



A Comparative Analyses of Ricoeur and Derrida's Phenomenology

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines Ricoeur's phenomenology and its points of divergence with Derrida's. Ricoeur developed phenomenology in a theological direction and directed phenomenology's emphasis towards intersubjectivity and an examination of how Otherness is constitutive of the self and the fundamental unit of phenomenology rather than ipseity or the ego. As I have argued in the above section, Derrida differs from this emphasis on Otherness in his discovery of the quasi-transcendental, or the difference between the transcendental and empirical which enables phenomenology. Derrida thus performs a meta-phenomenology in place of Ricoeur's existential phenomenology and philosophical anthropology. Derrida inscribes phenomenology more powerfully by bringing it to terms with its condition of possibility.

Keywords: Ricoeur, Derrida, Transcendental, Empirical, Iterability

This paper will examine the radical empiricisms of Ricoeur. As previously shown with Heidegger, I will demonstrate that radical empiricisms translate into repetitions rather than deviations from metaphysics. Ricoeur, Levinas and Merleau-Ponty's turn to existential phenomenology and intersubjectivity represents a turn to overcome metaphysics, not unlike Heidegger, and thus repeat it by inscribing it as a negative or Jewish variant in the emphasis on Otherness and intersubjectivity in place of Being and presence. Their "ethical turn" was a turn to privilege Other over self and corporeality over transcendental which elides difference and the quasi-transcendental. In place of this radical empiricism or non-philosophy Derrida would argue for the importance of the quasi-transcendental as the meta-condition that grounds philosophy and non-philosophy. As we have argued in earlier papers on Husserl, the difference between the transcendental and the empirical, difference, translates into a difference which is nothing. The turn towards a radical empiricism that we witness with Ricoeur, Levinas, Merleau-Ponty and Blanchot thus reinscribes metaphysics as a negative, which is a repetition of the transcendental as the empirical, or iterability. Derrida thus discovers the condition of possibility of phenomenology as the quasi-transcendental, that which is neither transcendental nor empirical but enables the thinking of both, and hence inscribes phenomenology more powerfully.

Far from escaping metaphysics thus, the radical empiricisms of Ricoeur, Levinas, Merleau-Ponty and Blanchot merely reinscribe metaphysics by repeating it as a negative. The negative is not different from the positive. This is because the transcendental and the empirical are paradoxically identical and non-identical, their difference translates into a sameness. Nothing separates the transcendental and empirical. The empirical is but the iteration of the transcendental, just as I had previously showed the transcendental cannot exist outside the empirical. Transcendental and empirical exist only in a dynamic relation to each other through difference and iterability. As such, the transcendental-empirical distinction is an illusion. In the previous papers we have been examining the relation of deconstruction to phenomenology as defined by two of its major proponents, Husserl and Heidegger. The deconstructive reconfiguration of phenomenology also saw some precedent in the work of Ricoeur and Levinas, whom we will now turn towards examining. Ricoeur's early engagement with Husserl saw him breaking from phenomenology as an 'egology' and solipsistic

enterprise towards a definition of phenomenology as an engagement with intersubjectivity and “otherness”. Ricoeur is interested in limiting phenomenology and defining it in terms of its concrete and existential manifestations, which he defines in *Fallible Man* as the symbolics of evil and the disproportion or discrepancy between the finite and the infinite. Ricoeur’s approach to phenomenology differs from Derrida’s in as he is less interested in the meta-conditions of phenomenology. Rather he seeks to define its limitations as well as to inscribe fallen-ness as a theological concept into phenomenology as its limit. The notion of limit is more prominent in the thought of Ricoeur than Derrida, who seeks not so much to examine phenomenology’s limitations as define the conditions of possibility that enable phenomenology.

Ricoeur’s existential phenomenology

Ricoeur does not think the “Other” is subordinate to the ego as the transcendental reduction performs in bracketing the world, indeed Ricoeur argues that phenomenology is premised upon ‘Otherness’ in allowing a definition of subjectivity to take place. Ricoeur thinks that the ‘Other’ is essential to determining selfhood, indeed Ricoeur takes the Other as the foundation of his phenomenology. Ricoeur elevates the ‘Other’ to something primary rather than secondary in phenomenology. Ricoeur argues that Husserl’s importance was in discovering intersubjectivity as the condition of his phenomenology rather than the traditional view of Husserl’s phenomenology as a Cartesian, ego-centred phenomenology. Ricoeur defines the Other as essential to determining selfhood and subjectivity in *Oneself as Another*:

Myself as flesh, before the constitution of the alter ego, is what the strategy of the intersubjective constitution of nature obliges us to think. That we owe to this impossible enterprise the formation of the ontological concept of flesh is indeed the divine surprise. As we know, the methodological decision rests in the reduction to the sphere of ownness from which would be excluded all objective predicates indebted to intersubjectivity. The flesh would then prove to be the pole of reference of all bodies belonging to this nature (ownness). (Ricoeur, 1992:323)

Ricoeur thus argues that the objective self is predicated and premised upon the foundation of “Otherness”, rather than derived from what he calls a strictly Husserlian “egology”. Indeed he defines the “Other” as the “pole of reference” for the definition of own-ness, or selfhood. The “Other” is the ontological foundation of the self, rather than something which is simply exterior or alien to the concept of the ego as Husserl’s phenomenological reduction would have it.

Ricoeur defines selfhood as concretely and ontologically situated as “the flesh”, subjectivity is embodied and corporeal as well as situated in relation to the “Other”. Indeed this relation to the Other is the fundamental defining trait of subjectivity, selfhood exists only in relation to the Other, it is thus dynamically constituted by this relation to the Other rather than being any simple form of “egology”. Ricoeur describes the “flesh” as the foundation of passive synpaper upon which active synpaper is grounded, selfhood is inextricably bound up with this relation to the Other upon which it proceeds to define itself. Ricoeur argues that “Otherness” is the foundation upon which the ego is premised, as he argues, “the otherness of the flesh would still precede it”, as the ego is derived from the Other and the Other is thus its origin rather than its subordinate as performed in the phenomenological reduction.

Ricoeur thus takes Husserl’s most original discovery to be the discovery of intersubjectivity as well as the idea that subjectivity is fundamentally embodied- a condition which Ricoeur explores with his notion of “the flesh”. Subjectivity is corporeal and situated in relation to an ontology rooted in Otherness rather than existing in a vacuum, as the phenomenological reduction would result in a form of solipsism and isolation of the ego, which, in existential conditions, is not a true assessment of the situation of the self according to Ricoeur. As Ricoeur argues with his point on nonbelongingness of the self as subject in a system of objects in Wittgenstein, the self is fundamentally situated in relation to the Other. Self does not exist alone without definition to this existential concrete reality of the Other or in a vacuum. The spatiality of flesh is its concrete embodiment in existential terms rather than being defined as immaterial or transcendental, without corporeal definition or an existential, concrete form of tangible reality. Ricoeur goes on to define subjectivity as a fundamentally existential condition, taking his cue from Heidegger, arguing that selfhood is a thrown-ness or situatedness and a facticity, and thus an ontological reality, rather than a transcendental or immaterial substance existing without concrete or existential definition.

In his volume on Husserl, Ricoeur further argues:

Thus, the “appresentation” of the psyche of the Other has its original reference- its *ursprungliche Vorlage*- in the solipsistic experience of a total compresence of the psychic and the physical. The unity of man is present only there, or more precisely “only in tactile and affective sensations. The “appresence” of the psyche of the Other “in” his body is a transferred compresence. The Other senses and thinks as I do, his body too, is a psychic field, just as mine is an originary sensorial field. But the range of action of this transfer is boundless. All compresence is transmuted into empathy: the hand of the Other that I see “appresents to me” the solipsistic touching of that hand and all that goes along with this touching. A whole world is born to this hand, a world that I can only “presentiate” “render” present to myself, without its being present to me. Thus, bit by bit, an art of signs is formed, a vast grammar of expressions of which the most notable illustration is language. To understand these signs is to constitute man, to apprehend the Other as “analogue of myself”.(Ricoeur, 1967: 65-66)

Ricoeur thus argues that phenomenology up to Husserl has been solipsistic and that the Other is an “analogue of myself”, the Other constitutes the self, as Ricoeur argues, the brain is always the brain of another. Ricoeur argues that Husserl’s original discovery is the discovery of intersubjectivity and that this idea of the self being relational and constituted by the Other is fundamental rather than marginal to phenomenology. The Other is not reducible as it is the fundamental relational entity upon which the self is premised. The self can only be defined in relation to the Other. It does not exist as an ipseity or a solipsistic and solitary entity as Husserl’s Cartesian inclinations would have it. Ricoeur thus premises his ontology and phenomenology upon the Other. Derrida, in “Violence and Metaphysics”, will argue that this flight towards the Other is a characteristic of Jewish philosophy. Derrida does not privilege the Other in his phenomenology, but examines the aporia and differance between presence and absence which enables phenomenology. The notion of the quasi-transcendental, or the differance between transcendental and empirical, or philosophy and non-philosophy, which enables phenomenology, is Derrida’s contribution to phenomenology. Derrida does not think that Ricoeur’s existential phenomenology manages to escape metaphysics as it is a Jewish and negative repetition of metaphysics which its emphasis on “Otherness” and intersubjectivity in place of Being and presence. As argued above, the radical empiricism of Ricoeur and his turn to privilege the Other over the Same, merely inscribes metaphysics as a negative and thus does not overcome metaphysics as the transcendental and the empirical are the same, as argued in the Husserl papers. The movement of the trace institutes the difference between the transcendental and empirical as a non-difference, or a sameness. By seeking so rigorously to elevate the Other over the Same Ricoeur merely repeats metaphysics as differance or the trace determines the difference between the transcendental and empirical as a difference which is nothing and separates nothing. The transcendental exists only through the empirical in the dynamic relation of iterability, and hence an empirical idealism like Ricoeur’s which negates the transcendental lands phenomenology in an aporia, in a manner similar to the way the transcendental reduction lands phenomenology in an aporia, because it simply reverses the effects of the transcendental reduction. The difference which separates the transcendental and empirical is a difference which is nothing, or differance, and hence Ricoeur’s turn to radical empiricism repeats metaphysics because the transcendental and empirical are separated by nothing, differance, and are the same. The transcendental-empirical distinction is an illusion, as demonstrated in the papers on Husserl. Hence, empirical idealism is a repetition of transcendental idealism rather than a deviation from it. Derrida thus differs from Ricoeur in not performing philosophical anthropology or existential philosophy but examining the meta-conditions which allow phenomenology to take place, naming these as differance and iterability. The transcendental and empirical are related in a paradoxical relation of simultaneous identity and non-identity, because their difference translates into a sameness and non-distinction. Hence, the quasi-transcendental is a paradoxical distinction that is a non-distinction and thus aporetic rather than immanent, inclusive, or contaminating as previous critics have argued. Rather than privilege an empirical idealism or subvert transcendental idealism like Ricoeur, Derrida locates the space of truth as quasi-transcendental, neither transcendental nor empirical but the limit, spacing and interval between them that allows the thinking of both through the differentiating movement of differance and the trace. It is the quasi-

transcendental or the written mark, functioning as if it was transcendental, which enables metaphysics as it is the conditionality of transcendental-empirical differentiation as well as the condition of impossibility for designating an exclusive sphere of idealism or expressive signs, or empirical signs in converse. The quasi-transcendental relates the transcendental and empirical in simultaneous identity and difference, identity and non-identity. The necessity for the quasi-transcendental to distinguish the transcendental and empirical makes it impossible to separate transcendental and empirical as each separation depends on the other term for the distinction to be upheld. If there were no transcendental, it would be impossible to distinguish, as Ricoeur does, a pure empirical idealism from it. The transcendental thus inhabits the empirical even as it is separated from it through the written mark or quasi-transcendental. Ricoeur requires the transcendental to exclude it from his radical empiricism. Empirical thus exists only in relation to transcendental through iterability and difference. Derrida thus inscribes phenomenology in a more powerful form through his discovery of the quasi-transcendental, which is the condition of possibility of phenomenology as it would be impossible to differentiate the transcendental and empirical without it, while it also institutes the impossibility of their separation as the transcendental is simultaneously the empirical. Derrida's dialogue with Ricoeur is important because where Ricoeur performs anthropological phenomenology, Derrida discovers that Ricoeur's existential phenomenology falls into aporia by negating difference and the quasi-transcendental. Ricoeur's existential phenomenology requires the transcendental to be excluded from it in order to establish itself. Ricoeur's empiricism would not hold if there were no transcendental, hence Derrida's intervention in establishing the meta-conditions of iterability and difference addresses this aporia. It is the quasi-transcendental which enables phenomenology as the transcendental is simultaneously the empirical, there would be no transcendental-empirical distinction without it and yet it is simultaneously impossible to separate the transcendental and empirical because nothing separates them. Derrida thus establishes a phenomenology which is reflexive of its own conditions and functioning in contrast to Ricoeur's anthropological and empiricist phenomenology, which in its privilege of the empirical, lapses into blindness and logocentrism. Derrida thus saves Ricoeur's phenomenology from blindness in his positing of the quasi-transcendental, or the repetition of the transcendental in the empirical as the transcendental does not exist outside its relation to the empirical and vice versa, hence Ricoeur's empirical idealism requires the transcendental as a point of exclusion. Paradoxically hence, Ricoeur expels that which is necessary to determining his phenomenology by insisting on a pure empiricism and Other-directed phenomenology because the empirical does not exist outside the structure of repetition from the transcendental through iterability and difference.

In *Fallible Man*, Ricoeur attempts to bring an affective dimension to phenomenology in examining the reality of misery as a human condition, as well as to define man as essentially fallen and capable of evil, which paradoxically also enables man's capacity for good. In *Fallible Man*, Ricoeur defines the relation between the finite and infinite as one of disproportion and discrepancy. Ricoeur is thus interested in the limits of man and a theological notion of evil which had not been written into phenomenology prior to Ricoeur as phenomenology had been largely a-theological and without a concept of man's fallen-ness or sin. Phenomenology according to Husserl had been defined as transcendental. In contrast, according to Ricoeur, such a reading elides man's fallen nature and capacity for evil, as the transcendental had been defined according to Kant as the basis for man's capacity for virtue and reason, who grounded his metaphysics of morals in it. Ricoeur examines the limitations of phenomenology defined according to a transcendental framework as he argues that there is a disproportion or discrepancy between the finite and infinite. Man thus is fallen and inadequate to the infinite because he is circumscribed by his finitude and flawed nature which Ricoeur writes into his phenomenology as a symbolics of evil. Ricoeur is interested in the interweaving and inextricability of the finite and infinite as infinity can only find expression in finitude. This he explores in his notion of synpaper. Derrida also explores this contamination of the transcendental and empirical, but where Derrida is interested in the phenomenon of mediation and the enabling conditions of transcendental genesis Ricoeur is more interested in reducing the portrait of man as infallible and good.

Ricoeur highlights fallibility as a theological concept much more than Derrida, who is interested not so much in a theological conception of man as the meta-conditions which enable metaphysical thinking. Where Ricoeur emphasizes the intertwining of good and evil in man to highlight the essential theological condition of man as Christian, Derrida's expansion of Husserl's

notion of *Verflechtung* or the interweaving of the transcendental and empirical is an examination of iterability, or repetition, as the condition of possibility of metaphysics. Ricoeur is interested in the discrepancy between the finite and infinite while Derrida is more interested in the aporia that enables the instantiation of the transcendental as iterability or repetition with a difference. Derrida has less interest in the incommensurability of the finite to the infinite than the enabling condition of the transcendental and empirical as the movement of the trace or difference. Essentially, Derrida's difference differs from Ricoeur's fallibility in terms of the theological and Christian import of Ricoeur's interest in fallen-ness and sin and Derrida's more meta-phenomenological concerns in the movement of difference and the trace as the enabling condition of metaphysical thought. The movement of the trace, or difference, distinguishes nothing and separates nothing, hence in place of an incommensurability or disproportion as Ricoeur argues, Derrida would argue that the transcendental and empirical are the same. Nothing separates the transcendental and empirical as the transcendental-empirical difference is an illusion. Ricoeur brings to bear a notion of synpaper that allows the expression of the infinite in the finite. This notion of synpaper however, is to be distinguished from Derrida's notion of iterability and mediation.

Where Ricoeur argues for an interweaving of the finite and infinite because man's capacity for evil paradoxically is also his capacity for good, Derrida is interested in the meta-phenomenological conditions which allow metaphysical structures to come into being. Their difference of interest is thus on the one hand, theological definitions of phenomenology as a description of man's fundamentally Christian condition and meta-phenomenological definitions of difference and iterability as the conditions of possibility for metaphysics. Ricoeur's disproportion also differs from Derrida's difference, in that Ricoeur is interested in describing man's limits and fallibility, while Derrida is interested in the meta-conditions that allow phenomenological structures to play out in the first place. Derrida's difference is a meta-condition that allows the very possibility of phenomenology, while Ricoeur is simply seeking to circumscribe phenomenology in describing man as fallen and finite. The ends of these philosophers are thus different. Ricoeur is a theologian interested in the fallen nature of man, whereas Derrida is interested in that which enables phenomenology to play out in transcendental and empirical determination, as iterability and difference. Derrida is hence a philosopher of the very conditions of phenomenology as a metaphysical dynamic that relates transcendental and empirical through difference and iterability, whereas Ricoeur is interested in limiting the theological conception of man to finitude and fallen-ness with his inscription of a natural propensity to sin and fall short of divine goodness with man's natural inclination toward evil. Ricoeur further argues on disproportion:

The "disproportion" between sense and perspective, between intending and looking, between the verb and point of view, is as the melodic germ of all the variations and all the developments that culminate in the 'disproportion' between happiness and character.

This "disproportion", we remember, vouched for itself in the simple fact of reflection. Man's finitude, we said, is such that it can be known and expressed; and it can be expressed only because speaking itself is already a transgression of point of view and finite perspective. However, that 'disproportion' between speaking and perspective was still only the theoretical aspect of human disproportion. What we are trying to express now is the global character of disproportion. (Ricoeur, 1986: 64-65)

As we can see from the above paragraphs, Ricoeur is interested in limiting the concept of the good and the infinite in phenomenology in his emphasis on disproportion and discrepancy between the finite and the infinite. Ricoeur is also interested in the notion of synpaper. Happiness is not an abstraction or a finite concept but an interweaving of the two because it is affective and existentially manifested. Ricoeur's difference from Derrida is thus in his interest as well in the affective aspects of phenomenology, in concrete existential manifestations of phenomenology in emotions such as happiness and misery, taking his cue perhaps from Heidegger's notions of moods such as boredom and anxiety. To examine Ricoeur further on his notion of disproportion:

All human action bears the mark of this indefiniteness. Upsets the structure of acts at the vital level, acts characterized by a cycle of lack or avoidance, of pain, of initiating something, of attainment, of pleasure or pain. The criteria of 'satiety' alone would allow us to give a strict meaning to the idea of affective regulation; but these criteria can no longer be applied.

‘Satiety’ would be reached if all tensions could be totally saturated. But action, insofar as it unfolds at the beck of the three fundamental quests of self-being, is in principle a perpetual movement. The Thomist and Cartesian description of the love-desire-pleasure cycle becomes unusable. Extending this cycle or introducing delays into it is no longer sufficient; it is necessary to open it up. No action is any longer terminal, all actions have become strangely intermediary. (Ricoeur, 1986:125-126)

In the above passage Ricoeur introduces a further notion of indefiniteness, the self is essentially not determinate and constantly becoming or in the process of definition. This notion of ‘becoming’ is quite existential and is also explored by Sartre who argues that being is nothingness, there is no essential self, the self is constantly in a process of definition. Derrida will differ from this opinion in by no means being an existential phenomenologist but a phenomenologist who performs meta-phenomenology in examining aporia as the condition that defines phenomenology, the transcendental-empirical relation is one of paradox and repetition rather than any existential or anthropologicist return to the realm of Being. Derrida would find Ricoeur’s phenomenology anthropologicist, as he found Heidegger’s. Derrida demonstrates that non-being is as essential to determining Being as presence and the transcendental, because the transcendental is constituted by difference and iterability. The transcendental and empirical are related by the trace which institutes their difference as a paradoxical sameness. The impossibility of the distinction between Ricoeur’s empiricism and Husserl’s idealism is its own possibility as empirical idealism and transcendental idealism are the same, separated by difference, a difference that is not a difference, rather than mutually exclusive. It is the aporia between the transcendental and empirical which enables the thinking of both as the transcendental is nothing outside the empirical, their distinction translates into a non-distinction or a sameness.

Ricoeur seeks to elevate the Other in his phenomenology and circumscribe it to finitude. Yet the Other is no different from the Same, in seeking so rigorously to elevate the Other over the same, Ricoeur repeats metaphysics and reinscribes metaphysics as an empirical idealism, which is no different from a transcendental idealism. In his emphasis on man as fallible, finite and fallen, Ricoeur commits phenomenology to an anthropological and empirical idealism, which does not differ essentially from transcendental idealism as transcendental-empirical difference is an illusion, as argued in the papers on Husserl. As argued previously, the transcendental and empirical are repetitions rather than divergences from one another. Transcendental and empirical exist only in and through each other in a dynamic relation of difference and iterability. As transcendental exists only through the empirical, it is absurd to conceive of empiricism without idealism or vice versa as both are produced only through the distinguishing movement of the trace in a movement of repetition and iterability. The empirical is but the repeated trace of the transcendental, it does not exist outside this dynamic of iterability and repetition with a difference, to conceive of empiricism without the transcendental is to suppress the movement of difference and iterability which are the true conditions of metaphysics. As transcendental-empirical difference is an illusion, circumscribing phenomenology to empiricism repeats metaphysics rather than escaping it.

By so rigorously seeking to elevate the Other over the same, Ricoeur suppresses difference, which is the true condition of possibility for metaphysics. Empirical idealism is no different from transcendental idealism as the difference between the transcendental and empirical translates as a difference which is nothing and separates nothing. By suppressing difference, Ricoeur forgets to acknowledge the true founding condition of possibility of phenomenology as the quasi-transcendental. The quasi-transcendental, or the difference between the transcendental and empirical, conditions metaphysics in its entirety as it functions as the limit and spacing which produces both transcendental and empirical and allows metaphysics to perpetuate itself through the distinguishing movement of the trace.

Ricoeur thus reinscribes phenomenology as a negative or empirical idealism which does not differ essentially from transcendental idealism upon close examination, as the difference between the transcendental and empirical translates as a non-difference or a paradoxical sameness. While seeking to escape metaphysics by elevating the Other and circumscribing it to finitude and fallibility, Ricoeur does not manage to evade it as he repeats it by borrowing entirely from its terms, ontological structure and vocabulary. The terms finite, fallible, fallen are borrowed from empiricist accounts of

phenomenology, and by circumscribing phenomenology and limiting it to the finite and the fallible Ricoeur commits himself to empiricism, which differs only in name from idealism as nothing separates the transcendental and empirical, their difference is an illusion. The difference between the transcendental and empirical translates into a paradoxical non-difference or sameness, identity in non-identity as they are simultaneously similar and different. The quasi-transcendental conjoins the transcendental and empirical in this paradoxical relation of sameness in difference, identity in non-identity as their difference is paradoxically a non difference or sameness. Ricoeur's notion of disproportion interests him more as a form of limit to phenomenology and a circumscription, thus privileging empirical idealism. In contrast Derrida would take pains to suggest that difference constitutes metaphysics. The quasi-transcendental, that which is neither transcendental nor empirical, is the true condition for metaphysics as it produces metaphysics in an economy rather than privileges either transcendental or empirical. As this paper has demonstrated, transcendental and empirical are but historical names derived from metaphysics. Their difference is an illusion, hence privileging empirical idealism as Ricoeur does, represses difference and aporia which are the true conditions of metaphysics.

The empirical idealism of Ricoeur thus reinscribes metaphysics by instituting a distinction which collapses through the movement of the trace and difference, which designates the a priori distinction between the transcendental and empirical as a repetition of the same. The transcendental does not exist outside the empirical, just as the empirical is the repeated trace of the transcendental through iterability. Ricoeur does not differ from Husserl as transcendental and empirical are repetitions of the same through iterability. Derrida thus democratizes phenomenology in showing that Ricoeur does not differ essentially from Husserl despite seeking to invert phenomenology in directing it towards Otherness and empiricism.

In this section I have examined Ricoeur's phenomenology and its points of divergence with Derrida's. Ricoeur developed phenomenology in a theological direction and directed phenomenology's emphasis towards intersubjectivity and an examination of how Otherness is constitutive of the self and the fundamental unit of phenomenology rather than ipseity or the ego. As I have argued in the above section, Derrida differs from this emphasis on Otherness in his discovery of the quasi-transcendental, or the difference between the transcendental and empirical which enables phenomenology. Derrida thus performs a meta-phenomenology in place of Ricoeur's existential phenomenology and philosophical anthropology. Derrida inscribes phenomenology more powerfully by bringing it to terms with its condition of possibility.

In this paper I have examined Ricoeur's turn to an ethical phenomenology in their emphasis on intersubjectivity and integrating the Other into phenomenology. Derrida would argue however that this overcoming of ipseity and being and essence as a form of non-philosophy repeats metaphysics as a Jewish variant and inscribes metaphysics negatively and thus does not manage to escape metaphysics. Derrida's quasi-transcendental, the difference between philosophy and non-philosophy, or the difference between Jew and Greek, is then shown to be the grounding conditionality of philosophy and phenomenology as difference. Derrida thus performs a meta-phenomenology rather than a reversed phenomenology or a negative phenomenology as Ricoeur had done. As I have argued in this paper, the difference between the transcendental and empirical is paradoxically a non-difference, or a sameness. The impossibility of the distinction between the transcendental and empirical is its own possibility as these are separated by difference, an interval which is a nothingness. Hence, the transcendental and the empirical are the same. This demonstration of the similarity between transcendental and empirical democratizes phenomenology as radical empiricisms such as Ricoeur are shown to repeat metaphysics rather than escaping from it, or overcoming it, as an empirical idealism is not distinct from a transcendental idealism, but a repetition of it. As I have argued earlier in my paper on Husserl, transcendental-empirical distinction is an illusion. The transcendental and empirical are simultaneously identical and non-identical as the distinction translates into a sameness, paradoxically, difference translates into non-difference and thus transcendental-empirical difference is an illusion. Derrida has thus democratized phenomenology in showing radical empirical empiricisms such as Ricoeur's are the same and repetitions of metaphysics rather than deviations or subversions of it.

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