TOWARD A PHENOMENOLOGICAL
THEORY OF LITERATURE

THESIS

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The problem is the investigation of the possibility of an alternative theory of literature that attempts to show literature's relation to human consciousness. A phenomenological theory of literature is presented as a comprehensive theory of literature as opposed to extrinsic theories that are not comprehensive. The basic assumption is that a comprehensive theory of literature must take into account literature's relationship to human consciousness.

The shortcomings of traditional modes of literary theory are discussed in order to provide grounds for the proposed intrinsic alternative. The philosophical foundations for the proposed alternative are laid in the phenomenology of Husserl, Ingarden, Heidegger, and the French existentialists. These four positions are mediated through the introduction of the philosophy of Paul Ricoeur. Finally, the proposed alternative theory of literature is applied to the test case of Joseph Conrad's *Lord Jim*. 
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CHAPTER I

SOME PROBLEMS IN THE STUDY OF LITERATURE

The scholar analyzing the literary work of art has at his disposal an overwhelming amount of theoretical material. In the mass of critical material, the investigator may find a method of criticism that affirms some explicit or implicit literary theory. It soon becomes evident that the many approaches to the critical problems presented by literature provide only partial solutions. The number of methods employed by scholars in the study of literature plus the volume of their contributions suggest the notion that no comprehensive theory of literature is possible. The confusion that arises from the various methods of interpretation and criticism tends to indicate that there can be no total method by which one might be able to judge a literary work. The crucial issue then is perhaps whether a comprehensive theory of literature is in fact a possibility. An investigation that attempts a comprehensive theory must first examine the traditional approaches to the study of literature so that the groundwork for alternatives may be laid. The most that can be hoped for in this attempt is that one might be able to define the issues clearly enough that a comprehensive
theory of literature could be proposed. The least that such an approach could hope to accomplish is a retracing of the essential questions involved in the understanding and comprehension of the literary work of art. In either case, a re-asking of the crucial questions concerning literature will give the scholar new bearings back to the source of the problems in literary theory.

For the purposes of this particular task Joseph Conrad's novel, *Lord Jim*, will be utilized as a test case. It should be noted, however, that the main concern is not the discovery of new revelations concerning *Lord Jim*, but rather the examination of an alternative theory of literary criticism. *Lord Jim* is not a completely arbitrary choice, but if the proposed theory has any final merit, it is hoped that it will work for any literary work of art. Certainly the scope of this study is too narrow to take all of the traditional modes of literary criticism to task; therefore the comments made concerning standard modes of literary theory are necessary to provide a ground for an unbiased assessment of the proposed theory. At the same time, one should understand that the critique of conventional criticism is necessary to clear the ground, at least temporarily, for the proposal at hand. It would necessitate a study of extreme range to deal with a thorough critique of the traditional theories of literature. For now, that project must be held in abeyance. The criticisms of
traditional theory, then, are to be read as only passing comments necessary to a true representation of the theory of literary criticism proposed in this thesis. To deem the traditional theories as outmoded or dead is not the purpose here; rather it is to review some well-known criticisms of traditional theories without elaborating on them. The critical statements are made in order to provide a possible, but possibly fragile, ground for the alternative proposal made here.

As far as Lord Jim is concerned, the novel is secondary to the main concern of this paper. If any insights into Lord Jim are gained, they are positive additions to the usefulness of the proposed literary theory. It will be seen that the application of phenomenology to the work brings out no insights that are individually startling, but the structure revealed in the work through a hermeneutic analysis is surprising. Mythological readings of Lord Jim are well-known, but the structure of the novel revealed in this study is unique in Conrad scholarship. Here the novel is read as a re-enactment of the traditional myths of evil as described in the typology proposed by Paul Ricoeur. The novel may be seen as separated into four main divisions. The first section of the novel deals with the Patna incident. This section corresponds to what Ricoeur calls "... the 'Adamic' myth."

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The second section of the novel in which Jim wanders about aimlessly is a re-enactment of the "... myth of the exiled soul." When Jim becomes "Lord Jim" in Patusan, the event corresponds to the myth of "... the drama of creation." The fourth myth is consummated in the death of Jim, which is the culmination of the "tragic myth." This four-part structure is revealing in what it has to say about, above all, the relation of literature to human consciousness.

The method of examining this question is primarily phenomenological. Within the scope of phenomenology there can be found a great divergence of opinion concerning what is crucial in the formulation of any final method of criticism. Of course, phenomenologists are all agreed on the fact that external matters should be excluded from any study of the work or object in question. Thus arises the need for the comments critical of any theory of literature that admits matters external to the literary work of art itself. The philosophical ground for the claims of the phenomenologists begins with the insights of Husserl's transcendental phenomenology. The discussion of Husserl's method provides a foundation for the study of literary works of art with no consideration of matters outside the work itself. But the

\[2\text{Ibid.}, \text{p. 300.}\]

\[3\text{Ibid.}, \text{p. 172.}\]

\[4\text{Ibid.}, \text{p. 173.}\]
literary work of art seems to demand more latitude than the foundation work of Husserl can provide. Roman Ingarden's application of phenomenology to the literary work of art proves very useful since it takes the study beyond the work of Husserl. Ingarden expands the range of study by proposing that the literary work of art has an ontological status that Husserl would never accept. This thesis will explain the importance of Ingarden's ontology. The next step will be to investigate Heidegger's ontology, which in turn lays the foundation for the advent of French existentialism. Heidegger's insistence on the fact that through a hermeneutic phenomenology one may find the "ground of being" separates him from both Husserl and Ingarden. Then, finally, with the existentialists, the full range of phenomenological methods is seen. The existentialists see the literary work of art as the culmination of an ethical act. Heidegger sees his application of method as leading to ontology. Ingarden uses pure phenomenology only to the point of discovering the structure of the literary work of art which he determines has an ontological status. Husserl sees philosophy primarily as methodology and, as such, ontological questions are not admissable. The confusion concerning which of these opinions to follow leads one to the introduction of the philosophy of Paul Ricoeur.

Husserl's phenomenology has uses for Ricoeur, but Ricoeur realizes its limitations as well. The existential influence
is also seen in Ricoeur, but his main interest combines the lessons of Husserl and the existentialists. Ricoeur's problem is to trace the re-enactment of the human experience of evil in consciousness. Ricoeur's mediation of the views of Husserl, Ingarden, Heidegger, and the existentialists makes possible a unique study of the experience of evil as adumbrated in the relation of literature to human consciousness. Ricoeur's hermeneutic method allows one to first use the pure phenomenology of Husserl and Ingarden to discover the structure of the phenomenon in question. Ricoeur then maintains that he must go beyond what pure phenomenology would allow in order to re-enact the experience of evil. At this point, he synthesizes the best lessons and insights gained from Heidegger and the existentialists. In this sense, it may be argued that Ricoeur's philosophy comprises a mediation of the various alternative methods found in the intrinsic theories of literature.

The problems in the study of literature concern not so much what has been done, but rather the failure to establish a concrete and rigorous approach to the difficulties as a whole. The issue may be more clearly seen in the questions that are normally dealt with in a literary study. It may be that in general the questions asked are improper to a rigorous study. This suggestion may appear too bold a claim in view of our rich and complex literary history, but what
comprehensive theory is there at present on the intellectual horizon that is able to stand without a series of dubious props? The roll call of subjectivism, relativism, psychologism, structuralism, and the so-called "objective" analysis may be made, but which of these can be counted as an inclusive theory of literature? An examination of the shortcomings of these various perspectives will give some insight into the nature of a possible solution to the present dilemma.

There appear at present to be four broad types of literary theory. At this juncture, it will prove useful to examine these types in order to refine the distinctions that can be made concerning traditional approaches to the study of literature. The first type of literary study attempts to gain insight into the work by a thorough examination of the writer. The second investigates the relationship of the reader to a particular work. The third studies the states of affairs surrounding a work and the fourth tries to implement an objective or scientific approach to the understanding of the literary work of art. It should be noted that these groupings at times may overlap and that a particular scholar may utilize any combination of these types for his own ends. What is crucial here is not the preciseness of the types, but rather the shortcomings of these types imposed by the intention of the models themselves. This is not to say that they fail in what they are and what they attempt, but it
will become clear that they are inadequate to describe a comprehensive vision of literary theory.

Some literary scholars have been engaged in research concerning the psychology or the biography of the various writers whose works they are investigating. The hope of this endeavor is to provide some insight into the work that cannot be gained from the literary object itself. It has been pointed out that "The most obvious cause of a work of art is its creator, the author; and hence an explanation in terms of the personality and the life of the writer has been one of the oldest and best established methods of literary study." Although this method has had many proponents, it is not beyond a critical examination. Perhaps an interest in the writer as person is a product of natural curiosity, but the question must be asked, "How far are the results of literary biography relevant and important for an understanding of the works themselves?" An investigation of the relationship between a writer and his work is a biographical concern, but it is not clear that a knowledge of the author's biography contributes anything to the final comprehension of the literary work. More precisely, the work must stand on its merits as a literary piece regardless of the personality

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6Ibid., p. 76.
involved in the creation of it. Roman Ingarden maintains that

The fact that many, indeed very many, literary scholars use literary works of art to gain a more or less probable knowledge about their authors testifies to nothing more than that they have not become conscious of their actual task. We need not reproach them for directing their chief interest to the characteristics of the author. . . . My reproach is not directed against this at all. I am only concerned that the scholars I have in mind believe that they are investigating a literary work of art, whereas they are actually doing individual psychology, usually without having the proper training in this area and without applying the proper methods of research.  

Although the study of a particular author's biography or psychology through the literary work might be of some value to the scholar interested in the person of the writer, to make some assertion from that basis concerning the work itself is questionable. A knowledge of the relationship between the writer and his work is usually not crucial or valuable to an understanding of the literary piece in question. Ingarden asserts that the " . . . author, with all his vicissitudes, experiences, and psychic states, remains completely outside the literary work."  

A study of the writer should be external to the literary work of art.

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and is excluded as it "... is by its very nature foreign to it." A play such as Hamlet cannot be used to explain anything about the life of Shakespeare nor can Shakespeare's life be used to explain Hamlet. Wellek and Warren reaffirm this position:

One cannot, from fictional statements, especially those made in plays, draw any valid inference as to the biography of a writer. One may gravely doubt even the usual view that Shakespeare passed through a period of depression, in which he wrote his tragedies and his bitter comedies, to achieve some serenity of resolution in The Tempest. It is not self-evident that a writer needs to be in a tragic mood to write tragedies or that he writes comedies when he feels pleased with life.10

The literary work must be judged as separate from and only created by the author.

The investigation of the literary work of art then leads one to the conclusion that the study need not include the personal history or biography of the writer of the work in question. This is not to say that any scholar should refrain from such a study, but rather that this type of investigation can in fact provide little insight into the understanding of the particular work under study. Richard Palmer informs the reader that "The subjectivity of neither the author or the reader is the real reference point. . . . "11

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9 Ibid., p. 22.
10 Wellek and Warren, pp. 76-77.
Palmer's comment also introduces the second area that can be eliminated, in the main, from the study of the literary work. The multiplicity of interpretations that can be derived from a single work leads some to think that a literary work means whatever the reader considers it to mean. In this type of relativistic thinking, the meaning and interpretation of the work is dependent on the attitude, background, and opinion of the reader. Here, too, one finds the so-called literary "consumer" who reads for the pleasure that the work might give him. Ingarden says of these types that they read the works

... merely fleetingly, imprecisely, and idly, simply in order to progress and to find out how the story ends. They look up the "happy ending." Since they care nothing about a faithful concretization of the work of art or about the value which comes to appearance in it, but only about their own experience and the experienced pleasure, their concretization of the work usually takes on a very imperfect and distorted form which, however, satisfies them and gives them enjoyment.

A reader of this type uses literature to his own hedonistic ends. The literary work of art "... is degraded to a mere tool of pleasure." A reading of this sort can contribute nothing to the understanding of the work except accidently. Though the literary consumer may be in the

113 Ibid., p. 172.
114 Ibid., p. 172.
majority, he, nonetheless, is one that ". . . does not value the work for its inherent value since, due to his attitude, this is not at all perceived but rather is concealed by the profusion of his subjective feelings." The reader's attitude cannot provide a ground for the evaluation of literary works. The work itself should be in question and not the opinion of some self-serving reader.

In an examination of the work, is the scholar himself under an obligation to know all the details concerning the states of affairs surrounding the creation of a particular work? This particular question is an extension of the two types of literary study discussed above, as the states of affairs are often dependent on the reader's or writer's point of view. Now it can be seen that an author's personal situation sheds little light on the work itself. The same may be shown for the other factors involved in the creation of the work in question. Ingarden maintains that ". . . the whole sphere of objects and states of affairs which constitutes, as the case may be, the model of the objects from the structure of the literary work of art . . . " must be eliminated from a consideration of the work. If a particular work exhibits places, objects, or persons that are known to the reader and to the author as well, they are

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16 Ibid., p. 25.
not at the same time to be regarded as equivalent objects to those found or once found in the lived world. For example, the reader is aware that Julius Caesar lived in the city of Rome, but that Caesar cannot be the one of Shakespeare's play just as that Rome is not Shakespeare's Rome. The consequences of interpreting literature in terms of states of affairs would result in a distortion of the work. Even if a work originates because of a certain state of affairs, the scholar must realize that the work must finally stand on its own. This issue can potentially lead one far afield into the whole question of history, but for a study of the literary work it only has to be noted that no historical knowledge of the time in question is necessary to an understanding of the work. Julius Caesar must be judged only in the terms described by the literary work of art and not in its relation to any historical facts. A literary work of art must be judged apart from history and the accidental states of affairs present during its conception.

The fourth point of view to be discussed concerns the attempts at a scientific or objective analysis of literature. If the earlier claims have merit, one might be inclined to maintain that an objective analysis is the only remaining alternative. In fact though, it too is to be eliminated, according to the phenomenological theory to be proposed, from a study of the literary work of art. Palmer points
out some of the shortcomings of objective analysis in the following:

Disinterested objectivity is not appropriate to the understanding of a literary work. The modern critic, of course, pleads for passion—surrender to the "autonomous being" of the work—yet all the while he is treating the work as an object of analysis. Literary works are best regarded, however, not primarily as objects of analysis but as humanly created texts which speak. One must risk his personal "world" if he is to enter the life-world of a great lyric poem, novel, or drama. What is needed for this is not some scientific method in disguise, or an "anatomy of criticism" with the most brilliant and subtle typologies and classifications, but a humanistic understanding of what interpretation of a work involves.17

Science and scientific methods have made their presence felt in culture, and it is perhaps only natural that the methods of science would begin to make their appearance in the study of literature. It still remains to be shown that such an "objective" approach can provide any valuable insight into the work of art. The traditional method of science sometimes involves the dissection of objects. In a scientific literary study, the piece is dissected into its various components so that each of the facets of the work may be scrutinized under the objective and disinterested eye of the observer. A basic fallacy is committed here as what is demonstrated to be true of the parts cannot be shown to be true of the whole. The work of art must be taken in its

entirety. If not, the comprehension of the work as a whole is lost, as it is categorized and sterilized rather than experienced as a work of art. Palmer criticizes the scientific approach in the following passage:

Analysis and methodical questioning, however, tend not to call into question their own guiding presuppositions but rather to operate within a system, so that the answer is always potentially present and expected within the system. Thus they are not so much forms of true questioning as of testing. But experience does not follow the model of solving a problem within a system; it is the means of reaching outside the system, a means of creative transcendence and a striking down of the system.18

What is significant here is that the scientific method is an external system brought to the object in question. The object then becomes a specimen that must conform to the dictates of the method. The literary work demands more than conformity to a system if it is to be thoroughly understood. Palmer says further that

When any truly great work of art or literature is encountered, it transforms one's understanding; it is a fresh way of seeing life. It is for this "freshness" that a work is read, but just this freshness is what escapes analytical seeing (which might also be called "analytical blindness").19

"Objective analysis" then tends to provide preconceived answers rather than allowing the work to emerge as it must in order to be properly understood.

18 Ibid., p. 233.
19 Ibid., p. 233.
The four broad approaches considered above may not have been described here as accurately as they deserve to be, but the descriptions are useful in that each of the approaches contains a range of theories that may in general be termed "extrinsic." The various extrinsic approaches to the literary work of art place the emphasis on the author, the reader, the states of affairs surrounding and indicated by the work, or on an artificial system brought to the work with the solutions predetermined and demanded by the system itself. The central problem with all extrinsic approaches is that they bring far too many preconceptions to the study of the literary work of art. What is needed is a return to the work of art in order to discover it by understanding what it is rather than seeing it through the narrow vision of imposed analysis. Wellek and Warren point out that "The natural and sensible starting-point for work in literary scholarship is the interpretation and the analysis of the works of literature themselves." The discussion to this point is not intended to be a complete criticism or disavowal of all extrinsic methods; rather what is proposed is that those methods should be temporarily set aside in order to judge the merits of the alternative method that will soon be proposed.

20 Wellek and Warren, p. 173.
21 Ibid., p. 139.
The alternative method endeavors to investigate the works from the point of view generally termed "intrinsic." This term, like extrinsic, covers a broad range of possibilities and the problem must be narrowed to a manageable point. Hence the next chapter emphasizes a return to the work in itself for the starting point of any legitimate investigation of the literary work of art. Any other point of departure is dubious at best and wrong-headed at worst. A return to the work is the best possible way to discover what value a work may contain. This is not to say that this type of work has not been done. Welleck and Warren indicate that "In recent years a healthy reaction has taken place which recognizes that the study of literature should, first and foremost, concentrate on the actual works of art themselves." The fore-runners of this movement found their ground in the works of phenomenology and existentialism.

22 Ibid., p. 136
23 Ibid., p. 139.
CHAPTER II

INTRINSIC ALTERNATIVES

In the on-going debate between the creators and the critics, there seems to be one constant. Neither of the two parties is concerned with the intrinsic theory regarding the nature of the literary work of art itself. The writers indulge themselves variously with expressions of "artistic creativity" or other examples of subjective opinion while students and critics typically content themselves with the discussion of "ideas." An alternative claim will be made that these matters of typical interest are primarily external to the study of the literary work. An intention to understand literature should be directed to the works themselves as art rather than as "containers" of ideas. The alternatives to be proposed in this thesis will be, in general, referred to as "intrinsic."¹ Intrinsic studies of the literary work may, as indicated above, find philosophical grounding in the writings of phenomenologists and existentialists. The works of these philosophers have led thinking to return "... to the things themselves."² In order to comprehend


what is meant by such a phrase and what it may possibly contribute to a legitimate and comprehensive study of literature, it will be necessary to investigate the basic assumptions of the phenomenological method as proposed by Edmund Husserl. A second step will involve an investigation of the precepts of phenomenology as applied to the literary work of art. Roman Ingarden will form the central figure in this discussion. It will be seen that Ingarden does not strictly follow his teacher Husserl, and there are even further deviations from him in the works of the existentialists. Heidegger will be discussed in order to demonstrate the initial departure of existentialism from phenomenology proper, as phenomenology does not go far enough to encompass the scope of the problems presented by literature. Finally, the extreme range of the intrinsic alternatives will be described in an account of the French existentialists. What will become most evident is the fact that the intrinsic alternatives as of yet do not constitute a unified theory of literature, but they are directed to the proper questions and not to affairs external to the literary work of art.

It is interesting that Husserl "... never aspired to develop his philosophy into a speculative synthesis." He nevertheless progressed through various phases that indicate

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the direction of his thinking and prompted the philosophy of transcendental phenomenology. In these stages, it becomes evident that Husserl is doing something distinct from traditional philosophy in that

... it would have to be called a system in reverse: rather than building upwards, Husserl digs deeper and deeper, trying at the same time to lay firmer foundations for established insights. ... This conception of the task of philosophy also accounts for the characteristic mixture of pride and humility with which he referred to his final ambition as that of being a "true beginner."^4

Husserl's drive to be a "true beginner" minimized the possibility of a completed philosophical system. But there were constants in his philosophy, which Herbert Spiegelberg describes:

I shall describe the most important among them (constants) under the following headings: 1. the ideal of rigorous science; 2. the urge to go down to the sources (philosophical radicalism); 3. the ethos of radical autonomy; 4. the "wonder of all wonders": subjectivity.^5

Each of the four divisions constitutes a major portion of Husserl's phenomenology, but for the issue at hand, "the urge to go down to the sources" will be the most significant. Husserl's philosophical radicalism provides the ground for a turn to the work itself.

The problem then becomes one of method. In order to find the roots or the foundation of an object, some clear-cut

^4 Ibid., pp. 75-76.  ^5 Ibid., p. 76.
path must be forged to point the way. The phenomenological method attempts through a mental act of intuition to examine only the object itself. In order to examine phenomena, J. M. Bochenski maintains that

This however requires a threefold exclusion or "reduction," also called "epoche": first, of all subjectivity: what is called for is a purely objective standpoint, concentrated singlemindedly on the object; second, of all theoretical knowledge, such as hypotheses and proofs derived from other sources, so that only the given will be admitted; third, of all tradition, i.e. of everything that others have taught about the object in question.

When these reductions are made, the only thing that remains is the object or phenomenon alone. Then the object too must be further reduced so that the essence of the phenomenon may be realized. It is especially important for the study of the literary work of art that these further reductions take place as "... the existence of the thing must be disregarded." Existence will provide the point of departure for the existentialists from the precepts of pure phenomenology. Moreover, in a general context, the factual nature of events, places, and times loses any significance in a study of the literary work. Everything that is in any way inessential to the work of art must be excluded. Now the term "philosophical radicalism" can be understood as

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6 Bochenski, The Methods of Contemporary Thought, p. 16.
7 Ibid., p. 17.
not standing "... for any extremist fanaticism, so alien
to Husserl's scholarly pattern of life, but for a going to
the 'roots' or 'beginnings' of all knowledge, i.e., to its
ultimate foundations."\(^8\) The foundations of things are to
be found in the objects themselves.

The very complexity of objects demands that an exacting
method of investigation be devised in order to account for
the infinite richness of phenomena and the experience of
the phenomenal world. The difficulty found in any description
of objects may be cleared away if all of the extraneous
material is discarded at the outset. Three principles of
phenomenology may be derived that elucidate the aims of the
method. First, one must turn to the objects themselves.
Second, anything that comes from the observer of the phenom-
enon must be regarded as irrelevant. This leads one to the
point that "... it requires that the investigator should
devote himself completely to the object of inquiry, having
regard only for what is objective."\(^9\) If one is really
objective, then no subjective considerations should enter
the investigation. If one is seeking some hedonistic or
self-serving end, the phenomenological method will prove to
be, at best, only marginally useful. Third, one is to exclude

\(^8\) Spiegelberg, *The Phenomenological Movement*, I, 82.
\(^9\) Bochenski, p. 19.
all information that can be known from external sources. Bochenski says that

The rule "back to the things themselves" requires the exclusion of all subjective feelings but also of everything objective which is not directly given in the object under examination. This includes everything which we know from other sources or by inference. Only what is given the phenomenon, must be seen, and beyond that nothing.\(^{10}\)

Simply because some authority has maintained something to be essential concerning a particular object or work, that alone in no way guarantees the validity of the statement. Here methodology is all important and the strict adherence to the prescribed method will hopefully insure the exactness of the results. To take a narrow view of the literary work of art involves the procedure of approaching a work with categories presumed. One can easily see the possibility of distorting the evidence presented by the object itself if the object is ignored or is considered to be secondary. The investigator must strive to see as much as is possible concerning the object or phenomenon alone. If one were to object that the phenomenological method denies too much and is itself narrow, the response may be given that until all the inessentials are cleared away, all possible insights are subject to distortion.

Phenomenology is an attempt to investigate objects without any goals or predetermined rules in mind. This

\(^{10}\)Ibid., p. 21.
attempt, according to Herbert Spiegelberg, was "One of the most debated expressions of Husserl's radicalism."\(^\text{11}\) A presuppositionless philosophy would exclude everything that might inhibit the discovery of the essence of objects.

One might be curious at this point as to what this means to a study of the literary work of art. By and large, the meaning may be summarized in the following manner. The literary work of art has not been dealt with, by critics so far, in a very rigorous manner. The various attempts to study literature have, in many cases, led away from the work itself to matters external to it. The point of literary study is to gain understanding of literature in itself instead of what it is "about." But if a particular literary work were to be examined by all traditional methods, the end results would probably cover the entire range of the critical spectrum, and yet, no one method could make a claim to greater exactness than the rest. This sort of vicious relativism can only lead to the position that "one opinion is as good as the next."

Strangely enough, the traditional critic would object most vehemently if his particular approach were to be put in league with those methods that he might consider to be inferior. The problem then becomes one of discovering if the study of literature is in fact to be relegated to the confines of relativism. A possible solution to the dilemma lies in a rigorous

\(^{11}\text{Spiegelberg, I, 83.}\)
examination of the literary work of art so that the essential structure of this phenomenon may be described. After this has been accomplished, perhaps a ground for interpretation and judgment may be laid. This hope cannot be realized if the structure of the literary work of art is not known or if there is no possibility of achieving such essential knowledge. The phenomenological method provides the investigator with the first step in gaining insight into the very essence of the literary work of art. How then is this accomplished? Roman Ingarden provides the most complete answer to date. The application of the phenomenological method to the literary work of art is the next step in providing intrinsic alternatives.

It has been said of Roman Ingarden that

Perhaps his most original phenomenological work has been done in the analysis of various works of art, beginning with his book on the literary work of art, but extending to works of music and to the pictorial and tectonic arts. In these studies Ingarden made impressive use of the strata theory of pure logic as developed particularly by Pfänder on the basis of Husserl's first suggestions.¹²

In The Literary Work of Art, Ingarden describes those matters that are to be excluded from the literary work of art. After these preliminary comments, he turns to the literary work of art and applies the precepts of the phenomenological method to it in order to discover its essential structure. The

¹²Ibid., p. 226.
question before his study is "What are the essential properties, the invariant logical conditions of that mode of being which the literary work of art uniquely possesses?"\textsuperscript{13} If this question can be answered, then the possibility of distinguishing the literary work of art from other types of writing and from other types of art becomes probable.

The basic structure of the literary work emerges as "... a formation constructed of several heterogeneous strata."\textsuperscript{14} There are distinct differences in the various layers and these layers are distinct in two ways. Each layer has its own materials which are products of the strata themselves, and, secondly, each stratum is related to every other stratum in such a way that they form a structure rather than a series of unrelated layers. There is a structural unity. Some of the strata found in a particular work may not be found in every work, so these extraneous strata must be excluded and only the essential strata should remain. Ingarden concludes that the essential strata of the literary work of art are the following:

\begin{itemize}
\item (1) the stratum of word sounds and the phonetic formations of higher order built on them;
\item (2) the stratum of meaning units of various orders;
\item (3) the \textsuperscript{13} Roman Ingarden, \textit{The Literary Work of Art}, translated by George B. Grabowicz (Evanston, 1973), p. xvi.
\item \textsuperscript{14} Ibid., p. 29.
stratum of manifold schematized aspects and aspect continua and series, and, finally, (4) the stratum of represented objectivities and their vicissitudes. These essential strata do not fully describe the structure of the literary work of art, as the multi-layered nature of the work demands that the layers or strata be in some sort of unified state. The unification of the literary work of art is seen in the fact that it exhibits sequence and that it has a beginning and an end. Moreover, there might be a case made for another stratum that runs vertically through all of the individual strata.

Nevertheless, one might want to say that this in no way can contribute to an understanding of the literary work of art. Ingarden responds to that sort of thinking in the following way:

The establishment of the stratified polyphonic structure of the literary work is basically trivial. But trivial though it is, none of the authors known to me has seen clearly that in it lies the essential basic structure of the literary work. In the practice of literary criticism, i.e., in the discussion of individual works, in the distinguishing of their various types, in the contrasting of various literary movements and schools, etc., the usual practice has been to contrast the individual elements of the literary work and in individual instances point out their properties. But it has never been noticed that what is involved are the heterogeneous strata which are mutually conditioned and are joined together by manifold connections; nor has anyone ever clearly distinguished them in their general structure and shown the connection between them which arises from this structure.  

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15 Ibid., p. 31.  
16 Ibid., pp. 31-33.
The problems encountered by the literary critic are generally answered in terms without clarity. The desire to found criticism in more and more lucid terms demands a consideration of the work itself. Without a detailed study of what constitutes the essential structure of the literary work of art, the search for critical solutions will remain groundless.

A complete examination of the application of the phenomenological method is perhaps beyond the scope of this particular study, but it may prove useful to recount Ingarden's investigation of at least one stratum in order to clarify any methodological questions. Wellek and Warren's statement may hold equally here, that "We need not follow him [Roman Ingarden] in every detail to see that his general distinctions are sound and useful." Nevertheless, an investigation of one stratum will permit some general insight into the procedure as a whole. Therefore the first stratum will receive considerable attention.

In the history of literary study, various statements have been proposed concerning language without a decisive conclusion. Ingarden has his own explanation and it is molded in the terms of the linguistic sound formations. The importance of the stratum of linguistic sound formations is immediately recognized in the statement that the "... primary and essential function of the word sound itself is to

\[17\] Wellek and Warren, p. 151.
determine the meaning of the given word."\(^\text{18}\) This may seem trivial, but the emphasis of the type of investigation will be on the broadest range of data so that nothing that may be essential will be over-looked. To ignore the obvious may contribute to the distortion of emerging evidence.

One becomes aware early on that meaning is determined by more than the simple sound of the word in some universal pronunciation as various word sounds perform individual functions. Ingarden states:

\[\ldots\text{the whole word sound can already contain qualities that are aesthetically relevant. Thus one often distinguishes, e.g., "beautiful" and "ugly" sounding words (or, more precisely, word sounds). There are, in addition, "light" and "heavy" words, words which sound "funny" or "serious," or "pathetic," and those which are "simple" and "straightforward." These are all differences and characteristics which find their expression in the word sounds themselves, though we cannot doubt that they are also closely connected to the corresponding meanings and are frequently attributed to the words by the manner of expression, by the "tone."}\(^\text{19}\)

Even beyond this range of meaning indication, it must be noted that certain words are alive and vibrant while others may be so worn and stripped of tension that they may be understood to be "dead." The combination of living words and the aesthetically relevant sounds indicates the meaning of a word in the context of a literary work of art.

\(^\text{18}\)Ingarden, *The Literary Work of Art*, p. 42.

\(^\text{19}\)Ibid., p. 45.
The word is only a small unit in the stratum of word sounds. By and large, words are segments in formations of a higher order. Sentences exhibit qualities of rhythm, tempo, melody, and timbre through the combinations of individual words and their sounds. Through these devices various formations may make their appearance. As Ingarden points out:

These are the many and various "emotional" or "mood" qualities: "sad," "melancholy," "merry," "powerful," etc. Their appearance can also be conditioned and influenced by the meaning that is bound to the word sound. But, as is clearly shown in musical works, they can also be produced solely by the phonic material. For example, we frequently do not need to understand at all a poem read in a foreign language in order to apprehend clearly the characters here in question.20

It is realized that the reader of a particular work has influence over the concretization of that work, but it should now be more clearly seen that an understanding of the phonetic stratum of the work will lead to greater accuracy in interpretation. The phonetic stratum of the work itself provides insight into the problem of meaning. The work takes the lead rather than the reader forcing his subjective will on the piece. This kind of understanding indicates that the criticism of works should be interpreted in terms of the work rather than in the terms of the reader's or critic's personal and subjective opinion.

Central to Ingarden's inquiry is an indication of which phonetic formations are necessary to the literary work of

20 Ibid., p. 52.
art. By identifying the formations that belong specifically to the literary work, one is closer to realizing those features that may be shown to be unnecessary in a study of the work. It is interesting to note that the range of phonetic formations may vary from work to work. There is no one formation that is necessary to every work of literature, but it is necessary that there be a phonetic stratum. There must be word sounds. One example of formations that may be found in the literary work is the Gestalt quality of any work in which individuals are shown to be speaking.

Thus, there are various Gestalt qualities of the tone in which one speaks: "plaintive" or "joyful," "lively" or "tired," "passionate" or "calm." On the other hand, there are Gestalt qualities of the tone in which one addresses others, e.g., a "sharp" or "gracious" tone, a tone in which one "talks down" to others, or "friendly," "sulky," "loving," or "spiteful" tones in speaking to other people. These other formations may also be found in the work:

... rhythm, tempo, melody, units of a higher order conditioned by the rhythm or the meaning of the sentence, etc. All of them belong to the literary work, but always in the sense of particular typical Gestalt qualities and not as occurrences appearing only in the concrete phonic material. These phonetic formations need not appear in every literary work; they are present in a work when they are produced by the manifold and the pattern of word sounds conditioning them. They are only the aftereffects of these primary elements of the word-sound aspect of language.

The various formations of the phonetic stratum are the by-products of the nature of language and its corresponding

\[21\text{Ibid.},\ p.\ 55.\quad 22\text{Ibid.},\ p.\ 55.\]
relation to sound. The formations of each kind are not absolutely necessary to every work, but the sound aspect is undeniable. Without sound there would not be a literary work of art. Now that the sound stratum has been described, it is necessary to discover what role it plays in the literary work of art.

The phonetic strata may be described as accomplishing two things:

First, they constitute, thanks to their manifold properties and characters, a particular element in the structure of the work; second, they perform their own functions in the unfolding, and also partly in the constituting, of the other strata.\textsuperscript{23}

It may be understood that the individuality of the work is due in large part to the phonetic stratum. The individual phonetic strata then contribute to the great and possibly insurmountable problem of translation. It is doubtful that translations of works could ever hope to achieve an exact reproduction of the phonetic meaning indicators found in a particular language. The words do two things, one of which may not be absolutely necessary to the creation of the literary work:

In the first instance, the phonetic stratum, and in particular the manifold of word sounds, forms the external, fixed shell of the literary work, in which all the remaining strata find their external point of support or--if one will--their external expression. The constitutive foundation

\textsuperscript{23}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 56.
proper of the individual literary work certainly lies in the stratum of meaning units of a lower and higher order. But the meanings are essentially bound to the word sounds. It might be claimed that the phonetic stratum gives expression to the work, but the potential richness of this stratum is not necessary to the work. When it is realized that meaning cannot be separated from the sounds of words, then it is understood that the phonetic stratum reveals the stratum of meaning units and is necessary to the literary work of art. Ingarden says in conclusion, "This first, external stratum is, therefore, not merely a means of access to the literary work, not a 'factor essentially alien to poetry'; it is on the contrary, an indispensible element in the structure of the literary work of art."25

The next layer is the stratum of meaning units. The investigation of this stratum will enable "... us to understand the role of the units of meaning in the literary work."26 Ingarden continues his use of the phenomenological method in his investigation of this stratum as well as in the other two. After the more complete discussion of the method as employed by Ingarden, it does not appear necessary to repeat in detail each application of the method to the

24 Ibid., p. 59.
25 Ibid., p. 61.
26 Ibid., p. 62.
remaining strata. It will be useful to determine what conclusions are reached by the use of the phenomenological method in the other instances.

The analysis of the phonetic stratum demonstrates that it is not accidental but essential. The stratum arising from that conclusion is the meaning stratum. It is important to note that words have meanings that are potential and actual. These stocks of word meanings combine in the larger meaning units. The larger meaning units are the sentences and combinations of sentences. Ingarden notes that

Like individual works, sentences are also a two-layered formation, in which one has to distinguish (a) the phonetic stratum and (b) the meaning content. As we noted before, there is no "sentence sound" which, as a unit, may be analogous to the word sound. If the sentence does appear as a unit this is due solely to the unity of its meaning content. . . . 27

The external phonetic structure gives rise to the meaning units that demonstrate the cohesion of the sentence through its meaning alone. It becomes apparent that "The performance of a sentence depends on its total function." 28 The function of the sentence is to provide some release in the individual being addressed.

One role of the stratum of meaning units is to make it possible to define the distinction between a clear and an obscure work. Ingarden says,

The first thing that comes to our attention, is the difference between "clarity" and "obscurity." Both the sentence structure itself and the type of connection between sentences and the order of their sequence contribute to the fact that the whole is at one time "clear" and at another time "unclear."\(^{29}\)

On the other hand, one must realize the writer may have in mind certain types of imposed ambiguity or complexity that are also related to the meaning stratum of the literary work of art. Ingarden notes that "... obscurity and complexity of a text usually go together."\(^{30}\) The other roles of the meaning units are the same as the roles of the other strata. The meaning units contribute their own particular stratum to the literary work of art. It is first indicated by the relationship of the phonetic stratum to meaning. Then the meaning units open the way to the emergence of another stratum. Each stratum contributes something individually to the literary work, but then proceeds to preview the emergence of a new stratum in the polyphonic harmony of the literary work of art.

The third stratum is the layer of schematized aspects. The schematized aspects found in the literary work are "... neither concrete nor at all psychic."\(^{31}\) The aspects

\(^{29}\)Ibid., p. 212.
\(^{30}\)Ibid., p. 264.
\(^{31}\)Ibid., p. 214.
referred to here are the descriptions of the objects found in the literary work of art. It must be realized that in contrast to the objects found in the sense experiential world, the objects created in literature may only be represented in schematic form. An object in the world is subject to investigation so that every aspect of it could possibly be discovered at one time or another. The literary work, by its essential structure, is only partially open to investigation. Here then is found the role of responsible interpretation and criticism. The aspects are open to interpretation in such a way that the objects represented can never be fully realized in the work. Objects in literature can only be produced in a schematized fashion. The schematized aspects play a two part role in the literary work according to Ingarden:

... (1) aspects held in readiness enable us to intuitively apprehend represented objects in pre-determined types of modes of appearance. At the same time, they gain a certain power over represented objects by influencing their constitution. (2) Aspects have their own properties and constitute their own aesthetic value qualities, which have their own voice in the polyphony of the whole work and which play an essential role in the aesthetic reception of the work.32

It is important to note that the schematized aspects of the work do not determine completely how the objects will be finally represented, but they indicate certain characteristics that are a necessary part of the objects. The interpretation of the objects is contained in the partial description of the

32Ibid., p. 276.
individual object. If the objects represented by the work were left simply to the discretion of the reader, they would be no more than relative subjective concepts. But the schema of aspects indicates the structure of the objects represented in a work. If the writer leaves the wrong matters to the interpretation of the reader and fills in trivial aspects that contribute nothing to a faithful reading of the work, then it may be subject to the charge of not being a literary work of art at all. On the other hand, if a reader or critic fills in the schematized aspects inappropriately, then he may be guilty of not responding to the work itself. When the writer presents the aspects that properly represent the object in question, the representation is referred to as style. Stylistic elements determine what aspects will be held in readiness and belong specifically to the stratum of schematized aspects. The stratum of schematized aspects "... is de facto an essential element, whose removal would transform a literary work of art into a mere written work." The schematized aspects lead directly to the stratum of represented objectivities.

The stratum of represented objectivities is the one stratum that most often comes under the scrutiny of readers and critics. Ingarden says,

\[33\text{Ibid.},\ p.\ 287.\]
They appear to be the best known of all the strata, and in fact they are usually the only factor in the literary work of art to be apprehended thematically. To the extent that the reader follows the meaning intentions of the text, they are always the first thing that comes to his attention in a simple reading of the work. Likewise, the great majority of literary studies devote their attention primarily to this stratum of the work. The attention devoted to this aspect would lead one never to doubt the importance of this stratum. But as Ingarden is investigating those strata essential to the literary work of art, no stratum may be taken as self-evident. Nevertheless, Ingarden's analysis shows that

When we attempt to apprehend the various strata of the literary work of art in the role they play in the whole of the work, it immediately becomes apparent that all the other strata are present in the work primarily for the purpose of appropriately representing objects.

It is understood that this stratum is dependent on the other strata previously mentioned for its existence. It cannot be known without the interplay of the various strata in the polyphonic harmony of the whole of the literary work of art.

The phenomenological investigation of the literary work of art has produced a cross-sectional analysis of the essential strata of the work. This is only a partial solution, as the horizontal relations and connections must be further discussed as well. Ingarden continues the

34Ibid., p. 217.
investigation by showing how the various strata expand. For the purposes here, enough has been shown to demonstrate the basic utilization of the phenomenological method in a consideration of the literary work of art. It is most important to note that the essential intrinsic aspects of the work were in question, while anything external to the work was not of importance to Ingarden's study. Moreover, a foundation is provided for the justification of the intrinsic study of the literary work of art.

In retrospect, it is useful to note that Ingarden utilized Husserl's method, but not without some modification. The difference centers on their varying views of ontology. Whereas Husserl would maintain that

Transcendental phenomenology, systematically and fully developed, is eo ipso a "universal ontology"; not merely a formal ontology, but one which contains all the possibilities of existence.36

Ingarden seems to be claiming that individual objects under consideration may have ontological status. He says, "We believe that we have uncovered in the literary work a unique sphere of specially structured objectivities which are very important for various reasons, and, among them, purely ontological reasons."37 The literary work of art for Ingarden would have ontological status, while the pure phenomenology of Husserl would deny such a claim.

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37 Ingarden, p. 356.
At this point a transition may be made to an alternative intrinsic view. This transition may be made by contrasting the phenomenological views of Husserl and Heidegger. Heidegger contributes to the movement from pure phenomenology to existentialism. It is important to note that according to Everett W. Knight,

Of one thing we may be sure however—the fecundity of a thought without which the work of neither Heidegger nor Sartre would have been possible. Without Husserl, existentializing philosophies would have remained the activity of "visionaries" like Kierkegaard. Kierkegaard maintained that subjectivity is truth, an assertion which orthodox philosophy could not have been expected to take seriously, but one for which Husserl provides a philosophical foundation.38

Although Heidegger represents here a break with transcendental phenomenology, the distinction is possible only through the contribution of Husserl. Intentionality is the key to the division in phenomenology. In order to initiate a phenomenological hermeneutics, it is necessary that the person or reader as subject take a significant role. The subject in turning to the objects themselves begins to play a more significant part in the determination of the concretizations of objects. In this turn to objects, a new realization concerning objects is seen. Knight notes that "One of the most important objectives of phenomenology is to put back together again what philosophy has analysed into incomprehensibility.

38Everett W. Knight, Literature Considered as Philosophy (London, 1957), p. 3.
An object cannot be 'simplified.'” Phenomenology is "... simply a belief in the possibility of seizing appearances before a conscious effort to observe has had the opportunity to alter them." With the importance of Husserl looming large in the background, Heidegger can be seen not just using the method provided by Husserl but, "On the contrary, Heidegger rethought the concept of phenomenology itself, so that phenomenology and phenomenological method take on a radically different character." The shift in the phenomenological movement may be characterized by the two major differences in these thinkers. First, as was previously noted, Husserl desired philosophy to become "rigorous science." Heidegger might even be called anti-scientific as for him "... all the rigor in the world could not make scientific knowledge a final goal." Whereas Husserl is interested in the structure of the ego and presuppositionless philosophy, Heidegger is more concerned with interpretation. He does not mention the sort of goals that Husserl has in mind. They differ in a second way as well. The vision of Husserl translated "... temporality back into the static and

39 Ibid., p. 18.
40 Ibid., p. 175.
42 Ibid., p. 126.
presentational terms of science—essentially to deny the temporality of being itself and assert a realm of ideas above the flux." Heidegger, on the other hand, remained secure in the position that events or objects have significance in time. The opening of consciousness to investigation has possibly provided insight into the being behind consciousness. Then, in contrast to Husserl, Heidegger is giving ontological status to objects in time.

The division between Husserl and Heidegger emerges as a crucial division in the consideration of intrinsic alternatives. Husserl's and Ingarden's approach to the literary work of art demands that the investigation begin with no presuppositions. Now Heidegger maintains that such an attempt is an impossible task. His study of the nature of understanding states that one "... approaches the text questioningly, not with blank openness." The deviation between Husserl and Heidegger then reflects on all presuppositionless attempts, including Ingarden's. As Richard E. Palmer notes concerning the presuppositionless interpreter, "His encounter with the work is not in some context outside time and space, outside his own horizon of experiences and interests, but rather in a particular time and place."45

43 Ibid., p. 127.
44 Ibid., p. 136.
Heidegger is a prominent figure in the transition to the words of existentialism. The trend follows a moving pattern. Husserl provides a philosophy whereby the things themselves become most important. The subject through intentionality turns to the objects. Ingarden formally applies the phenomenological method, but contributes his own ideas by determining that the literary work of art has ontological status. Then the split occurs in the formation of the method itself. No longer is philosophy a rigorous investigation of objects before understanding can distort them, but it becomes the path to the ground of being. The furthest range of the phenomenological movement now emerges into the fore. The existentialists go beyond ontology to ethics.

The existentialism of the philosopher-writers deviates extensively from Husserl's philosophy. Knight says, "Husserl's main preoccupation was to discover, by means of the phenomenological reduction, how it is possible for things to be in-themselves meaningful."\textsuperscript{46} The existentialists were not primarily concerned with the structure of consciousness. They were intrigued by "... the fact that everything encountered by consciousness exists."\textsuperscript{47} Existentialism is concerned more with existence of particular objects than with the objects as

\textsuperscript{46}Knight, \textit{Literature Considered as Philosophy}, p. 65.

\textsuperscript{47}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 65.
such. More precisely, certain existential philosopher-writers see action as creative of existence. From this point of view, the literary work of art is a manifestation of an ethical act. The division between philosophy and art begins to dissipate in the face of existentialism. Knight says, "Philosophy and literature have often acted upon one another in the past, but they have never lost their identity in one another."\(^{48}\) Literature is the example of philosophy for existentialism.

For philosophy to become act, two things occurred. First, the Self receded to a secondary position. Second, man was recognized to be what he does. The first occurrence is seen in Antoine de Saint-Exupéry, whose works indicate that "... the Self has ceased to exist."\(^{49}\) Gide also minimized the self, as he "... endeavors to act without giving himself the time to reflect; that is, without giving himself the time to tarnish the purity of his act with self-interest."\(^{50}\) In the maelstrom of action, the Self is soon lost in the doing of things.

Malraux exemplifies the second stage of existential philosophy, as he is interpreted by Knight as believing that "Man is what he does. He is not his thought, or his intention,

\(^{48}\)Ibid., p. 128.
\(^{49}\)Ibid., p. 160.
\(^{50}\)Ibid., p. 117.
or his 'subconscious,' and therefore a common action is a common bond."\(^{51}\) If the Self is understood to be nothing, then man can only have meaning through his action. In this sense, the literary work of art is an ethical act. Gide was said to have believed that "... art is derived from life."\(^{52}\) Knight comments on this belief in the following manner:

The idea is innocuous in appearance only, for it is one of the forms in which we may express the principle which distinguishes modern thought from all which preceded it—the particular is in itself meaningful; or if one prefers, existence precedes essence.\(^{53}\)

The creative act in art is an action that gives meaning to the existence of the work.

The philosophy of Jean-Paul Sartre exemplifies French existential philosophy. Knight says that Sartre

... cleared the way for a philosophy which, assuming truth to acquired, would be free to concentrate its whole attention upon its utilization; a philosophy which would no longer be an investigation, but an act; no longer a science, but an ethic.\(^{54}\)

The literary work of art is no longer to be investigated, but is to be taken as an example of the meaning of action. Existential philosophy has taken the contemplative view of philosophy and art to task. It appears that "In the broadest possible terms, we may say that existentialism is an attempt to utilize philosophy."\(^{55}\)

\(^{51}\)Ibid., p. 131.  \(^{52}\)Ibid., p. 97.  \(^{53}\)Ibid., p. 97.  \(^{54}\)Ibid., p. 190.  \(^{55}\)Ibid., p. 219.
The range of intrinsic alternatives has been examined from methodology of Husserl and Ingarden to the ethics of action as proposed by the existentialists. The dilemma remains. It is not immediately clear which of the intrinsic alternatives would finally prove useful. The emphasis of this sort of attempt would be of necessity, phenomenological, but it might well take in the lessons of Heidegger's hermeneutics and the existential vision of action. The best candidate for such a philosophical view can be found in Paul Ricoeur.
CHAPTER III

MEDIATION

The difficulties encountered in the discussion of intrinsic alternatives involve a "family feud." Each of the views is mainly concerned with a turn to the objects themselves, rather than with matters external to the issue. The difference between Husserl and Heidegger is one of aims. Husserl sees the results of the phenomenological method as the goal and end of the philosophical enterprise. Heidegger would want to reach beyond the aims of Husserl's ideal method in hopes of discovering the ground of being. Ingarden utilizes the phenomenological method precisely, but he concludes that the literary work of art has ontological status. Even so, he is closer to Husserl than to Heidegger. Then the existentialists, taking Heidegger's lead to the extreme, determine that the literary work of art is no longer a subject for methodology. It becomes the example of a philosophy of ethical action. The movement from methodology, to ontological aesthetics, to ontology, and finally to ethics is seen within the intrinsic alternatives.

From the center of this argument arises Paul Ricoeur, a new philosophical figure, who is influenced on the one hand by French existentialism, and by Husserl, on the other.
The works of Paul Ricoeur may be seen as a mediation between the various alternatives. Ricoeur will prove to be extremely useful in the study of literature, because of his intensive investigation of symbolism. Evidence for Ricoeur's posture of mediation may be demonstrated by an investigation of his enormous philosophical enterprise, "The Philosophy of the Will." This project will be comprised of three major divisions. First, Freedom and Nature: The Voluntary and the Involuntary is devoted "... to the eidetics of the will." The second volume is concerned with "... the 'Emperics' of the will." Two books constitute the second volume, which is called Finitude and Guilt, and they are Fallible Man and The Symbolism of Evil. Each of the published works is leading to the projected third volume, which is to be a "... 'poetics' of the will." As of yet, the project remains unfinished, but it still may produce methodological insight into the problem at hand.

It can be discerned that Ricoeur is employing the phenomenological method developed by Husserl when he speaks of the eidetics of the will. Ricoeur says of his first volume:

2Ibid., p. xi.
4Ibid., p. x.
Such ramifications and distortions—which we shall investigate in the principle of passions and which we might call the fault or moral evil—indispensably require this particular abstraction capable of revealing man's structures or fundamental possibilities.

This abstraction is in some respects akin to what Husserl calls eidetic reduction, that is, bracketing of the fact and elaborating the idea or meaning.\(^5\)

The initiation of the project begins with the fundamental notion of Husserl's phenomenology. Ricoeur sums up the methodological problems by saying, "The axis of the method is a description of the intentional, practical and affective structures of the Cogito in the Husserlian manner."\(^6\) Nevertheless, he finds the initial method has limitations that require him to move methodologically into the realm of phenomenological hermeneutics. The second volume culminates in that transition. E. V. Kohak says of *Finitude and Guilt*:

The first part, published separately as *L'Homme faillible* (and, in English translation, as *Fallible Man*), still falls broadly within the limits of descriptive phenomenology. . . . The second part, published the same year under the title *La Symbolique du mal*, continues the task of emperics of the will, but its focus is no longer possibility, but rather the experienced fact of evil as it is expressed in symbol and myth.

This transition requires a basic change of methodology. While both earlier volumes employed a descriptive phenomenology to describe overt meanings, *La Symbolique du mal*, like the projected third volume, *Poetics of the Will*, must resort to a hermeneutic phenomenology of latent meanings.\(^7\)

\(^5\)Ricoeur, *Freedom and Nature*, pp. 3-4.

\(^6\)Ibid., p. 19.

\(^7\)Ibid., pp. xi-xii.
The methodological problem may be understood more readily when it is realized that Ricoeur's "... use of the eidetic method is based on the assumption that an eidetics is necessary but not adequate." The movement from eidetics to hermeneutics may be more clearly understood if the existential influence on Ricoeur is seen. As a student of the French existential philosopher, Gabriel Marcel, Ricoeur has studied what Marcel calls, "... the analyses dealing with sensation and with what is often today called the body-subject, that is, my body precisely as mine." The problem of the incarnation of the body is a motivating factor in the project that Ricoeur has set before himself. David M. Rasmussen points out that "Ricoeur's interpretation of the eidetic method includes more than the repossessing of consciousness to which Husserl directed the method; rather, Ricoeur seeks to enlarge the method to include consciousness of the body." Consciousness of the body plays an integral role in The Voluntary and the Involuntary. It is precisely the body over which man has no voluntary control and this may be attributed directly to the

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10 Rasmussen, Mythic-Symbolic Language and Philosophical Anthropology, p. 33.
incarnation of the physical body. Husserl's phenomenology cannot account for such a concept as the existence of the human body as it would necessarily be excluded from any investigation.

From this methodological juncture, Ricoeur moves to the other extreme of the intrinsic alternatives. In this move, "As Ricoeur conceives of it, the transition from the realm of eidetic description to the realm of existential description may be understood as a transition from ideal to actual possibilities." Ricoeur shifts from the pure description of Husserl to the impure description of the actualities of the sense experiential and accidental world. It may be seen also in terms earlier expressed as Ricoeur moves from the realm of realities above the flux to an interest in the fact that everything encountered by consciousness exists. But even here, Ricoeur is not satisfied with the results. Rasmussen says that existential description "... is limited, in fact, confined to the realm of evil as a possibility. It can only locate evil; it cannot fully probe its meaning." The description of the event of evil does not divulge the meaning of evil. The nature of the problem before Ricoeur necessitates that he move beyond both the phenomenological and existential vision of description. The option then left for

11 Ibid., p. 37.
12 Ibid., p. 39.
Ricoeur is hermeneutic phenomenology. Before moving to a hermeneutic phenomenology, it is interesting to note that

The debate among phenomenologists involves the relation of the eidetic (Husserl) to existential signification (Sartre, Heidegger). Perhaps there is no better testimony to Ricoeur's desire to bridge the various alternatives within the phenomenological movement, incorporating its best insights into his own thought, than his methodological movement from eidetic to existential description. One may conclude that neither eidetic nor existential description is adequate for a full global philosophical anthropology. Both are necessary for a full description.\textsuperscript{13}

With the desire to find a complete and inclusive method, Ricoeur employs the precepts of hermeneutic phenomenology.

It is useful to indicate here that Ricoeur's methodological aims are exactly the same as those in attempting a comprehensive study of the literary work of art. The problems encountered by students of literary study might well be solved by the same sort of methodological thinking. Hermeneutics will provide a way to come round again to the issue of literary study.

The combination of eidetic and existential phenomenology ends with only the consideration of possibility. Ricoeur desires to go further than possibility as

He risks the possible loss of clarity for depth. He risks the loss of a clear but narrow vision of man for a global view of man. The hermeneutic occurs at this juncture not simply as an experiment in method but in the name of an attempt to recover the actual human experience of fault and the consequent quest for freedom.\textsuperscript{14}

\textsuperscript{13} Ibid., p. 37. \textsuperscript{14} Ibid., p. 41.
Hermeneutics moves the argument from the possible to the experience of evil. This experience is made possible through the language of fault. The experience into which Ricoeur is now inquiring demands a hermeneutics of language so that the meaning behind the symbols may be seen. Kohak says,

The task of hermeneutic phenomenology is precisely to recognize the universal latent significance made manifest through the overt meanings of myth and symbol. Thus a hermeneutics must combine the attitude of trust with an attitude of suspicion, a willingness to listen to what is revealed through the symbol and a suspicion which would protect it from being mislead by its overt meanings. 15

In order to understand, Ricoeur would maintain that one must see through the opaque nature of literal language so that its symbolic nature and meaning will be revealed.

It may now be seen that Ricoeur is indeed the mediator of the intrinsic alternatives. He utilizes the phenomenological method of Husserl in order to discover the structure of the particular object under investigation. When that method becomes inadequate to deal with what he considers to be crucial issues, he incorporates the understanding and concerns of the existentialists into his study. Finally, in Ricoeur's methodological progression, he moves to a position between Husserl and Heidegger. He abandons Husserl only at the precipice of his method's usefulness. The hermeneutic position ascribed to Heidegger is then adopted, but not to

the extent that phenomenology is completely rethought in the way that Heidegger would have him do. Ricoeur abandons none, but includes the comprehensive vision of the range of intrinsic alternatives.

The key to mediation then appears to be through hermeneutics. To clarify how this is possible, an investigation of the general theory of hermeneutics seems in order. The beginning of such a study incorporates an understanding of the base meanings of the term, hermeneutics. Richard E. Palmer discusses this problem in the following manner:

The roots for the word hermeneutics lie in the Greek verb hermeneuin, generally translated "to interpret," and the noun hermeneia, "interpretation." An exploration of the origin of these two words and of the three basic directions of meaning they carried in ancient usage sheds surprising light on the nature of interpretation in theology and literature. . . 16

If one notes the close association of the word hermeneutics and the Greek god Hermes, many mythological connotations will come to mind. In mythology, Hermes brought to light information that was generally beyond the range of human understanding. In this original sense, hermeneutics is an attempt to bring something "... from unintelligibility... to understanding."17 Palmer maintains that there are three ways in which one may define hermeneutics so that this original sense is kept intact. They are "... (1) to express aloud in

17 Ibid., p. 13.
words, that is, 'to say'; (2) to explain, as in explaining a situation; and (3) to translate, as in the translation of a foreign tongue." Each of these definitions, though different, has the common characteristic of bringing something separated from intelligibility to understanding through language. It should be apparent as well that each of the functions of hermeneutics describes a crucial aspect of literary study.

If hermeneuvin is taken to be first understood as meaning "to say," it becomes clear that the saying of a thing is tantamount to interpreting a thing. The relationship here of saying and interpretation is reminiscent of the phonetic stratum as described by Ingarden. The various aspects of the word sounds contribute to meaning and thereby contribute to interpretation. From another point of view, "The powers of spoken language should remind us of an important phenomenon: the weakness of written language." Perhaps written language is to be regarded as weaker than spoken language. It must be concluded that "... oral language is 'understood' more easily than written language." This conception may fit very well into a study of the literary work; if so, the serious reader becomes more clearly defined. As a matter of fact, one might want to attempt a criticism of this sort:

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18 Ibid., p. 13.
19 Ibid., p. 15.
20 Ibid., p. 16.
"A literary criticism which aspires to be an 'enabling act' is in part an effort to make up for the weakness and helplessness of the written word; it tries to put back into the work the dimensions of speech." 21 Many literary criticisms are inherently concerned with the problem of language and how it is to be interpreted, but an approach that emphasizes the strength of the oral word is returning to the foundations of literary communication.

As far as the literary work of art is concerned, the second definition of hermeneuin is equally helpful. If the term is taken to mean "to explain," the role of criticism is perhaps further defined. Palmer says, "The function of explanatory interpretation may be seen, in this context, as an effort to lay the foundations in 'preunderstanding' for an understanding of the text." 22 For a preunderstanding of the literary work of art, the foundation may be laid in the symbolic nature of language. Looking forward to Ricoeur's use of hermeneutics, it may be seen that his attempt will be to use what is immediately known through an eidetics so that the explanation of the actuality of fault can be discovered. The preunderstanding is grounded in the ontic status of man's experience of evil.

The final use of hermeneuin as meaning "to translate" may mean specifically to bring something from the realm of

21 Ibid., p. 17. 22 Ibid., p. 25.
unintelligibility to understanding. The problem of translation spoken of earlier returns here. It is necessary to understand the phenomenon of the phonetic stratum so that a faithful translation may be made. If the structure and the nature of language are not understood, a violation of the intention of the particular word sounds may occur. Often the literary critic attempts what is called "analysis" to bring about the understanding of a text. Invariably some aspects are recognized, but the larger sense of the work is lost in such analyses. If one were able to translate a work properly, even in the same language, perhaps the communication of meaning could occur. Palmer contends that

Teachers of literature need to become experts in "translation" more than "analysis"; their task is to bring what is strange, unfamiliar, and obscure in its meaning into something meaningful that "speaks our language." This does not mean "soup ing up" the classics and dressing Chaucer in twentieth-century English; it means recognizing the problem of a conflict of horizons and taking steps to deal with it, rather than sweeping it under the rug and concentrating on analytical games.\(^2^3\)

The ancient uses of the term indicate what uses hermeneutics have had in the recent past and for literary criticism, what uses may be in the offing for the future.

Palmer offers for his readers six modern descriptions of hermeneutics. A short inspection of the definitions will prove useful in placing the hermeneutic phenomenology of

\(^{23}\)Ibid., p. 29.
Paul Ricoeur. The first of Palmer's six definitions deals with hermeneutics as a theory of Biblical exegesis. Since the advent of Biblical scholarship, the problem of interpretation has presented itself to the serious investigator of scriptural matters. The question of meaning was left in the hands of certain authorities whose interpretations of texts were not often questioned. When the protestant revolution made every man his own priest, interpretation of texts became a more open matter. The advent of hermeneutics was brought about in this context to find the meanings that were not readily apparent. Palmer notes that "In this sense hermeneutics is the interpreter's system for finding the 'hidden' meaning of the text."\(^{24}\) Biblical interpreters carried their vision of hermeneutics beyond the scope of simple textual interpretation and finally included in their studies the history of all commentaries on the texts. This includes ancient as well as modern so that "In essence, such a history becomes a history of theology."\(^{25}\) The attempt was to give Biblical scholarship some claim to validity in the face of the emerging rationalism.

The second use of hermeneutics came about in the study of philology. Here hermeneutics constitutes the methodology that was required in the serious study of the Bible during

\(^{24}\)Ibid., p. 36.

\(^{25}\)Ibid., p. 37.
the Enlightenment. The interpretation and history of certain words were deemed crucial to any possible understanding of any text, including the Bible. Palmer indicates that "It is enough here to say simply that the conception of hermeneutics as strictly Biblical gradually shaded into hermeneutics as the general rules of philological exegesis, with the Bible as one among other possible objects of these rules." The influence of rationality brought the formal rules of interpretation to a more secular use.

Third, hermeneutics came to be used as the science of linguistic understanding. Now the attempt is to go beyond a system of rules or an aggregation of rules, and to make it "... the study of understanding itself." The fourth definition of hermeneutics is formulated specifically by Wilhelm Dilthey. He saw hermeneutics as a possible way to create a foundation for the geisteswissenschaften. In this attempt to provide a methodological foundation for the study of all of man's writings, art, and actions, what was called for was "... an operation fundamentally distinct from the quantifying, scientific grasp of the natural world; for in this act of historical understanding what is called into play is a personal knowledge of what being human means."  

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26 Ibid., p. 40.  
27 Ibid., p. 40.  
28 Ibid., p. 41.
The movement of hermeneutics has shifted from an attempt to understand the Bible to an attempt to understand man. In the fifth definition, the humanistic theme is carried further because Heidegger saw hermeneutics as the phenomenology of Dasein and of existential understanding. More than the understanding of man is at stake in Heidegger's thinking, as he is interested in the "... phenomenological explication of human existing itself."²⁹ His most significant contribution to hermeneutics is the fact that it becomes identified with phenomenology and ontology for the first time.

The final use of hermeneutics in modern times according to Palmer brings the issue round once again to Paul Ricoeur. For Ricoeur, hermeneutics provides a means by which meaning may be recovered. Ricoeur defines hermeneutics as "... the theory of the rules that preside over an exegesis—that is, over the interpretation of a particular text, or of a group of signs that may be viewed as a 'text.'"³⁰ Since Ricoeur's study involves symbol and myth, it seems necessary that "Hermeneutics is the system by which the deeper significance is revealed beneath the manifest content."³¹ Ricoeur's attempt to use the notion of hermeneutics as a

²⁹Ibid., p. 42.
³¹Palmer, *Hermeneutics*, p. 44.
means to discover the hidden meaning of symbols seems to define the state of the hermeneutical art. Palmer maintains the following:

Ricoeur attempts to encompass both the rationality of doubt and the faith of recollective interpretation in a reflective philosophy that does not retreat into abstractions or degenerate into the simple exercise of doubt, a philosophy that takes up the hermeneutical challenge in myths and symbols and reflectively thematizes the reality behind language, symbol, and myth.  

The history of hermeneutics from the ancient roots of the term to the interposition of Ricoeur has seen the emphasis change from the narrow to the broad. The recounting of the various uses of the term has given some insight into the method, but one crucial point concerning the method itself is still to be made.

The basic concept of hermeneutic studies is based on the notion of the hermeneutic circle. Rasmussen describes his own use of the circle in the following manner: "It begins with a problematic, it incorporates an analysis, and finally it returns to that problematic by attempting to construct a solution to it."  

The complaint may be legitimately made that the argument is not sound if it ends where it begins. The only response is that it is hoped that the

\[32\text{Ibid.}, \text{pp. 44-45.} \]

\[33\text{Rasmussen, Mythic-Symbolic Language and Philosophical Anthropology, p. 5.}\]
circle will not be vicious. "Vicious" is understood to mean that no insight is gained in the circular travels from beginning and back again. Palmer says that

Understanding is a basically referential operation; we understand something by comparing it to something we already know. What we understand forms itself into systematic unities, or circles made up of parts. The circle as a whole defines the individual part, and the parts together form the circle. 34

If one approaches the circle from a logical standpoint, it soon becomes evident that it rests on a logical contradiction. To answer this problem it must finally be said that "...logic cannot fully account for the workings of understanding." 35

The concept of the hermeneutic circle in some sense may represent the whole of the intrinsic alternatives in that the emphasis is placed on the immediacy of phenomena and objective analysis is negated.

Beyond the phenomenology of the literary work of art, many other problems confront the serious literary critic. In the matter of interpretation, one well-known problem is centered in the consideration of symbols. The way in which texts have been interpreted has been under considerable attack because of a lack of any serious methodology. Paul Ricoeur presents a philosophical method in approaching a particular project that may present the critic with some tools for interpretation, especially in the realm of symbols.

34 Palmer, p. 87. 35 Ibid., p. 87.
To investigate the hermeneutic method as applied by Ricoeur, it becomes necessary to understand the attempts of his philosophical project. As was previously noted, the first volume of *The Philosophy of the Will* deals with an eidetics of the will. In this particular volume, a phenomenological investigation of the nature of freedom is undertaken in the context of nature. Rasmussen indicates the concerns and conclusions of the first volume in the following:

If Ricoeur's first principle may be characterized as one which argues the case for nature as the informant of freedom, his second is that nature is the limitation of freedom. The conclusion of *Freedom and Nature* is instructive in this regard. "An only human freedom" is, for Ricoeur, a freedom which is limited by the context of its occurrence—the human and the involvement of the human in nature. The idea of a perfectly motivated freedom, or a freedom which is governed and limited by the body.\(^{36}\)

There is a problem to be found in the relationship of freedom to nature. If one is to be free he must either reject nature, which is not possible, or consent to the necessity of the hold that nature has over man through the incarnation of the body. The realization is made that the eidetic description of incarnation and the body is inadequate to describe the drive of freedom to go beyond its limitations. The experience of evil as fact forces Ricoeur to move to the emperics of the will.

\(^{36}\)Rasmussen, p. 66.
This portion of the project begins with *Fallible Man*. The basic method is still phenomenological. Ricoeur begins by saying, "The idea that man is by nature fragile and liable to err is, according to our working hypothesis, an idea wholly accessible to pure reflection; it designates a characteristic of man's being." Though phenomenological, the method is no longer purely phenomenological, as it may be seen that the brackets of existence have been dropped and that Ricoeur is investigating the actual occurrence of evil. The investigation of these matters leads Ricoeur to conclude that there is a disproportionate relation of finitude to infinitude. Ricoeur says,

> It is this relation which constitutes the ontological "locus" which is between being and nothingness, or in other words, "man's degree of being," his "quantity of being." It is this relation which makes human limitation synonymous with fallibility."

Man is a non-necessary creature and is therefore innately limited. This limitation then provides for the possibility of evil. The structure of the occurrence of evil is described in the following: "Weakness makes evil possible in several senses which may be classified in an increasing order of complexity from the occasion to the origin and from the origin to the capacity." What is revealed in

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37Ricoeur, *Fallible Man*, p. 3.  
38Ibid., p. 205.  
39Ibid., p. 217.
Ricoeur's final eidetic reduction is "... the essential ambiguity of man's existence as the root of man's 'fallibility'--the possibility of evil." The range of eidetics has reached its limit in the fact that the possibility of evil has been accounted for, but no provision has been made for the actual existence of evil. The project then demands an exegesis of the language of fault in order to gain insight into the existence of evil in fact and in experience.

The hermeneutic project of The Symbolism of Evil is a deviation from the presuppositionless philosophy of Husserl. And it is at this point that Ricoeur's enterprise begins to methodologically mediate the various intrinsic alternatives. Ricoeur's attempt may vary from the aims of the literary critic, but a recounting of the method employed by him in the hermeneutic description and recovery of symbols may have use for any discipline involved in the interpretation of language. To continue, provisions must be made for the actual experience of evil. To move from pure possibility to experience involves a wager. The wager also requires the shift from eidetics to hermeneutics. The major reason for this move is found in the experience of evil itself and the fact that this experience is enacted through language. Therefore,

In The Symbolics of Evil Ricoeur starts out with the "fullness of language" and initiates a

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hermeneutics or exegesis of symbols and myths. The method is no longer that of pure reflection but rather is a confrontation with the fundamental symbols wherein man avows his actual fallen condition.41

The presupposition is language and it comes before any interpretation of objects. The other deviation from Husserl is seen in that Ricoeur narrows his project to include only those things that are particularly human. True to the notion of a method that inspects appearances before understanding has had an opportunity to distort them, each of the stages in Ricoeur's philosophic project begins with a pre-reflexive base. Rasmussen notes the following:

If in Freedom and Nature the pre-reflexive basis for reflection was the bodily involuntary (nature), and if in Fallible Man the pre-reflexive basis for reflection was the hypothesis, at the juncture of the phenomenological hermeneutic, the pre-reflexive basis for reflection is language itself.42

Language here is defined in a singular manner. It is the language of confession, which constitutes man's experience of evil. Ricoeur describes it in this way:

By this threefold route man's living experience of fault gives itself a language: a language that expresses it in spite of its blind character; a language that makes explicit its contradictions and its internal revolutions; a language, finally, that reveals the experience of alienation as astonishing.43

41Ricoeur, Fallible Man, p. xiv.
42Rasmussen, p. 77.
The experience of evil cannot but occur in the sea of symbols that are transparent in order that one is able to see meaning behind the literal language of the symbol. The meaning of the fullness of language may be seen in the following discussion of symbols:

The fullness consists in the fact that the second meaning somehow dwells in the first meaning. Symbols are bound in a double sense: bound to and bound by. On the one hand, the sacred is bound to its primary, literal, sensible meanings; this is what constitutes the opacity of symbols. On the other hand, the literal meaning is bound by the symbolic meaning that resides in it; this is what I have called the revealing power of symbols, which gives them their force in spite of their opacity.44

Symbols enable the hermeneutic investigation to proceed full circle from the literal to the symbolic and back again, in hopes of deriving otherwise obscure insights. With this vision of language, Ricoeur begins his hermeneutic investigation of the symbols of evil.

The confession for Ricoeur is the enactment of the experience of evil and through its language an exegesis may construct a philosophical re-enactment of evil. A hermeneutics of the confessional language indicates that there are three primary symbols in the expression of the experience of evil. The symbols are those of defilement, sin, and guilt. The concept of defilement is probably best seen in the symbols of impurity or stain. In this vision, there is a

44Ricoeur, Freud and Philosophy, pp. 30-31.
relationship between the symbols of stain and a growing sense of the awareness of evil. The literal and objective meaning is clear enough, but more importantly, symbolically the stain is "... a something that infects by contact. But this infectious contact is experienced subjectively in a specific feeling which is in the order of dread." In this symbol, the circularity of the two layered notion of the symbolic nature of language comes to mind. Along with the subjective belief that one is stained, the objective rituals of absolution indicate the literal level of the symbol. Rasmussen says, "Ricoeur finds a great similarity between Hebrew rituals of cleansing and the Greek practice of catharsis. Both are aimed at ridding man of the evil brought on by the presence of stain." It is apparent that the symbols of defilement are two layered in that they exhibit an objective (literal) and a subjective (symbolic) correlate. The external stain or spot is objective and the feeling associated with defilement is subjective. The ritual of cleansing appears as it provides the hope of regained purity.

The next primary symbol is that of sin. Sin is realized in the objective act of breaking the covenant, although the experience of sin is subjective. Moreover, it may be noted

46 Rasmussen, p. 79.
that "... sin is not only the rupture of a relation; it is also the experience of a power that lays hold of a man."47 Being in sin is very much like the objective realization that one is physically separated from God. Sin is worse because it leads to feelings of nothingness that are instigated by the actual separation of man. It must be realized, however, that sin is not nothing, simply because it is posited in experience.

The symbols of guilt are the most internal of all the experiences of evil. Ricoeur says,

What is essential in guilt is already contained in this consciousness of being "burdened" by a "weight." Guiltiness is never anything else than the anticipated chastisement itself, internalized and already weighing upon consciousness; and as dread is from the beginning the way of internalization of defilement itself, in spite of the radical externality of the evil, guilt is a moment contemporaneous with defilement itself.48

The awareness of infection and the impending feeling of separation lead to the burden that is expressed in guilt. The symbols of evil express exactly the notion of the hermeneutic circle: "... there is a circular relation among all the symbols: the last bring out the meaning of the preceding ones, but the first lend to the last all their power of symbolization."49

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47Ricoeur, The Symbolism of Evil, p. 70.
48Ibid., p. 101.
49Ibid., p. 152.
literary critic is that language and the method of the hermeneutic express relationships that lead to insights in an understanding of the meaning of symbols. The study of the literary work of art might be greatly aided by an application of the methods employed by Ricoeur. The way in which the symbols are circular is indicated by the fact that "Guilt cannot, in fact, express itself except in the indirect language of 'captivity' and 'infection,' inherited from the two prior stages." From a hermeneutics of the symbols of evil certain conclusions may be reached that indicate the meaning behind the language of confession and the philosophical re-enactment of the experience of evil. The conclusions are the following:

First, defilement demonstrates that evil is not a nothing. It is positive because it is a something done, achieved, and conquered whether viewed on a human or a divine scale. Second, evil is seen as something that comes to man from outside; as that which was present before man and is therefore a structure in which man participates. Third, evil is something which infects, which is thereby a contagious phenomenon.

The presence of evil previous to man's existence indicates that man's freedom to do good is limited by the nature of existence. This notion is in no sense new, but has been expressed from the earliest times in the form of myths.

Mythology, properly interpreted, utilizes the symbolic nature

50 Ibid., p. 152.
51 Rasmussen, p. 80.
of language to indicate that the very structure of existence necessitates evil. The condition of fallibility that leads man to fault may now be seen as a break or rift. The break between man and the powers of the universe is expressed in the language of myths.

Methodologically, the shift from a discussion of symbol to one of myth is a further attempt to sympathetically re-enact the experience of evil. The difference is found in the fact that now the emphasis is on the universality of the experience of fault. For this reason, myths have special significance for Ricoeur as they provide further insights into the relationship of man and his experience of evil. A hermeneutics of myth begins with the problematic of the myth. Rasmussen says,

For Ricoeur myth can be defined in a three-fold way: first, as that which unites man in an exemplar history, thereby giving definition to man and humanity; second, myth tells a story which combines fable and history; and third, myth attempts to explain the enigma of human history, placing within its story the explanation for man's particular problem.52

The myths of every culture fit into one of the particular types and they all utilize the symbolic nature of language to capture the meaning of man's existence as a creature of the servile will.

Ricoeur examines four types of myth that concern the origin and the end of evil. In the first type, the drama of

52Ibid., p. 81.
creation myths, it can be seen that these myths are themselves ritual re-enactments of the event of creation. The narrations involve the struggles of the gods against the powers of chaos. In this type of myth, Ricoeur notes that "The identity of evil and 'chaos' and the identity of salvation with 'creation,' have seemed to us to constitute the two fundamental traits of this first type." The second myth occurs after creation; the myth of the fall and its consequences is noted in the following:

Thus the cleavage effected, with the second type, between the irrational event of the fall and the ancient drama of creation provokes a parallel cleavage between the theme of salvation, which becomes eminently historical, and the theme of creation, which recedes to the position of the "cosmological" background for the temporal drama played in the foreground of the world.

The fall of man is understood to be an irrational act that must necessarily be spoken of in symbolic terms. Logical comprehension of such an event is not possible. The third type of myth actually is placed between the drama of creation and the fall. The third type is the tragic myth that crystallized in the Greek mind. Here the complete vision of man and evil is revealed at once. Ricoeur says,

*Behind the tragic vision of man we shall look for an implicit, and perhaps unavowable, theology: the theology of a god who tempts, blinds, leads astray. Here the fault appears to be indistinguishable from the very existence of the tragic hero: he does not commit the fault, he is guilty.*

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54 Ibid., p. 173.
55 Ibid., p. 173.
For the conception of the study of literature, the vision of tragedy is expanded greatly. The narrow vision of the tragedy of the great may now be understood to be the tragedy of existence itself. The structure of consciousness dictates the guilt of everyman.

The fourth myth is distinct from the other three, but it is an extremely important myth in the community of western man. This is the myth of the exiled soul. The myth "... divides man into soul and body and concentrates on the destiny of the soul, which it depicts as coming from elsewhere and straying here below, while the cosmogonic, or theogonic, background of the other myths receives little emphasis."56 The resolution of this myth involves salvation through knowledge.

A great number of other things could be said about the specifics of the myths and how a hermeneutic provides the greatest possible insight into the nature of mythic-symbolic language, but for present purposes, it is not necessary. This is not to say that it will not be finally necessary in the study of the literary work of art, but that it must now only be postponed. The type of problem that Ricoeur is dealing with demands the methodological wager that he has made. Now it can be seen that the wager involves the movement from pure methodology to the impure realm of

56Ibid., p. 174.
existentialism and finally, to a hermeneutics of symbolic language. Rather than deal with pure possibility, Ricoeur chooses to risk philosophy in a sympathetic re-enactment of the actuality of the human experience of evil. This experience cannot be approached directly through a phenomenological or existential description because it is essentially symbolic. Hermeneutics is suited to this particular task and the method is therefore adopted by Ricoeur. The intrinsic alternatives find their mediation in the hermeneutic enterprise and the circle is complete.
A methodology that claims to have certain advantages must finally face the question concerning insight. The final test of literary theory is not originality or analytic accuracy, but whether or not it provides any insight into the literary work of art. Analytical criticism may indicate the categories of symbols and myths in a very clear manner, but the attempt here will be to begin to take the concept of the wager, as proposed in the philosophy of Paul Ricoeur, a step further. It will be remembered that Ricoeur introduces the wager in an attempt to "... enrich the discourse on freedom and limitation. ... He risks the possible loss of clarity for depth."¹ The risk taken here is on the mediating position of Paul Ricoeur. The work to be investigated, as a test case, is Joseph Conrad's Lord Jim. Unfortunately, a complete hermeneutic study of the symbols of evil found in this work is a task that, for the moment, must be postponed. The best hope here is to produce an adequate propaedeutic. The issue concerns grounds for the justification of an involved study that a hermeneutic study would require.

Perhaps the grounds for such a study may be laid by showing the uncanny correspondence between *Lord Jim* and the four myths that emerge from the primary symbols in Ricoeur's *The Symbolism of Evil*. When this propaeduetic task is completed, one may then have reason enough to incorporate the hermeneutic method into the study of the symbols of evil in not only Conrad's work, but in the study of any symbolism in the literary work of art. The wager is not made wildly because even if one loses it, he may hope that even the simple drawing of correspondences will indicate something about the nature of literature through the symbol that may be lost in the objective analysis of symbols.

The symbols of evil in *Lord Jim* provide a well-known problem in literary criticism. The symbols of this work have been subjected to isolation, analysis, and categorical claims. In spite of the prolonged efforts of literary critics, one of them notes that "*Lord Jim* is a work whose symbolism is particularly dense--so dense, in fact, that no one has yet succeeded in laying bare its total pattern." ² D. J. Schneider makes this claim in hopes of describing the symbols in *Lord Jim* adequately where others have failed. It should be noted that though Schneider's attempt is admirable and in fact isolates the symbols and shows their relations to the other

symbols in the work, it is not at all clear that any new insights have been gained into the symbols themselves. The role of the symbol is indicated in relation to the whole, but the access to meaning remains to be described. Schneider is actually applying the same sort of thinking to the problem of symbol that others have used. The only difference is that he is attempting to isolate the symbols in terms of a broader point of view. The hope here is to at least indicate a new method which will in the course of application necessitate a different point of view as well.

The concept of the wager again comes to the fore. The hermeneutic study of the symbols of evil for Ricoeur involves examples from theology. The issue here concerns the literary symbols of evil. The wager made is manifest in the claim that the symbols may be pushed to include the literary or poetic as well as the religious. The foundation for the calculated risk lies in the fact that "The term symbol is not conceived as an abstract sign as it is in symbolic logic, but rather as a concrete phenomenon--religious, psychological, and poetic."\(^3\) Remembering that the religious and psychological manifestations of symbols have been considered in The Symbolism of Evil and Freud and Philosophy, respectively, the methodological risk is not so great as one might imagine. Perhaps one would want to claim that the issue of the symbols

\(^3\)Rasmussen, p. 1.
of poetry should remain intact until the method has been applied philosophically in the completion of Ricoeur's project. But that is exactly the risk of the wager. The purpose of this admittedly narrow application is to first test one's understanding of the method and more than that, to attempt to see through the opaqueness of symbols to the very nature of human consciousness itself.

The ultimate goal of the wager is found in the claim that symbols and mythology, whether used in the realm of religion, psychology, or literature indicate something about the nature of consciousness. The experience of human consciousness for Delmore Schwartz may be instructive here as "His general theme, he once said, was 'the wound of consciousness.'" For Ricoeur it has been seen that the various symbols of evil are indications of the fallibility of man. Fault, in this case, is to "... be taken in this sense as it is in the geological sense: a break, a rift, a tearing." The rift, it is wagered, may be equated to the wound of consciousness. If this equation may be allowed, then one has grounds for investigating the symbolism of any work, whether it be religious, psychological, or literary in terms of the rift in

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consciousness. The symbols of evil in particular demonstrate that fact that each symbol encompasses the religious, the psychological, and the poetic. The aspect of the individual symbol that one recognizes as a symbol leads in an indirect and circular fashion to these three aspects and through them, meaning is apprehended. It may be concluded that the primary symbols of evil indicate a unity of meaning whether they are found in a religious or literary text. The nature of the tear in consciousness is not directly accessible and requires the introduction of a hermeneutics to investigate the mythic-symbolic language in which it is indirectly revealed to the mind of man.

An examination of the symbols of evil found in Lord Jim indicates a striking correspondence in the work of Ricoeur. The correlation of the primary symbols of evil as described in Ricoeur, and the symbols found in Conrad's work cannot be considered to be accidental. The symbols lead then to an investigation of the myths and it appears that Lord Jim may possibly be described as a modern emergence of the ancient myths of the drama of creation, the myth of the fall, the tragic myth, and the myth of the exiled soul. It must be realized that the hope is not simply the drawing of a correspondence from preconceived categories and applying them to the literary work of art, but is rather an attempt to show that the symbols of evil, no matter what the context, demonstrate something about the nature of consciousness itself.
In particular, human consciousness indicates a flaw in consciousness that cannot be approached by any empirical or scientific means. For this reason the ties of literature and philosophy are reaffirmed in the sense that "Philosophy and literature are sisters." This relation is strengthened when it is understood that the scientific approach to literature will never really succeed as science tends to examine only parts of the whole while literature and philosophy investigate the whole of meanings. More precisely, Alfred Stern maintains that ". . . science examines the mutual relationships among determined objects, without any regard to the subject, both philosophy and literature concentrate on the relationships between man as a subject and the objective world." The philosophical concept of hermeneutics as applied to mythic-symbolic language then may provide a method of interpretation that goes beyond analysis to insight.

The approach to Lord Jim will then be determined by the rift in consciousness emerging from the work itself in terms of the primary symbols of evil and the corresponding myths wherein the symbols are found in abundance. It should be noted that the myth in modern times is no longer a primordial explanation of the unknown. Ricoeur points out the role of myth in the following passage:

7 Ibid., p. 101.
... the myth can no longer be an explanation; to exclude its etiological intention is the theme of all necessary demythologization. But in losing its explanatory pretensions the myth reveals its exploratory significance and its contribution to understanding, which we shall later call its symbolic function— that is to say, its power of discovering and revealing the bond between man and what he considers sacred. Paradoxical as it may seem, the myth, when it is thus demythologized through contact with scientific history and elevated to the dignity of a symbol, is a dimension of modern thought.  

If the events of Lord Jim reveal or comprise the myths as described by Ricoeur, then one is able to treat a broad range of events as he would an individual symbol. An examination of the novel demonstrates an almost direct correspondence between the major movements of Jim the myths previously describe. According to this view of Lord Jim, the first comparison occurs when Jim is involved in the Patna incident. This event corresponds symbolically to the myth of the fall. The second comparison is seen in Jim's aimless wandering and the myth of the exiled soul. When Jim becomes Lord Jim in Patusan the third myth of the drama of creation is re-enacted. The fourth correspondence is demonstrated by the death of Jim, which is the consummation of the tragic myth. It should be noted that the primary symbols of guilt, sin, and defilement emerge in all of the myths as described by Ricoeur. The symbols are basic to each of the myths that describe or relate the human experience of evil.  

The symbol of the myth of the fall is expressed in the works of Paul Ricoeur by reference to the Adamic myth. In the myth of Adam is found "... the anthropological myth par excellence; Adam means man." The myth of the fall is the symbolic myth of man and it thereby indirectly indicates something about the experience of human consciousness. The hermeneutic investigation of this myth indicated that the crucial symbol here is one of deviation. Ricoeur points out that "When we have traced the roots of the symbolism of the Adamic myth back to the more fundamental symbolism of sin, we shall see that the Adamic myth is a myth of 'deviation,' or 'going astray,' rather than a myth of the 'fall.'" Of course, a fall or leap, as it were, is involved in the myth of Adam as well in the incident aboard the Patna, but an investigation reveals that the falls or jumps were after-the-fact incidents. Adam and Jim go astray before the fall.

This first section of the novel is primarily an account of the events leading up to Jim's leap and the subsequent inquiry. Jim's first opportunity to act is fouled by his inability to respond properly and quickly to a situation even while he is still in instruction. One ship collides with another and while his fellows rush to the coaster's aid, Jim acts too late to be of any assistance. This subjective

9 Ibid., p. 232.
10 Ibid., p. 233.
failure on Jim's part later becomes physically manifest. The reader is aware that Jim is already, before the Patna episode, deformed or crooked, which is a symbolic reference to a going astray. The objective aspect of the symbol of deviation is introduced when Jim is disabled by a falling spar. The emotional scar of his inability to act in the incident of the ship collision becomes physically manifest, and although he wants to forget, "His lameness, however, persisted, and when the ship arrived at an Eastern port he had to go to the hospital. His recovery was slow and he was left behind."  

This is very interesting if Jim's lameness may be understood to be a stain, or more precisely, something that infects. The incident of the colliding ships made a subjective mark on Jim and the falling spar gave him an objective mark of defilement. For all intents and purposes, Jim is stained before the fall. Ricoeur points out, regarding the objective and subjective traits of stain, that "What remains astonishing is that these two traits will never simply be abolished, but will also be retained and transformed into new moments."  

The presence of stain or deviation in Jim does exactly this as it is transformed into the fall to which the Patna is witness.

The *Patna* is loaded with pilgrims when it runs over some unknown object. The crew feels that she is bound to sink and they rush to abandon ship. Jim at first will have nothing to do with this action, but he later jumps. The conclusion of the event occurs when the officers are rescued and they find that the *Patna* did not sink after all. In the following inquiry, Jim is the only officer to testify. His stain is permanently fixed at this point as "A man is defiled in the sight of certain men. Only he is defiled who is regarded as defiled; a law is required to say it; the interdict is itself a defining utterance." The court completes its symbolic role by pronouncing Jim's fault.

In the hermeneutics of the symbols of evil the next primary symbol, following that of deviation, is the symbol of sin. The fixing of the stain through the inquiry is comprehensible, but why Jim confesses poses a mystery for Marlow in view of Jim's past record. Jim explains by saying that "I may have jumped, but I don't run away." Jim faces the inquiry with the truth even though the others have made up a tale to protect themselves. The other officers will have nothing to do with him because of his compulsion to confess. Ricoeur indicates that the symbols of stain lead to the symbols of sin when "... the feeling of being

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13 Ibid., p. 36.

14 Conrad, p. 111.
abandoned gives a new impulse to confession. . . "15 The confession of the sin makes it objective while the subjective portion of sin is realized in the fact that sin ". . . is not the transgression of an abstract rule--of a value--but the violation of a personal bond."16 Jim has violated the personal bond between himself and his dreams. The broken bond is indicated by his need to confess.

The symbol of guilt is the last of the primary symbols and it too may be seen in the fall of Jim. The fall itself or at least the recounting of the jump indicates the guilt that Jim knows so well. After he jumps, Jim looks back to the ship and says,

"She seemed higher than a wall; she loomed like a cliff over the boat. . . . I wished I could die," he cried, "There was no going back. It was as if I had jumped into a well--into an everlasting deep hole. . . ."17

The round of primary symbols is made in the myth of the fall and in Jim's jump. Jim like Adam ". . . is summed up in one act: he took the fruit and ate of it. About that event there is nothing to say; one can only tell of it; it happens and hence-forth evil has arrived."18 The circular relation of the symbols is finally manifest in the symbol of the fall for Adam and for Jim.

16 Ibid., p. 52. 17 Conrad, p. 82.
18 Ricoeur, The Symbolism of Evil, p. 244.
Now Jim enters into the section of the myth that corresponds to the myth of the exiled soul. For Ricoeur, the myth of the exiled soul deals with the dualistic conception of the body and the soul. The interpretation is religious in The Symbolism of Evil, but according to the wager, the symbol may still have significance in Lord Jim. The soul is understood "... as coming from elsewhere and straying here below. ..."19 After the fall, Jim's wanderings are symbolic of the lost soul. Jim moves from job to job, succeeding in each one, only to be reminded of his past at some point. He tries to leave his past and his stain behind, but

"To the common mind he became known as a rolling stone, because this was the funniest part; he did after a time become perfectly known, and even notorious, within the circle of his wanderings (which had a diameter of, say, three thousand miles), in the same way as an eccentric character is known to the whole countryside."20

Jim is never able to escape his past and the primary symbols of evil again emerge in this new setting. Jim is stained and defiled by the realization that he has broken the bond. He is then destined to drift as an exile. His reaction to the mere presence of someone who knows of the Patna incident, symbolizes the extraordinary guilt that he feels. Ricoeur maintains that "... it is in the sight of other people who excite the feeling of shame and under the influence of

19 Ibid., p. 174.
20 Conrad, p. 141.
the word which says what is pure and impure that stain is defilement."\(^{21}\)

Jim at one point is employed by a man named Egstrom who thinks very highly of Jim. But the mere mention of the Patna incident by a Captain O’Brien causes Jim to leave Egstrom’s employ. O’Brien says, "I would despise being seen in the same room with one of those men."\(^{22}\) The statement excited Jim’s sense of stain. The sin of Jim’s fall is demonstrated in the symbols of suffering. The wandering from place to place is indicative of the pain of the exiled soul. Jim’s continued loss of self-respect is described in the following passage:

"It struck me that it is from such as he that the great army of waifs and strays is recruited, the army that marches down, down into all the gutters of the earth. As soon as he left my room, that 'bit of shelter,' he would take his place in the ranks, and begin the journey towards the bottomless pit."\(^{23}\)

Jim’s posture, as described by Marlow, embodies the primary symbol of sin as discussed by Ricoeur in the following:

... sin will not be fully understood until it is approached through the new factor in the consciousness of fault that we shall call guilt. Strictly speaking, it is only with this new moment that the consciousness of sin becomes the criterion and the measure of fault. The feeling of guilt will coincide exactly with the consciousness that the guilty one has of himself and will be indistinguishable from the "for itself" of the fault.\(^{24}\)


\(^{22}\)Conrad, p. 138. \(^{23}\)bid., p. 129.

\(^{24}\)Ricoeur, *The Symbolism of Evil*, pp. 81-82.
Jim's guilt is reflected symbolically in his wandering and lack of self-confidence and respect. The movement from a "going astray" to the wandering here below is manifest in the symbols referring to the "pit" that Marlow sees Jim wandering into. Jim's deviation has led to the symbol in this section of the exiled soul.

The third part of the novel coincides with the drama creation myth. Ricour says of this type that

We shall verify in the structure of the cult that corresponds to this "type" of the origin and end of evil [sic]; the cult can only be a ritual re-enactment of the combats at the origin of the world. The identity of evil and "chaos," and the identity of salvation with "creation," have seemed to us to constitute the two fundamental traits of this first type.  

The notion of primordial chaos may symbolically indicate evil. The case of Jim is significant in this regard because he arrives in a place that is chaotic in a primordial sense. The people of Patusan are divided into a number of factions. Jim through a number of heroic and symbolic acts brings about order from chaos. In the ancient drama-creation myths, the role of the gods is to eliminate evil by overcoming chaos. Jim symbolically assumes the role of the primordial gods and Marlow notes that a fisherman "... called him Tuan Jim."  

Jim's exploits are very much like the ritual re-enactment of

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25 Ibid., p. 172
the battles of creation. For defeating Sherif Ali, Jim is now made into "Lord Jim." The salvation of the people is equal to creation in myth as "Already the legend had gifted him with supernatural powers." Even in this moment of glory, one is reminded that each movement is at best tenuous because the stain may never be completely abolished. When Jim escapes the stockade at the beginning of his adventure, he arrives covered with mud, symbolically bearing his stain to the remotest areas of existence.

The fourth section of the novel coincides with, or reveals, the tragic myth. In this last section of the novel, Jim has to decide between one of his own kind, the stained Brown, or the people whose fate he now holds in his own hands. The result is disastrous for his dear friend, Dain Waris, who is killed and Jim must offer his own life in exchange. The situation is such that any action on Jim's part would have caused some tragic occurrence. Ricoeur describes this myth in the following terms:

Here the fault appears to be indistinguishable from the very existence of the tragic hero; he does not commit the fault, he is guilty. What, then, can salvation be? Not the "remission of sins," for there is no pardon for an inevitable fault. Nevertheless, there is a tragic salvation, which consists in a sort of aesthetic deliverance issuing from the tragic spectacle itself, internalized in the depths of existence and converted into pity with respect to oneself.28

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27 Ibid., p. 191.
Jim has had two opportunities to prove himself before; the incident on the training ship and the Patna case. He fails in both, but he does not fail in this, his final chance. Jim is not responsible for the death of Dain Waris, except in some indirect fashion as the tragic hero "does not commit the fault and yet, he is guilty." Jim throughout the novel carries his stain that must inevitably be transformed again and again, but never absolved. Jim's only salvation is tragic and aesthetic.

The crowd, which had fallen apart behind Jim as soon as Dormin had raised his hand, rushed tumultuously forward after the shot. They say that the white man sent right and left at all those faces a proud and unflinching glance. Then with his hand over his lips he fell forward, dead.\textsuperscript{29}

The inevitable event of Jim's death was predetermined by his very existence, as Jim's fault was an inevitable fault, as it finally is for all men.

The utilization of Ricoeur's hermeneutic findings has demonstrated that the primary symbols of evil eventually manifest themselves in a unity of expression. These unified myths may then be read as symbols themselves and may be treated accordingly. The interesting thing about \textit{Lord Jim} is that the symbols of evil found in the novel seem to emerge into parallel myths. This one incomplete study of such coincidences may not provide for inordinately bold

\textsuperscript{29}Conrad, p. 299.
claims concerning the nature of human consciousness, but the indications of potential insight into the rift of consciousness through a hermeneutic of mythic-symbolic language is too great to ignore. Hopefully the direction of one intrinsic literary method has been properly indicated.
CHAPTER V
CONCLUSION

The study of the literary work of art has taken many directions in the past that have not always been in the best interests of criticism. It has been indicated here that perhaps a review of traditional approaches to literature may suggest the need for new alternatives in literary theory, such as the phenomenological one, in order to turn to the work of art itself. All matters that are external to this object of investigation are to be regarded as irrelevant in the presentation of possible alternatives. If the extrinsic alternatives are not eliminated from the discussion, two problems arise. First, a distortion of the literary work itself may occur. Second, the intrinsic alternatives presented may not be judged on their own merits, but in terms of traditional theory. It is hoped that if any methodological advances are made, they will prove themselves; this proposition is founded in the concept of openness through the exclusion of presuppositions.

The extrinsic approaches to be eliminated are those derived from the point of view of the author and the reader. It is claimed that the author's or reader's personal feeling concerning a work tend to be relative and subjective and
thereby contribute little to comprehensive understanding of literature. If the states of affairs concerning the creation of a work are known, they are to be excluded from consideration as well. Of course, these issues may be matters of curiosity, but they distract from an understanding of the work itself. Tradition and previous studies pertaining to a particular work are to be disregarded as well. This negation would include the works or products of so-called objective analysis that ignore the subjective impact of literature. In this case, as in the others, it is noted that the critics have not failed in their task as they see it, but they have brought too many presuppositions to the work and thereby distort it as a work of art. It appears that there is more than enough in the work itself to investigate, without introducing extraneous matters that may only complicate the issue. No one should be limited in his areas of study, but only those matters proper to a study of the literary work of art should be allowed to be referred to as objects of literary theory and criticism. The problems encountered are complex enough without the introduction of matters that at best may distract from a proper study and at worst, distort a proper study of the literary work of art.

In contrast to the extrinsic alternatives, there appear to be four major types of intrinsic alternatives. Two of these approaches are theoretical and philosophical while two
are primarily concerned with application. Husserl's concept of transcendental phenomenology is extremely important for all versions of the intrinsic alternatives, as his philosophy provides the groundwork for the turn to the objects themselves. In the concept of intentionality, the critic is provided with a method by which the elimination of extrinsic matters is justified. At the same time, objective analyses are denied as possibilities in that objects cannot be simplified or categorized. It is crucial that nothing be brought to the literary work of art. The attempt is to provide a method with no presuppositions.

Roman Ingarden applies the precepts of phenomenology to the literary work of art. His investigation reveals that there are certain structures that may be found in every literary work of art. They are the phonetic sound stratum, the stratum of meaning units, the stratum of schematized aspects, and the stratum of represented objectivities. All of these strata form a unity in the literary work of art as each layer contributes to the emergence of every other stratum. If any one stratum is eliminated, then the work is no longer a literary work of art. Other strata may be found in particular works, but these four are absolutely necessary strata. Ingarden's work is important in that the nature of the literary work of art is described and distinguished from other writings.
Heidegger is important to an understanding of the intrinsic approach advocated in this thesis because he presents the problem concerning the ontological status of objects. It is his belief that objects have significance in time. If time is important, the next logical step involves the introduction of the problem of existence. These matters are crucial to Heidegger's thought because he is concerned with interpretation of objects rather than the structure of phenomenon. Heidegger's phenomenological hermeneutics constitutes a theoretical shift within the intrinsic alternatives. Husserl would deny the importance of all states of affairs including the time of events or phenomenon, whereas Heidegger is searching for the ground of being of all existent phenomena. The existence of an object in time provides for Heidegger some insight into the ontological status of any object or event.

The existentialists move beyond Heidegger and Husserl in their belief that what is important is the existence of objects. Husserl sought the structure of objects, Heidegger sought the ground of being, and the existentialists were astonished by existence itself. Existence is creative of itself, so the literary work of art becomes the product of ethical action. Each of the intrinsic alternatives is persuasive, and it would take a thorough study of each to finally determine which alternative provides the greatest insight. Rather than attempt such a project, one alternative is to
mediate the various positions so that one comprehensive theory of literature may be deduced from the intrinsic findings.

The philosophy of Paul Ricoeur is introduced because it seems to be a position within the arena of intrinsic alternatives that attempts to combine the best aspects of all the other approaches. Ricoeur in his study of the symbols of evil, utilizes the eidetic phenomenology of Husserl, but he also takes into account the lessons of Heidegger and the existentialists. The emphasis of Ricoeur's study is on the mythic-symbolic nature of language. Since language is crucial, Ricoeur finds it necessary to abandon Husserl's phenomenology for the hermeneutic phenomenology of Heidegger. Ricoeur in contrast to Husserl, maintains that there is one necessary presupposition and that is that the world is manifested through a sea of symbols. If one is to understand, then it is necessary to comprehend the language of symbol through which the nature of human consciousness is expressed. Symbols, according to Ricoeur, have three dimensions that are all necessary to the understanding of a particular symbol. They are the religious, psychological, and the poetic. The first two have been hermeneutically investigated by Ricoeur in previous works. The poetic interpretation of symbols is a projected work. The chance was taken, the wager made that enough had been shown about the hermeneutic method in Ricoeur's previous applications, that one is justified in drawing some
early conclusions concerning the potential outcome of such
an investigation. If the assumptions have any validity at
all, then some insight may be gained into the nature of
mythic-symbolic language, thereby demonstrating something
about the enterprise of the literary work of art.

The application of Ricoeur's insights to Conrad's Lord
Jim in the manner of a propaeduetic, demonstrated some sur-
prising relations. If the intrinsic alternatives provide
some possible method for the universal comprehension of
literature, then perhaps Ricoeur provides the unifying ground
for such an attempt. If one can postulate that the literary
work of art describes something about the nature of man
through human experience, it is not too far-fetched to claim
that literature describes the nature of consciousness. If
this is in fact the case, then a method that can reach that
consciousness through literature, may indicate the universal
qualities of the human experience in consciousness. The
contention here is that mythic-symbolic language describes
that aspect of consciousness that is peculiarly human and
that may be referred to as the rift in consciousness. Lord
Jim seems to provide an example for this claim.

In The Symbolism of Evil, Ricoeur demonstrated that
there are three primary symbols of evil: defilement, sin,
and guilt. These symbols are found at the base of man's
experience of evil. Now these symbols finally emerge in the
form of myths which in fact may be seen as whole units themselves.
When treated in this manner, any recreation of myth, even if it is found in modern guise, may be traced to the original myth and the experience that the myth attempts to re-enact. The myths emerge from the primary symbols, but they emerge from the original event in human consciousness. Thus the hermeneutic method is introduced so that the primary experience of evil and the rift in consciousness may be recovered. *Lord Jim* then may be seen as a modern re-enactment of the various myths that are attempts to comprehend the encounter of evil with the consciousness of man. The mythological readings of the novel are well-known, but this method provides a comprehensive vision of the structure of the myths in the novel that has not been previously espoused.

The four myths of evil as described by Ricoeur may be seen to correspond to the four sections that emerge from a hermeneutic reading of Conrad's work. The first section of *Lord Jim* that culminates in the inquiry concerning the Patna incident, corresponds to Ricoeur's interpretation of the myth of the fall. The second section, dealing with Jim's wanderings, is parallel with the myth of the exiled soul. The third part of the novel finds Jim becoming "Lord Jim" and this event is parallel to the drama-creation myth. The last myth Ricoeur describes is the tragic myth. *Lord Jim* ends in events that correspond to this myth. The relations described here must be more than merely accidental. The fact that
philosophical reflection has produced an interpretation of consciousness and evil that is so nearly parallel to the interpretation that arises from a particular literary work of art is in and of itself astonishing. This event alone is justification for a further and more thorough investigation of the work itself. The potential for insight is phenomenal. The intrinsic approach to the literary work of art has come full circle. What has been wagered in clarity has been hopefully restored two-fold in insight. For the price of tradition, the way for a new perspective has been won.
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