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利科與詮釋： 聖經、敘事及 身分認同的神學反思

RICOEUR AND HERMENEUTICS:
THEOLOGICAL REFLECTIONS ON BIBLE,
NARRATIVE AND IDENTITY FORMATION

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編者語

這一期《建道學刊》以「利科與詮釋：聖經、敘事及身分認同的神學反思」為題，聚焦於哲學家保羅·利科（Paul Ricoeur）的詮釋理論及其在聖經敘事與身分認同神學上的影響。利科作為二十世紀詮釋學的重要代表人物，以其深入的人性探討與複雜的敘事結構分析，在學術界引起廣泛關注。他獨特的敘事哲學強調敘事在構建自我理解中的角色，認為故事是連結個人經驗與集體記憶的橋樑，並為我們提供了理解自身與他人的方式。這種對敘事的重視，使他在聖經研究、倫理學和神學上產生了深遠的影響。本期學刊邀請學者運用利科的理論，探討如何透過敘事理解聖經文本，並如何在身分塑造和羣體認同中體現神學意涵。我們希望這些研究不僅能啟發讀者思考敘事的神學意義，也能在詮釋與身分認同的議題上開啟新對話。

首先，貴格利·勞格里（Gregory Laughery）的文章〈與保羅·利科探討歷史、虛構小說與聖經詮釋——一種詩學〉探討了保羅·利科對聖經詮釋學的貢獻，特別是他在歷史、敘事和虛構方面的見解。勞格里將利科的工作置於後現代主義對聖經解釋和歷史書寫的影響中，該影響通常質疑追求客觀歷史的可能性。他強調利科認為歷史書寫雖然不同於純粹的虛構，但包含一種敘事維度，這種敘事性必然會影響我們對過去的理解。利科的三階段歷史學方法：文件檢視、理解、以及詩性綜合，強調歷史敘述不僅是報導過去事件，而是通過再解釋來創造意義，兼顧事實的可靠性與敘事的連貫性。勞格里將利科的哲學應用於聖經文本，提出聖經的敘事既非單純的歷史，也非虛構，而是一種特殊的融合，結合了文學性和歷史性。通過利科的視角，勞格里建議聖經詮釋學需要認識到這種雙重性，既尊重歷史基礎，又通過神學洞見超越歷史限制，從而實現更深層次的神學反思。

接着，巴納巴斯·阿斯普雷（Barnabas Aspray）在〈利科在英語神學中的接收——歷史與評價〉一文中，探討了利科的思想在神學界的

深遠影響，儘管利科本身並非神學家。阿斯普雷通過分析四個主要的英語神學學派來探究利科的思想如何在神學領域中被接收和運用。首先，阿斯普雷指出，在「芝加哥學派」和「耶魯學派」的辯論中，利科的敘事詮釋和哲學理念扮演了重要角色。然而，這種關聯也導致一些人將利科視為自由派思想家，使他與保守派的立場相對立。其次，阿斯普雷闡述了巴特主義者如何對利科的思想進行重新詮釋，強調利科的理論並非與保守基督教觀點相悖，而是可以與其部分觀點兼容。第三方面，由於利科的思想源自後康德的形而上學，激進正統運動對其立場抱持拒斥態度。接着，阿斯普雷對這四個學派如何理解和運用利科的思想進行了批判性評估，並探討一個受利科啟發的神學觀如何可能回應這些學派的不同挑戰。最後，阿斯普雷提出，利科的思想具有靈活的適應性，有助於推動不同神學傳統之間的對話，並可能促進普世教會的合一。

在延續對敘事與修辭的深入探討過程中，葉應霖的文章〈修辭與敘事的對立？——腓立比書二章15節c保羅修辭的敘事分析〉則關注於敘事中固有的修辭層面，旨在填補敘事理論與修辭理論之間的裂隙。雖然社羣的規範奠定了說服性話語的基礎，但保羅·利科的理論表明，敘事的想像性元素不僅能夠穩固也能轉化說服所依賴的前設。與克里斯多夫·史坦利（Christopher Stanley）的「觀眾中心」方法不同，該文運用了利科的三重塑形模式，將使徒保羅的神學思維與其修辭策略聯結起來，從而超越當時希羅和猶太傳統的社會公認意見。透過將新約故事疊加於舊約故事的敘事框架，作者增強了尤金·懷特（Eugene White）的「構型修辭」，並通過腓立比書二章15節c中對但以理書十二章3節的暗示，闡明了其中的時間性，從而揭示保羅修辭的深層考量。

劉文玲在〈利科式腓利門書解讀——從敘事神學看腓利門的「自我」角力〉一文，則從牧養角度重新閱讀腓利門書。她特別聚焦於腓利門收到書信後所面對的困局與生命轉化。她指出，現有研究較少考慮到腓利門在收到保羅書信後的倫理挑戰和靈性成長，因此希望能補充這方面的探討。劉氏認為這樣的研究至關重要，因為腓利門書是一封強調實踐性和處境倫理的書信，腓利門所經歷的自我轉變過程突顯了其中的神

學和倫理精髓，即出於基督的愛心行善。這種探索涉及聖經詮釋與倫理實踐兩方面。為此，作者運用了利科的敘事神學視角及葉應霖的「故事疊故事」理論，嘗試在經文解釋中建立橋樑，以幫助讀者理解腓利門從兩難困境到生命轉化的過程。

進一步地，鄭穎堃在〈聖道在基督徒挪用先知身分過程中的角色——利科的哲學探索〉一文中，重新審視基督徒如何獲得先知身分的問題。與傳統的聖靈論觀點不同，鄭氏借助利科的詮釋學哲學，特別是其三重模仿理論，探討聖道在此過程中的角色。本文採用愛任紐的「雙手」隱喻：聖道與聖子乃父神的雙手，從哲學角度發掘聖道如何向基督徒發出先知的呼召並賦予他們先知身分。鄭氏透過利科的閱讀理論，指出成文的道作為先知式呼召的基礎，深化了對聖道與基督徒身分形成之間關係的神學理解。

石瑞蓮的〈憤怒又自責的小毛蟲——INFP + 1號——從保羅·利科的敘事身分理論看自我成長〉一文，以利科的敘事身分理論為基礎，透過 MBTI 和九型人格的性格分析，進行自我成長和靈命反思。石氏結合利科在《自我宛如他者》（*Oneself as Another*）中提出的自我詮釋理論，將「自我」理解為敘事身分的三重辯證結構，即自我的解釋與理解、*idem* 與 *ipse* 之間的張力，以及自我與他者的互動。利科的敘事理論中，通過自我身分（*ipseity*）對本真追求引入「證成」概念，成為成長的核心。石氏在文章後半部分敘述其性格（INFP和1號）與靈命的情節化歷程，探討在 INFP 的一致性中確認自我（*idem*），並在 INFP + 1 號的內在掙扎中追求真正的自我（*ipse*），最終通過基督為模範的靈命轉化達到自我與他者的和諧辯證。

李凱琪的〈保羅·利科與敘事治療——以「三重模擬」完善敘事治療的哲學基礎〉一文，探討了利科的「三重模擬」理論如何鞏固敘事治療的哲學基礎。文章指出，利科的理論為「外化對話」、「重寫對話」和「替代身分」等敘事治療核心概念提供了理論支撐，說明敘事治療師如何與來訪者共同重構生活經驗，從而建立新的自我理解。本文亦強調利科對時間性的探討，補充了麥克·懷特提出的時間維度在心理治療中

的重要性。此外，作者提出基督徒的生命轉化可以理解為透過敘事性地將神聖經驗整合入自我敘事，達成對自我身分的新詮釋。

本期另有一篇其他文章，陳智衡的〈日本侵華戰爭下的緊急接棒——以張伯懷為個案探討〉分析中華基督教會於動盪時期的領導權過渡問題。當時中國處於內戰與外敵威脅之中，而太平洋戰爭的爆發更讓教會面臨前所未有的挑戰。中華基督教會總會在此背景下迅速任命張伯懷牧師擔任臨時總幹事，接替因戰爭而離職的原總幹事，以維持教會在戰爭時期的穩定和運作。文章探討了張牧師不僅負責管理邊疆服務，也領導教會完成總會遷往西南的計劃，為教會在戰時的持續使命提供了支持。本文指出張伯懷的臨時領導如何在緊急時刻穩定教會，並指出其對教會持續發展的重要性。

最後，何善斌的書評集中評析葉應霖所著的 *A Ricoeurian Analysis of Identity Formation in Philippians: Narrative, Testimony, Contestation*。他認為葉氏採用利科的敘事哲學和鄧恩（James Dunn）的五層故事框架相同，創新性地分析了腓立比書，展示保羅通過敘事結構與對手展開辯證的策略。葉氏以敘事方式解釋保羅的身分塑造、福音受苦神學及敘事的連貫性，揭示文本豐富的多層意涵。書評讚賞其詮釋方式契合東方敘事傳統，並引起新一代的共鳴。然而，何善斌對葉氏的部分歷史背景解釋提出質疑，認為在帝皇崇拜與腓立比教會互動以及保羅與猶太基督徒領袖爭議等方面，葉氏的分析缺乏一世紀社會背景的充分支撐，更直接的歷史解釋可能增強其說服力。儘管如此，書評高度肯定該書的結構嚴謹與理論創新，認為其在保羅書信研究中引入舊約解讀和敘事分析的進路，對新約研究具有重要的參考價值。

倪步曉

Editor's Foreword

This issue of the journal, titled "Ricoeur and Hermeneutics: Theological Reflections on Bible, Narrative and Identity Formation," focuses on the hermeneutical theory of philosopher Paul Ricoeur and its impact on biblical narrative and the theology of identity formation. As a significant figure in 20th-century hermeneutics, Ricoeur garnered widespread attention in academia for his profound exploration of human nature and intricate analyses of narrative structures. His unique narrative philosophy emphasizes the role of storytelling in shaping self-understanding, asserting that stories serve as a bridge between personal experience and collective memory, providing a means to comprehend ourselves and others. This emphasis on narrative has profoundly influenced biblical studies, ethics, and theology.

Firstly, Gregory J. Laughery's article, "Thinking History, Fiction, and Biblical Hermeneutics with Paul Ricoeur: A Poetics," explores Paul Ricoeur's significant contributions to biblical hermeneutics, particularly in the realms of history, narrative, and fiction. Laughery situates Ricoeur's ideas within the broader context of postmodernism, which frequently critiques the feasibility of achieving historical objectivity. He underscores Ricoeur's perspective that historiography, while not equivalent to pure fiction, inherently incorporates a narrative element that shapes how we comprehend the past. Ricoeur's historiographical framework, comprising three stages—documentation, comprehension, and poetic synthesis—emphasizes that historical narratives go beyond mere reportage. They reinterpret events to construct meaning, striking a balance between factual accuracy and narrative coherence. Applying Ricoeur's philosophy to biblical texts, Laughery argues that the Bible's narratives represent a distinctive synthesis, intertwining literary and historical elements. Through Ricoeur's lens, Laughery proposes that biblical hermeneutics must recognize this dual character, respecting the historical foundations of Scripture while engaging in theological reflection that transcends historical constraints. This approach enables deeper theological insights while honoring the narrative complexity of the biblical text.

Next, Barnabas Aspray's article, "Ricoeur's Reception in Anglophone Theology: History and Evaluation," examines the extensive influence of Paul Ricoeur's philosophical writings on theology, despite Ricoeur not being a theologian himself. The article traces his reception across four major movements in Anglophone theology. First, Ricoeur's ideas significantly influenced the famous debate between the "Chicago school" and the "Yale school." However, this association often led to his being labeled a liberal thinker, positioning him at odds with conservative theology. Second, Barthian theologians sought to reinterpret Ricoeur's thought, demonstrating its compatibility with certain conservative Christian perspectives. Third, the Radical Orthodoxy movement rejected Ricoeur, critiquing his grounding in post-Kantian metaphysics. Lastly, the article evaluates these four theological schools, critically analyzing their interpretations of Ricoeur and exploring how a Ricoeur-inspired theology could engage with their distinct challenges. Aspray concludes by arguing that Ricoeur's thought is remarkably adaptable across diverse theological traditions. This versatility, he suggests, positions Ricoeur's philosophy as a potential ecumenical bridge, fostering unity within the Church by encouraging dialogue between different theological perspectives.

Scott Ying-lam Yip's article, "Rhetoric vs. Narrative? A Narrative Analysis of Paul's Rhetoric in Philippians 2:15c," explores the intrinsic rhetorical dimension of narrative, aiming to reconcile the often-perceived divide between narrative and rhetorical theories. While community norms provide the foundation for persuasive discourse, Paul Ricoeur's theory demonstrates how the imaginative aspects of narrative can both reinforce and transform the assumptions that underpin rhetorical persuasion. Contrasting Christopher Stanley's audience-focused methodology, Yip adopts Ricoeur's threefold mimesis model to connect the apostle Paul's theological reasoning with his rhetorical strategy. This approach transcends the Greco-Roman and Jewish endoxa (socially accepted opinions) of Paul's time. By layering New Testament narratives onto Old Testament texts, Yip builds on Eugene White's configurational rhetoric, clarifying the temporal dimensions of Paul's allusion to Daniel 12:3 in Philippians 2:15c. This layered narrative analysis uncovers the depth of Paul's rhetorical intent, highlighting the interplay between his theological vision and persuasive communication.

Man-ling Lau's article, "A Ricoeurian Interpretation of Philemon: Contestation of Self of Philemon Based on Narrative Theology," examines the theological and ethical dimensions of Philemon's personal struggle after receiving Paul's epistle, an aspect often overlooked in existing studies. Lau highlights the pastoral and pragmatic challenges Philemon faced, particularly in addressing the case of Onesimus, and argues that understanding this dilemma is essential for grasping the epistle's theological-ethical message: that every act of love is ultimately for Christ's sake. To bridge the gap between biblical interpretation and pragmatic ethical concerns, the article employs Paul Ricoeur's narrative theology and Scott Ying-lam Yip's theory of the "Nesting of Narratives." This approach illuminates how Philemon's journey from moral conflict to spiritual transformation reveals the epistle's deeper theological and ethical significance. Lau further suggests that this interpretative lens not only enhances readers' understanding of Philemon's narrative but also offers practical inspiration for those facing analogous situations in their own lives.

Wing-long Cheng's article, "A Ricoeurian Study on the Role of Word in Christian Acquisition of Prophethood," explores the often-overlooked role of the Word in the process of Christians acquiring prophetic identity. While existing scholarship predominantly attributes this process to the Holy Spirit, Cheng draws upon the Irenaean metaphor of the Word and Spirit as the "two hands of the Father" to examine the complementary role of the Word. Using Paul Ricoeur's hermeneutical philosophy as a foundation, the article investigates how the written Word issues a prophetic call and imparts prophetic identity to Christians. Cheng employs Ricoeur's concepts of threefold mimesis and reading theory to theorize this process, demonstrating how the prophetic call emerges from engagement with the Word. By integrating philosophical and theological perspectives, the study enriches the understanding of the interplay between the Word and the Spirit in the formation of Christian prophethood.

Shui-lin Shek's article, "The Angry and Self-Critical Chrysalis—INFP + Type 1: On Self-Growth through Paul Ricoeur's Narrative Identity Theory," offers a philosophical, psychological, and spiritual self-reflection centered on the question, "Who am I?" Drawing on Paul Ricoeur's narrative identity theory, the author integrates personality analysis through MBTI and Enneagram frameworks to explore personal growth and

spiritual transformation in Christ. Ricoeur's *Oneself as Another* provides the foundation for this exploration, where he addresses the ontological dilemmas of the self in Western philosophy and proposes a hermeneutical "detour." This detour reconstructs selfhood through a threefold dialectic: i) explanation and understanding, ii) the tension between sameness (*idem*) and selfhood (*ipse*), and iii) the interaction between self and other. Ricoeur identifies authenticity, or "attestation," as the mode of existence central to selfhood. Through narrative "emplotment," the author recounts her discoveries and growth in personality and spirituality. Her INFP personality type reflects consistency in *idem* identity, while her struggles with the additional complexity of Enneagram Type 1 highlight her pursuit of *ipse* identity. This dynamic culminates in a transformative dialectic, where the tension between selfhood and the other is resolved through spiritual growth toward Christlikeness.

Ashley H.K. Lee's article, "Paul Ricoeur and Narrative Therapy: Consolidating the Philosophical Foundation of Narrative Therapy through 'Threefold Mimesis'," examines how Paul Ricoeur's theory of "threefold mimesis" underpins the core principles of Narrative Therapy. The article demonstrates how Ricoeur's framework supports key therapeutic practices such as "externalizing conversations," "re-authoring conversations," and "alternative identities," enabling narrative therapists to collaborate with individuals in "re-emplotting" life experiences and crafting new, empowering stories that foster deeper self-understanding. Additionally, the article emphasizes Ricoeur's insights on the temporal dimension of narrative, complementing Michael White's recognition of its importance in therapy. Finally, Lee proposes that Christians' experiences of "life transformation" can be interpreted through this narrative lens, as individuals actively integrate God and divine experiences into their identity stories, creating fresh interpretations and renewed self-understandings.

Louis Chi-hang Chan's article, "Critical Leadership Transition During the Japanese Invasion of China: The Case of W.B. Djang," examines the Church of Christ in China's (C.C.C.) response to the turmoil during the Japanese invasion and the Pacific War. Amidst political instability, civil wars, and external threats, the church persisted in its mission to uphold and spread the Christian faith. The article focuses on the pivotal leadership

transition within the C.C.C. during this period, highlighting the rapid appointment of Rev. W.B. Djang as Acting General Secretary of the Interim General Assembly. Leading the Border Mission in southwest China, Djang provided crucial leadership that stabilized the church's operations and sustained its mission amidst war and uncertainty. The study underscores the significance of Djang's leadership in navigating the church through one of the most challenging periods in its history.

Finally is the book review by Sin-pan Ho of Scott Ying-lam Yip's *A Ricoeurian Analysis of Identity Formation in Philippians: Narrative, Testimony, Contestation*. The review highlights the book's innovative application of Paul Ricoeur's narrative philosophy and James Dunn's five-layered narrative framework to analyze Philippians. It commends Yip's approach for demonstrating how Paul employed narrative structure to engage in dialectics with his opponents, focusing on themes such as identity formation, the theology of suffering for the gospel, and narrative coherence, revealing the text's multi-layered meanings. The reviewer praises Yip's integration of narrative analysis with Old Testament interpretations, noting its alignment with Eastern storytelling traditions and its resonance with younger audiences. However, the review critiques Yip's treatment of the historical context, particularly regarding the interaction between emperor worship and the Philippian church, as well as disputes between Paul and Jewish Christian leaders. The reviewer suggests that stronger socio-historical foundations could enhance the book's arguments. Despite these critiques, the review recognizes the book's originality, rigorous structure, and its significant contribution to New Testament studies, particularly in introducing narrative analysis to Pauline scholarship.

Bu-xiao Ni

利科與詮釋：
聖經、敘事及身分認同的神學反思

RICOEUR AND HERMENEUTICS:
THEOLOGICAL REFLECTIONS ON BIBLE,
NARRATIVE AND IDENTITY FORMATION

Thinking History, Fiction, and Biblical Hermeneutics with Paul Ricoeur: A Poetics

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I. Introduction

Postmodernism has had a profound impact on many disciplines, including history and biblical interpretation. In fact, in our times, a diversity of scholarly pursuits has undergone revision. In addition to postmodern views and versions of philosophy, literature, hermeneutics, and theology, there is a vigorous debate on "history" in a variety of academic and broader socio-cultural contexts.¹ What are we to make of the notion of a new way of doing history or a "new" history?² Some suggest such a proposal represents a crisis, which amounts to an assault on traditional forms and older representations of historical inquiry.³

¹ J. Appleby, L. Hunt, M. Jacob, *Telling the Truth About History* (New York: Norton, 1994).

² See the discussion of historiographic metafiction in L. Hutcheon, *A Poetics of Postmodernism: History, Theory Fiction* (London: Routledge, 1988), 87–120, who argues that the problematic we face is not so much that of a historiographical external reality, but of a loss of faith in our capacity to know that reality.

³ J. B. Green, "Rethinking," in *Between Two Horizons: Spanning New Testament Studies & Systematic Theology*, ed. J. B. Green and M. Turner (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), 237–42. Also, B. Southgate, *History: What & Why? Ancient, Modern and Postmodern Perspectives* (London: Routledge, 1996), 4, 131.

After all, from within some expressions of a modernist perspective, it was once thought that history was stable and clear; facts and truths were objectively discovered and conveyed. Marc Trachtenberg observes:

Increasingly the old ideal of historical objectivity is dismissed out of hand. The very notion of "historical truth" is now often considered hopelessly naïve.⁴

In other circles, the new ways of doing history are deemed essential if we are to leave behind the old fantasies of certainty thought to be at the center of historiographical discourse.⁵ There can be no objective historians seeking an objective truth in the past as we now know this to be an illusory quest.⁶ This view contends that historiography is more connected to literary construction and therefore a fictionalizing or falsifying of the real, than any well-worn conception of the old objective of getting the events of the story straight.⁷

How are we to understand, explain, and newly understand the past in the midst of growing uncertainty in the discipline of history?⁸ Under

⁴ M. Trachtenberg, "The Past Under Siege: A Historian Ponders the State of His Profession—and What to Do about It," in *Reconstructing History*, ed. Elizabeth Fox-Genovese and Elisabeth Lasch-Quinn (London: Routledge, 1999), 9–11.

⁵ A. Munslow, *Deconstructing History* (London: Routledge, 1997), 19, refers to "new wave" historians who emphasize the form-content relation and the inescapable relativism of historical understanding.

⁶ See Southgate, *History*, x; K. Jenkins, ed., *The Postmodern History Reader* (London: Routledge, 1997), 6, "For the attempt to pass off the study of history in the form of the ostensibly disinterested scholarship of academics studying the past objectively and 'for its own sake' as 'proper' history, is now unsustainable. In fact history appears to be just one more foundationless, positioned expression in a world of foundationless, positioned expressions."

⁷ H. Kellner, *Language and Historical Representation: Getting the Story Crooked* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1989), xi, 3–25, 273–93, argues that as a result of the blurring of distinctions between historiography and literature, we find ourselves needing to get the story crooked. "To get the story crooked is to understand that the straightness of any story is a rhetorical invention and that the invention of stories is the most important part of human self-understanding and self-creation."

⁸ I. W. Provan, "Ideologies, Literary and Critical: Reflections on Recent Writing on the History of Israel," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 114, no. 4 (1995): 585–606; V. P. Long, *The Art of Biblical History* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994); T. Longman, *Literary Approaches to Biblical Interpretation* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1987); T. Longman, "Storytellers, Poets and the Bible: Can Literary Artifice be True?," in *Inerrancy and Hermeneutic*, ed. H. Conn (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1988), 137–49.

the template of many modernist and postmodern modernist theories, the search for an accurate recounting of real events, representations of the way it was in time, is thought to be an impossible task. In this scenario, any pursuit of historical occurrence in the past becomes highly dubious. Thus, the debate over history and fiction, literature and narrative, has enormous repercussions for a variety of biblical texts, which in some sense, claim to be connected to real events of the past.

Biblical interpretation, in our times, has been closely linked to questions and issues of history. In the wake of the declining influence of some of the more radical forms of structuralism⁹ and historical criticism,¹⁰ an interest in narrative and biblical narrative is currently flourishing.¹¹ What might such a flourishing hold for the discipline of history and the future of biblical hermeneutics, as we move further along on the journey? Narratives are central to the divine, human life, culture, fiction, and history,¹² contributing to the recounting of our past, understanding of our present, and the projection of our future. The narrative turn has drawn the attention of literary theorists, philosophers,

⁹ See J. Culler, *Structuralist Poetics: Structuralism, Linguistics, and the Study of Literature* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1975); R. Barthes, "Introduction à l'analyse structurale des récits," *Communications* 8 (1966): 1–27; D. Patte, *The New Testament and Structuralism* (Pittsburgh: Pickwick, 1976); L. Marin, "Essai d'analyse structurale d'un récit-parabole: Matthieu 13/1–23," *Etudes théologiques et religieuses* 46 (1971): 35–74; Paul Ricoeur, "Du conflit à la convergence des méthodes en exégèse biblique," in *Exégèse et herméneutique*, ed. X. Léon-Dufour (Paris: Seuil, 1971), 35–53; Paul Ricoeur, "Biblical Hermeneutics," *Semeia* 4 (1975): 29–148. Paul Ricoeur, *La Mémoire, L'Histoire, L'Oubli* (Paris: Seuil, 2000) (*Memory, History, Forgetting*, trans., K. Blamey and D. Pellauer [Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004, ET], 321–22) argues that structuralism should have never made the inroad it did in history as it was a semiotics of story, unconcerned with reference, on the register of fiction.

¹⁰ L. G. Perdue, *The Collapse of History: Reconstructing Old Testament Theology* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1994), 7–11 has written of the collapse of history as a master paradigm for OT theology.

¹¹ R. Alter, *The Art of Biblical Narrative* (New York: Basic Books, 1981), 15, remarks that a more marked interest in a literary perspective of the Bible begins to arise in the 1970s. See also, H. Blocher, "Biblical Narrative and Historical Reference," *Scottish Bulletin of Evangelical Theology* 3 (1989): 102–22.

¹² Paul Ricoeur, *Temps et récit I* (Paris: Seuil, 1983), 315 (*Time and Narrative I*, trans., K. McLaughlin and D. Pellauer [Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984], 226, ET) points out that history and fiction are the "great" narrative modes. See also, K. J. Vanhoozer, *Is There A Meaning in This Text? The Bible, the Reader and the Morality of Literary Knowledge* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1998), 38.

biblical exegetes, theologians, scientists, and historians. Such attention has become the object of intense debate.¹³ What is the relation, or lack thereof, between history and historiography, narrative and the real world; the literary and the actual? These central aporias continue to plague practitioners of the various disciplines mentioned above. Scholars in a diversity of field's encounter, with growing intensity, perplexing and dominant hermeneutical issues connected to life, the world, history, biblical interpretation and so on.

I believe it is crucial to interact with these issues. Stories in the biblical text are neither cloistered from, nor should be determined by,

¹³ F. Kermode, *A Sense of Ending: Studies in the Theory of Fiction* (London: Oxford University Press, 1966); H. Kellner and F. R. Ankersmit, *A New History of Philosophy* (London: Reaktion Books, 1995); H. White, *Metahistory: The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth-Century Europe* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1973); H. White, *The Content of the Form: Narrative Discourse and Historical Representation* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987); S. Chatman, *Story and Discourse: Narrative Structure in Fiction and Film* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1978); Ricoeur, *Temps et récit I - III*; D. Carr, *Time, Narrative, and History* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986); W. J. T. Mitchell, ed., *On Narrative* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981); P. Bühler and J. F. Habermacher, ed., *La narration. Quand le récit devient communication*, Lieux théologiques 12 (Genève: Labor et Fides, 1988); D. Marguerat, Y. Bourquin, *How to Read Bible Stories: An Introduction to Narrative Criticism*, trans. J. Bowden (London: SCM, 1999); W. R. Stenger, *Narrative Theology in Early Jewish Christianity* (Louisville: Westminster, 1989); S. S. Lanser, *The Narrative Act: Point of View in Prose Fiction* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981); W. Harris, *Literary Meaning: Reclaiming the Study of Literature* (London: Macmillan, 1996); W. Harris, *Interpretive Acts: In Search of Meaning* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988); H. Frei, *The Eclipse of Biblical Narrative* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1974); S. Hauerwas and L. G. Jones, ed., *Why Narrative? Readings in Narrative Theology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989); M. Ellingsen, *The Integrity of Biblical Narrative: Story in Theology and Proclamation* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1990); M. Sternberg, *The Poetics of Biblical Narrative: Ideological Literature and the Drama of Reading* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985); Long, *The Art of Biblical History*; Longman, *Literary Approaches to Biblical Interpretation*; K. J. Vanhoozer, *Biblical Narrative in the Philosophy of Paul Ricoeur* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990); Vanhoozer, *Is There A Meaning in This Text?*; D. R. Stiver, *The Philosophy of Religious Language: Sign, Symbol & Story* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1996); G. J. Laughery, *Paul Ricoeur & Living Hermeneutics: Exploring Ricoeur's Contribution to Biblical Interpretation* (Huémoz: Destinée, 2016); C. G. Bartholomew, C. Greene, K. Möller, *Renewing Biblical Interpretation*, Scripture and Hermeneutics Series, vol. 1 (Grand Rapids / Carlisle: Zondervan, Paternoster, 2000); D. L. Jeffery, *People of the Book. Christian Identity and Literary Culture* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996); offer a variety of different perspectives and orientations.

the whirlwind of various critical theories.¹⁴ In order to make a contribution to these weighty debates we are obliged to participate in the necessarily arduous task of being open to learning from, while also offering a critique of, a proliferation of points of view: modernist, poststructuralist, postmodern, post-history, narrative, etc. One major goal, among others, is to put forward fecund general (philosophical) and specific (theological) hermeneutical perspectives on these problematics.¹⁵ Informed responsible engagement with academia is indispensable in order to continue to develop an authentic and increasingly credible voice in what is turning out to be a fascinating and ongoing discussion.

I will address four major issues in this paper: history and historiography; historiography and fiction; historiography, fiction and the Bible; a theology of history. My aim is to interpret, evaluate, and apply the thinking of the French philosopher Paul Ricoeur to these issues. Ricoeur's work is one of the most prominent enterprises to peruse for an investigation into the philosophy of history, fiction, narrative, and biblical hermeneutics as his numerous writings on these topics clearly attest.¹⁶

¹⁴ V. P. Long, D. W. Baker, G. J. Wenham, eds., *Windows into Old Testament History, Evidence, Argument, and the Crisis of "Biblical Israel"* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002).

¹⁵ See G. M. Marsden, "What Difference Christian Perspectives Might Make?" in *History and the Christian Historian*, ed. R. A. Wells (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 11–22. Also, Provan, "Ideologies, Literary and Critical," 585–606, esp. 601. I would propose that the crisis or siege with respect to the current debate on history, perhaps, stems from a much wider problematic: worldview. Michel Foucault, for example, takes the position that the Christian worldview is that spun by a divine spider—no directionality or final cause here—necessity is the hand, following Nietzsche, that roles the dice of chance. See Foucault, "Nietzsche," in *Postmodern*, 124–26. Questions of worldview are essential to keep in mind.

¹⁶ Ricoeur, *Temps et récit*, I–III; Ricoeur, "Philosophie critiques de l'histoire: Recherche, explication, écriture," in *Philosophical Problems Today*, 1, ed. G. Fløistad (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1994), 139–201; Ricoeur, *La Mémoire, L'Histoire, L'Oubli*; Paul Ricoeur, *Essays on Biblical Interpretation*, ed. L. Mudge (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1980); Paul Ricoeur, *Figuring The Sacred: Religion, Narrative, and Imagination*, ed. M. I. Wallace (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1995); Paul Ricoeur, *From Text to Action* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1991); Paul Ricoeur, A. Lacoque, *Penser la Bible* (Paris: Seuil, 1998) (*Thinking Biblically: Exegetical and Hermeneutical Studies*, trans., D. Pellauer [Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998], ET).

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