

FROM WHERE DO YOU SPEAK?

SOCIETY FOR RICOEUR STUDIES CONFERENCE

STELLENBOSCH, SOUTH AFRICA

23-25 MAY 2018

PRELIMINARY PROGRAMME

WEDNESDAY, 23 MAY 2018 • FACULTY OF THEOLOGY, STELLENBOSCH UNIVERSITY

08:00-09:00 Registration and refreshments

09:00-09:15 Opening

09:15-10:30 **Plenary 1: Pumla Gobodo-Madikizela** (Chair: Robert Vosloo)

Topic t.b.c.

10:30-11:00 Refreshments

11:00-12:15 **Plenary 2: Damien Tissot** (Chair: Louise du Toit)

Topic t.b.c.

12:15-14:00 Lunch

14:00-15:30 **Parallel Session I**

IA: Room 1002

Anthony C Ajah (University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Nigeria)

Hermeneutic Engagements on Africa: On the Tension between 'Acknowledgement' and 'Errantic Exaggeration' of Topoi

Justin Sands (North West University, South Africa)

On the Necessity of Hermeneutics and Politics: Black Consciousness within Phenomenology

IB: Room 1003

Paul A Custer (Lenoir-Rhyne University, USA)

The sixth sense: speaking, vehemence, and the desire-to-be

Blake Scott (KU Leuven, Belgium)

Reasonable Rhetoric: Ricoeur, Perelman, and the Philosophy of Argumentation

1C: Room 2004

Michael Deckard (Lenoir-Rhyne University, USA)

In limine primo: Reading Coetzee and Ricoeur Backwards

Olivia Rahmsdorf (Johannes-Gutenberg Universität Mainz, Germany)

Speaking from above and below: The Gospel of John as metaphorical and narrative reference to a distant reality

15:30-16:00 Refreshments

16:00-17:30 **Parallel Session 2**

2A: Room 1002

Samantha Crossly (Leeds Business School, Leeds Beckett University, UK)

Applying Ricoeur's Philosophy to the Leadership Challenge of Managing Sexual Harassment Accusations

Anja Visser (North West University, South Africa)

Thinking with Ricoeur: from where do human trafficking survivors speak about freedom?

2B: Room 1003

Helgard Pretorius/Robert Vosloo (Stellenbosch University, South Africa)

Heaven is yesterday: on the grammar of hope in a nostalgic future

Frederich von Petersdorff (Independent scholar)

From where does Michel de Certeau, as a historian, speak?

2C: Room 2004

Jaco Dreyer (University of South Africa, South Africa)

"Researcher, from where do you speak?" Reflections on Ricoeur's concepts of attestation in view of the dilemmas of researcher positionality

Anél Marais (Aberystwyth Law School, Wales, UK)

Narrating the future: between identity and alterity

EVENING FREE

09:00-09:15 Refreshments

09:15-10:30 **Plenary 3: Bernard Lategan** (Chair: Nobuntu Penxa-Matholeni)

Topic t.b.c.

10:30-11:00 Refreshments

11:00-12:15 **Plenary 4: Morny Joy** (Chair: Anné Verhoef)

Topic t.b.c.

12:15-14:00 Lunch

14:00-15:30 **Parallel Session 3**

3A: Room 1002

Lindokuhle Gama (University of Pretoria, South Africa)

Blackness: Who was allowed to speak during #FeesMustFall?

Nobuntu Penxa-Matholeni (Stellenbosch University, South Africa)

“NDIYINDODA”: A black male’s coming-of-age and implications of the concept to a black professional woman.

3B: Room 1003 (Interpreted session: French-English)

Marjolaine Deschênes (Collège Montmorency, Canada)

Avec Michèle Lê Dœff: lire ceux qui écrivent depuis l’imaginaire philosophique

3C: Room 2004

Candess Kostopoulos (University of the Free State, South Africa)

Ricoeur’s Political Aesthetics: a feminist perspective

Rikus van Eeden (KU Leuven, Belgium)

Before the Law: Ricoeur and Benjamin on the Critique of Symbolically Legitimated Power

15:30-17:00 Free time

17:00 Depart to Solms-Delta Wine Estate, Franschhoek (transport provided)

18:00 Reception

Speaker: **Marlene van Niekerk**

Topic t.b.c.

08:45-09:00 Refreshments

09:00-10:30 **Parallel Session 4**

4A: Room 1002

René Dentz (Jesuit College of Philosophy and Theology of Belo Horizonte, Brazil)

Forgiveness and Freedom in Ricoeur

Dion Forster (Stellenbosch University, South Africa)

Translation and the politics of forgiveness in South Africa? What Black Christians believe and White Christians don't understand

4B: Room 1003

Jaco Kruger (St. Augustine College of South Africa)

Still searching for the pineal gland?

Anné Verhoef (North-West University, South Africa)

Paul Ricoeur and the problem of 'From where to speak about happiness'

4C: Room 2004

Stephanie N Arel (New York University / The 9/11 Memorial & Museum, USA)

Speaking a Trauma of Place with Paul Ricoeur: Memorialization, the Body, and the Crisis of Witnessing

Vasti Roodt (Stellenbosch University, South Africa)

"Let me tell you where I'm coming from": Situatedness, homelessness and worldliness

10:30-11:00 Refreshments

11:00-12:15 **Plenary 5: Ernst Wolff** (Chair: Vasti Roodt)

Topic t.b.c.

12:15-13:00 **Concluding panel: How do we speak from here?**

[participants to be announced]

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS



Morny Joy is Professor in the Department of Religious Studies at the University of Calgary, Canada. Joy obtained a PhD from McGill University Montreal and spent a postdoctoral fellowship at the University of Chicago. Her research interests include philosophy and religion, postcolonialism, and intercultural studies in South and South-East Asia, as well as in diverse aspects of women and religion. Her recent publications include: *Women and the Gift: Beyond the Given and the All-giving* (2013); and *After Appropriation: Explorations in Intercultural Philosophy and Religion* (2011). In 2011 she received an Honorary Doctorate from the University of Helsinki, and she is a Life Fellow at Clare Hall, University of Cambridge.



Bernard Lategan is one of the most widely respected public intellectuals in South Africa. After doctoral studies in the Netherlands, Lategan served as Professor of New Testament at the University of the Western Cape (1969-1977), and lectured at several universities in Ancient languages, linguistics, literature and theology. He later served as Professor of Biblical Studies (1978 – 1991) and Dean of the Faculty of Arts (1991-1996) at Stellenbosch University, where he was also founder and first director of the *Stellenbosch Institute for Advanced Study* (2000-2009). In 2009 Lategan received an honorary Doctorate in Philosophy from Stellenbosch University. A selection of his essays – also reflecting the influence of Ricoeur’s work – was recently published as *Hermeneutics and Social Transformation* (2015).



Pumla Gobodo-Madikizela currently holds the *Research Chair for Historical Trauma and Transformation* at Stellenbosch University. As clinical psychologist she served on the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission. She also served as Professor of Psychology at the University of Cape Town, and Senior Research Professor at the University of the Free State where she led the initiative *Studies in Trauma, Memory and Forgiveness*. Her award-winning book, *A Human Being Died that Night: A South African Story of Forgiveness* (2004), explores the complexity of remorse, apology and forgiveness, and has been converted into a play that has been staged in major cities in South Africa, the UK, and the USA.



Marlene van Niekerk is a celebrated Afrikaans writer whose poetry and novels have received local and international acclaim. She studied philosophy, languages and literature at the universities of Stellenbosch and Amsterdam. Her doctorate, *Taal en mythe: een structuralistiese en een hermeneutiese benadering* (1985, University of Amsterdam), focused on the work of Claude Lévi-Strauss and Paul Ricoeur. Her debut volume of poetry, *Sprokkelster* (1977) won two of the biggest prizes in Afrikaans poetry, while her novels *Triomf* (1995) and *Agaat* (2004) attained no fewer than nine literary awards. Van Niekerk is currently Professor of Afrikaans and Dutch literature and creative writing at Stellenbosch University.



Damien Tissot is Senior Lecturer in the Romance Studies Department at Cornell University. His Ph.D. thesis from Paris VIII University, *Feminism and Universalism: Toward a Common Definition of Justice*, combines his interests in gender studies and philosophy. Through the lens of feminist theory and postcolonial critique, it provides a genealogy of the idea of universalism and explores the ways in which the notion of universalism was used in feminist claims for justice. His current research interests include dialogues between American and French feminisms, transnational feminist alliances, theories of care and ethics, ecofeminisms, feminist movements in the Caucasus, and Paul Ricoeur’s philosophy.



Ernst Wolff is currently Professor of Philosophy at KU Leuven’s Centre for Metaphysics, Philosophy of Religion and Philosophy of Culture. He studied in Languages, Theology and Philosophy at the universities of Pretoria, Johannesburg and Paris IV-Sorbonne, before being appointed as Professor of Philosophy at the University of Pretoria (2005-2017). Among his publications figure two monographs: *De l’éthique à la justice* (2007) and *Political responsibility for a globalised world* (2011). His work is devoted to questions of individual and collective agency, responsibility and technology. In the South African philosophical community, Wolff is also known for his work on the thought of Marthinus Versfeld.

ABSTRACTS

(in alphabetic order by surname)

Hermeneutic Engagements on Africa: On the Tension between ‘Acknowledgement’ and ‘Errantic Exaggeration’ of Topoi

Anthony C. Ajah

An initial answer to Paul Ricoeur’s question ‘From where do you speak?’ is ‘I speak from my location’. That answer, alone, needs to be understood as inadequate to accord full acknowledgement, respect, and legitimacy to every speaker. This is because: (i) not all locations (physical/ conceptual) deserve equal respect with regard to what is being spoken about; and (ii) the mere fact of speaking from a particular topoi (context) does not necessarily validate a speaker’s conceptual position. There is therefore the need for a follow-up answer to the question ‘From where do you speak?’ That answer needs to include justification for the appropriateness of the location, and the legitimacy of the speaker, with regard to what is being spoken. This is where rhetoric needs to supplement hermeneutics to curtail exaggerated claims to unique contexts and meanings. The purpose of this paper, therefore, is to assess the common trend of hermeneutic engagements and narratives on Africa which emphasize the need for an acknowledgment of the uniqueness of the African topoi to the point that illogical and dehumanizing principles/ practices are narrated as good, unique, and worth-sustaining for Africa(ns). Preferring and interpreting as ‘African’ what is inhumane, dehumanizing, illogical, and irrational, simply because one demands that his/her topoi be acknowledged (that is, respected without questioning), is described in this paper as erranticism. Erranticism is one of the most dangerous trends in hermeneutic engagements on Africa because in the bid to project what is narrated and interpreted as unique to Africans, Africans are emptied (or most times empty themselves) of their agency and sense of responsibility. This is a tension that lingers and needs to be resolved in the works of many scholars/ hermeneuticists on Africa.

Speaking a Trauma of Place with Paul Ricoeur: Memorialization, the Body, and the Crisis of Witnessing

Stephanie N. Arel

This paper will explore Paul Ricoeur’s famous question, ‘From where do you speak?’ related to what I am calling a “trauma of place.” I define this trauma as an event that interrupts time, posing a challenge to the integration of the traumatic event into individual and collective consciousness. The central guiding question of the project is, “How do we interpret memory and experience the crisis of witnessing from distinct places of trauma?” The question, therefore, presses Ricoeur’s notion of the demand to listen.

I approach trauma of place as “speaking” from three locations. The first location that I confront is the place of trauma memorialized in architectural structures, memorials or museums, erected at the site of the traumatic event(s), such as the Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial and Museum, the House of Slaves Senegal, and the 9/11 Museum & Memorial. The second location I explore is the place of trauma which is not memorialized but which bears the wounds of trauma in the landscape, especially emergent in places where insidious trauma has occurred, such as plantations in the American South and the streets of Belfast, Ireland. Each of these places will be considered (in a longer version of this paper) alongside the Celtic traditional notion of “thin place” – an in-between place that merges the natural and sacred. I explore whether in a trauma of place “thick place” emerges, impeding the natural-sacred connection intrinsic to “thin place.”

At the center of interpretation – that to which we need to listen as Ricoeur prompts us – I situate the third location represented by the body, the interpretive guide of traumatic narratives, a body which may also bear the wounds of other unrelated trauma(s). Following Ricoeur’s work with Jean- Pierre Changeux in *What Makes Us Think*, I consider the objective body (as a source of affect from which we can interpret trauma). Ricoeur aligns this objectivity with the brain and neurological feedback calling it a “first discourse,”

met by a second discourse on one's own body, "with its vast ethical implications." These discourses are followed by what Ricoeur labels a normative discourse, which deals with legal and political issues that graft themselves on the two preceding discourses. In this grafting, I explore how the trauma of place acts out the past, incorporated bodily, as Ricoeur states, "in the present without distance," illustrating trauma and "habit memory." This type of memory, contrasts with "pure memory" – encapsulated perhaps more in the structure of the memorial and museum – where the anteriority or priorness of the remembered event stands out. Through the discourses of the body as a location of trauma and/or an interpreter of trauma, a more robust understanding of how trauma functions in place will manifest.

Applying Ricoeur's Philosophy to the Leadership Challenge of Managing Sexual Harassment Accusations.

Samantha Crossley

Given the rise of high-profile corporate scandals reported in the past decade (Johnson, 2017), it is unsurprising that high ethical standards and the ability to create a safe and trusting work environment are stated as the highest-ranking leadership aptitudes (Giles, 2016). Yet in the past two months, the initial disclosure of alleged incidents involving high-profile executives and public officials has created a long overdue catalyst in highlighting the vast extent of alleged sexual harassment and abuse that still exists within the organisational management of all (Khomami, 2017).

From where do you speak?

There have been widespread calls to reassess company policies put in place to protect employees from such practices within organisations. This supports former appeals to readdress classifications of sexual harassment in the workplace, given the progression of equality and diversity the past three decades (Quick & McFadyen, 2017; McDonald, 2012). A statement is memorial, situational and contextual. This introduces the notion of historical spatial paradigms (Ricoeur, 1984) and to question whether time is a meaningful component within the textual composite analysis of a sexual harassment claim?

From where do you speak?

There remains little consideration given to the relationship between business ethics management and sexual harassment, particularly the ethical ideology within leadership (Keyton & Rhodes, 1997; Johnson, 2017). Although leaders are significant within the social order, not only are they influential, they are also heavily influenced (Mangham, 1995). There is a demand to know more about the role power dynamics play in the leadership of organisations and the failure for leaders to take their role morality seriously (Alzola, 2015), by avoiding confronting the undiscussable issues and being obedient to the power of conformity (Ryan and Deci, 2003).

From where do you speak?

By applying a Ricoeurian (1992) philosophy on selfhood and ethical aims, "I" argue there is a need to establish critical perspectives on the function of power and wilful ignorance within leadership. We must also note to what effect Ricoeur's (1984) tripartite exposition of mimesis will have on a Leader, as a critic, when being made aware of alleged incidents and of how the listener is pre-conditioned to the text of the speaking subject. There are limitations in addressing the gender balance within the subjective bias problem contained within most sexual harassment cases (Grosser et al., 2017). Can cultivating the objective spirit within leadership provide discourse for appropriate levels of thinking and acting?

From where do you speak?

The sixth sense: speaking, vehemence, and the desire-to-be

Paul A. Custer

The from-where in "From where do you speak?" contains also a sixth sense which I will argue that Ricoeur calls "vehemence". I will begin with speech considered under an Arendtian frame of action: it is, first, aleatory, involving both uncertainty and risk; and its goal is to appear as who-one-is in and among one's

polis. Politically-speaking, Arendt argues, to be is to appear. Speech is political action that projects and calls, and expects and waits, together: to speak is both to impose upon, and to submit to, one's others. The core of the matter, insofar as speech is a wager, is the leap: whence the impulsion to jump and so to risk? This cannot be decided on plain plane of cognition and concepts. Ricoeur, both in *Metaphor Vivre* and *Memory, History, Forgetting*, leavens Arendt's theory of action with the ontological urgency of a desire-to-be—which grounds the decision to speak.

I will explore two routes to this destination. In the first place, there is performative speech, rhyming and aligning with prior utterances that have over time and practice become authorized and banal. This I will call "the spoken." Speaking "the spoken" calms and banalizes the exotic and strange, on the one hand, and sustains itself in appearance (and therefore in being), on the other. Alternatively, one may consider speech as event: speaking the unexpected, the inappropriate, the new, undertaking the (relational, bodily, ideological) risk of coming-out. Event-speech endeavors to alter the terms of utterance, and so of political belonging: at its source a desire to appear, which (again following Arendt) means to be: to become intelligible, possible. This desire that one's who should be able to appear—the desire that the impossible, unspoken, and silent should be able come-out into sens and noise—Ricoeur calls in several places (but without explicit thematization) "ontological vehemence." This matters: in Kyyv as in Washington, D.C., in Harare as in Istanbul. It matters, perhaps more than ever, in the America of Dark Times.

In Limino Primo: Reading Coetzee and Ricoeur Backwards

Michael Deckard

Two works were published around the same time: Ricoeur's *Oneself as Another* (1990) and Coetzee's *Age of Iron* (1990). One is philosophy and one is fiction. Both dealt with loss. Both attempt to heal wounds, personal and political. Why read them backwards (i.e. *nachträglich*)? Eschewing purely biographical narratives, they were attempts to deal meaningfully with children, mothers and fathers. In the first case, Ricoeur dedicates the tragic interlude to Olivier. In the second case, the work is dedicated to Coetzee's mother, father, and son, all of whom passed away while writing this work. What does this say about narrative identity or the liminality between life and death, fact and fiction, history and character? Utilizing philosophers such as Adriana Cavarero, Louise du Toit, and Stephen Mulhall on narrative and selfhood, and the making and unmaking of the feminine self, I wish to argue that the female narrative of Coetzee's works are in *limine primo*—in a place that is no-place—a kind of haunting ground (*hauntology*) of liminal subjects with no real existence. Yet, belief persists even when the ground from which it grows is taken away, such that the academic personae of *Age of Iron* and Elizabeth Costello are characters whose questions concerning the very evidentness or clarity and distinctness of the cogito pertain to the nature of belief. Thus, this form of storytelling hits on the real if only through shadows or intimations, that is, a fictive space that provides an opening onto another world, another way of being in which the plural space of selfhood can be understood. This makes for the *l'homme capable*, since these works also reference the last days and the end of apartheid. Both works then can be read backwards in light of the lyric at the end of Ricoeur's *Memory, History, Forgetting* and the references there to South Africa, alongside Coetzee's most recent *Childhood & Schooldays of Jesus*. These are attempts at reconciliation with the past and loss. What is real and what is fictive become interwoven through the story in such a way that personal identity in its Western individualist guise becomes subject to oblivion.

Forgiveness and Freedom in Ricoeur

René Dentz

Paul Ricoeur was one of the leading contemporary philosophers. The richness of his thinking is based on several factors, of which two stand out: first, his constant dialogue with several areas of knowledge and their consequent interfaces; on the other hand, his attentive sensitivity to the historical moments and their experience, their pains and joys. Thus, the theme of forgiveness is a key example of the two factors:

it is studied from dialogues and interfaces, but it is also a historical theme that allows reconciliation with events as well as on a personal level. Within this perspective, Ricoeur constantly has as its background in its thematic approaches of theological inspiration. Such themes are placed in a borderline between theology and philosophy. The theme of forgiveness appears explicitly and systematized in a late work, *La mémoire, l'histoire, l'oubli* (2000) and through an ethical and political approach. However, we can find it at other times as a horizon, which is constantly theologically inspired, as in the affirmation of the logic of superabundance. In this way, the articulation of freedom with forgiveness is allowed in view of the Ricoeurian project of a philosophy of the will, following the path of an eidetic (or phenomenology), empirical (or symbolic) and a poetics of freedom and forgiveness. A poetics of the will was a project that was unfinished in the matter of freedom, but we can situate it within the proposal of the sequence of the works *La Métaphore vive* and *Temps et Récit*. In the context of forgiveness, the project concretized by the French philosopher was that of a phenomenology, which is present in the epilogue of the work of the year 2000. However, we suggest the existence of a "symbolic" and a "poetic" of forgiveness as we retrace the trajectory of Ricoeur's thought, analyzing its constant weights and its interfaces, especially that of theology with philosophy. Thus, we find as a great example of these constant themes, which we also affirm to be the horizon of the thought of our author, that of the "capable man". However, this affirmation of anthropological model can be sustained, in the last instance, by the affirmation of the logic of the "superabundance", that is the logic of the pardon. So there is forgiveness and there is freedom.

"Researcher, from where do you speak?" Reflections on Ricoeur's concept of attestation in view of the dilemmas of researcher positionality

Jaco Dreyer

The aim of this paper is to explore the possible contribution of Ricoeur's notion of attestation in dealing with the dilemmas of researcher positionality as reflected in the question: "Researcher, from where do you speak?"

Researchers do not have a privileged "God's eye view" or a view from nowhere when they construct their knowledge claims. We are well aware of the role of power (Foucault) and the researcher's "positionality" in the research context. This situation, namely that all knowledge is mediated knowledge, that there is a conflict of interpretations, and that bias, researcher subjectivity, and positionality play a role in these interpretations, is a basic epistemological dilemma.

In the first part of the paper I will argue that reflexivity cannot heal the "epistemological wound" of researcher subjectivity, bias, and positionality. It could help researchers to better understand from where they speak and the factors that may influence the knowledge constructed, and it could make them more sensitive to the possible "violence" in the act of representing others by means of research as well as the many ambiguities related to research practices. However, due to our existential "situatedness", our horizons of understanding, we will never be able to escape from our subjectivities. This is the "crisis of the cogito", the shattered Cartesian cogito (Ricoeur). Just as we cannot see others from an "objective" or "God's eye view", we cannot see ourselves from this vantage point. Reflecting on our reflexivity will thus continue indefinitely, with no possibility to reach a final point.

Against this background, I will present Ricoeur's hermeneutical anthropology, with his view of the capable and responsible self, as a possible avenue to respond to the dilemmas of researcher positionality and subjectivity. I will argue that Ricoeur's notion of attestation could be particularly helpful in dealing with the question: "Researcher, from where do you speak?" Ricoeur describes attestation as the type of certainty that is appropriate for a hermeneutics of the self that does not exalt the subject (Descartes) nor humiliate the subject (Nietzsche). Attestation is not the certainty "claimed by the cogito" of "self-founding knowledge", that is, the certainty belonging to an ultimate foundation. But it is also not the uncertainty of perpetual doubt and suspicion as a result of a humiliated cogito. Attestation is thus the kind of certainty of a self that recognizes its limitations and fallibility, but that acts with conscience and integrity, with the "assurance of being oneself acting and suffering". It is the kind of certainty of a self that makes and keeps

promises, that acts with self-esteem and conviction whilst always being aware of its fragility and its responsibility towards the self and others.

The paper will end with some critical remarks on the possibilities and limitation of Ricoeur's notion of attestation in dealing with the question: "Researcher, from where do you speak?" in the (South) African context.

Avec Michèle Le Dœuff : lire ceux qui écrivent depuis l'imaginaire philosophique

Marjolaine Deschênes

Cette communication veut démontrer que la poétique ricœurienne du récit (« triple mimésis » : l'amont et l'aval du texte, ainsi que la refiguration du monde du lecteur grâce à la réception du texte (Temps et récit, 1984-1986)) trouve une préceuseure théorique et méthodologique importante chez la philosophe française Michèle Le Dœuff (L'imaginaire philosophique, 1980). Alors que Le Dœuff voit dans les discours philosophiques singuliers la façon dont le poétique réaménage les apories théoriques propres à chaque philosophe, Ricoeur, lui, verra dans le champ discursif poétique (littéraire) une réplique aux apories du champ discursif philosophique lorsqu'il s'agit de dire le temps qui, par essence et de tous côtés, fuit. Chez les deux philosophes, la contribution de la métaphore et du poétique à réduire l'impuissance du concept est reconnue. Mais l'originalité de Le Dœuff, dont la théorie à cet égard précède celle de Ricoeur, est de repérer le travail métaphorique soutenant et creusant du même coup le discours philosophique singulier de l'intérieur, tandis que Ricoeur place cette réplique du poétique à l'extérieur de la bibliothèque philosophique : chez les poètes et les romanciers. Ainsi, sans prétendre que Ricoeur aurait lu Le Dœuff sans le dire, je pose plutôt que la poétique de Ricoeur constitue en tout cas un renversement (fortuit?), tout comme un riche complément de la poétique de Le Dœuff. Afin de le démontrer, je me pencherai sur tous les éléments d'analyse de texte qui, annoncés et appliqués par Le Dœuff, préfigurent ceux que Ricoeur a ensuite déployés, quelques années plus tard.

Before the Law: Ricoeur and Benjamin on the Critique of Symbolically Legitimated Power

Rikus van Eeden

From where does the law speak? And, how does this speech induce citizens' belief in the legal state? Moreover, from where can one speak against the state and abuse of the law? I approach these three questions as the explicandum of political theory for both Paul Ricoeur and Walter Benjamin. I argue that Ricoeur shares Benjamin's basic questions but takes us beyond the impasse of latter's 'Critique of Violence.' I do so by reading Benjamin's text alongside Ricoeur's work on the ideological constitution of political authority in *Ideology and Utopia* and the essays 'The Political Paradox,' 'Ethics and Politics' and 'The Paradox of Authority.' I begin with the second question, namely, how the state's claims to legitimacy induce belief on the part of its citizens. I argue that, for both Ricoeur and Benjamin, the state's claim to legitimacy is not, and cannot be, fully rational. Rational claims to legitimacy fall short of warranting citizen's submission to the state's authority. On this basis I approach the first question to argue that the discontinuity between the state's claims and citizens' belief must be explained by a third term. According to Ricoeur, the state claims legitimacy through ideology drawn from a symbolic tradition. For Benjamin, the state's legitimacy is based on a mythical discourse which presents its authority as fated. It is here, I argue, that the two thinkers diverge. This connects the first question – from where the state speaks – with the third – from where we can speak against abuses of the law. I argue that by focussing on the opposition between political myth and the destruction of these myths, Benjamin ends up with a dichotomy: either we are duped by the mythology of the state or we lose faith in the state's authority. This is particularly problematic since we cannot envision a situation in which collectives can be organised without some form of authority resting on symbolically mediated claims to legitimacy. I suggest that Benjamin encounters this dichotomy because he neglects the symbolic tradition from which the state constructs its claims to legitimacy, instead treating the state as if it arose ex nihilo by an act of law-making violence.

Ricoeur's analysis of ideology and utopia as complementary rather than antagonistic discourses, drawn from the same symbolic tradition, allows us to overcome Benjamin's dichotomy. Realising the inevitable violence of the state and the ideological nature of its legitimacy does not necessitate a purely negative relation to the law. Instead, the attention Ricoeur pays to the shared symbolic tradition in which the state arises allows us to understand that the force and appeal of the law derives from both ideological and utopian discourses. We can thus critique abuses of power – violence – from within the tradition on which the state bases its claims to legitimacy. We are bound to the law, not because we are duped, but because the symbolic source the state draws on has utopian as well as ideological potential.

Translation and the politics of forgiveness in South Africa? What Black Christians believe and White Christians don't understand

Dion Forster

Forgiveness, as a theological and social discourse in South Africa, is deeply contested. Numerous South African scholars and activists have raised concerns about the transactional nature of the concept of forgiveness [1]. Moreover, interpersonal socio-political factors such as the nature of the historical offence, whether reparation has been made (or attempted), the political identities of the parties involved, expectations and conditions for the self and for the other, also play a role in understandings of forgiveness. One significant problem that has been identified, and is evidenced in the findings of this research, is that un-reconciled persons in South Africa seldom have contact with each other because legacy of the apartheid system which separated persons racially, according to economic class, and geographically [2]. In at least one sense this makes forgiveness impossible – not only is it impossible for persons to forgive one another since they have no proximate or authentic social engagement, forgiveness is also a theological impossibility because of deeply held and entrenched faith convictions about the nature and processes of forgiveness [3]. In other words, there is both a hermeneutic and a social barrier to forgiveness. Paul Ricoeur suggests that what is needed is an act of translation[4] that can bridge the differences in language and the very nature of the difference[5] between the self and the other[6]. This paper will reflect on the complexity of translation in relation to the politics of forgiveness in South Africa.

Blackness: Who was allowed to speak during fees must fall?

Lindokuhle Gama

This paper situates identity within three rungs of abstraction using the work of Paul Ricoeur and Léopold Senghor. These three rungs of abstraction are the individual, collective and general anthropological levels. These levels are in chronological order and the degree of abstraction becomes higher from the individual level to the general anthropological level. The individual level refers to how individuals speak about themselves and their particulars. The individual is then the bearer of identity. The collective level abstracts some particular attributes of a person, and finds it in others so as to foster a collective identity. The collective is thus the bearer of identity and not the individual. The general anthropological level is describing all human beings' commonalities in the most general sense. I advance the argument that all three rungs of abstraction adhere to essentialism at varying degrees. These kinds of approaches to abstraction were seen during the student protests. I choose to use this particular socio-political issue because this movement was a catalyst in one of the biggest debates currently in the academic space: issues of multiculturalism, equality, gender, political praxis, language, our relation to colonisation, tensions evident within different races and cultures, identity and curriculum change to name but a few. Thus, the students called for transformation in the form of radical blackness towards free decolonized higher learning education. Radical blackness is an extreme appropriation of a particular notion of what it means to be black and channelling this notion into various political platforms. It is a purification of the identity of the black which can be understood as the state before the 'interaction' with what is radically different to the black. During these movements, as a result of this clarion call, an ascribed identity was given to those

seen to be black. As a consequence, there was a certain expectation around the performativity of blackness. This resulted in racial categories as the 'authentic black' and the 'good/better black', where the latter were those seen to be behaving in a way that is characteristic of whiteness or anti-blackness. I find the anthropology evident in the student protests to be the kind of anthropological essentialism that corresponds with Senghor's Negritude. I deduced that these identities within the black students were either subscribing to the collective abstractionist approach or the individual and general approach. Where Senghor's work corresponds with the former, I saw Ricoeur's work as corresponding with the latter abstraction approach. I place emphasis on Ricoeur in this dissertation because I experienced exclusion from a racial group I have identified with my whole life during the student protests i.e. black people. I was therefore relegated to the racial category of a 'good/better black'. Furthermore, Ricoeur offers an identity that explains the lived experience of a black student who identifies with this collective racial identity but performs it differently and is ever changing. In light of this, I argue that there seems to be a need to identify the speaker in order to determine where we are speaking from.

Still searching for the pineal gland? Anti-correlationism and the Ricoeur-Changeux debate

Jaco Kruger

A number of years ago a debate took place between Paul Ricoeur and Jean-Pierre Changeux, a renowned neuroscientist and author of the 1983 book, *Neuronal Man*. The debate was published in English in 2000 under the title *What Makes Us Think? – A neuroscientist and a philosopher argue about ethics, human nature, and the brain*. Throughout their interaction Ricoeur and Changeux attempt, from their respective perspectives, to elucidate the age-old search for a link between the brain and the mind. In their discussion the work of René Descartes, inter alia his speculation about a pineal gland that connects the mind and the brain, forms an important point of reference. One of the remarkable aspects of the debate, as published, is the frankness of both intellectuals about from where they speak (*d'où ils parlent*.)

In attempting an interpretation of the Ricoeur-Changeux debate, the proposed paper takes the published debate as its frame of reference, thereby largely leaving aside the rest of both authors' extensive oeuvres. The paper is furthermore not about the link between the brain and the mind as such, but focusses on thought about the link between the brain and the mind, of which Ricoeur and Changeux's interaction provides an excellent example. In this regard, the aim of the paper is to bring the contribution of a fairly recent development in continental philosophy, namely anti-correlationism, to bear on the Ricoeur-Changeux debate so as to suggest other, perhaps understated angles from where the question of what makes us think may be addressed.

An anti-correlationist approach to philosophy is associated with the work of Quentin Meillassoux and Graham Harman, amongst others. Challenging the accepted orthodoxy of post-Kantian critical thought, Meillassoux draws on a reading of Descartes to argue for a renewed speculative courage in philosophy. The paper proposes that Meillassoux's critique of correlationism may be brought to bear on the Ricoeur-Changeux debate by asking both authors whether access to the link between the mind and the brain is possible in principle. The paper subsequently does not follow Meillassoux's proposal of a speculative materialism, but instead suggests that the result of an anti-correlationist perspective on the Ricoeur-Changeux debate might be that the terms of reference of the debate be extended further than both the current natural scientific and phenomenological approaches allow.

Narrating the future: between identity and alterity

Anel Marais

The proposed paper uses as its starting point comments made by Paul Ricoeur in his 1996 essay entitled 'Reflections on a new ethos for Europe'. He starts the essay by saying that the problem of the future of Europe is a problem of imagination. He regards this this lack of imagination – the inability to imagine the future as a radical opening, as an 'unprecedented problem'. He then makes reference to a so-called 'post-

national state' where it may be possible to imagine the establishment of as yet 'unprecedented institutions'. The 'political imagination', needed for such an undertaking has gained particular relevance in the current climate of fractious international relations. For Ricoeur the central problem is finding, or at least imagining a way to combine "identity" and "alterity". The aim of the essay is to put forward suggested models of integration between these two extremes.

Ricoeur proposes three models (also called mediations): the model of translation; the model of the exchange of memories; and the model of forgiveness. All three models aim at resisting irreducible pluralism and the danger of incommunicability. All three these models are problematic, topical and radical. According to Ricoeur translation is the best way of demonstrating the universality of language, so-called crossed narration is the best way of sharing the memories of others and, most problematic, forgiveness is the best way of 'lifting impediments to the practice of justice'.

The concept of post-nationalism is still in an early stage of development. The proposed paper will provide a brief exploration of this new imaginary opening. The paper hopes to contribute to the ongoing debate on the balance between universality and historical/cultural difference and perhaps even a new vision on integration.

"NDIYINDODA": A black male's coming-of-age and implications of the concept to a black professional woman.

Nobuntu Penxa-Matholeni

When an isiXhosa-speaking man undergoes "ulwaluko", (initiation practices), he is told to shout, "Ndiyindoda!" [Meaning, "I am a man!"]. The shouting happens immediately after the removal of his foreskin. This declaration marks a significant shift in his social status. He is no longer an inkwenkwe (a boy), although he is not completely regarded as indoda until he has fully completed the ritual. (Mfecane: 2016).

The transition from boyhood to manhood thus begins with a specific act of inserting a cultural mark of manhood into the body (Ngwane: 2004). The exclamation of "Ndiyindoda!" marks the coming-of-age of isiXhosa men. However, the same exclamation holds particular implications for the black woman. The implication of the concept to a black woman, mean, amongst other things what Claassens (Ed), (2013:85) calls dehumanizing behaviour towards females in our society. This paper will adopt an auto-ethnographic approach to interrogate the concept "ndiyindoda." 'Auto-ethnography is a form of self-narrative that places the self within a social context' (Reed-Danahay 1997b, 9). The five professional black women will be recruited from different work places. There will be no questions drawn, the focus group will only discuss the concept "Ndiyindoda" and its implications and meaning to them and their lives. According to Chilisa: (2012, 78) the questionnaire is a top down method of collecting data that mirrors the world view of the researcher. The follow-up questions will be determined by the themes that will be produced by the discussion of the concept 'We tell stories because in the last analysis human lives need and merit being narrated', Ricoeur (1984:75). In this story telling, the meaning of the concept will be discussed and its implications to the black professional woman's perspective. This concept will be put under the microscope from an IsiXhosa professional woman's perspective.

Key words: black women, ndiyindoda, inkwenkwe, auto-ethnography, initiation practices, gender violence, isiXhosa culture, ukuyalwa, iziyalo

From where does Michel de Certeau, as a historian, speak?

Friedrich von Petersdorff

Ricoeur, in the course of his analysis regarding the various steps of historical research and writing, came to the conclusion that these steps could best be understood when viewing them as different but nonetheless intertwined moments of a triadic process, consisting of 1) the documentary phase, 2) the task of explanation and understanding, and 3) the historian's representation. Ricoeur, accordingly, developed a

detailed account of the structure of the operations undertaken by historians during the process of both their research and their representation of the respective results. Later on, Ricœur decided to add a fourth phase, thereby reflecting upon how historiography influenced the historical memory of those reading the published works of historians. However, regardless of this late modification of his structure of the historical phases, Ricœur developed his analysis by following the likewise triadic scheme of historical scholarship as outlined by Michel de Certeau. But, apart from the fact that both authors presented a triadic structure, their triadic schemes differ to a considerable degree from one another. One possible approach, when attempting to analyse and distinguish the specific similarities as well as distinctions among both triadic structures, would be to compare the structure and content of both frame works, i.e. regarding the significance and the functioning of the distinct historical operations. However, despite the possible merits of such an analysis I would like to underline the differences which become apparent when comparing how Certeau, on the one hand, and Ricœur, on the other, view and conceptualize the past. In other words: “from where” do they speak when referring to the past? How does the respective situatedness influence their understandings of pastness? Ricœur speaks about history, i.e. about the process of historical research and historical writing, by focussing upon the sources and traces still available in the present – thereby the past becoming accessible. Certeau, however, underlines the pastness and the alterity of the respective historical events in question.

In my paper I shall analyse in detail the structure of Certeau’s understanding of the gone, historical past. I, thereby, intend to focus less upon epistemological but rather on ontological aspects – as any attempt to reply to the question, from where does someone speak, is also of ontological concern. Whereas Ricœur referred to Certeau’s conceptual structure in order to present his own version of the phases of historical research, I intend to pursue my analysis by taking Ricœur’s analysis as a starting point. Then, in a second step, I shall return (by keeping Ricœur’s point of view in mind) to Certeau’s understanding of history and of historical research – as I argue that an understanding of Certeau’s concept of history is intertwined with the point / space / location from where he speaks. However, an analysis of Certeau’s point of departure should then, in turn, shed as well new light upon Ricœur’s concept of the historical past.

Heaven is yesterday: on the grammar of hope in a nostalgic future

Helgard Pretorius & Robert Vosloo

In the late years of apartheid, during heated discussions at a conference about the possibility of a transition toward a democratic South Africa, a black participant is quoted to have said to one of the white participants: “When you speak like that it makes me lose hope.” The political philosopher Johan Degenaar, also present at the conference, often recalled this interaction to illustrate that how we speak matters. How we speak matters – also for hope.

Almost thirty years later, having traversed the unlikely transition towards democracy, the same phrase sadly still exemplifies many people’s experience of the discursive fabric of this society in transition. We still speak in ways that make others lose hope; or that betray the true grammar of hope for what masquerades as hopeful speech but is in fact something else – often wishful thinking masking partisan interests. Yet even such optimistic perspectives on the future seem to be making way for nostalgia as the most prevalent cultural mood of our time, with far-reaching consequences for how people speak and act, and therefore, also for hope.

There seems to be much truth in Svetlana Boym’s claim that “the twentieth century began with a futuristic utopia and ended with nostalgia,” which might explain the recent proliferation of (competing) nostalgic visions. In *The Future of Nostalgia* (2010) Boym argues that nostalgia – as a composite between *nostos* (homecoming) and *algia* (longing) – is an ‘affliction of the imagination’ affecting also the social imaginaries of groups and cultures. Could it be that nostalgia – as a longing for a home that no longer exists or that never has – is also changing the way people speak? And what would be the consequences, also for hope? If there is a shift from futuristic utopias to nostalgic visions of a pristine past, what might the implications be for the grammar of hope? Does hope have a future when heaven is yesterday?

These are the central questions raised in this paper. To help bring to light the relationship between nostalgia and the grammar of hope, we draw on Ricoeur's discussion in the third volume of *Time and Narrative* of the interanimating relationship between the "space of experience" and the "horizon of expectation" via the historical present. We argue that the grammar of hope relies on the double task of resisting "the narrowing of the space of experience" on the one hand; and the withdrawal of the horizon of expectation "into an ever more distant and indistinct future" on the other. Our hypothesis is that the antidote for nostalgia cannot be found in the flee into a utopian future any more than the antidote for the disillusionment with progress can be found in nostalgic restorations of idealised pasts. Instead, a case shall be made for a retroactive grammar of hope (allowing room for what Boym calls a reflective nostalgia) committed to the historical present as a time of initiative open to multiple passages between past and future.

Speaking from above and below The Gospel of John as metaphorical and narrative reference to a distant reality

Olivia Rahmsdorf

The one who is from the earth belongs to the earth, and speaks from the earth. The one who comes from heaven is above all (John 3:31). What does it mean to speak from the earth? How can one speak from the earth but at the same time about heavenly things? The Fourth Evangelist creates a tension between these two realms of perception and cognition. Those from above (ἄνωθεν) are fundamentally different from those who belong to the kosmos (John 15:19). But how can we, as the Johannine Jesus suggests, be born from above resp. born again (ἄνωθεν), in order to be able to see the Kingdom of God (John 3:3)? As the Greek preposition ἄνωθεν indicates, this glance at the heavenly realm is not only a matter of locality but, even more pivotally, of temporality. In order to see beyond or above our cosmological realms, we have to transcend our earthly time and space, our individual context and limited visual field. How is this project feasible? To overcome the obstacle of confined space and limited visual horizon, we can rely on the linguistic instrument of metaphors, since their key faculty is to transport/transcend (μετα-φέρω = transfer). Paul Ricoeur notes, "It is this change of distance in logical space that is the work of the productive imagination." (Ricoeur 2009, x) And according to Hans Blumenberg, metaphors are entrusted with "the transportation of the reflection on one object of intuition to another, quite different concept, to which perhaps no intuition can ever directly correspond." (Blumenberg 2010, 44) To transcend the limitations of time and its epistemological horizons, Paul Ricoeur then recruits the genre of narration. In *Time and Narrative* (Vol. I), he detects a close connection between metaphors and narratives in their similar mode of reference: Just as the metaphor "brings to language aspects, qualities, and values of reality that lack access to language that is directly descriptive," the narrative executes the same metaphorical reference only in "application to the sphere of action." Therefore "the mimetic function of [narrative] plots takes place by preference in the field of action and of its temporal values." (Ricoeur 2009, xi) In my paper I will demonstrate how the two modes of reference to a reality that is located and dated beyond (ἄνωθεν) our cosmological realms are at work in the Gospel of John. It is not only known for its "riddling arabesque" (Attridge 2015, 40 – 44) and complex metaphorical network (see among others Zimmermann 2004), but for its ingenious narrative play with the cosmological linearity of time (see among others Estes 2008). With Ricoeur's theoretical assistance on *Time and Narrative*, I will highlight these formal features of the Fourth Gospel as the prerequisite for its synthesis of the heterogeneous: the two opposing realms of above and below, light and darkness, day and night, spirit and flesh, and, respectively, the synthesis of high Christology and Christology of incarnation, without ever leveling those poles.

"Let me tell you where I'm coming from": Situatedness, homelessness and worldliness

Vasti Roodt

This paper investigates the political justification for the mobilization on behalf of specific identity formations who are in some way subject to political marginalization, exclusion or oppression. In particular, I aim to offer a critical analysis of the kind of justification that underlies a spatialized conception of identity – that is to say, identity defined in terms of “where I am coming from”, while “where I am coming from” is taken to determine where (and with whom) I belong. In this context, the demand for political recognition of a given identity can then be understood as the demand that the particular space one occupies in the world is secured by political measures. Moreover, this demand itself is based on the assumption that that we have an inalienable right to be fully at home in the world. In the second part of my paper, I argue that this approach to the experience of marginalization or exclusion is self-defeating, in so far as it seeks the legitimation of the desire to transform the world in accordance with the spatial imaginary of a particular group. In the third and last part of the paper I then examine cosmopolitanism as an alternative approach to identity as a political phenomenon – and thus an alternative justification for political mobilization against marginalization and oppression – that would not be equally self-defeating. This alternative would neither seek to reduce identity to a fixed place in the world nor surrender to a radical homelessness. Instead, I argue that the cosmopolitan ideal exercises a normative appeal on us to develop a “world-centered” notion of political identity that commits us to a world we share with others, but in which we are never finally at home.

On the Necessity of Hermeneutics and Politics: Black Consciousness within Phenomenology

Justin Sands

In Paul Ricoeur’s unfinished project, the *Philosophy of the Will*, one finds Ricoeur meeting the limitations of a specifically Husserlian-based phenomenological methodology. Freedom and Nature’s strictly phenomenological approach yields to a philosophical anthropology in *Fallible Man*, which eventually yields to a budding hermeneutical-phenomenological methodology employed in *The Symbolism of Evil*. The limitations he encountered within the project would eventually lead him to develop his own hermeneutical phenomenological method, one with a hermeneutics of suspicion as an integral component to recognizing his methodology’s limits.

In this paper, I propose that we expand that hermeneutics of suspicion to question in what ways a hermeneutical phenomenology may presuppose a normative whiteness within its concept of consciousness and interpretation. Specific to my questioning is the Black Consciousness movement within South Africa and how this movement reveals the essential historico-political context of consciousness; does the old maxim within phenomenology that “consciousness is consciousness of” presuppose a Western, white consciousness? If not, then how does its concept of consciousness, as the structure of experience of the world, function prior to the facticity of race, gender, and so forth? This is where I will explore Ricoeur’s encounter with the limits of a strict phenomenological analysis. If it does presuppose a white consciousness, which I hypothesize, then this raises further and more pointed questions about the Western and white normativity within Continental philosophy and its use of this methodology. However, this would also give us an access point to open this field and its subdisciplines to decolonial critique; thereby yielding a greater understanding of the self, its world, and others who also inhabit that world. I will argue this hypothesis by exploring Black Consciousness thinkers such as Steve Biko as well as the work of Franz Fanon, who employs an Sartrean phenomenological analysis in many of his major works.

Reasonable Rhetoric: Ricoeur, Perelman, and the Philosophy of Argumentation

Blake Scott

If language always involves “somebody saying something to someone about something”, then Ricoeur’s question, “from where do you speak?”, implies a corollary, namely, “to whom do you speak?” By emphasizing the addressee or audience of language in this way we find ourselves within what Chaim

Perelman called the “realm of rhetoric”. Although references to Perelman’s works can be found throughout many of Ricoeur’s writings, little has been done to bring these two contemporaries into dialogue. In this direction, the aim of the paper is to show one of the ways in which Ricoeur’s work is relevant to debates in contemporary argumentation theory—a field whose existence and development owes a great deal to Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca’s breakthrough work, *The New Rhetoric*. The standard critical reading of this text has been that Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca’s insistence upon the inclusion of the audience as a constitutive element of argumentation ultimately leaves their approach with relativistic standards of argument evaluation. In light of this criticism I will argue that Ricoeur’s conception of “practical truth”, and the importance that he places on the speaking self, can be used to supplement the epistemological shortcomings of *The New Rhetoric*. Without contradicting the basic theoretical framework of *The New Rhetoric*, as I will show, Ricoeur’s account allows the rhetorical approach to preserve its defining emphasis on audiences without committing to relativism in the way that critics have charged. I proceed in three steps. First, I establish several points of reference shared by both Ricoeur and Perelman. The most important of these are a return to Aristotle’s practical philosophy, a distinction between the rational and the reasonable, and a normative understanding of the concept of justice. Next, I outline Ricoeur’s understanding of the nature and scope of practical philosophy in general, and the epistemological value of his conception of practical truth in particular. Finally, I show how Ricoeur’s conception of practical truth fits with the basic theoretical framework of Perelman’s rhetorical approach to argumentation, provided that Perelman’s controversial notion of the “universal audience” is not interpreted in a strong epistemic way.

Paul Ricoeur and the problem of ‘From where to speak about happiness’

Anné Verhoef

The conference theme is a reminder of Ricoeur’s repeated question to his students, *D’ou parlez-vous?* (From where do you speak?). This question is an acknowledgement and a constant reminder that we always speak from somewhere; that our thinking and speaking cannot escape our situatedness and contexts. An awareness and exploration of our vantage points, theoretically, contextually and in terms of disciplines, is not detrimental to what we want to say, but can rather open up new insights and possibilities of thinking and speaking. Ricoeur explored this notion in his own thinking by speaking sometimes as philosopher and sometimes as theologian. Each way of speaking has its motivation and benefits, but also its shortcomings, so that Ricoeur could say ‘more’ by speaking from different ‘places’. This is characteristic in the way Ricoeur speaks about happiness as well. This paper will explore how Ricoeur speaks about happiness as philosopher, and how he speaks then (when he elaborates on his previous writings) about happiness from a theological (or religious) perspective.

In *Fallible Man* Ricoeur situated the question of happiness within our human fallibility. He describes for example humans as always between (mediating) their propensity to evil (and suffering) and their striving towards happiness and the highest good. In this scheme, happiness is something unattainable, something transcendent in nature. Only after *Oneself as Another*, Ricoeur wrote an essay devoted completely to the topic of happiness, namely “*Le Bonheur Hors Lieu*” (1994). This essay was published in the book *Où est le bonheur?* (Edited by Droit, R-P) and Ricoeur argues here that happiness is “out of bounds”, or “off-site”, but happiness is not “sans lieu”. These philosophical works were followed by a more religious (theological) discussion of happiness in his essay, “*L’optatif du bonheur*” (2001), published in *Demain L’Église* (edited by Duchesne, J. & Ollier, J. Paris: Flammarion). Here he argues that the place of happiness is to be found in the optative mood of language – the only mode which can accommodate the happiness/luck pair and which accepts the happiness/unhappiness pair at the same time.

In my paper I will give an analyses on how and why Ricoeur speak from different ‘places’ about happiness. This analyses attempts to not only give more insight into Ricoeur’s way of thinking, but also about our thinking and speaking about happiness from and in our own contexts.

Thinking with Ricoeur: from where do human trafficking survivors speak about freedom?

Anja Visser

Human trafficking is a global crime with estimated millions of people being enslaved every year. Some of these people are rescued and rehabilitated and they transform from victims to survivors of trafficking. Survivors have an urgency to speak and to be heard. Their voices are often silenced and censored by their exploiters and even rescuers. When research is conducted on survivors' experiences, ethics committees of universities further contribute to the silencing and censoring of their voices through strict policies and rules which are supposed to protect them against further harm. In this context researchers have to constantly think about how and what to narrate, which could lead to self-censoring of their research. Many questions come to the fore in this process: What should researchers rather leave as unsaid? Can survivors not speak for themselves or should someone speak on their behalf? Can survivors speak about freedom if they never experienced it? (Some are held captive since they were 3 or 4 years old). From which concept of freedom does the researcher interpret the narratives of trafficking survivors? The philosophical concept of freedom (and its limits) is determinative in 1) how survivors of human trafficking speak about the new found deliverance (liberation), and 2) how researcher listen to, understand, interpret, narrate and document the survivors' experiences. From where do human trafficking survivors speak about freedom? Can they? This paper will attempt to think with or from Ricoeur on this complex issue. Ricoeur's unique understanding of freedom, as the reciprocal relationship (not polar opposites) between the voluntary and the involuntary, allows for a much fluid understanding of freedom to which both survivor and researcher can relate. For Ricoeur (in *Freedom and nature: the voluntary and the involuntary*) there is a constant negotiation between the voluntary and the involuntary. The voluntary and involuntary co-determine the willing actions of the self, with the voluntary reacting to or drawing from involuntary actions. In other words, the voluntary reveals itself only by means of and in relation to the involuntary. Ricoeur describes the act of the will through a triadic paradigm. In this paradigm, three modes of willing can be distinguished, namely: decision, movement and consent. These modes of willing can be arranged in any sequence from a practical mediation perspective. The reciprocal relationship between the voluntary and the involuntary is visible in every moment of the three modes of willing.

This paper will argue that this philosophical lens of Ricoeur on freedom, enable both survivors to speak about freedom (although it might look initially impossible), and researchers to interpret the survivors' experiences of freedom in a more nuance way. Ricoeur's concept of freedom provides thus a platform for survivors' narratives to be heard, but at the same time 'freedom in the context of human trafficking' challenges Ricoeur's concept of 'freedom and nature'.