve this problematic is not fully successful. This difficulty is seen by Ricoeur to be similar to the problematic aspects of both Freud's notion of symbolism and sublimation. All three concepts involve creative processes which are not fully accounted for. A new system is created via identification and a new product is created via sublimation. In any case, Ricoeur regards the notion of identification to be inadequate to the task of accounting for the formation of the superego,

which comes about by both an internalization of external factors (parental authority) and an internal differentiation of intrapsychical energy. Ricoeur asks: "how can a percipitate of identification act as 'opposition' to the ego? How can the superego be both derived from the id and opposed to it and its first object-choices?" (Ricoeur, 1970, p. 226). In fact, it is this type of question that led Freud to his focus on the aggressive nature of the superego (Freud, 1923, pp. 34-39) which is ultimately explained in terms of instinctual defusion and the death instinct (ibid., pp. 54-55).

Eros and Thanatos

Ricoeur sees Freud's theory of the death instinct as resulting in a change in the meaning (and name) of libido which becomes Eros, as involving a type of speculation which is different from that of the quantitative theory, and as questioning Freud's initial hypothesis of the constancy principle. Ricoeur's question here is "what happens to this semantics of desire, this discourse, when a more romantic type of speculation about life and death is joined to a more scientific type of speculation about the constancy hypothesis and its psychological equivalent the pleasure principle?" (Ricoeur, 1970, p. 257). Ricoeur's task here is of course to show the essential presence of a semantics of desire in Freud's final

instinct theory. Ricoeur's procedure, as we have seen, is to discover the psychical representatives or expressions of an instinct. However, Freud states that "the death instincts are by their nature mute" (1923, p. 46). Ricoeur recognizes this apparent difficulty. "The desire for death does not speak, as does the desire for life. Death works in silence. Hence, the method of deciphering, based on the equivalence of two systems of reference, instincts and meaning, finds itself in difficulty. Yet psychoanalysis has no other recourse than to interpret, that is, to read an interplay of forces in an interplay of symptoms" (Ricoeur, 1970, p. 294). Since instincts are never immediately presented but only mediately expressed in the form of instinctual representatives, such derivatives must be interpreted. However, even though the death instinct is hypothesized to account for the repetition compulsion, and is "confirmed" by aggressiveness, the manifestations of which can be interpreted, the death instinct is never fully expressed in such manifestations. Nevertheless, Ricoeur asserts that this does not actually pose a problem for the interpretation of psychoanalysis as a mixed discourse. Whether in the form of instinct, libido or Thanatos, desire has always been primary for Freud. However, this does <u>not</u> mean that psychoanalysis doesn't need a semantics of desire to secure its epistemological foundation. It is

because of this very excess of desire that semantics exists or needs to exist at all. "Man is speech because the first semantics of desire is distortion" (ibid., p. 313). This notion is not new to us. In discussing the concept of instinctual representative, Ricoeur already pointed out that due to primary repression we are always epistemologically in a mediate realm (see pp. 24-5 above). The additional point being made now is that speech is necessary for this very reason, i.e. because there is no immediacy, no equivalence between desire and its expression. It is because we are not immediately or absolutely transparent to one another that we must speak in order to know or be known, however partial this knowledge must be. It is because what we are and what we wish for is never totally manifest that it needs to be expressed or symbolized at all. This expression never fully or unequivocally coincides with what it intends to express. If this were possible, if what we wish to express could be perfectly coincident with our expression, it would not need to be expressed in the first place. It is because we only see "but through a glass darkly" that we symbolize or need to symbolize at all. This is what Ricoeur means when he says "desire qua insatiable demand, gives rise to speech" (ibid., p. 322).

Ricoeur proceeds to discuss what effects this new instinct theory has upon the law of constancy. He wants

to show that the quantitative theory and the constancy hypothesis, when seen in the light of the theory of Eros and Thanatos, are no longer out of harmony with his notion of analytic discourse as a mixed discourse. Insofar as the death instinct can be identified with the constancy principle, it also coincides with the pleasure principle. Freud says as much, in Beyond the Pleasure Principle, when he states that "the pleasure principle seems actually to serve the death instincts" (1920, p. 63). Eros, however, is the one exception to the law of constancy. Eros creates tensions, it preserves and unites. "The life process of the individual leads for internal reasons to an abolition of chemical tensions, that is to say, to death, whereas union with the living substance of a different individual increases those tensions, introducing what may be described as fresh 'vital differences' which must then be lived off" (Freud, 1920, p. 55). Ricoeur argues that this final dualism of Eros and Thanatos cuts across all previous instinctual dualities. Thus object-love, for example, has elements of both the life and death instinct (Ricoeur, 1970, p. 293) and even pleasure itself partakes of both Eros and Thanatos. Freud states that "it cannot be doubted that there are pleasurable tensions and unpleasurable relaxations of tensions . . . . Pleasure and unpleasure, therefore, cannot be referred to an increase or decrease

of a quantity. . . . It appears that they depend not on this quantitative factor, but on some characteristic of it which we can only describe as a qualitative one" (1924, p. 160). Thus while Eros may maintain ties with the constancy principle, it clearly goes beyond it. Further, Eros is fundamentally object related. There is no such thing as a drive to life within an individual substance, only in its relationship to another substance. Ricoeur thus speaks of the "intersubjective structure of desire" (1970, p. 387). Ricoeur suggests that, taken as an absolute, the pleasure principle as a solipsistic, internal, tension regulator has never been the actual human condition as seen by Freud. "If desire were not located within an interhuman situation, there would be no such thing as repression, censorship, or wish fulfillment through fantasies" (loc. cit.). "The experience of satisfaction inevitably involves the help of others, object relations, and consequently the whole circuit of reality" (ibid., p. 265). This intersubjective character is expressed as internalized in the structural model and ultimately as the structure of desire itself in the final instinct theory. The concept of transference necessitates such an intersubjective model and thus provides further evidence of this state of affairs. But Ricoeur makes the even stronger claim that this is a requirement of the metapsychology itself. Desire is fundamentally

desire of another and is thus meaningful. This concept of desire necessitates a mixed discourse in order to be interpreted, explained or known because it is itself both an economic and an object relational concept.

Chapter 2

METHODOLOGICAL ISSUES

We now turn to Ricoeur's second major line of argumentation for his thesis that psychoanalysis is a "mixed discourse". Ricoeur attempts to show that psychoanalysis does not conform to the methods of either the empirical sciences or those of linguistic analysis. Psychoanalysis, according to Ricoeur, is not methodologically identical to the natural sciences nor to structuralism or phenomenology. In addition to this negative argument, Ricoeur gives a positive analysis of the process of validating psychoanalytic interpretations, thus attempting to provide a specific method of verification for this epistemologically unique science. Further, Ricoeur spells out the mixed nature of psychoanalytic practice in order to show the parallel epistemological structure of the clinical theory and the metapsychology.

Psychoanalysis and Empiricism

Psychoanalysis has often been criticized by philosophers and scientists alike for not fulfilling the criteria of verifiability and validity of the empirical sciences. Ernest Nagel (1959), for example, argues that the hypotheses of psychoanalysis are not capable of

empirical verification:

> The theory does not seem to me to satisfy two requirements which any theory must satisfy if it is to be capable of empirical verification. . . . it must be possible to deduce determinate consequences from the assumptions and . . . . at least some theoretical notions must be tied down to fairly definite and unambiguously specified observable materials. . . . In respect to both these requirements, however, Freudian theory in general, and the metapsychology in particular, seem to me to suffer from serious shortcomings. (pp. 39-40)

In order to meet these requirements, some theorists have proposed that psychoanalysis needs to be reformulated in an operational language (Bridgeman, 1938). The failure of psychoanalysis to conform to a strict operationalism has been cogently argued by Skinner (1956). The alternative of a modified operational reformulation for psychoanalysis has been proposed by Ellis (1956). This requires "that in some final analysis, albeit most indirectly and through a long network of intervening constructs, a statement or hypothesis must in some manner (or in principle) be confirmable - that is, significantly tieable to or correlatable with some kind of observable" (p. 135). Thus, psychoanalytic constructs need to be reformulated as ultimately derivatives of observable empirical concepts. This is in fact attempted, with regard to Freud's theory of repression, by Peter Madison (1961). Madison himself is forced to recognize that such a reformulation can only be partially successful. Referring to Freud's (1909) equation of the horse phobia

and castration anxiety in the case of Little Hans, Madison states, "insofar as analysts only infer the Oedipus complex on such a symbolic basis, it is not statable in observational terms and consequently not measurable even in principle" (p. 190).

According to Ricoeur, this failure of psychoanalytic theory to conform absolutely to empiricist criteria of verification is due to the fact that psychoanalytic propositions are based on interpretations of data rather than on inferences from observables. "Interpretation intervenes not only in the cases where one can neither observe nor measure; it covers the whole field of investigation, only a part of which can be translated into observational language" (1970, p. 357). It is for this reason that Ricoeur asserts that psychoanalysis does not deal with facts which are observed, but rather with reports which are interpreted. "Strictly speaking there are no 'facts' in psychoanalysis, for the analyst does not observe, he interprets" (ibid., p. 365). Despite the <u>partial</u> possibility, and even the partial value, of attempting to reformulate psychoanalytic concepts in empirical terms and thus showing overlaps between different fields of investigation into human behavior, Ricoeur insists that it is necessary to remain aware of the fundamental difference between psychoanalysis and empirical, observational psychology. This essential

difference, which is manifested in many ways, ultimately comes down to the semantic aspect of the 'semantics of desire'. Psychoanalysis deals with the meaning of, events, beliefs, behaviors and the effects of these meanings, not simply with events, beliefs and behaviors per se. Whereas for empirical psychology meaning is an aspect of behavior, "for the analyst behavior is a segment of meaning" (ibid., p. 369). The fact that the analyst makes observations and collects data makes no essential difference to this argument. What is essential is what determines that something counts as a "fact" and what "observation" thus consists of. Ricoeur's argument is that something counts as a fact for psychoanalysis if it is "able to be said, to be addressed to another person, to be fantasized figured or symbolized and to be recounted in the story of a life" (1981e, p. 259). Such "facts" are necessarily situated, at least in part, within the sphere of meaning.

For Ricoeur, reformulations which do not recognize the core difference between psychoanalysis and the empirical sciences run the risk of distorting the proper sense of the terms that are to be reformulated. Further, such attempts to apply empiricist criteria to psychoanalytic theory inevitably lead to a decrease in the scientific status of psychoanalysis which can never fully conform to those criteria. Ricoeur insists however that this is not

due to psychoanalysis being a second rate or immature science. Rather, it is due to the fact that such criteria are not appropriate to the discipline. However, Ricoeur recognizes that the hypotheses and interpretations of psychoanalytic metapsychology and clinical theory do require verification and validation in order to be counted as scientific. Such criteria may need to be different than those of natural science but some criterion is nevertheless required. Ricoeur's own notions about the procedures of proof in psychoanalysis will be explicated in a later section. First it is necessary to show that while for Ricoeur psychoanalysis is not identical with the natural sciences, neither is it reducible to a pure semantics.

Psychoanalysis and Linguistic Analysis

"If this mixed discourse prevents psychoanalysis from swinging towards the natural sciences, it prevents it from swinging towards semiology as well. The laws of meaning in psychoanalysis cannot be reduced to those of linguistics . . . the ambiguity of the relation sustained by desire with language is irreducible" (Ricoeur, 1974d, p. 168). Many theorists who have opposed the incorporation of psychoanalysis into the natural sciences, have suggested that psychoanalysis should be regarded as a type of linguistic analysis (e.g. Flew,

1954; Lacan, 1977; Rosen, 1969, 1974). Ricoeur, on the other hand, cogently argues against this alternative. His argument here, like his argument against the identification of psychoanalysis and empirical science, is based on his conviction that any reformulation of psychoanalysis that does not account for the mixed nature of the discipline, either distorts the meaning of the theoretical terms or makes them appear incomprehensible. Whereas his criticism of the position that takes psychoanalysis to be a natural science demonstrates the necessity of the hermeneutic aspect of psychoanalytic theory, his criticism of the position that takes psychoanalysis to be a linguistic science is an attempt to demonstrate the necessity of the economic aspect of the theory. In this respect his argument against Lacan's structuralist interpretation (1977), Edelson's Chomskian interpretation (1975), and the formulations of ordinary language philosophers (Flew, 1954, 1956; Toulmin, 1954) addresses itself to the same problematic. All of these theorists reduce the psychoanalytic field to language and semantics and "only differ as to the linguistic model employed" (Ricoeur, 1978, p. 309).

Ricoeur's argument against Lacan, for example, points out that while one can certainly regard the process of psychoanalytic interpretation as a translation from a distorted and fragmented discourse into a more

coherent and meaningful discourse, linguistic analysis cannot account for the fact that these two discourses are initially separated from one another. The barrier between conscious and unconscious material, the mechanisms which maintain this barrier as well as the correlative mechanisms which work toward overcoming this barrier in psychoanalytic practice, are not accounted for by language, but rather necessitate an economic explanation. Further, Ricoeur argues against Lacan's notion that the unconscious is structured like a language. Ricoeur certainly recognizes the semantic aspect of psychoanalysis. He agrees that for psychoanalytic practice language is "the field of action and the privileged instrument of its efficacy . . . . Therefore, the analytic situation itself establishes a semantic aspect" (1978, p. 312). He agrees that the capacity to make the unconscious conscious implies that the unconscious has the potential for being spoken. He agrees that that which is spoken has a meaning, a signification. However, he rightfully insists that "none of this proves that what thus comes to language - or better, is brought to language - is or must <u>be</u> language. On the contrary, because the level of expression proper to the unconscious is not language, the work of interpretation is difficult and constitutes a veritable linguistic promotion" (ibid.).

Ricoeur is not saying that there is no signifying

factor in the unconscious. Clearly, he believes that unconscious material is meaningful and entails relationships of signification. It should be remembered that Ricoeur insists that the unconscious is comprised of "instinctual representatives" and that instincts are known for psychoanalysis only mediately and thus significatively. He insists that psychoanalysis cannot be reformulated as a natural science precisely because it is a semantics of desire. Yet he asserts that the unconscious per se does not involve linguistic significations. What then is the factor in the unconscious which is both pre-linguistic and significative? Ricoeur answers that "the universe of discourse appropriate to the psychoanalytic discovery [i.e. to the unconscious] is not so much a linguistic one as that of fantasy in general" (1978, p. 311). "The universe of discourse appropriate to the analytic experience is not that of language but that of the image" (ibid., p. 293).

Ricoeur believes that the image shares with language a semiotic dimension, which is clearly overlooked in theories of the image which regard the image as a perceptual trace or residue. He feels that it is this lack of an appropriate theory of the image which leads to either overlooking the signifying dimensions of the unconscious or misunderstanding it as a linguistic phenomenon. He attempts to repair this state of affairs by providing an

alternative account of "image" or "fantasy". For Ricoeur, "image" is a process rather than a content and has the characteristic of substitutability, being able to stand for or replace something else, as well as the characteristic of figurability, being able to instantiate or embody something. The image is not "a dead mental presence, but a procedure or method for providing images to concepts" (ibid., p. 321). Thus, for example, in the case of dreams, image or fantasizing becomes identified with the dream work. "The image, in effect, is not distinct from the dream work. It is the very process of transformation of the dream thoughts into the manifest content" (ibid., p. 318). As such, this concept of the image is not opposed to the economic aspects of Freud's theorizing but rather takes full account of this part of the mixed discourse of psychoanalysis. The characteristics of substitutability and figurability possessed by image and fantasy are clearly related to the hermeneutic aspect of the mixed discourse. Again, for example, in the case of dreams, the capacity of dream thoughts to become dream images, i.e. the "Considerations of Representability" (Freud, 1900, p. 339), is based on the figurability and substitutability characteristics of the image. Ricoeur views what he calls the "image-family" (1978, p. 318) or the "space of fantasy" (1976, p. 12) as the expressive field of the unconscious. This field

clearly includes more than just dream images. Ricoeur, in fact, suggests that the "space of fantasy", understood as constructive, figurable and substitutable, incorporates a whole continuum of phenomena ranging from hallucinatory wish fulfillment to the creation of works of art. However, a discussion of this point would take us too far beyond our present area of concern regarding the relationship of psychoanalysis to linguistic analysis. What is important to note in this regard is that for Ricoeur, the image is the signifying factor appropriate to the unconscious and that this concept of the image accounts for both the hermeneutic and energetic aspects of Freudian theory. An unconscious wish or desire remains, for Ricoeur, that which can become language but is not yet language. "If desire is the unnameable, it is turned from the very outset towards language; it wishes to be expressed; it is in potency to speech. What makes desire the limit concept at the frontier between the organic and the psychical is the fact that desire is both the nonspoken and the wish-to-speak, the unnameable and the potency to speak" (1970, p. 457). This is the irreducible ambiguity of the relationship of language and desire which was referred to at the start of this section. It is this relationship which prevents psychoanalysis from being identified as either natural science or linguistics, as either economics or

hermeneutics.

The Relationship of Theory and Practice

Of the several outstanding methodological issues yet to be addressed, the relationship of theory to practice provides an important link in Ricoeur's chain of argumentation for psychoanalysis as a mixed discourse. The dichotomy which Ricoeur is attempting to overcome has often been posed in the form of metapsychology versus clinical theory, science versus art, or explanation versus interpretation.[1] In order to strengthen his thesis that psychoanalysis is always (and only) a unique mixture of both causal and hermeneutic knowledge, Ricoeur must show that the mixed discourse, which he has shown to be foundational for the metapsychology, is essential to the clinical theory and practice as well.

According to Ricoeur, psychoanalysis is a unique form of practice:

> It is a technique, by its character as work and its commerce with energies and mechanisms which are attached to the economy of desire. But it is an utterly unique technique in that it encounters and handles energies only through effects of

[1] As used here, in the context of the art of interpretation as opposed to the science of explanation, the term interpretation is meant in the narrow sense of a motivational or hermeneutic account of the data. This use of the term interpretation must be clearly distinguished from Ricoeur's broader usage, which as we have seen, includes both causal and motivational, both economic and hermeneutic aspects.

> meaning - what Freud calls 'derivatives' of instinctual representatives. The analyst never handles forces directly but always indirectly in the play of meaning, double meaning, and substituted, displaced, or transposed meanings. An economy of desire, yes - but across a hermeneutics. It is in, and by, meaning effects that the psychism works. (1974e, p. 187)

The notion of work as an economic concept is essential to psychoanalytic practice. For Ricoeur, psychoanalysis is a work in three respects; it is a work on the part of the analyst who handles the patient's resistances, a work on the part of the patient who commits himself to the treatment process, and a work on the part of the unconscious mechanisms which form the problem or neurosis to be treated. The notion of interpretation (in the narrow sense) as a hermeneutic concept is also essential to psychoanalytic practice. The work of analysis takes place within the intersubjective situation of the transference. It entails the translation of distorted, seemingly meaningless, communications which are regarded as hidden or latent meanings in need of interpretation. It takes as a goal the recognition of the previously hidden meaning which can then be incorporated into the analysands history.

Psychoanalytic practice then, like psychoanalytic theory, is essentially a mixed discourse. An interpretation that is not worked through is a purely intellectual exercise. Equally, there is no psychoanalytic work outside of the analytic situation which is intersubjective,

and delimited by what is fantasized and said. "Thus the correlation between hermeneutics and energetics . . . reappears in a decisive manner on the level of praxis, as a correlation between the art of interpretation and the work against resistances: 'to translate' the unconscious into the conscious and 'to do away with the constraint' resulting from the resistances are one and the same thing. To interpret and to work coincide" (Ricoeur, 1970, p. 408). The notion of transference is itself a mixed concept and as such reveals the mixed nature of desire, i.e. of the repressed wishes brought to light within the transference. The transference occurs in a field of speech and in the context of privation. The analysand must say whatever comes to mind and the analyst - according to the goal of moving the patient from repetition into remembering or recognition - must make explicit the demands spoken by the patient while refusing to satisfy them. "Thus the analyst's work which we described at first as a struggle against the resistances, is now seen as a struggle against substitute satisfactions precisely in the transference where the patient is particularly looking for such satisfaction" (Ricoeur, 1970, p. 417). As was pointed out at the end of Chapter 1, the possibility of transference requires that the concept of desire is an object-relational concept, that desire is necessarily desire of another and thus

meaningful. But the work of the transference reveals "that desire is at bottom an unanswered demand" (loc. cit.). This aspect of the transference refers one back to the economic aspect of symptom formation as "nothing else than a substitute form of satisfaction" (ibid., pp. 416-17).

Ricoeur is clearly saying that his concept of mixed discourse is foundational not only to the metapsychology but to the clinical theory and practice as well. However, implicit in the above analysis of the transference is another point which deserves to be made explicit. As we have already indicated, the data obtained in the practice of psychoanalysis are determined by certain delimiting features of psychoanalytic practice itself - i.e. something counts as a fact in psychoanalysis if it can be spoken to another, can be symbolized or fantasized, and can be narrated or incorporated into the patient's history. Ricoeur is also saying that these constitutive features of psychoanalytic practice are also constitutive features of psychoanalytic theory or metapsychological terms. Thus, the metapsychological concept of desire or wish is constituted by the same unique features which constitute the clinical concept of transference and the actual data obtained in analytic practice.

It is a small step from this point to another

assertion which Ricoeur makes, that the metapsychological and clinical hypotheses and interpretations must be validated or invalidated together. The process of verification itself will be addressed in the next section. What is important to note here is that, for Ricoeur, not only do the metapsychology and the clinical theory and practice have the same epistemological foundation. Not only are the metapsychological and the clinical terms justified by their capacity to interrelate both aspects of the mixed discourse. Both the metapsychology and the clinical theory are necessary components for psychoanalysis. Whether or not Freud's particular system of energetics is justified some such system is needed. Ricoeur, then, distinguishes himself from those who claim that economic explanation belongs to the metapsychology and hermeneutic interpretation belongs to the clinical theory and practice (e.g. Bowlby, 1979; Kuiper, 1964). He distinguishes himself from those who claim that the metapsychology is not only faulty in certain respects, but fundamentally unnecessary (e.g. Klein, 1976). He also thus distinguishes himself from those who claim that there is "no direct connection between" metapsychology and clinical theory (Gill, 1976, p. 103) as well as from those who claim that the metapsychology and the clinical theory represent two essentially different points of view (e.g. Rubinstein, 1976).

Freud has defined psychoanalysis as "the name (1) of a procedure for the investigation of mental processes which are almost inaccessible in any other way, (2) of a method (based upon that investigation) for the treatment of neurotic disorders and (3) of a collection of psychological information obtained along those lines which is gradually being accumulated into a new scientific discipline" (1923, p. 235). Ricoeur takes this threefold nature of psychoanalysis - a procedure of investigation, a method of treatment, and a scientific theory - to constitute a unique relationship between theory and practice. This state of affairs, that the method of treatment is also the procedure of investigation which leads to the generation of theoretical hypotheses, has often been seen as a difficulty in the way of psychoanalysis' claim for scientific status. Ricoeur, on the contrary, sees this as part of the essential nature of the discipline and a part which, as we will soon see, has far reaching consequences for the process and criterion of verification of psychoanalytic claims. Ricoeur regards the investigatory procedure as one of deciphering or interpreting in the sense of "the substitution of an intelligible meaning for an absurd one" (1981e, p. 258), and the method of treatment as a work in the sense of the economic "struggle against resistances" (ibid., p. 257). Together this hermeneutics and this energetics make up

the "mixed discourse" of psychoanalytic practice. The third aspect of the Freudian definition of psychoanalysis, i.e. the scientific theory, must account for this dual nature of psychoanalytic practice. "It is the complex character of actual practice which requires the theory to overcome the apparent contradiction between the metaphor of the text to be interpreted and that of the forces to be regulated; in short, practice forces us to think of meaning and force together in a comprehensive theory" (ibid., p. 258). The adequacy of theoretical concepts must thus be judged on the basis of whether they account for what actually occurs in practice. The topographic model then, for example, is inadequate not because it is mechanistic or outdated hydraulics, but because it is solipsistic and as such cannot account for the fact of intersubjectivity which is necessitated by the transference of psychoanalytic practice.

The Problem of Proof

Preliminary Considerations

In an essay entitled the "Question of Proof in Freud's Psychoanalytic Writings" (1981e), Ricoeur spells out the criteria for the verification of psychoanalytic theoretical hypotheses and clinical interpretations which he considers to be appropriate to this unique science. He believes that in order to succeed in this enterprise

it is necessary to first clarify both the specific nature of what a fact is and the specific nature of the relationship between the theory and such facts in psychoanalysis. He considers that the failure to first clarify these issues is what has led to attempts to apply inappropriate criteria to psychoanalysis which inevitably fail to be fulfilled. We have already addressed these issues in order to prepare the way for an exposition of Ricoeur's positions on this most important methodological issue, regarding the nature of proof in psychoanalysis.

Summarily then, in the natural sciences verification proceeds on the basis of the direct or indirect validation of observables by spelling out the procedures for connecting theoretical propositions to relatively unambiguous facts. However, the facts of psychoanalysis are not 'observables' whether by observables one means directly observed, or operationalized and thus indirectly observed data. Further, the relationship of theory to fact in psychoanalysis is not the same as for natural sciences. The "facts" of psychoanalysis are determined by the psychoanalytic situation which delimits four criteria for what counts as a fact and thus what will need to be accounted for by the theory. These criteria are: that which can be said, that which can be said to another, that which can be fantasized or symbolized and that which can be narrated. Let us make some of the

implications of these criteria more explicit.

That psychoanalytic facts must be spoken - which technical rule attempts to work against acting out or repetition and towards the transference and remembering - implies that meanings rather than physiological events are the object of investigation for psychoanalysis.

> This screening through speech in the analytic situation also functions as a criterion for what will be held to be the object of this science: not instinct as physiological phenomenon, not even desire as energy, but desire as meaning capable of being deciphered, translated and interpreted. . . . It is this selective restriction which forces us to situate the facts of psychoanalysis inside a sphere of motivation and meaning. (Ricoeur, 1981e, p. 248)

Thus Ricoeur prefers to speak of 'reports' rather than 'facts' when referring to psychoanalytic data. That psychoanalytic reports must be spoken to another is a direct consequence of the centrality of transference to psychoanalytic practice and implies that the wishes or desires that are reported are necessarily other directed. This other may be:

> real or a fantasy, present or lost, a source of anguish or the object of successful mourning. Through transference, psychoanalysis controls and examines these alternative possibilities . . . . Thus it is the analytic experience itself that forces the theory to include intersubjectivity within the very constitution of the libido and to conceive of it less as a need than as an other directed wish. (ibid., p. 250)

That psychoanalytic data are fantasies or symbols, in the broad sense of being significative, is just

another way of saying that psychoanalytic facts are facts of psychical reality and not of material reality. The correspondence of the fantasy to external reality is of less importance than what the analysand makes of the fantasy or its place in the analysand's 'psychic continuity'. When we previously discussed Ricoeur's notion of the image or fantasy, we noted that these building blocks of unconscious "discourse" have the characteristic of substitutability. The "reality of these psychic formations consists in the thematic unity which serves as a basis for the interplay of their substitutions. Their reality is their meaning, and their meaning is their capability of mutually replacing one another" (ibid., p. 252). Thus, as a result of their characteristic of substitutability, these psychical realities have "a coherence and a resistance comparable to that of material reality" (ibid., p. 251). The final criterion for psychoanalytic facts, that they must be capable of being incorporated into a narrative, means that this science deals with case histories as opposed to cases and that remembering "facts" involves incorporating them into a meaningful whole or case history. Implicit here is a view of reconstruction as a creative or constructive process rather than as an accumulation of materially real facts.

These "facts" are not tied to theoretical

propositions by the same operative procedure used in the natural sciences. This is due to the fact that psychoanalytic practice is both and at once a procedure of investigation and a method of treatment. "It is this relation [between the investigatory procedure and the treatment method] that mediates between the theory and the facts" (ibid., p. 255). As was previously discussed, Ricoeur regards the investigatory procedure as a hermeneutics, as an attempt to understand the meanings of the data, and the treatment method as an economics, as an attempt to work through resistances. The theory must account for this mixed discourse and its adequacy must be judged on this basis.

The Process of Verification

According to Ricoeur, the question of proof in psychoanalysis is a question not only of the method and criteria of verification of psychoanalytic statements, but also a question of the nature of the truth claim of the statements to be verified. Both the nature of the truth claim and the criteria of verification will need to conform to the unique facts and the unique relationship of theory to facts which psychoanalysis presents. Ricoeur insists that:

> The degree of exactitude that can be expected of psychoanalytic statements depends on the sort of truth that can be expected in this domain. For lack of an exact view of the qualitative diversity of the types of truth in relation to

> the types of facts, verificational criteria appropriate to the sciences, in which facts are empirically given to one or more external observers, have been repeatedly applied to psychoanalysis. The conclusion has been either that psychoanalysis does not in any way satisfy these criteria or that it satisfies them only if they are weakened. Now the question is not how use strict criteria loosely . . . . but how to specify the truth claim appropriate to the facts in the psychoanalytic domain. (1981e, p. 264-5)

According to Ricoeur's criteria for what analytic experience delimits as a fact, truth in psychoanalysis is in the first place a "saying-true rather than a being-true" (ibid., p. 265). By this Ricoeur means that truth in psychoanalysis is self-understanding or recognition as opposed to misunderstanding or lack of awareness. Secondly, truth claims in psychoanalysis must "be placed within the field of intersubjective communication" (loc. cit.), i.e. recognition must involve recognition of the other, whether this other is an internalized object or the analyst in the transference. The third criterion of "facts" poses an apparent difficulty for psychoanalytic truth claims since it involves psychical reality or the meaning of fantasies. Ricoeur rightfully asks "are we not breaking the bond between veracity and truth?" (ibid., p. 266). In other words, if truth claims do not refer to something actual or materially real, but rather to fantasy, what happens to the distinction between fiction and truth?

The fourth criterion of facts, that of being able to

be incorporated into a narrative, provides at least a partial answer to this question. In terms of this criterion, the recognition of psychically real self and object representations have validity to the extent that they are able to be constructed into a meaningful whole. However, this raises the possibility that what we thus take to be truth may be just one large, coherent falsehood, as in the case of a systematized paranoid delusion. However, as Ricoeur points out, if truth claims are not somehow tied to coherent, narrative accounts in psychoanalytic practice, one would be left without any defense against accusations that psychoanalytic treatment is merely rhetorical persuasion and psychotherapeutic success is merely the analysands capacity to accept a particular type of world view. Ricoeur's answer to this apparent dilemma is that while "all truth claims of psychoanalysis are ultimately summed up in the narrative structure of psychoanalytic facts . . . . the means of proof relevant to the narrative explanations are . . . carried by the non-narrative statements of psychoanalysis" (1981e, p. 268).

Non-narrative statements exist on the level of clinical generalizations, the level of lawlike generalizations of types of behavior, as well as on the level of the most general axiomatic hypotheses. An example of the first level would be explanations in terms of libidinal

phases or unconscious motives. An example of the second level would be explanations in terms of defense mechanisms. An example of the third level would be explanations in terms of metapsychological hypotheses about the functioning of instinct. Ricoeur insists that the proof of psychoanalytic truth claims "resides in the very articulation of the entire network constituted by the theory, the interpretive procedures, the therapeutic treatment and the narrative structure of the analytic experience" (1981e, p. 270). Thus, axiomatic generalizations on the basis of the metapsychological theory, lawlike generalizations on the basis of the treatment method, clinical generalizations on the basis of the investigatory procedures, as well as the narrative of the particular case history itself, are to be taken together for the purposes of verification.

Ricoeur addresses the obvious objection that if the whole network which comprises the psychoanalytic domain is to be verified together, then psychoanalytic propositions are in principle unverifiable since the method of proof is self-confirmatory and circular. His argument against this objection is that as long as the verification of one aspect of the network is not a condition for the verification of any other aspect of the network, the method of proof is not a vicious circle:

> The circle of verification will not be vicious . . . if validation proceeds in a cumulative

> fashion through the mutual reinforcement of criteria which taken in isolation would not be decisive, but whose convergence makes them plausible and, in the best cases, probable and even convincing. I shall say, therefore, that the validation apt to confirm the truth claim belonging to the domain of psychoanalytic facts is an extremely complex process which is based on the synergy of partial and heterogeneous criteria. (1981e, p. 271)

Ricoeur proceeds to spell out four criteria of what, together, constitute a good psychoanalytic explanation. The first is coherence with the psychoanalytic theory. He recognizes that this criterion is identical for all sciences. The second is that "a good psychoanalytic explanation must satisfy the universalizable rules set up by the procedures of interpretation for the sake of decoding the text of the unconscious" (ibid., p. 271-2). In other words, the meaning of the symptom, transference neurosis, or dream which is interpreted must be internally consistent. Ricoeur notes that a corollary of this criterion is that the meaning of a symptom and the meaning of a dream must be consistent with one another as well. This is not dependent upon the first criterion of coherence with the theory. In fact, discoveries made within the realm of understanding unconscious meaning may provide new facts which the theory would then have to take into account. As such this second aspect of the fourfold criteria of a good psychoanalytic explanation may provide a corrective function with regard to the first aspect.

Thirdly, "a good psychoanalytic explanation must be satisfactory in economic terms" (ibid., p. 272). In other words, it must be something which the analysand can work through, and consequently a contributing factor in therapeutic success. Clearly, this is not dependent upon the second criterion since, as we already noted (p. 46), an interpretation in the sense of a meaningful translation remains purely intellectual unless it is worked through and thus makes an economic difference.

The final aspect of the criteria of validity is, of course, that the explanation contributes to the "narrative intelligibility" (ibid., p. 273) of a case history. Ricoeur cautions against putting too much weight on this aspect of the verification network since, as he has already made clear, the proof of narrative explanations are not given by the narrative statements themselves. Nevertheless, this criterion of "narrative intelligibility" contributes to the network of verification procedures without being dependent upon the other procedures for its own verification. This is understandable when it is recognized that by "narrative intelligibility" Ricoeur means more than the analysands own acceptance of an explanation as incorporated into his life history. Rather he is here referring to "the general condition of acceptability that we apply when we read any story, be it historical or fictional . . . . a story has to be

'followable', and in this sense, 'self-explanatory' . . . . It is this whole tradition of storytelling that provides a relative autonomy to the criterion of narrative intelligibility" (ibid.).

It is this complex network of criteria which together form the process of verification appropriate to the unique science of psychoanalysis.

Chapter 3

CRITICISMS OF THE SEMANTICS OF DESIRE

Having presented Ricoeur's theory of the epistemological foundation of psychoanalysis, we can now turn to an examination and evaluation of those criticisms which have been levied against his position. Ricoeur's critics can be regarded as falling into one of several categories. A substantial proportion of the criticisms are based upon blatant misunderstandings of Ricoeur's position. These criticisms tend to misrepresent Ricoeur's theory of interpretation as a purely hermeneutic reformulation of psychoanalysis in the tradition of Wilhelm Dilthey, or as a purely linguistic reformulation in the spirit of Jacques Lacan. We have previously noted the rather remarkable fact that some of those theorists who call for the very epistemological foundation which Ricoeur works out, use Ricoeur as an example of someone who does not recognize the need for such a foundation (see especially Modell, 1978). Equally remarkable, is the proliferation of patent misrepresentations of Ricoeur's position by otherwise competent theorists. This apparently highly intellectual issue effects impassioned responses which too often lead to ad hominum and straw man arguments. This widespread misrepresentation of

Ricoeur deserves to be redressed.

A second major group of criticisms, also based on misunderstandings of Ricoeur, are however of greater value in that an examination of these criticisms leads to a further clarification of Ricoeur's terms. Here we find misunderstandings of what Ricoeur means by language, intentionality, and the text. A third and final group of criticisms is based on more substantial disagreements. Here we find disagreements regarding the nature of scientific method, the issue of epistemological dualism, and the meaning of 'meaning' in psychoanalysis. Our discussion of the validity of these more substantive criticisms will be reserved for Chapter 4. We will proceed now with an analysis of the first two groups of criticisms which we regard as being based on more or less obvious misunderstandings of Ricoeur's theory.

Misrepresentations of Ricoeur's Interpretation Theory as a Pure Hermeneutics

A number of Ricoeur's critics view him as following Wilhelm Dilthey in holding that psychoanalysis should be regarded as a Geisteswissenschaft, a human science, as opposed to a Naturwissenschaft, a natural science. As such, psychoanalysis would be a science which aims at understanding (Verstehen) rather than explanation (Erklärung). It would deal solely with motives rather than causes. It would make use of the "method" of

identification or re-enactment, rather than empirical verification, in order to understand types of actions, rather than to explain causal laws. This blatantly incorrect view of Ricoeur is typical of many of his critics including: James G. Blight (1981), Adolf Grunbaum (1984), Robert R. Holt (1981), Marie Jahoda (1977), Arnold H. Modell (1978, 1984), Isak Ramzy and Howard Shevrin (1976), as well as Robert K. Shope (1973). Before examining the specifics of these criticisms it would be helpful to sketch Dilthey's own position regarding the epistemology of the human sciences. This is of some importance since Dilthey's views have themselves been the subject of some misunderstanding both by opponents and proponents of viewing psychoanalysis as a hermeneutic science. Further, Ricoeur has explicitly made his own critique of Dilthey, although it has clearly been overlooked by those critics who identify the two epistemological positions.

Wilhelm Dilthey's Hermeneutics

Wilhelm Dilthey[1], a 19th century German philosopher, attempted to provide an epistemological foundation for

[1] For some useful summaries of Dilthey's ideas see: Bleicher (1980), Palmer (1969), Rickman (1967, and in the preface to Dilthey (1962)). For translations of some of Dilthey's works see: Thomas Hall's translation in P. Connerton (1976), H.P. Rickman's translation in Dilthey (1962) and J.J. Kuhle's translation in Gardner (1959).

the human sciences which would be comparable to the foundation Kant provided for the natural sciences. Dilthey insisted that Kant's categories of pure reason were not appropriate for gaining an understanding of either the inner life of man or the products of human beings, insofar as they are regarded as the products of this inner life. The Kantian categories are static while the experience of life is temporal, historical. The Kantian categories are purely cognitive while the experience of life is "known" via cognition, feeling and will. However, according to Dilthey, the question of how we come to know ourselves, other human beings and their products can not be answered by resorting to introspectionism. Nor can such knowledge be gained through any form of transcendentalism. Dilthey was in fact an empiricist. Thus he regarded his categories of historical reason as empirical generalizations which as such were incomplete, and he regarded knowledge as never being absolute. However, he objected to the positivistic application of the norms of the natural sciences to the human sciences as being logically inappropriate as well as reductionistic.

According to Dilthey, all knowledge must be grounded in the actual, concrete experience of life. This is in fact the pre-reflective beginning for any and all knowledge including that of the natural sciences. However,

for the human sciences, this has a special importance in that we pre-reflectively encounter experience as already organized and meaningful. It is this already apprehended meaning or organization that we want to come to know and to know how we know it. In other words, in the human sciences the object of our knowledge is not different than the knowing or investigating subject himself.

An examination of the categories or organizing principles of lived experience while quite interesting in itself, is irrelevant to our concerns here. Suffice it to say that these categories are, for Dilthey, the ways in which meaning is constituted in some context, the ways events are interpreted in some relationship, e.g. the relation of inner and outer, part and whole, etc.. These categories organize our experience of meaning in the same way that Kant's categories of space and causality, for example, organize our experience of natural phenomena. Dilthey believed that meaning is not only experienced but it is also expressed, and it is expressed in many forms: in gestures, actions, ideas, beliefs, speech, and works of art. These expressions or objectifications of meaning are the object of study for the human sciences. It is these objects which we come to know and not some individual, subjective state. Thus it is possible to have objectively valid knowledge of human experience. But how do we come to know such expressions, by what method?

Dilthey believed that the human sciences in fact make use of all the methods of all the sciences, but that an additional, special method is required to enable one to achieve knowledge of "objectifications of the mind" (Dilthey, 1962, p. 71). This method is Das Verstehen or understanding. It is this method which serves to distinguish the human sciences (Geisteswissenschaften) from the natural sciences (Naturwissenschaften) for which the achievement of knowledge is to explain (Erklärung). Dilthey specifies several conditions for the possibility of this method of Verstehen. The first condition is that we can identify with the object of our study, can re-experience and reconstruct it because we experience such processes ourselves. This was Dilthey's earliest notion of understanding and was a continuation of Schleiermacher's psychologistic hermeneutics. Dilthey, in fact, moved beyond this notion in his later works and stressed two other conditions of Verstehen. The second condition is that we can understand meaningful expressions because we understand the context in which the expression becomes meaningful. For example, the meaning of a word can only be understood in the context of a sentence. This is the hermeneutic circle which we have already discussed (see p. 4) and which sees the attainment of knowledge as a cumulative process of relating part to whole and of continually checking our initial, uncritical

interpretations against the context in which they occur. The third condition is that we can understand meaningful expressions on the basis of our knowledge of the socio-cultural structures in which they occur. For example, words can only be understood because we understand the language. This means that while understanding may in fact be directed towards an individual expression, the understanding of that particular occurs on the basis of more general regularities which are also themselves objectifications of mind.

We have gone into such detail here because we are faced with the rather convoluted situation that some of Ricoeur's critics who have identified him with Dilthey have not only thus misunderstood Ricoeur, but have also presented an incorrect view of Dilthey. In addition, a supposed proponent of Dilthey, H.J. Home (1966), with whom Ricoeur is also incorrectly identified by some critics, has himself a rather distorted view of Dilthey. Further, Ricoeur's own criticism of Dilthey needs to be taken into account in our attempt to show the mistake of identifying Ricoeur with Dilthey or Home to be a misunderstanding of Ricoeur's position. Thus, it is hoped that the above sketch will aid in our actual task of defending Ricoeur against this first group of critics.

Misunderstandings of Dilthey's Position

Robert Holt (1962) provides us with a good example

of a critic of Ricoeur who gives a typical misrepresentation of Dilthey's position as subjectivistic and individualistic. He scornfully regards Dilthey's work as the "philosophical auspices under which to reject scientific method and control . . . to indulge in irresponsible speculation and undisciplined intuition" (p. 387). Verstehen is said by Holt to be "a subjective effect properly aimed at by artists, not scientists" (loc. cit.), and "a method of intuition . . . essentially a wordless act of identification with the object, or some other attempt to 'live in it' without analyzing its Gestalt" (p. 390). Dilthey, however, regarded Verstehen as a method for gaining objectively valid knowledge because it was applied to "objectifications of mind" or objects and not to intuited or introspected subjective states. It is true that Dilthey, early in his philosophical development, regarded a type of identification or re-enactment as an essential aspect of Verstehen. However, this was never an undisciplined, anti-scientific speculation or indulgence, but rather a condition of the possibility of coming to know something. Further, in his later work his emphasis on this psychologistic aspect of understanding waned. Instead, he focused on explicit interpretive or hermeneutic rules of understanding structures, which could hardly be regarded as merely individualistic or immediately, empathically grasped.

H. J. Home, who Holt (1972) cites as a proponent of Dilthey, is perhaps more deserving of the criticisms which Holt levies against Dilthey himself. Home (1966) does in fact regard the method of understanding to be a simple "act of cognition through identification" (p. 44). Even this, however, is not quite compatible with early Dilthey for whom cognition is not separable from feeling and willing. Home does subscribe to the distinction between the human sciences and the natural sciences implicit in Dilthey's distinction between understanding (Verstehen) and explanation (Erklärung), i.e. the distinction between motives and causes. Home states "science asks the question how does a thing occur and receives an answer in terms of causes, whereas a humanistic study asks the question why and receives an answer in terms of reasons" (1966, p. 44). But Ricoeur, as we by now know all too well, does not subscribe to this distinction in regard to psychoanalytic epistemology. Yet Holt (1981) insists of Ricoeur that "his position and his arguments roughly resemble those of Home" (p. 135) and refers to "Home, and others of his persuasion, including Ricoeur" (p. 134). Before dealing in any depth with this all too prevalent misunderstanding of Ricoeur by his critics, let us first examine Ricoeur's own critique of Dilthey in order to make as apparent as possible, the ways in which Ricoeur distinguishes himself

from this position which he is accused of taking.

Ricoeur's Critique of Dilthey

In a series of articles, Ricoeur (1981b, 1981c, 1981d) provides a cogent critique of Dilthey's position and explicitly indicates how his own position differs from the epistemologist of the Geisteswissenschaften. Following Gadamer (1975, pp. 192-214), Ricoeur recognizes the conflict in Dilthey's work between a subjectivistic notion of interpretation grounded in understanding (Verstehen) as an immediate identification with meaningful expressions, and a scientific notion of interpretation grounded in the mediate understanding of objectifications of mind. Ricoeur regards this conflict in Dilthey's epistemology as the central problematic of Dilthey's position. In the first place, Ricoeur points out that even in Dilthey's later work, which focuses on objectifications of mind, these objectifications are ultimately subjectively justified or grounded in that Dilthey's focus remains on the "life" which creates these objects rather than on the objects themselves. This is in distinct contrast to Ricoeur's position where the "text" to be interpreted is autonomous and, as such, an object which can be scientifically approached. In the second place, Ricoeur makes the intriguing point that this conflict, between the science of interpretation and a

subjectivistic understanding in Dilthey's hermeneutics, is actually the result of his having separated out understanding and explanation in the first place. Having attempted to rid the human sciences of the procedures of explanation, explanation appears again in a kind of return of the repressed, or better, return of the split off, as a conflict in the heart of Dilthey's hermeneutics itself.

Ricoeur's position on the other hand avoids this dilemma by refusing to regard understanding and explanation as exclusive alternatives demarcating two spheres of reality. Rather he regards these two attitudes as complementary and insists that both are necessary for any interpretation that is not simply naive. Despite Holt's identification of Ricoeur with Home and Dilthey, Ricoeur emphatically states that for him "understanding has nothing to do with an <u>immediate</u> grasping of a foreign psychic life or with an <u>emotional</u> identification with a mental intention. Understanding is entirely <u>mediated</u> by the whole of explanatory procedures which precede it and accompany it" (1981d, p. 220). Ricoeur's position is different than Dilthey's not only in that he insists on the necessity of both hermeneutic and explanatory stages in his theory of interpretation. The hermeneutic aspect of his epistemology is itself different than Dilthey's notion of understanding. However, this additional

argument against those critics who assimilate Ricoeur to Dilthey or Home is not necessary for our purpose here. It is sufficient to have shown that unlike Dilthey, Ricoeur requires an acknowledgment of both hermeneutic and explanatory procedures in any attempt to obtain scientific knowledge of any human object.

Ricoeur's Interpretation Theory is Not a Pure Hermeneutics

Despite Ricoeur's commitment to the necessity of a mixed discourse as epistemologically foundational for psychoanalysis, his critics have continued to attack him for presenting a purely hermeneutic position. Maria Jahoda (1977), for example, asserts that Ricoeur restricts psychoanalysis to the study of meanings only and does not recognize the economic aspects of psychoanalytic theory. As we have shown throughout this essay, and as Ricoeur shows through his writings on psychoanalysis, such a criticism is patently untrue. Ricoeur explicitly states, "if we were only to follow the suggestion of the concepts of the text and interpretation, we would arrive at an entirely erroneous notion of psychoanalysis. Psychoanalysis would be purely and simply subsumed under the aegis of the historico-hermeneutical sciences, alongside philology and exegesis" (1981e, p. 256). Nevertheless, Ramzy and Shevrin (1976) accuse Ricoeur of holding that psychoanalysis is "a purely interpretive

discipline related to such pursuits as deciphering the meaning of a biblical text" (p. 157), i.e. a pure hermeneutics. They insist that Ricoeur presents "a thoroughgoing nominalism in which it seems as if nothing other than symbols exist" (loc. cit.). What they consider to be their most important objection to Ricoeur is that "if indeed the psychoanalyst deals with a language of desires, there must be some means by which the desires are transmuted into language" (loc. cit.). This is no criticism of Ricoeur, as such an assertion could easily have been made by Ricoeur himself. As we have previously shown, Ricoeur insists that an economic explanation is required by the very fact that there is a barrier between the unconscious and the conscious, by the fact that there are specific mechanisms which maintain this barrier and by the fact that it is an effort, a work, to overcome this barrier. As if against Ricoeur, Ramzy and Shevrin go on to suggest that symptoms for Freud are not simply symbols but are also the results of conflictual processes. Ricoeur would certainly agree. This all too prevalent assumption, that Ricoeur argues for psychoanalysis as a purely hermeneutic discipline, leads such critics to make rather embarrassingly blatant errors in their reading of Ricoeur. Thus Modell (1978) quotes Ricoeur's statement that "it is not the dream work that constructs the symbolic relation but the work of culture"

(Ricoeur, 1970, p. 500) and asserts that Ricoeur makes this statement "to maintain the hermeneutic analogy" (Modell, 1978, pp. 645-646). In actuality, Ricoeur's statement here has a twofold purpose, neither of which have anything to do with establishing the theory of dreams to be evidence of the hermeneutic nature of psychoanalysis. Rather, he is here pointing out that, firstly, the dream work requires an economic rather than a hermeneutic explanation and that secondly, for Freud dream symbols are cultural relics (see Freud, 1900, pp. 339-404; 1916, pp. 149-169).

Critics such as Robert Shope (1973) and Adolf Grunbaum (1984) tend to use Ricoeur as a straw man for their attempts to assert a purely causal account of psychoanalytic explanations. Shope (1970, p. 298) states that Ricoeur regards Freud's notion of wish fulfillment as purely hermeneutic and then, as if to prove his point, proceeds to quote Ricoeur's statement: "to say that a dream is a fulfillment of a repressed wish is to put together two notions which belong to different orders" (1970, p. 92). Shope goes on to argue that the notion of wish fulfillment is a purely economic one. Whether or not he is correct has no bearing on the point that Ricoeur does not make the opposite claim, i.e. that wish fulfillment is a purely hermeneutic concept, as Shope accuses him of doing. Grunbaum (1984, pp. 48-49) argues

against Ricoeur in a similarly fallacious manner and to a similar end. He begins by presenting Ricoeur's position as a purely hermeneutic one. He then presumes that Ricoeur is forced to admit the error of his ways, recognize that Grunbaum is correct and that causal explanations are necessary after all. He then presents Ricoeur as forgetting this recognition and reasserting the purely hermeneutic nature of psychoanalysis. He concludes that Ricoeur's position is incoherent. This verdict appears to be more appropriate to Grunbaum's assumptions than to Ricoeur's actual position wherein both hermeneutic interpretation and economic explanation are assumed to be equally necessary from the start.

Terminological Misunderstandings

The second group of criticisms which we will address are those which can be seen to be based on a misunderstanding of some of Ricoeur's terms, specifically his notions of language, text, and intentionality.

Language

Ricoeur is typically criticized for contracting the scope of psychoanalysis by limiting it to the sphere of speech. Implicit in this criticism, however, is a misunderstanding of what Ricoeur intends by language and semantics. Ramzy and Shevrin (1976), for example, criticize Ricoeur by objecting that "it is not correct that

the psychoanalyst depends only on language, important as language is" (p. 157). Maxwell and Maxwell (1972) in their review of Ricoeur's Freud and Philosophy, accuse Ricoeur of having a "bias in favor of 'the Word'" (p. 519). Holt (1981) states that "Ricoeur . . . wants a sharp restriction of psychoanalytic theory . . . only to what can be expressed in words" (p. 136). Grunbaum (1984) insists that Ricoeur's view of psychoanalysis "immures its substantive purview within the verbal productions of the clinical transaction" (p. 43). He concludes that for Ricoeur "even the analysands nonverbal productions are excluded from its [psychoanalysis'] scope" and that "Ricoeur's circumscription . . . is a mutilation of its [psychoanalysis'] range of relevance" (loc. cit.).

From such statements one would never guess that Ricoeur, as we know, regards the image rather than language to be primary for psychoanalysis and that he consistently criticizes Lacan's assimilation of the unconscious to structural linguistics. Ricoeur states: "Let us be clear on this point. It is in no way a question here of an amputation of human experience, which is thereby reduced to discourse. On the contrary, it is a question of an extension of the semiotic sphere as far as the obscure confines of mute desire antecedent to language" (1978, p. 295 - my emphases). Rather than

attempting to truncate the psychoanalytic realm to speech and language, he believes that psychoanalysis broadens the semiotic sphere, the sphere of meaning, to include not only language, but bodily gestures, psychosomatic symptoms, fantasies and dream images. He can thus be seen to use the term 'speech' in much the same way as Freud (1913) did when Freud stated "in what follows 'speech' must be understood not merely to mean the expression of thoughts in words but to include the speech of gesture and every other method such, for instance, as writing, by which mental activity can be expressed" (p. 176).

Adolf Grunbaum accuses Ricoeur of misassimilating "symptoms to linguistic expressions" (1984, p. 61) or instinctual "derivatives . . . to linguistic communications" (ibid., p. 63). Grunbaum argues that the remoteness of such derivatives from their instinctual origins defies such an assimilation. But Ricoeur, as we have previously seen, makes the very same argument in his criticism of Lacan, whom Grunbaum nevertheless insists that Ricoeur endorses (ibid., p. 65). Further, Ricoeur does not assimilate symptoms et. al. to linguistic expressions but to semiotic ones. For Ricoeur, the semiotic field is not, as we have also seen, fundamentally linguistic. Where Grunbaum and Ricoeur do disagree is in whether symptoms, dreams, fantasies or derivatives of

any kind are significative at all. For Ricoeur, they clearly do signify, but not - Grunbaum's accusations to the contrary not withstanding - as language signifies:

> The representing of instincts (Trieben) is thus at the center of our problem. It is neither biological nor semantic. It is delegated by the instincts and promised to language and reveals instincts only in their derivatives while gaining access to language only by the twisted combinations of object cathexes which precede verbal representation. We must invoke an irreducible type of relationship between signifiers and signifieds. These signs and meaning effects have a linguistic vocation but are not, in their specific texture, of the order of language. This is what Freud indicates by the word Vorstellung or representation, and it is what keeps the level of fantasy distinct from that of speech. (Ricoeur, 1974d, p. 169)

Grunbaum, on the other hand, wants to argue that psychoanalytic phenomena have meaning, express or signify only in the highly attenuated sense of, for example, the way a rain cloud signifies rain or a footprint means that someone walked here. This is part of his (and others, such as Robert Shope) argument for a purely causal account of psychoanalytic propositions. The inherent difficulties of such a position, which difficulties are clearly avoided by Ricoeur's position, will be addressed in Chapter 4. In any case, it is simply unfounded on Grunbaum's part to accuse Ricoeur of holding that "repressed wishes were verbal devices of communication" (1984, p. 65). Unconscious contents are never linguistic for Ricoeur, and repression is regarded by him to require an economic explanation. Ricoeur, in fact, recognizes an

inherent danger in a purely linguistic reading of psychoanalysis. Ramzy and Shevrin inevitably reverse the actual state of affairs in this regard as well, stating that "ironically, Ricoeur's efforts to tie analysis solely to linguistics as a way of bringing it closer to the humanities also brings it close to the brink of therapeutic nihilism" (1976, p. 158). More ironically however, Ricoeur himself says much the same thing. "A decisive question for metapsychology is whether the recognition of the privileged imaginative level of the processes described by Freud does not make the articulation of the economic and the semiotic aspects of psychoanalysis intelligible, whereas a purely linguistic theory seems to make them almost incomprehensible" (1978, p. 322). One can only assume that Ricoeur would not write in this way about himself.

The Text

Arnold Modell (1978, 1984) accuses Ricoeur of emphasizing a fixed symbolism and eschewing the discovery of the meaning of dream symbols via free association. He states: "Ricoeur maintains that Freud did not pay sufficient attention to the process of symbolization, that he minimized the existence of fixed interpretation of symbols in favor of the method of free association" (1978, pp. 644-645). This is a peculiar criticism of

Ricoeur. In fact, Ricoeur does have some important fault to find with Freud's notion of dream symbolism, but his criticism is the very one which Modell here levies against Ricoeur himself and which in no way reflects Ricoeur's position. Ricoeur quite accurately presents Freud's theory of symbolism in dreams as "very narrowly restricted to the stereotypes which resist the piecemeal method of deciphering dreams through the dreamers free association" (1970, p. 498). For Freud, dream symbols have "a permanently fixed meaning . . . like the grammalogues in shorthand" (ibid., p. 499). This notion of the symbol as "a relic and a mark of former identity" (Freud, 1900, p. 352) is in clear distinction to Ricoeur's notion of the symbol as something which both reveals and conceals. For Ricoeur, a symbol may, at its lowest level, become so "worn" that it is merely a Freudian dream symbol in which the process of symbolization is no longer active, a cultural stereotype with "nothing but a past" (Ricoeur, 1970, p. 505). At the other end of the continuum however, symbols create meanings. According to Ricoeur, such symbols are "creations of meaning that take up the traditional symbols with their multiple significations and serve as vehicles of new meanings" (loc. cit.).

Modell's misrepresentation of Ricoeur's position may well be due to his misunderstanding of what Ricoeur refers to as "the text" which is to be interpreted.

Modell states, for example, "I believe that this assertion goes to the heart of the matter - the difference between seeing the dream as a text requiring translation, or viewing the interpretation of dreams as a source of new and unexpected observations" (1978, p. 645). However, by the term 'text' Ricoeur does not mean to say that we or our dreams are fixed and dead, written down once and for all between the covers of a book. Nor does he mean that psychoanalytic phenomena should be interpreted by means of a textual exegesis, as the bible was by the earliest hermeneuticians. A brief exposition of what Ricoeur means by the text would be useful, not only in answering Modell's particular criticism, but also in illuminating an aspect of the misunderstanding we have yet to address, that of intentionality.

The text, as the object of knowledge in Ricoeur's theory of interpretation, is autonomous, i.e. it is not reducible to the intentions of its author. Thus it can be scientifically approached and the pitfalls of epistemological subjectivism can be avoided. Ricoeur (1981d) regards the text as a paradigm for the scientific study of "meaningful action" and, as we will see, such an object is by no means fixed and closed to change as Modell would have it. As an object, the text calls for explanatory procedures in order to be known, but it can be explained in its own terms, without reduction of its

meaningful or signifying aspect. The text has the characteristic of being a whole, as for example an organism is a whole. It is perspectival in nature, i.e. as is the case for perceptual objects, all of its aspects are never given at one and the same time. Thus it requires interpretation. This is not due to the ineffability or purely subjective nature of psychic experience but is rather due to the non-linear, gestalt nature of such texts. In this regard, the example of a piece of music or a novel is quite useful. A musical phrase or a particular sentence becomes meaningful in the accumulating context of all the other phrases or sentences which go to make up the text. "The reconstruction of the text as a whole necessarily has a circular character, in the sense that the presupposition of a certain kind of whole is implied in the recognition of the parts. And reciprocally, it is in construing the details that we construe the whole" (Ricoeur, 1981d, p. 211).

Ricoeur specifies four traits of the text which together constitute its status as an object, its objectivity. The first is that it provides a 'fixation of meaning'. By this, Ricoeur does not mean that the text - for example the dream with its dream symbols - is fixed in the sense of being set down in the past and not able to provide any new information. Rather, he means that the meaning is fixed in an atemporal sense of being

presented as a "delineated pattern which has to be interpreted according to its inner connections" (ibid., p. 204). The second trait of the text is that its meaning is dissociated from the subjective intention of the author. As we will see, this trait will be particularly important in the proper understanding of Ricoeur's notion of intentionality. Ricoeur would say that the text has an intentionality but is autonomous of the particular intention of the author of the text. We will return to this point in the following section. The third trait is that the text has a non-ostensive reference. This doesn't mean that the text does not refer to something. Rather it means that the meaning the text has, i.e. what the text refers to or is about, goes beyond the particulars that it presents. For example, the Brothers Karamazov conjures up, not only a particular set of situations of a particular set of characters, but a world such that one can speak of the world of 19th century Russia. Or again, for example, an obsessive compulsive individual who may have particular traits, such as excessive concerns with money or cleanliness, can be referred to as having an obsessive style. Such a style is more than a set of traits, but rather refers to a general way of cognizing, experiencing and relating. This characteristic of the text will be important in our response to the charge that Ricoeur's position negates any possibility of

establishing recurrent configurations or general laws. This will be addressed in Chapter 4. The fourth trait of the text, that it has what Ricoeur refers to as a 'universal range', provides the most direct answer to Modell's supposed criticism of Ricoeur. The text like "human action, is an open work . . . . It is because it [the text] opens up new references and receives fresh relevance from them, that human deeds are also waiting for fresh interpretations which decide their meaning" (Ricoeur, 1981d, p. 208).

Intentionality

Another concept which Ricoeur makes use of and which has been the subject of some misunderstanding, is the notion of intentionality. Grunbaum (1984, pp. 69-83) regards the thesis that intentionality plays an essential role in the explanation of human action, to be another way of stating that human action is understood via reasons or motivations as opposed to being explained by causes. He calls this thesis "reasons versus causes" or "R vs C". He clarifies the relationship of the notion of intentionality to the motive-cause distinction as follows.

> R vs C develops its case by reference to the so-called "practical syllogism" which has the following form: an action A is held to be carried out, because the agent aims [i.e. intends] to achieve a goal G and believes [i.e. intends] that A will issue in the attainment of G. And, pointing to these stated reasons for doing A, R vs C

> denies that an agent's state of having a reason for action (in the explanatory sense) can belong to a species of the genus "cause". (p. 70)

Grunbaum proceeds to argue against this motive-cause distinction to the effect of attempting to show that motives are simply a species of causes. The content of his argument is of little importance here due to the fact that Ricoeur never embraced the "R vs C" thesis in regard to psychoanalytic explanation. While Grunbaum recognizes that Ricoeur does not subscribe to this thesis in his later works on psychoanalysis (e.g. Ricoeur 1981a), Grunbaum insists that this must be due to Ricoeur's having been belatedly influenced by Michael Sherwood's (1969) work on the logic of psychoanalytic explanation. He asserts that prior to this Ricoeur believed otherwise. Grunbaum states:

> In his full-length work on Freud, Ricoeur (1970: 359-360) endorses Toulmin's claim that psychoanalytic explanations are not causal, just in virtue of being motivational. As Ricoeur saw it then, in psychoanalysis "an explanation through motives is irreducible to an explanation through causes . . . . a motive and a cause are completely different", instead of the former being a species of the later. (1984, p. 73)

This is a very disturbing quotation because it is an apparently willful misrepresentation. With the words which Grunbaum quotes, Ricoeur is presenting the position of Toulmin and other ordinary language philosophers such as Flew. In the very same pages which Grunbaum cites, Ricoeur plainly states that he disagrees with this aspect

of Toulmin's and Flew's positions. "The statements of psychoanalysis are located neither within the causal discourse of the natural sciences nor within the motive discourse of phenomenology" (1970, p. 360). Several pages further on Ricoeur states that "the distinction between motive and cause does not resolve the epistemological problem posed by Freudian discourse . . . it is a mixed discourse that falls outside the motive-cause alternative" (ibid., p. 363).

It is clear that Ricoeur does not endorse a purely causal view of psychoanalytic explanation. But neither has he endorsed a purely motivational account in Freud and Philosophy or elsewhere. He does however endorse the role of intentionality in psychoanalysis as in all human activity. Grunbaum's criticism of intentionality could be seen - although, as we will see, this would be a mistake - as applying to Ricoeur. Grunbaum does insist that:

> The notion of intentionality appropriate to the explanation of premeditated actions - intended because of the agents belief in their conduciveness to his goals - typically applies at best in only a Pickwickian or metaphorical sense, if at all. Unconsciously, the agent is conatively intent upon a certain desideratum, but he is hardly intent upon the behavior that is causally engendered by this yearning as an action towards that desideratum. (1984, pp. 79-80)

The only problem with this is that Ricoeur's notion of intentionality has nothing to do with "the agent's belief in [something's] conduciveness to his goals", whether

that belief is considered to be conscious or unconscious. This notion of belief or intent has little to do with Ricoeur's concept of intentionality.

Ricoeur uses the word 'intentionality', not in its ordinary language sense, nor in its Aristotelian sense as in the practical syllogism, but rather in the Husserlian or phenomenological sense. According to Husserl[2], intentionality is definitive of mental acts, insofar as every mental act stands in some relation to an object. One can think about something, look at something, believe in something, fantasize about something, etc., but in each case the meaning of that something is constituted in the relationship in which one stands (thinking, looking, believing, fantasizing) towards that object. Intentionality is this meaning, this significative relationship which holds between sign and signified. Husserl in fact distinguishes between signs which have a meaning which the sign expresses and signs which merely point to an object. Signs which merely point and do not express are called "marks". Such signs and what they point to can be related in several ways, e.g. arbitrarily by convention, as in the relation between a road sign and its message, or e.g. causally, as in the relation of a footprint in

[2] For some useful introductions to Husserl's concept of intentionality see: Edo Pivcević (1970, Ch. 4) and Aron Gurwitsch (1966, Ch. 7).

the sand to the person who walked on the beach. Physical symptoms, for example, are signs or "marks" of a disease. "The referring function of an indicatory sign or 'mark' is understood as a result of an association of ideas" (Pivcević, 1970, p. 52). Signs which express, or "expressions", are unlike "marks" in that they involve intentionality, i.e. "they refer to something solely in virtue of what they mean" (loc. cit.). Expressions are related to what they express by relationships of meaning, by intentional acts. For Ricoeur, for example, dreams are expressions of unconscious wishes. For Grunbaum, for example, dreams are marks of unconscious wishes.

Ricoeur's use of the concept of intentionality in regard to psychoanalysis has several functions. With this concept he attempts to show the importance of meaning, the ambiguity of meaning, the body as meaningful and the importance of intersubjectivity. The details of his demonstrations in this regard would take us far afield. It is however important to note that despite Ricoeur's analysis of the unconscious as a center of intentionalities, he insists that the Freudian unconscious can never be fully explained by phenomenology but rather requires an explanation in terms of forces.

> The notion of cathexis expresses a type of adhesion and cohesion that no phenomenology of intentionality can possibly reconstruct. At this point the energy metaphors replace the inadequate language of intention and meaning. Conflicts, formations of compromise, facts of distortion -

> none of these can be stated in a reference system restricted to relations of meaning to meaning, much less . . . of literal meaning to intended meaning; the distortion that separates the literal meaning from the intended meaning requires concepts such as dream-work, displacement, condensation, which we have shown to be both hermeneutic and energic in nature; the function of the energy metaphors is to account for the disjunction between meaning and meaning. (Ricoeur, 1970, pp. 393-4)

Robert Shope (1973), unlike Grunbaum, more often than not recognizes that Ricoeur does not use intentionality in the sense of the practical syllogism but rather in the sense of meaning, expression or signification. Shope also recognizes that one of Freud's usages of meaning is that of intention, by which Freud does not mean an intended action. Thus he can not quarrel with Ricoeur on that front. Where he does quarrel with Ricoeur is in regard to whether intentionality, meaning or expression in Ricoeur's sense does or does not apply to what he sees as any of Freud's several usages of 'meaning'. Shope interprets Freud's use of meaning as intention, as equivalent to Freud's use of meaning as motivation. Shope interprets Freud's use of meaning in the sense of motivation or motive as an exciting cause. This usage of meaning is thus not relevant to Ricoeur's use of intentionality. It is with Freud's use of meaning as expression that Shope places his argument with Ricoeur. Shope regards this usage as equivalent to substitution, i.e. - in Husserl's terms - as a "mark" rather

than as an "expression". Shope thus insists that dreams et. al. are merely signs or marks and as such do not need any hermeneutic procedure at all in order to be explained. Ricoeur, who regards such psychoanalytic phenomena to be expressions, i.e. intentional or meaningful objects, regards hermeneutics as a necessary part of their explanation. The relative merits and liabilities of this position, which Shope shares with Grunbaum and others, is one of several substantive criticisms of Ricoeur which have yet to be examined. It is to this third and final group of criticisms that we now turn.

Chapter 4

METHODOLOGICAL CRITICISMS

The more substantive criticisms of Ricoeur's Interpretation Theory largely center around differing views of scientific methodology and the correlative issues of validation and verification. Much concern has been directed towards Ricoeur's statements to the effect that psychoanalysis is not a natural science and does not observe facts. Such concerns form the basis of several typical criticisms of Ricoeur's position. Ricoeur has thus been accused of presenting an epistemological dualism and of adhering to an old-fashioned and inordinately narrow view of the natural sciences. Alternatively, it is proposed - usually by those theorists who have misunderstood Ricoeur's position to be a pure hermeneutics - that psychoanalysis is a natural science which like any other natural science, explains via causes and has no commerce with hermeneutic procedures of any sort. In part, these criticisms can be seen to be a consequence of the previous abuse that Freudian psychoanalysis had suffered at the hands of positivistic philosophers of science. Insults directed at Ricoeur's work are all too reminiscent of those thrown at psychoanalysis by philosophers of the symposium on Psychoanalysis, Scientific

Method and Philosophy (Hook, 1959). Thus psychoanalytic theory was referred to by Charles Frankel as "a language to say silly things in an impressive way" (cited in Waelder, 1962, p. 618) and Ricoeur's work is referred to by Robert Holt as "evocative verbalism with no clear content" and "inappropriate use of figurative language in the service of self-congratulation, obfuscation, and intimidation" (1981, p. 136). However, it is our task to put aside such identifications with the aggressor and examine Ricoeur's actual position rather than its feared consequence.

The Charge of Epistemological Dualism

Ricoeur holds that psychoanalysis does not observe facts but rather interprets reports. This is a disturbing claim if, and perhaps only if, it is assumed that data either comes from observation of external facts or introspection of subjective states. This assumption is the basis of, for example, Charles Brenner's defensive declaration of the scientific status of psychoanalysis, to wit: "Freud did not base his theories on introspective data, but on observation" (1970, p. 36). For those who presume this antinomy, if psychoanalysis does not observe facts then it becomes relegated to the subjectivism of introspective psychology. However, this old dichotomy of subjectivism versus objectivism, with its correlative

dichotomies of idealism versus realism and mind versus body is not embraced by Ricoeur. Further, Ricoeur regards Freud's notion of the unconscious as spanning and uniting these conceptual oppositions. Despite this, Ricoeur has been criticized for proposing a radical epistemological dualism.

The Great Divide

James Blight (1981) asserts that both hermeneutics and positivism are alike in maintaining an epistemological "Great Divide" between the natural sciences and the humanities, or between scientific explanation and historical explanation. Of Ricoeur he states, "Ricoeur is a radical epistemological dualist. Scientific knowledge of the physical world and hermeneutic knowledge of the self-reflective process are simply and utterly different . . . . psychoanalysis remains nothing like biology or any other natural science. It rests firmly, according to Ricoeur, on the hermeneutic side of the Great Divide" (p. 167). Similarly, Barnaby Barratt (1976) accuses Ricoeur of proposing "a radical dichotomy between hermeneutic and logical-empiricist knowledge systems, that is, between the acquisition of an interpretive understanding and of a physiocausal explanation" (p. 456).

These charges bear some similarity to those we have previously dealt with, wherein Ricoeur is mistakenly identified as presenting a purely hermeneutic position.

However, something more is at stake here. This will begin to be more obvious if we look at two other formulations of the charge of epistemological dualism. Robert Holt (1981) argues that Ricoeur holds that psychoanalysis requires "two theories . . . a hermeneutics to deal with the meanings and an energetics to deal with man's instinctual life" (p. 131). Holt continues, "The underlying difficulty, I believe, is metaphysical: the more one tends, consciously or not, toward a dualistic position on the mind-body problem, the more one will feel that there is an unbridgeable gulf between the realm of external physiochemical fact and that of inner meanings, and thus between science and the humanities" (loc. cit.). Similarly, Ramzy and Shevrin (1976) state that "Ricoeur . . . appears to sever utterly any connection between mind and body" (p. 158).

Ricoeur is not only being charged with holding that psychoanalysis is a hermeneutic, humanistic discipline which understands rather than a natural science which explains, which accusations have already been addressed. He is further being charged with adhering to a methodological, epistemological and metaphysical dualism. Ricoeur, we are being told, believes that psychoanalysis requires two disparate theories, that subjective and objective knowledge are radically distinct and that the mind and body are two disparate entities.

Overcoming the Great Divide

It is true that Ricoeur objects to any reduction of semantics to naturalism, as well as any reduction of the energic hypotheses of psychoanalytic theory to hermeneutic ones. It is true that Ricoeur maintains that the theoretical or clinical hypotheses of psychoanalysis cannot be reductionistically explained by either a purely causal or by a purely hermeneutic account. Nevertheless, Ricoeur is by no means an epistemological dualist. He insists that psychoanalysis requires a mixture of hermeneutic and explanatory procedures, such that these two aspects of our scientific approach to psychoanalytic phenomena compliment and require one another. Unlike Dilthey, Ricoeur holds that these two ways of obtaining knowledge do not represent two disparate epistemological or metaphysical realms. Rather, both are equally necessary components of psychoanalytic interpretation. Hermeneutics is required by the nature of the text as a totality whose parts can be explained or understood only in their context. Hermeneutics is further required by the nature of the text as an ambiguous whole, in regard to which several explanations or understandings are possible. Freud understood this very well when he stated:

> The uncertainties which still attach to our activities as interpreters of dreams spring in part from our incomplete knowledge, which can be progressively improved as we advance further, but

> in part from certain characteristics of dream symbols themselves. They frequently have more than one or even several meanings, and as with Chinese script, the correct interpretation can only be arrived at on each occasion from the context. This ambiguity of the symbols links up with the characteristic of dreams for admitting of 'over-interpretation'. (1900, p. 353)

However, explanatory procedures are equally required by the nature of the text, by the nature of the unconscious, as well as by the need for verifying our hypotheses and adjudicating between possible interpretations.

We have already shown in some detail (see Chapter 2 above) the ways in which both explanatory and hermeneutic procedures enter into the process of the validation of interpretations and hypotheses. What must be stressed now is that these two epistemological approaches are not mutually exclusive, but rather each is required by the other. Further, these epistemological approaches are both applied to the same object and result in one type of knowledge. Additionally, while Ricoeur is not an epistemological dualist, neither is he a methodological dualist. His hermeneutics and his energetics, which combine to create the mixed discourse of psychoanalytic theory, are not two theories but rather two dialectically related aspects of one theory. This singular epistemological foundation is applicable to both the clinical theory and the metapsychology. "Metapsychology is not a mere additional or optional construction . . . . psychoanalytic method [i.e. the clinical theory] and doctrine

[i.e. the metapsychology] cannot be distinguished" (Ricoeur, 1974b, pp. 103-104).

Ricoeur on Freud

Ricoeur views the dualisms of subject/object, mind/body and idealism/realism to be, in an important sense, inapplicable to Freudian theory. The Freudian unconscious is a radical denial of the subjective immediacy of knowledge. Self-knowledge can no longer be equated with any immediate act of consciousness, such as the Cartesian cogito. However, neither can such knowledge be found in any simple equation with external behavior, which presents one with only a distorted representation of unconscious wishes. Additionally, Freud's concept of the instinctual representative can be seen to bridge the mind/body distinction. Freud (1915) states, "an 'instinct' appears to us as a concept on the frontier between the mental and the somatic, as the psychical representative of the stimuli originating from within the organism and reaching the mind, as a measure of the demand made upon the mind for work in consequence of its connection with the body" (pp. 121-122). Instincts in psychoanalysis are that which "represent or express the body to the mind" (Ricoeur, 1970, p. 137). The body, for psychoanalysis, is not simply a mental representation nor simply an external object. Psychoanalysis thus can not

be reduced to a simple idealism or realism, any more than it can be reduced to linguistics or biology. The notion of instinctual representative is neither purely semantic nor purely biological but a coincidence or intersection of the two. Ricoeur's term 'desire' is particularly apt in pointing up this "double tenancy".

Ricoeur recognizes that, for Freud, the topographic unconscious is a real entity with its own systematic laws, which is separated from the system consciousness. This reality of the unconscious justifies Freud's use of energic metaphors and his naturalism. However, for Freud, the unconscious is also related to consciousness insofar as that which is unconscious has the possibility of being made conscious. If it were otherwise, one of Freud's explicit goals of treatment, as well as the need for defense mechanisms, and the possibility of interpreting a dream, would be incomprehensible. This relation of the unconscious to the conscious justifies Freud's use of hermeneutic metaphors. Ricoeur insists that, to obtain a proper understanding of Freud's concept of the unconscious, it is not necessary, or desirable, to choose between an "ideality of meaning" or a "reality of the id" (1970, p. 439). Rather than posing an exclusive alternative of regarding the unconscious as meaning or topography, Ricoeur insists that it is properly to be regarded as both.

The realism of the Freudian unconscious is of a particular sort. The unconscious is comprised of instinctual representatives, rather than of instincts per se which, according to Freud, lie outside of the realm of psychoanalytic investigation. This is not to say that such organic, biological instincts do not exist. They may in fact be that upon which the psychoanalytic unconscious is ultimately grounded. However, and in any case, they are not what constitutes the Freudian unconscious. "The nucleus of the unconscious consists of instinctual representatives" (Freud, 1915, p. 188). The psychoanalytic instinct is the psychical representative of the biological instinct, rather than being the biological instinct itself. Ricoeur thus refers to Freud's realism of the unconscious as a "realism of the knowable" (1970, p. 434) or a "representational realism" (1974b, p. 105). Ricoeur's point is that although the system unconscious is a "reality" it is ultimately a realism which is relative to the hermeneutic procedures of interpretation of the derivatives of instinctual representatives. In other words, this realism of the unconscious is relative to the interpretation of the meanings of unconscious derivatives. However, Ricoeur warns us that:

> This relativity must be clearly understood: it does not reduce itself to a simple projection on the part of the interpreter, in a common psychological sense; it means that the reality of the topography constitutes itself within hermeneutics, but in a purely epistemological sense. It

> is in the movement of tracing the derivative (Pcs.) back to its origin (Ucs.) that the concept of the unconscious takes on consistency and its mark of reality is tested. . . . The topography itself is relative to the hermeneutic constellation formed by the various signs, symptoms and inclinations together with the analytic method and the explanatory models. (1970, p. 436-437)

In sum, then, it must be granted that Ricoeur's position can in no way be construed as an epistemological dualism. His position is clearly that Freudian psychoanalysis presents two realms of discourse in a necessary interrelationship. This interrelationship is what gainsays the possibility of one realm being reduced to the other. This interrelationship, this mixed discourse, is what provides a unified epistemological foundation for psychoanalysis. Whether or not Ricoeur has worked out all of the difficulties adhering to such a position, it remains beyond doubt that the position in no way falls to the charge of epistemological dualism.

Observation of Facts or Interpretation of Reports

It should be clear by now that Ricoeur's insistence that psychoanalysis does not deal in the observation of facts in no way means that psychoanalysis is relegated to subjectivism or introspectionism. Ricoeur's assertion refers rather to the epistemological status of what counts as a fact and what observation thus consists of in psychoanalysis. The "facts" of psychoanalysis, unlike those of behavioral psychology or the natural sciences,

are reports made by analytic subjects or behaviors manifested by such subjects. These behaviors are "observed" as actions having meanings within a particular context rather than as behaviors per se. Maxwell and Maxwell, in a critical review of Ricoeur's Freud and Philosophy, state, "but is not the fact that a certain fact has assumed a certain meaning for a subject itself a fact" (1972, p. 520). If one intends by the term fact, the meaning that something has for a subject, then Ricoeur would have no argument with the assertion that psychoanalytic data are facts. However, the term is not generally used in this way, and it is this usage, i.e. the meaning that something has for a subject, which Ricoeur recognizes as appropriate to the nature of psychoanalytic data. David Rapaport implies much the same thing when he recognizes that the postulate of psychic continuity or meaning is "rooted not in empirics but in the method itself as it is used for investigation" (1967, p. 192). As a consequence of "the postulate of psychic continuity . . . . we cannot speak about objects existing in the outside world, but speak of objects insofar as they are experienced by us. . . . When one deals with a patient; one doesn't ask whether an event happened or not. One asks how the experience reported fits into the individuals psychic continuity; what meaning does it have?" (ibid., p. 195).

Moreover, these "facts" are not only assumed to have meanings, but to have meanings which are not readily apparent and which, as such, must be interpreted. Interpretation is not equivalent to observation. Direct or indirect inferences from observables can only be made to the extent that these observables are essentially unequivocal. Observation in the natural sciences requires the observable to be unambiguous. Psychoanalytic data, on the other hand, are essentially ambiguous. They are manifest meanings which refer to other latent meanings, which latent meanings are partly revealed and partly concealed by the manifest meanings. Psychoanalytic data have multiple meanings, i.e. they are equivocal. That inferences from directly or indirectly observed facts take place in psychoanalysis, as it does in the other sciences and in daily life, is not at issue. What is at issue here is that despite, and in addition to, such inferences from observables, psychoanalytic data is always interpreted data, i.e. an articulation of meanings which are both revealed by and concealed by the data which are to be interpreted.

Hermeneutics is a necessary condition for psychoanalysis, but that is not to say that it is sufficient. Clinically, psychoanalytic interpretations must be worked through, and such work can only be understood by an explanation in terms of forces. Metapsychologically,

hermeneutic and economic explanations are both necessary in order for Freud's theoretical concepts to be comprehensible and in order for the clinical concepts and clinical situation to be accounted for. All this has been discussed in considerable detail in Chapter 2. What is of importance now is to examine the feared consequences of this position in order to show these concerns to be ill-founded.

Modell (1984) states that Ricoeur "denied that psychoanalysts observe anything, claiming to the contrary that there are no facts in psychoanalysis and hence no recurrent configurations" (p. 148). Nothing in Ricoeur's delimitation of what counts as a fact in psychoanalysis, nothing in Ricoeur's definition of a psychoanalytic report, requires him to maintain that psychoanalysis is an ideographic science. The nature of psychoanalytic facts does determine, in part, the unique relationship between theory and fact in psychoanalysis, i.e. that the theory needs to account for the interrelationship of hermeneutic and economic procedures. The interrelationship of these two models, which Ricoeur sees as definitive of Freudian metapsychology, in no way precludes the establishment of "recurrent configurations". It will be remembered that Ricoeur holds that the validation of those truth claims which can be made on the basis of psychoanalytic facts or reports, is based on clinical

generalizations, laws and axioms. Ricoeur's insistence on the interpretation of reports as opposed to the observation of facts in no way keeps him from incorporating "several stages of causal explanation into the process of self-understanding in narrative terms" (Ricoeur, 1981e, p. 269). What it does, however, is prevent him from discarding the hermeneutic and narrative aspects of psychoanalytic interpretation. He is in no way prevented from addressing problems of validation (Barratt, 1976, p. 456-457), nor is he prevented from allowing psychoanalysis the scientific task of generating hypotheses (Holt, 1981, p. 136). However, because Ricoeur insists that psychoanalysis epistemologically joins hermeneutics and causal explanations, he is required to provide criteria and procedures for the validation of these unique explanations or "interpretations". In regard to these criteria and procedures, psychoanalysis can be seen to be methodologically distinguished from the natural sciences. Hypotheses which are made on the basis of observations of facts require standard empirical, inductive procedures of verification. A science which, additionally, makes interpretations of reports requires other criteria and procedures which Ricoeur spells out and which we have previously examined in detail in Chapter 2.

Ricoeur's insistence on the distinction between the interpretation of reports and the observation of facts

does not prevent psychoanalysis from obtaining scientific status, from making generalizations, developing hypotheses or attempting to validate theories. On the contrary, Ricoeur insists on this distinction in order to prevent psychoanalysis from being demoted to second class or immature science as a result of being unable to fulfill criteria which are actually inappropriate to its epistemological nature. Robert Waelder (1962), in his discussion of the Hook (1959) symposium, indicates that a typical response to the charge that psychoanalysis is unable to provide adequate evidence for its hypotheses takes the form of an apology. "Against verbal assaults of this kind the defenders of psychoanalysis . . . . argued that psychoanalysis was still a young science: when given more time, such evidence would eventually be forthcoming" (p. 624). Ricoeur, as we have seen (see pp. 37-41 above), recognizes that if one attempts to apply to psychoanalysis the same evidential criteria that are properly applied to the natural sciences, psychoanalysis will indeed be seen to only partially fulfill these criteria. Ricoeur insists, however, that this is due to the unique epistemological character of psychoanalysis as a science and not to its inadequacy or immaturity as a science. As we have argued, the essential ambiguity, or the necessarily equivocal nature, of psychoanalytic data necessitates the use of interpretation. Hence,

observational criteria, as they are usually understood, do not take account of the full range of psychoanalytic evidence. Ricoeur thus distinguishes psychoanalysis from the natural sciences on the basis of the verificational criteria appropriate to each.[1] In so doing he avoids the apologetic position required by those who attempt to validate psychoanalysis as a science on the basis of its ability to fulfill the evidential criteria of the natural sciences.

Minimizing Differences: A Narrow View of Science

In an effort to minimize the apparent differences between psychoanalysis and the natural sciences, Ricoeur's critics have accused him of presenting an anachronistic and narrow view of the natural sciences. However, this criticism, whether accurate or not, does nothing to address the real differences between the natural sciences and psychoanalysis and the real difficulties which arise in attempting an identification of the two. On the other hand, Ricoeur's position does address such differences and correlative difficulties. Further, it does so without requiring psychoanalysis to

[1] We have already made it clear that Ricoeur does not distinguish psychoanalysis and the natural sciences on the basis of the types of explanations that each make use of. Psychoanalysis, according to Ricoeur, makes use of both causal and hermeneutic explanations.

either accept a permanent ranking of second class science or to see itself as 'not yet fully developed' science and thus accept a temporary ranking of second class science.

Barnaby Barratt criticizes Ricoeur for holding to a "narrow perception of the natural sciences as necessarily mechanistic and atomistic, as inevitably involving linear determinate models of causality, as demanding public observation and as unable to deal with the ideographic" (1976, p. 456). Holt (1972) criticizes what he terms "Freud's mechanistic image of man" in a similar fashion. "Relativity and quantum theory made the mechanistic model of the universe a dead letter generations ago in the physical sciences. . . . the reductionistic strain in mechanism has long been seen to be fallacious" (p. 13). Firstly, Ricoeur submits that regardless of whether Freud's energy concepts are adequate or not, some explanation in terms of forces is required for psychoanalytic theory. Secondly, Ricoeur would no doubt insist that whether or not such an explanation was modeled on an atomistic mechanism, whether or not it involved linear models of causality, such an explanation while it would be necessary, would not be sufficient, as it would not take full account of the psychoanalytic data. Thus, whether or not Ricoeur views the natural sciences as anachronistically mechanistic has no essential bearing on his argument for the distinction between psychoanalysis

and the natural sciences. On the other hand, neither does the fact that structural linguistics makes use of non-linear models of explanation have any bearing on Ricoeur's argument for the distinction between psychoanalysis and linguistic analysis.

A closer look at Holt's (1962, 1978 & 1981) arguments for the identity of the natural sciences with those sciences which deal with verbal and nonverbal meanings will help us to clarify what is actually at stake and what is actually essential to Ricoeur's position. Holt states:

> First, is it true that natural scientists don't deal with meanings? Look over the shoulder of a high-energy physicist at the raw data of observation he deals with, for example photographs of tracks left in a bubble-chamber by colliding elementary particles. To the untrained mind, they might as well have been left by a gaggle of geese on a barnyard; they are as hard to make sense of as an X-ray or an EEG tracing or a Rorschach test psychogram - to anyone who lacks the requisite technical training. With it, meaningless marks take on a great deal of meaning, and distinctions the layman cannot perceive may become good or bad news. (1981, p. 134)

However, this is question begging. The "meanings" that the traces have are not meanings for the bubble chamber as well as for the physicist, whereas the meanings of dreams, for example, are meanings for the analysand as well as for the analyst. Further, the possibility of making use of such data as photographs of traces for the indirect observation of elementary particle behavior is based on an abstraction. In order to achieve a univocal

frame of observation which can be explained by reference to a consistent univocal observation language, all intervening variables of the concrete situation must be factored out. One must begin with facts which are arbitrarily demarcated and devoid of any original meaning. Such artificial constructs are necessary for the purpose of observation and inference therefrom. On the other hand, a piece of psychoanalytic data can not be interpreted outside of the situation in which it occurs or outside its relationship to some historical context. This is not to say that nomothetic laws cannot be abstracted from such data. However, such laws are derived less from correspondence of the data with an inferred actual occurrence, than from coherence of the data among each other. Additionally, the reports, "facts" or data themselves are necessarily equivocal in psychoanalysis, whereas the pictures of the particle traces aim at being unequivocal. It is for this reason that one factors out such possible interfering variables as lens dust, poor exposure, or influences of the equipment, whereas one does not factor out the analyst's interventions, the analysand's memory lapses, or the influence of the previous session.

Holt asks, "does the fact that meanings are discerned put the cognitive operations of these workers on a different methodological plane from those of scientists who

are not dealing with verbal materials?" (1978, p. 48). He answers in the negative, "because the grasp of linguistic meaning (including values) is a special form of perception, and all science involves perceptions of human observers, followed by cognitive manipulation of symbols" (p. 49). Perception may certainly be an element in many or even all cognitive operations, but it does not follow that all cognitive operations involve only perception, or can be explained solely on the basis of discrimination and recognition. What makes the grasping of linguistic meaning a special form of perception? What operations are required by the manipulation of symbols, when such symbols are carriers of ordinary linguistic meaning rather than elements of an abstracted language? These are questions which are not answered by Holt's perceptual model of mental functioning.

An examination of Holt's (1978, pp. 51-54) argument regarding the role of prediction in natural and psychoanalytic science exemplifies Ricoeur's claim that attempts to apply the verificational criteria of the natural sciences to psychoanalysis leads to consigning psychoanalysis to second class scientific status. Holt begins by recognizing that clinical judgment is justified by reference to internal consistency. He notes that internal consistency is also made use of in the natural sciences, e.g. in the process of theory construction.

However, he goes on to claim that internal consistency and predictive validity do not represent different kinds of truth criteria and that there is no essential difference between the two. "Logically, there is no difference between the two criteria; therefore, what looks like prediction can be converted into a search for internal consistency, and vice versa" (1978, p. 52). This assertion would certainly bring forth much dissension from many quarters and on myriad grounds. However, what is of importance here is to see what happens to the status of those sciences, which base the validity of their hypotheses on the internal consistency or coherence of their evidence or data, when an attempt is made to identify their evidential procedures with those of the natural sciences, wherein the validity of the hypotheses are based on the predictive validity or the correspondence of their evidence to hypothesized events. Holt is quickly forced to admit that predictive validity is practically superior. "The predictive experiment generally uses a sample of Ss different from the ones on whom the prediction was based, and involves gathering data at a different time and possibly in different ways. The true cross-validation is in this way superior to splitting the data gathered at one time and treating the halves as replicates of the experiment" (ibid., p. 53). Thus, if internal consistency is initially identified with

predictive validity it quickly becomes a weak, or second rate, means of proof.

Holt (1978) has made much use of one additional argument in his attempt to minimize the difference between the procedures of proof in the natural sciences and those in a science such as psychoanalysis. He consistently points out that the natural sciences make use of what could be regarded as hermeneutic procedures, and he uses this observation as evidence that the sciences are thus not different in any essential way. However, this conclusion simply does not follow from his observation. For that matter hermeneutic procedures, as well as causal explanations, are made use of by all of us in our daily lives, but our daily lives are not thus scientific. Clearly, the natural scientist makes use of hermeneutic procedures in so far as he makes judgments, creates theories, etc.. However, the difference here is that hermeneutic procedures are in no way an essential part of the procedures of verification in the natural sciences whereas, Ricoeur argues, they are an essential aspect of the means of proof in psychoanalysis.

Ricoeur's claim that psychoanalysis makes use of causal explanations does not negate his claim that psychoanalysis and the natural sciences must be distinguished on the basis of their verificational criteria. Likewise, Holt's claim that the natural sciences make use

of hermeneutic procedures does not negate the claim that there are essential differences between these sciences and psychoanalysis. As Donald Spence (1982) has pointed out, despite the fact that theories of the natural sciences are like psychoanalysis in that they depend upon paradigms for their construction and discovery (Kuhn, 1962), psychoanalytic data remain distinct from the data of the natural sciences. Whereas in the natural sciences paradigms determine what one discovers to be a worthwhile piece of reality to observe, the consequent observations form the basis for hypotheses which can then be empirically verified. In psychoanalysis, on the contrary, paradigms determine not only what one will focus upon as an object of investigation, but also determine the "observations" one makes of the paradigm determined objects of investigation. As Spence puts it "every attempt at naming first requires an interpretation; the raw data of the clinical happening are of a different order from [the raw data of physics]" (1982, p. 245).

For the natural sciences, the procedures of empirical verification provide a way out of any hermeneutic circle which may be implied by the place that paradigms have in determining its arenas of investigation and its theoretical constructs. For psychoanalysis, however, the hermeneutic circle cannot be eliminated from procedures of verification, because it is implied in the very nature

of psychoanalytic data, i.e. reports, and psychoanalytic observation, i.e. interpretation. It should not be forgotten, however, that while Ricoeur insists on the necessity of hermeneutic explanations in psychoanalysis, he insists on the necessity of causal explanations as well. His criteria for the validity of psychoanalytic interpretations combines both types of explanatory procedures, as well as their relationship to the meta-psychological theory and to the clinical narrative.

Psychoanalytic Interpretation and Causal Explanation

We have previously argued (see Chapter 3 above) that some of Ricoeur's critics, such as Adolf Grunbaum and Robert Shope, use Ricoeur as a straw man in their attempt to argue for a purely causal interpretation of Freudian theory. We have already discussed some of the ways in which these criticisms are erroneous. It has been shown that it is a mistake to regard Ricoeur's position as a pure hermeneutics, that it is a mistake to equate Ricoeur's notion of intentionality with the 'intention' of the practical syllogism, and that it is a mistake to view Ricoeur's assertions about unconscious signification to be equivalent to linguistic signification. Finally, we have previously made it clear that the actual difference between Ricoeur's position and that of a Grunbaum or

a Shope, is that while Ricoeur insists that unconscious meanings - i.e. unconscious derivatives generally, or symptoms and dreams specifically - are expressions, Grunbaum and Shope insist that unconscious derivatives are merely marks. This is another way of saying that Ricoeur believes that both hermeneutic and causal explanations are necessary for psychoanalysis, while Grunbaum and Shope believe that causal explanation alone is both necessary and sufficient. What we have yet to address, and what we will now turn our attention to, are the problems that arise in holding to a purely causal account of psychoanalytic propositions. In making these problems more explicit we are providing an additional argument for the value of Ricoeur's epistemological position.

In examining the inherent difficulties of a purely causal account in psychoanalysis, we will leave aside the problematic aspects of the concept of causality itself, since such issues apply equally to any and all uses of causal explanations and thus do not provide an argument against the usage of causal explanation as the sole explanatory modality for psychoanalysis. We will also leave aside the apparent difficulty of using causal explanations as explanations of motives, which difficulty arises from applying a concept to states of one and the same agent which is usually applied to a relationship between two substances or agents. We shall not become

entangled in this issue, since it is clear that Freud does make use of causal explanations and that Ricoeur and this final group of critics have no disagreement with this claim. Thus we will assume that psychoanalysis makes use of causal explanations and does so legitimately. What we will question is whether it does so to the exclusion of any other type of explanation, and what the consequences are if psychoanalysis is interpreted in this fashion.

Neither Grunbaum (1984) nor Shope (1973) dispute the simplest and most obvious of Ricoeur's claims, that Freud speaks in terms of causes and in terms of meanings and intentions. However, Grunbaum and Shope must explain the later terms away. They do so by reinterpreting Freud's usages of terms like 'meaning' or 'intention', and by disregarding statements to the contrary as mere analogies, momentary lapses and anthropomorphic figures of speech. Grunbaum quotes Freud's explanation of parapraxes which he is then at pains to explain away. "Psychoanalysis . . . profits by the study of the numerous little slips . . . which people make - symptomatic actions, as they are called . . . I have pointed out that these phenomena are not accidental . . . that they have a meaning and can be interpreted, and that one is justified in inferring from them the presence of restrained or repressed impulses and intentions" (Freud, 1925, pp. 46-

47, cited in Grunbaum, 1984, p. 64). This is a perfect example of Freud's mixed discourse. According to what Freud states here, if these phenomena are just accidental and we are only justified in inferring repressed impulses from them, they would not be slips; for they also have meanings which can be interpreted, and one is justified in inferring the presence of intentions from them as well. Shope cites Freud's recognition of the expressive aspect of dreams and explains it away as follows: "Freud does suggest taking as communication the dreams of persons actually in therapy. But since he speaks anthropomorphically of motives as 'saying' something in a disguised way, he is apparently using a figure of speech, and is regarding those dreams as communications merely in the sense of a transmission of information to the analyst from clues" (Shope, 1973, p. 302). It is likely, however, that Freud himself would not sanction Shope's manner of argumentation. On the contrary, Freud states: "it is not at all necessary to outgrow it [anthropomorphism]. Our understanding reaches as far as our anthropomorphism" (cited in Grossman & Simon, 1969, p. 78). In contrast to those who maintain that psychoanalysis intends to make sole use of causal explanations, Ricoeur is able to account for the implication of Freud's statement, that an anthropomorphic manner of speaking or theorizing is not a mistake, but a requirement for full

understanding in psychoanalysis.

> Now why does Freud get himself into such difficult straits with concepts which remain semi-metaphors and, in particular, with inconsistent metaphors which tend towards the polarity of, on the one hand, the textual concept of translation and, on the other, the mechanical concept of compromise, itself understood in the sense of a result of various forces interacting? I suggest that it is the conjunction of the investigatory procedure with the method of treatment that compels the theory to operate in this way. (Ricoeur, 1981e, p. 257)

Grunbaum and Shope both argue that psychoanalytic phenomena such as parapraxes, symptoms and dreams are merely signs or marks which have no more meaning than, for example rock strata or footprints. Like an organic symptom indicating the presence of physical disease, or like an accumulation of dark clouds indicating that rain is on its way, psychoanalytic phenomena are merely effects of causes and as such have no important or relevant relationship of meaning or signification to the causes of which they are mere traces or marks. These traces are merely 'substitutes' or 'stand-ins' for unconscious causes and do not 'express' or 'signify' such causes. In order to buttress their arguments, both quote Freud (1916) where he says "a dream does not want to say anything to anyone. It is not a vehicle for communication" (p. 231). Firstly, even if this out of context statement were to be taken quite literally as it stands, it certainly does not provide any proof for the claim that manifest dreams have no meaningful connection to

latent dream thoughts. Something can certainly be meaningful even if it is not intended to be communicated. This is the case, for example, for all so-called "private languages". This fallacious argument is similar to Grunbaum's mistaken assimilation of meaning or intentionality to the purposeful intent or belief of the practical syllogism, which we addressed earlier. Secondly, if one places Freud's statement back into its context one sees that he is comparing dreams to ancient languages, wherein the ambiguity of such "systems of expression" can only be resolved by "the hearers understanding" which "is guided by the context" (Freud, 1916, pp. 230-231). He goes on to say that the ambiguity of dreams is even more difficult to resolve than that of other "primitive systems of expression" because "it is meant to remain ununderstood" (loc. cit.). In other words, the dream work serves the function of keeping the meaning of the latent dream thought out of consciousness by allowing the meaning into consciousness only in a disguised and distorted form. Thirdly, if one interprets Freud's statement, as Grunbaum and Shope have, as an assertion to the effect that dreams do not express any meaning, but are only non-meaningful marks or traces of unconscious processes, several serious problems become apparent.

In the first place, Grunbaum and Shope take for granted, but never address, the issue of plausibility,

i.e. what would a mental content that has no intentional structure or meaning be like. Even if this preliminary question is answered, the further question of whether an explanation solely in terms of forces, with no reference to signification or meaning, is or is not adequate or sufficient for psychoanalysis, would still need to be addressed. I submit that such an account is neither plausible nor adequate, and further, that it leads to difficulties in maintaining a unified theoretical foundation.

If we define the boundaries of the field of psychoanalysis as Freud did, i.e. as restricted to the realm of instincts - which Freud defines as psychical representatives of organic, biological instincts but not the organic instincts themselves - then we can fairly assume that psychoanalysis addresses itself to the investigation of minds rather than brains. Of course, this does not mean that mental phenomena cannot be explained in terms of brain phenomena. Rather, it means that when we do so, we are doing so as, for example, neurologists and not as psychoanalysts. It can be argued that minds, unlike brains, are not simply complex physical systems in that meanings are intrinsic to mental phenomena. Thus a comparison of a mental phenomenon to rock strata quickly becomes, as we will see, inadequate. The traces left on rocks by geological conditions are determined, in part,

by the nature of rocks, such that it is not possible for such traces to take the form, for example, of sounds or odors. This does not gainsay the possibility that the geological conditions themselves might have such qualities. Similarly, when unconscious forces leave traces on the mind, the nature of such traces is, in part, determined by the nature of what is being imprinted. Even if unconscious forces simply leave traces or marks, such traces become meaningful insofar as they are mental traces. Thus, connections of signification exist along with causal connections from the start.

It is beyond doubt that Freud presents an unconscious which is an economic system and which exerts causal influences upon mental phenomena. Ricoeur, as we have seen, agrees that symptoms are, <u>in part</u>, merely substitute satisfactions, i.e. merely marks of unconscious wishes. The question is whether these phenomena can adequately be explained <u>solely</u> as effects of these causes or whether they are not rather "meaning effects", i.e. expressions and marks. It is clear that there is an economic aspect to dream formation, which determines the form of the dream images. It is clear, whether or not one holds that the manifest dream has any relationship of signification to the latent dream thought, that the manifest dream itself can be said to contain relationships of signification. However, if the form and content of the

dream is to be explained solely on the basis of causal effects of unconscious forces which as such have no meaning, how is one to explain the existence of the manifest signification? How can a pure force of desire alone be responsible for generating meanings which dream images manifestly have? If primary process is only mental billiards, if the unconscious is comprised solely of forces interacting with one another, what import would the interpretation of dreams, which are simply derivative of such forces, have? How could such interpretations reveal anything other than forces interacting with one another? Yet, in a footnote added in 1935 to his Autobiographical Study, Freud states: "Aristotle's old definition of the dream as mental life during sleep still holds good. There was a reason for my choosing as the title of my book not The Dream but The Interpretation of Dreams" (1925, p. 46).

If a dream, for example, is co-determined by forces - which make the dream a sign with a non-meaningful referent - and by the context of intentional meanings in which it is created - which make it a symbol with reference to a network of meanings - then the dream requires an explanation in terms of economics and hermeneutics. If one wants to explain these phenomena solely in terms of economics, then one faces the following difficulties. One ends up either having explained only part of the

data, or being forced to regard the meanings of the phenomena as unimportant, accidental or epiphenomenal. If psychoanalysis is only explaining repressed causes, then the set of associated meanings to these purportedly meaningless traces, which the practicing analyst interprets, are either left unexplained or require a separate theoretical foundation in order to be explained. Psychoanalysis then would require two separate theories which would have no apparent relationship to one another. Further, if meanings are relegated solely to consciousness and secondary process, and the unconscious and primary process is considered to be comprised solely of forces, one is also faced with the task of explaining how, in principle, one moves between two such absolutely disparate systems. Further, this position will ultimately have to answer to the charge of epistemological dualism. Blight (1981) has cogently argued that an approach to psychoanalysis which rests on a pure hermeneutics or a pure logical empiricism is ultimately forced into affirming an epistemological dualism.

Ricoeur's position on the contrary avoids all of the difficulties inherent in Grunbaum's and Shope's position, as well as those inherent in a purely hermeneutic position, such as that of Schafer, Rosen or Lacan. By recognizing that a mixed discourse is foundational to the theoretical, practical and methodological facets of

Freudian psychoanalysis, he is able to account for the presence of causal, motivational and hermeneutic explanations, to account for the presence of resistance and significance in the analytic situation and to account for the relationship between the metapsychology and the clinical theory. As opposed to denying the presence of signification in psychoanalytic data, which thus require a hermeneutic explanation, and as opposed to denying the presence of the effects of economic forces in psychoanalytic data, which thus require a causal explanation, Ricoeur states:

> Freud is correct in completely ignoring the distinction between motive and cause and in making even its theoretical formulation impossible. In many ways his explanations refer to 'causally relevant' factors, whether this is in terms of the initial phenomenon (e.g. the origin of a neurosis), the intermediate stages (e.g. the genesis of a symptom, of a libidinal structure), its function (e.g. compromise formation), or finally, its 'significance' (e.g. substitution or symbolic value). . . . All that is important to him is to explain through one or another of the explanatory modes . . . or through an 'overdetermined' use of several of them, what in behavior are the 'the incongruities' in relation to the expected course of a human agent's action. It is the attempt to reduce these 'incongruities' that forbids distinguishing between motives and causes because it calls for an explanation by means of causes in order to reach an understanding in terms of motives. And this is what I try to express in my own terms by saying that the facts of psychoanalysis arise both from the category of the text, and hence of meaning, and from the categories of energy and resistance, and hence of force. (1981e, p. 263)

CONCLUSION

> Neither in its temporal flow nor in the depth of its content is the self fully accessible to us in experience. For the small area of conscious life rises like an island from inaccessible depths. But expression lifts something from out of these depths; it is creative. And thus in the process of understanding, life itself becomes accessible as a reproduction of creative activity.
>
> W.Dilthey,Musical Understanding (in Dilthey, 1962, p. 116)

We have examined the shortcomings inherent in regarding psychoanalysis as either a pure hermeneutics or a pure natural science. We have seen the ways in which Paul Ricoeur's Interpretation Theory avoids the intrinsic difficulties of either of those two polar positions. In introducing our thesis we noted that a number of psychoanalysts have, either implicitly or explicitly, recognized the need for an epistemological foundation that would address itself to the "double tenancy" of psychoanalysis. We have attempted to show that Ricoeur's Interpretation Theory fills this need and does so in a comprehensive manner. Ricoeur recognizes that psychoanalytic interpretations and explanations are not purely motivational nor purely causal but a conjunction of the two. Ricoeur recognizes that the Freudian unconscious is neither a language nor a machine, neither a consciousness nor a body, though it is related to both. With his

interpretation of psychoanalysis as a mixed discourse, a semantics of desire, Ricoeur provides psychoanalysis with an epistemological foundation, a unified basis for both the metapsychology and the clinical theory, and an evidential criterion. His position provides an answer to the charge of "protoscience" while at the same time preserving what is essential to the project of psychoanalytic thought and activity.

Due to the prevalence of patent misunderstandings of Ricoeur's position, the value of his contributions have largely gone unappreciated and unutilized. We have tried to clear a path for the appreciation and utilization of Ricoeur's theory, by detailing his actual position and detailing its misrepresentation by his critics. The perpetuation of such misrepresentations has been to the detriment of psychoanalytic theorizing, which both sorely needs, and recognizes the need for, an epistemological foundation that accounts for the special arena of scientific investigation which Freud delimited.

Once the proper understanding of Ricoeur's contribution has been reached, one can begin to connect his work with that of others who have also attempted to show how psychoanalysis combines what are usually seen to be two disparate modes of discourse and means of investigation. The contributions of theorists such as Ella Sharpe (1940), S. Bernfeld (1932) and Michael Sherwood

(1969) can be properly regarded as eminently compatible with those of Ricoeur. Previously, the positions of these theorists have been posed as antithetical to Ricoeur's position. It has been held (see for example Grunbaum, 1984; Ramzy and Shevrin, 1976) that these theorists are not only opposed to Ricoeur, but unlike Ricoeur provide a useful, beginning approach to the special difficulties which arise from the paradoxical epistemological nature of psychoanalysis. However, once Ricoeur's views are properly understood, they can be seen, not only to be in harmony with such theorists, but to provide more than a beginning answer to the questions that they all have in common. We have perhaps only begun to draw out the useful consequences of Ricoeur's view. We have focused instead on the preliminary issue of clarification, in order to clear the way for the possibility of articulating and employing such consequences. In conclusion, it would perhaps not be out of place to mention, however briefly and broadly, some possible consequences and uses.

In the context of his interpretation of Freud's theorizing, Ricoeur mentions several concepts which he feels remain as problematic concepts, ideas which are not fully integrated or fully articulated within the metapsychology. These problematic concepts - identification, sublimation and symbolization - are all concepts which

involve the issue of creativity, and are all issues which have been the subject of considerable work by many of Freud's successors. Ricoeur's views on symbolization are grounded in his Interpretation Theory, and are consistent with the Freudian metapsychology but able to take fuller account of the creative nature of human activity. They may be found to provide a basis for the ideas of those psychoanalytic theorists whose work on these issues remains rooted in Freud, while enriching and extending the scope of Freud's thought. Ricoeur's work can be seen to cohere, for example, with the work of Winnicott (1971), Kubie (1978), and Deri (1984) on symbolization and creativity, as well as the work of Erikson (1959) and Loewald (1972) on identity and temporality.

Deri (1984) speaks of the "bridging-over" function - between self and other, inner and outer, manifest and latent, conscious and unconscious - of symbols. Ricoeur's Interpretation Theory can perhaps be regarded as a "bridging-over" theory - between hermeneutics and natural science, Freud and his successors. This notion of creative bridge making is as much a part of Ricoeur's general theorizing, as it is a part of his notion of symbolization. It is perhaps a merely aesthetic argument for the value of Ricoeur's position, but the ability to recognize and integrate the past into the future and the future within the past, certainly enriches and

strengthens present acts of work and love.

> I suggest that we distinguish various levels of creativity of symbols. At the lowest level we come upon sedimented symbolism; here we find various stereotypes and fragmented remains of symbols, symbols so commonplace and worn with use that they have nothing but a past. . . . At a second level, we come upon the symbols that function in everyday life; these are the symbols that are useful and are actually utilized, that have a past and a present. . . . At a higher level come the prospective symbols; these are creations of meaning that take up the traditional symbols, with their multiple significations and serve as the vehicles of new meanings. . . . This creation of meaning is <u>at the same time</u> a recapture of archaic fantasies and a living interpretation of this fantasy substrate. (Ricoeur, 1970, pp. 504-505; my emphasis)

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