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Conceptual Blending, the Second Naïveté, and the Emergence of New Meanings

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Abstract: The field of cognitive linguistics has generated a powerful set of theoretical tools for analyzing the ways in which we understand, communicate, and create concepts. In the conceptual integration theory of Gilles Fauconnier and Mark Turner, the cognitive process known as double-scope blending provides a high-definition model for the phenomenological hermeneutics of Paul Ricoeur. In particular, Ricoeur's notion of developing a second naïveté through the blending of ancient and contemporary worlds of meanings can be viewed as the double-scope integration of concepts across disparate conceptual frames. This re-modeling of Ricoeur's hermeneutics gives it a new level of clarity and precision in cognitive scientific terms, which in turn may be utilized in service of theological and other forms of discourse. Conceptual integration theory also sheds light on other Ricoeur-inspired hermeneutical models and makes a case for the revelatory character of scripture through the meaning-making process of interpretation. The interpretation of the image of God concept in an evolutionary worldview serves as a heuristic example of second naiveté as double-scope blending.

Keywords: Blending, Cognitive linguistics, Double-scope conceptual integration, Emergent meanings, Gilles Fauconnier, Hermeneutics, Mark Turner, Mental space, Paul Ricoeur

Often with some mixture of academic and faith-based motivations, biblical scholars and theologians seek to render renewed understandings of sacred texts and traditions through critical reflection. They are betting that through interpretation, these traditional sources of wisdom have something unique and important to say. Theoretical frameworks in hermeneutical philosophy and cognitive linguistics help the interpretive process to be more self-conscious and open to analysis, evaluation, and development.

In this vein, hermeneutical philosopher Paul Ricoeur has famously wagered that ancient myths are still able to offer illuminating and morally fruitful understandings of the human condition, provided that today's interpreters read and live out of these ancient texts with what he calls a "second naïveté." This task of critical exegesis, interpretation, and appropriation of religious symbols involves a cognitive clash of past and present worlds of meanings.

The field of cognitive linguistics has also generated a powerful set of theoretical tools for analyzing the ways in which we understand, communicate, and create the concepts we live by. In the conceptual integration theory of Gilles Fauconnier and Mark Turner, the cognitive process known as double-scope conceptual integration provides a high-definition model for Ricoeur's phenomenological hermeneutics. In particular, Ricoeur's notion of developing a second naïveté through the blending of ancient and contemporary worlds of meanings can be viewed as the double-scope integration of concepts across disparate conceptual frames. This re-modeling of Ricoeur's hermeneutics gives it a new level of clarity and precision in cognitive scientific terms, which in turn may be utilized in service of theological and other forms of discourse.

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We will explore these connections in the following five sections. The first outlines Ricoeur's concept of the second naïveté and related hermeneutical insights from his later writings. The second section summarizes Fauconnier and Turner's theory of conceptual integration, aka blending, and defines four types of conceptual integration networks. Third, we see how the notion of developing a second naïveté interpretation can be modeled in terms of double-scope blending. Fourth, we view three Ricoeur-inspired hermeneutical procedures that also bear this structure—Mary Gerhart and Allan Melvin Russell's metaphoric process, Philip Hefner's rendering the theological tradition, and J. Richard Middleton's hermeneutics of mutuality. Finally, in light of the attention that Ricoeur, Hefner, and Middleton give to Genesis, the interpretation of the image of God concept in an evolutionary worldview serves as a heuristic example of second naiveté as double-scope blending. Through its compelling explanation of how novel meanings emerge and open up new avenues of thought and action, conceptual integration theory makes a case for the revelatory character of scripture through the meaning-making process of interpretation.

1 The second naïveté

At the close of *The Symbolism of Evil*, Ricoeur makes a provocative claim that on the other side of historical criticism, ancient myths, scriptures, and their symbols are able to gain renewed power to disclose the transcendent and evoke faith, hope, and love. The particulars of Ricoeur's claim are multi-layered. First, this assertion of the enduring revelatory power of myth symbols requires that their mode of expression is irreducible. They convey meanings in ways that cannot fully be expressed by other means.[1] Second, this claim comes at the culmination of Ricoeur's comparative evaluation of symbols concerning the beginning and end of evil. Because Ricoeur is a Christian philosopher, there is no wonder that he lauds the historical staying power and revelatory potential of what he calls "the Adamic myth and the eschatological vision of history" found in the Judeo-Christian scriptures.[2] Third, Ricoeur emphasizes that the post-critical reappropriation of scriptural meanings emerges as a different kind of belief and understanding than that of pre-modern hearers. That is, the development of a second naïveté requires an integration of ancient and contemporary worlds of meanings which is self-conscious of the hermeneutical circle through which the interpreter dymythologizes and remythologizes the symbolic world of the text.[3]

Ricoeur defines second naïveté most succinctly as "a creative interpretation of meaning, faithful to the impulsion, to the gift of meaning from the symbol, and faithful also to the philosopher's oath to seek understanding."[4] He goes on to explain that such a critical-hermeneutical endeavor begins "as an awareness of myth as myth."[5] This awareness of the exegete and would-be interpreter is a statement about both genre and form—the mode of expression and cultural function of certain narratives. A "myth," as Ricoeur defines it, is "not a false explanation by means of images and fables, but a traditional narration which relates to events that happened at the beginning of time and which has the purpose of providing grounds for the ritual actions of [people] today and, in a general manner, establishing all the forms of action and thought by which [a person] understands [herself] in [t]his world."[6]

By this definition, the creation accounts and other narratives of the primeval history in Genesis (i.e., chapters 1-11) are properly called myth. At the same time, other biblical concepts like "the peaceable kingdom," "kingdom of God," "resurrection," "new creation," etc. might be considered myth symbols, as they belong to the eschatological vision of history built upon the Adamic myth. Biblical or otherwise, myth encodes a symbolic world which transcends that of our ordinary experience and invites its hearers to test whether and how its seemingly counterfactual vision of reality is nonetheless true. That is, does the world of the text somehow disclose or reveal the way things really are and how we hope they can really be? What

1 See Wallace, *The Second Naiveté*, 27.
2 Ricoeur, *The Symbolism of Evil*, 232-78, 306-46.
3 Ibid., 351.
4 Ibid., 348.
5 Ibid., 350.
6 Ibid., 5.

does the dissonance between our lived reality and the symbolic worldview of the text challenge us hearers to believe, hope, and do in order to address this tension?

Ricoeur calls belief in the literal, historical, or otherwise factual truth of myth the "first" or "primitive naïveté."[7] This mode of belief is expected and excused of pre-modern hearers, but is usually derided as fideism or fundamentalism vis-à-vis the contemporary conceptual frameworks of historical-critical exegesis, the empirical sciences, and the philosophical paradigms in which they operate. So how does one transcend the dichotomy of fideism vs. historicism?

Summarizing Ricoeur's more mature hermeneutical theory, theologian Lewis S. Mudge lists three "moments" in the creation and reappropriation of scriptural meanings—"testimony in the making," "the critical moment," and "the post-critical moment."[8] While this nomenclature postdates *The Symbolism of Evil*, it serves as a faithful representation of the hermeneutical steps leading to second naïveté interpretation. The biblical testimony in its original contexts belongs to the first naïveté. In the critical moment the exegete situates the text and its meanings in their historical context. In this step, the interpreter who would move beyond exegesis must also acknowledge the contextual, subjective nature of her own encounter with the text and its world of meanings. In other words, the contemporary reader's view to the meanings of the text is always framed by a contemporary world of meanings. We can only read through the window or lens of our own conceptual paradigms. This hermeneutical circle, says Ricoeur, "can be stated bluntly: 'We must understand in order to believe, but we must believe in order to understand.'"[9] Thus, in the post-critical moment, the interpreter can self-consciously frame biblical concepts via contemporary meanings, while allowing those biblical meanings to have a transformative effect on contemporary concepts.

Much is lost and gained in this hermeneutical process. As Ricoeur puts it, through criticism, "something has been lost, irremediably lost: immediacy of belief. But if we can no longer live the great symbolisms of the sacred in accordance with the original belief in them, we can, we modern [people], aim at a second naïveté in and through criticism."[10] According to this view, the loss of a certain form of faith through "demythologization is the irreversible gain of truthfulness, intellectual honesty, objectivity."[11] However, the ultimate aim of criticism in this process is to revivify myth symbols, not repudiate them. As Ricoeur insists, "it is by *interpreting* that we can *hear* again. Thus it is in hermeneutics that the symbol's gift of meaning and the endeavor to understand by deciphering are knotted together" in the hermeneutical circle.[12]

The development of a second naïveté challenges the interpreter to locate the enlightening and humanizing insights of the myth and reframe its ancient meanings with background concepts taken from the present. In short, the second naïveté is not equivocal to the primitive or first naïveté of the myth's original hearers. Rather, the relation of the first naïveté to second is analogical, because the latter must appropriate and reformulate the ideological kernel of the former. A second naïveté must locate itself on what Ricoeur calls a hermeneutical "trajectory" (*trajectoire*) that is traceable in the creation of the myth itself and from its ancient contexts into present and future interpretations.[13] Emerging as a re-statement about the way things really are and ought to be, Ricoeur holds that the "second naïveté aims to be the postcritical equivalent of the precritical hierophany."[14] The meaning-making process of "creative interpretation" seeks to renew the revelatory significance of sacred texts and their "power to raise up, to illuminate, to give order to [a] region of human experience."[15]

7 Ibid., 351.
8 Mudge, "Paul Ricoeur on Biblical Interpretation," 18-32; cf. Ricoeur, "Toward a Hermeneutic of the Idea of Revelation," 73-118; "the Hermeneutics of Testimony," 119-54.
9 Ricoeur, *The Symbolism of Evil*, 351.
10 Ibid.
11 Ibid., 350.
12 Ibid., 351; emphasis original.
13 LaCocque and Ricoeur, *Thinking Biblically*, 6; cf. Ricoeur, "On the Exegesis of Genesis 1:1-2:4a," 132, 134; Wallace, *The Second Naiveté*, 51-71.
14 Ricoeur, *The Symbolism of Evil*, 352; cf. 356.
15 Ibid., 355.

But how does the interpreter know that the second naïveté really has any disclosive and evocative power? Here is where Ricoeur's wager comes to the fore as a means of getting "beyond the 'circle of hermeneutics.'"[16] This circle is not vicious because it is open to the input of new data, as well as verification in terms of its explanatory power and even moral fruits. Through interpretation, submits Ricoeur:

> I wager that I shall have a better understanding of [humankind] and of the bond between the being of [humankind] and the being of all beings if I follow the *indication* of symbolic thought. That wager then becomes the task of verifying my wager and saturating it, so to speak, with intelligibility. In return, the task transforms my wager: in betting *on* the significance of the symbolic world, I bet at the same time *that* my wager will be restored to me in power of reflection, in the element of coherent discourse.[17]

The development of a second-naïveté is, in other words, a bet on the truth value of meanings which emerge from the integration of concepts across disparate conceptual frames.[18]

2 Conceptual integration theory

This way of construing the creation of new kinds of meanings through the recombination and reconfiguration of existing concepts should be familiar to anyone who has encountered the works of cognitive linguistic theorists, such as Gilles Fauconnier, Mark Turner, George Lakoff, and Mark Johnson.[19] Conceptual integration, also known as blending, projects and merges meanings from two or more packets of conceptual information, which Fauconnier and Turner call "mental spaces." This projection of meanings then frames and fills a new mental space called a "blend."[20] This cognitive activity is creative, in that blended mental spaces often display emergent structure—conceptual relations that are not available in any of the input mental spaces, and are not predictable from them.[21] This creation of new significance and modes of signification is a dynamic mental process of composing, completing, and elaborating blends. Usually with little to no conscious effort, the human brain-mind recruits and projects conceptual meanings from input mental spaces, structures conceptual relations via frames and scenarios from those same and/or other input spaces, and runs the blend "imaginatively according to the principles that have been established for the blend."[22] At the cognitive level, therefore, the emergent structure of conceptual blends constitutes the neurologically-based, dynamic domain of all semantic meanings, including the generative grammar which relates them. In conceptual integration theory *meaning* is always a dynamic mental process, not a product or property of words, symbols, sentences, or objects themselves.

The illustration in figure 1 is adapted from Fauconnier and Turner's "basic diagram" for visualizing the cognitive process of conceptual integration.[23] I have added explanatory notes in parentheses to label the elements of Fauconnier and Turner's diagram. This figure also serves as a guide for the blends I describe in the concluding section on the interpretation of the image of God concept. The diagram provides a visual representation of cognitive structures and how they blend to produce new meanings. The dots represent individual conceptual structures, which can populate one or many of the larger circles representing mental spaces. Alternately, a mental space could also be called a cognitive domain. The boundaries of these spaces and the various distances at which conceptual structures relate to one another within them are designed to convey the notion that meanings are bounded by conceptual frameworks which dictate the logical distances and semantic relations among concepts. The solid and dashed lines show conceptual structures

16 Ibid.

17 Ibid.; emphasis original.

18 For Ricoeur's more systematic discourse on the relationship of meaning and truth, see *The Rule of Metaphor*, 247-313.

19 For the sake of brevity, only the first two of these scholars are cited extensively here. Important works by the other two include Lakoff and Johnson, *Metaphors We Live by*; *Philosophy in the Flesh*; Lakoff, "The Neural Theory of Metaphor."

20 Fauconnier and Turner, *The Way We Think*, 40, 47.

21 Ibid., 42-49; cf. "The Origin of Language," 133-35; "Principles of Conceptual Integration," 269-73, 278-82; "Rethinking Metaphor," 53-55.

22 Fauconnier and Turner, *The Way We Think*, 48.

23 Ibid., 46.

being projected across mental spaces and their conceptual frameworks. Abstracted from the input spaces on the right and left is a generic space on top containing the structural elements seemingly shared by both input spaces. The generic structural similarities which allow or prompt the cross space mapping of meanings may only be a single aspect of a broader concept, a similar relationship between concepts, or a family resemblance to a common form of human activity. Whatever the similarity, the differences among the concepts, conceptual frameworks, and semantic relationships within each input space are what generate a newly-structured constellation of meanings in the blended space, which emerges in the process of conceptual integration.

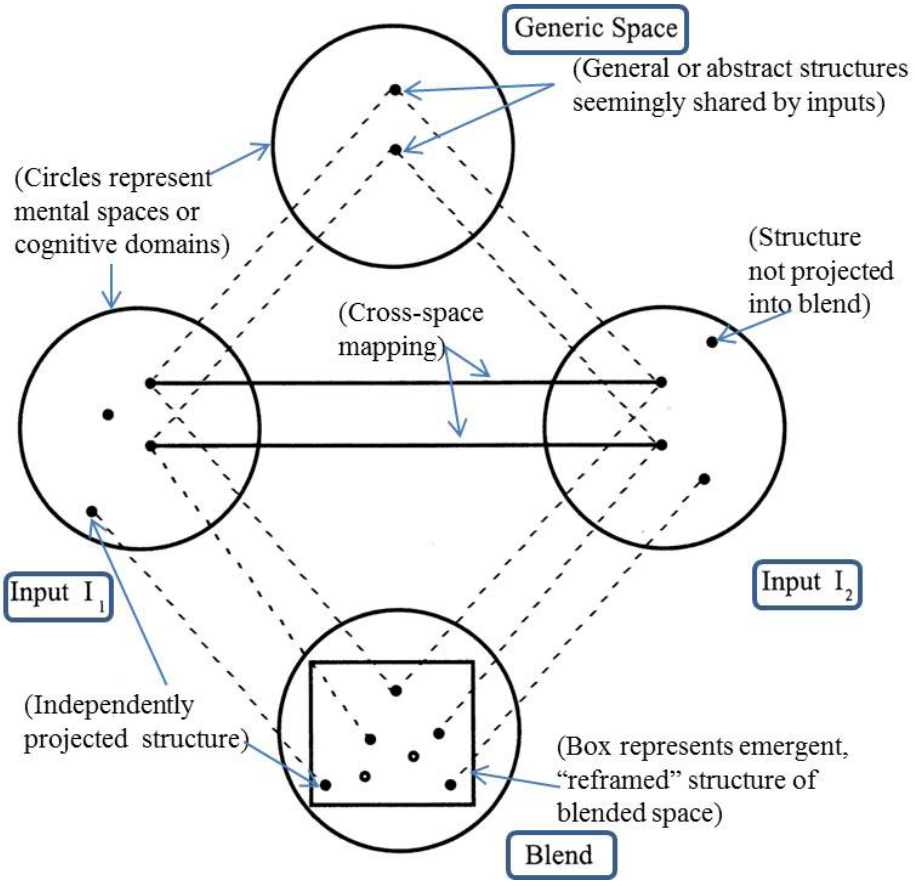

Figure 1: Conceptual Integration „Basic Diagram"

Fauconnier and Turner have identified four types of blends by which we transform the world we experience into our symbolic universe: "simplex," "mirror," "single-scope," and "double-scope." Simplex networks derive adequate input elements and frames from our biological and cultural history, applying those frames as values to various elements in the environment.[24] The statement, "Jason is the father of Quinton" represents a simplex network of family relations which frames the two male values, "Quinton" and "Jason," according to the projected roles of father and son. The projection of framing elements and values is direct and reflects the kind of truth-conditionality often expressed in the supposedly prototypical semantic form of first-order Fregean logic.[25] However, simplex conceptual integration networks are not always so simple in their meaning. Recall, too, that completing a blend often involves recruiting framing and building materials from other mental spaces. The integration networks represented in the statements, "Joseph was the father of Jesus," "The Pope is the father of all Catholics," "The Pope is the father of the Catholic Church," and "George

24 Ibid., 120.
25 Ibid.

Washington is the father of our country" all involve running more than one kind of blend simultaneously, with little or no conscious thought.[26] The significance and potential truth value of these statements are structured differently because of the various background concepts giving shape to the meaning of "father" in each of these deceptively simple sentences.

The mental spaces involved in mirror networks share a single organizing frame.[27] Sharing this organizing frame is how the input spaces mirror one another in achieving a blend.[28] To illustrate this type of blending, Fauconnier and Turner recount a riddle in which a "Buddhist Monk begins at dawn one day walking up a mountain, reaches the top at sunset, meditates at the top for several days until one dawn when he begins to walk back to the foot of the mountain, which he reaches as sunset."[29] The riddle is this: only knowing that the monk takes the same path up and down the mountain, does the monk ever occupy the same place at the same time of day on both journeys? Fauconnier and Turner suggest discovering the solution by imagining the Monk taking both journeys on the same day.[30] With both journeys framed by this impossible scenario, the solution emerges in the blend. One does not know exactly where it would happen, but at some point along the path, the Monk would have to run into himself, as it were.

Fauconnier and Turner define single-scope blending as integrating "two input spaces with different organizing frames, one of which is projected to organize the blend."[31] Many metaphors utilize single-scope blends to prompt inferences across domains of meaning, especially where the organizing frame of reference is more well-known than the other or is serving to qualify, clarify, or expand it. As Fauconnier and Turner suggest, "The scenario of two men boxing gives us a vibrant, compact frame to use in compressing our understanding of two CEOs in business competition. We say that one CEO landed a blow but the other recovered, one of them tripped and the other took advantage, one of them knocked the other out cold."[32] One input space is that of economic competition; the other is of a boxing match. The identities involved are projected from the CEO space, but the relations of role and causation are framed only by the boxing space. Without delving into the perhaps unfamiliar terminology of corporate transactions, the blend achieves the intended meaning via a more concrete conceptual domain.

Most relevant for our present purposes, double-scope blending involves two or more "inputs with different (and often clashing) organizing frames as well as an organizing frame for the blend that includes parts of each of those frames and has emergent structure of its own."[33] In double-scope blends, multiple—often disparate—input spaces play a role in framing the blend, giving shape and structure to new conceptual relations within the blended mental space. The new conceptual relations seeming to make sense of the reality construed by the conceptual integration are preserved in the blend. Those that do not are discarded or ignored. For Fauconnier and Turner, these conceptual relations constitute the grammar of the blend, and thus its mode of signification.[34] This cognitive restructuring creates the semantic logic of the blended mental space. In Ricoeur's terms the novel conceptual relations emerging through the hermeneutical process constitute "a recharging" of the "*logos* of the *mythos*" and the world of the text.[35]

A small-scale example of double-scope conceptual integration operates in the metaphor, "This surgeon is a butcher." As Fauconnier and Turner note, to make the inference that this is a pejorative statement, one must be able to blend automatically the neuro-cognitive structures involved in the conceptual frames of both surgery and meat-carving. The metaphor "underscores the clumsiness of the surgeon and its undesirable effects."[36] However, neither clumsiness nor undesirable effects are found in the conceptual

26 Ibid., 140-41.
27 Ibid., 47.
28 Ibid., 123.
29 Ibid., 39.
30 Ibid., 122-26.
31 Ibid., 126.
32 Ibid.
33 Ibid., 131.
34 Fauconnier and Turner, "The Origin of Language," 134, 144, 146-47, 150.
35 Ricoeur, *The Symbolism of Evil*, 352-53.
36 Fauconnier and Turner, "Principles of Conceptual Integration," 279.

frames of either meat-carving or surgery. Both butchers and surgeons can be quite skillful, organized, and sanitary, producing desirable results through their efforts. Both professions involve the cutting of body tissue in precise ways, making use of sharp steel instruments, and even wearing similar clothing. Yet when the blended space of the metaphor is framed by the setting, characters, and purposes of surgery along with the tools, methods, and purposes of butchery, clumsiness and its detrimental (perhaps even fatal) consequences emerge in this double-scope blend.[37] This integration of concepts creates meaning that is distinct from and not reducible to any meaning contained in or predictable from the originating conceptual frames.

3 Second naïveté as double-scope blending

The question now becomes how precisely to blend Ricoeur's phenomenological hermeneutics with Fauconnier and Turner's cognitive linguistics. How do these models map onto one other? What are the common generic features that call for the coordination of these models for making meanings? At least six shared features allow second naïveté interpretation to be described as a hermeneutical exercise of double-scope conceptual integration.

First, both Ricoeur's hermeneutics and conceptual integration theory are structural explanations for "the way we think," to quote the title of Fauconnier and Turner's monograph. Both theories hold in their own ways that the human being is not a *tabula rasa*—a blank slate to be filled with whatever kind of information is available in the environment. Rather, we bear a species-specific intelligence, which is extremely adept at making concepts and symbolizing them in language. The possibilities open to this meaning-making intelligence are constrained by the neuro-cognitive structures of the human brain-mind in its evolutionary emergence and socio-historical situatedness. Ricoeur's existential and phenomenological theorizing more closely resembles Immanuel Kant's musings on categories of understanding than cognitive linguistic theories. However, like Ricoeur, cognitive linguists are certainly indebted to the Copernican Revolution in epistemology epitomized in Kant's turn to the subject and the idea that concepts arise in a contingent manner from perceived phenomena, rather than from epistemic access to things in themselves. In addition, contemporary cognitive linguists have access to the various findings and interdisciplinary dialogues among more modern forms of psychology (e.g., cognitive, behavioral, and evolutionary), anthropology, computer science, neuroscience, game theory, artificial intelligence, etc. With all the methods, instruments, and data produced by these disciplines, it stands to reason that cognitive linguists like Fauconnier and Turner would shift from a more phenomenological model of how we comprehend, communicate, and create meanings to a more computational, systemic, input-output model.

Second, both Ricoeur's hermeneutics and Fauconnier and Turner's conceptual integration theory use spatial metaphors to describe the meaning-making process. This commonality is rooted in the structural nature of both theories, and even the term "structuralism" takes part in this extended metaphor. Concepts for Ricoeur belong to a "'world' of symbols,"[38] a "symbolic world,"[39] a "world of the work," "a world of the text."[40] Interpreters navigate these worlds of meanings in a hermeneutical circular from this or that "point of departure."[41] Even the etymology of "symbol" (*sumbolon*) speaks of the "casting together" of concepts, as if objects, into the same "region" of understanding in one's world of meanings.[42] Visually and terminologically, Fauconnier and Turner's theory develops this spatial metaphor even more thoroughly and self-consciously, as it "maps" conceptual "structures" across "mental spaces." Ricoeur's world of the text, as deciphered through critical exegesis, may be depicted as one input space. The interpreter's

37 Ibid.

38 Ricoeur, *The Symbolism of Evil*, 353.

39 Ibid., 355.

40 Ricoeur, *The Rule of Metaphor*, 220; cf. Klemm, *The Hermeneutical Theory of Paul Ricoeur*, 83, 85 on "world of the work" as "world of the text."

41 Ricoeur, *The Symbolism of Evil*, 348.

42 Ibid., 355.

contemporary conceptions of the text's topic constitute another input space. An interpretation emerges as a blended mental space through the tectonic collision of these regions from their respective worlds of meanings.

Third, this picture of texts, symbols, and worlds of meanings as mental spaces underscores another commonality among these theorists. They all agree that there is no objective access to meanings. Meaning is a cognitive process and product of the hearer or reader. Strictly speaking, therefore, interpretation is ubiquitous to symbolic communication in general, since meanings cannot be transferred immediately from one subject to another. This principle is the crux of Ricoeur's hermeneutical conclusion that "the symbol gives rise to thought."[43] Signifiers like words, sentences, narratives, rituals, etc. are given intersubjectively as an object of sensation and thought. But their appropriation is necessarily subjective. Each receiving subject must literally *make sense* of them. There is no conceptual *creatio ex nihilo*. To one degree or another, all intersubjective communication is a hermeneutical circle standing on the wager that the recipient *gets* what is being communicated. In synchronic dialogue the verification of this wager can be made manifest in the rapport between the interlocutors. Textual hermeneutics is a bit different, since the producer of the text is usually not available for conversation. In biblical interpretation the world of the text, constructed through historical criticism, takes the place of speaking subject and becomes an object of thought. In Fauconnier and Turner's terms the reader frames the world of the text as a mental space, which is in turn is able to be blended with other mental spaces. This final process of conceptual integration constitutes interpretation. Second naïveté interpretation, as a contemporized understanding of ancient meanings, beliefs, hopes, and other phenomena, is no more or less complex than the task so often and casually demanded of us as students and scholars: "put the author's thoughts into your own words." This "putting" is none other than the cross-space mapping of and reframing of conceptual structures.

Fourth, in many instances of double-scope blending, as in rendering a second naïveté interpretation of ancient texts, there is a clash of disparate conceptual frameworks. Hermeneutical scholar David E. Klemm gives a helpful description of the distinction and distance among the first naiveté, its apprehension through criticism, the conceptual frameworks of the critic, and their integration in the second naïveté. He notes that there "is no direct reference to the appearing symbol, either in the naive response or in the critical grasping of the symbol. Second naiveté [sic] instead has reference to the *consciousness of* the symbol of both the naïve and critical forms, so that the agreement or disagreement between those two forms of consciousness can be discerned."[44] The reader can imagine what it might be like to believe as an original hearer did, but the intellectually responsible reader cannot simply adopt that perspective. In the example of interpreting the image of God concept we explore below, the scientifically-informed reader can discern what it might mean to bear the image of the creator God. However, this task means reimagining divine creativity and the emergence creatures and their characteristics in evolutionary terms. By discerning the hermeneutical trajectory of the text in terms of its ideological function for its first authors and hearers, the reader determines some of the conceptual structures that populate the generic mental space of the blend. At the same time, the reader must also determine which disparate conceptual structures from the world of the text and her own perspective are necessary to project into the blend. As Ricoeur asserts, this necessity arises as a function of faithfulness "to the gift of meaning from the symbol" cast along its hermeneutical trajectory, as well as faithfulness "to the philosopher's oath to seek [an intellectually honest] understanding."[45]

Fifth, this conceptual integration is double-scope because the blend is created through the mutual interaction of concepts and their structural frameworks. The second naïveté emerges by allowing the symbol and its world of meanings to restructure the reader's perspective, while also allowing the reader's world of meanings to restructure the perspective encoded in the text.

Sixth, the blended meaning of the second naïveté has an emergent structure. The resulting concepts and conceptual relations in the double-scope blend are irreducible to and unpredictable from the meanings contained in the input spaces. In this case these input mental spaces belong to the symbolic world of the text

43 Ibid., 347-57.

44 Klemm, *The Hermeneutical Theory of Paul Ricoeur*, 72; emphasis original.

45 Ricoeur, *The Symbolism of Evil*, 348.

on one side and the interpreter's native world of meanings on the other. Interpretation creates a genuinely novel perspective by forcing these worlds to collide. The interpreter then has the conscious choice to live out of—or we could say within—the blended mental space of the second naïveté.[46]

This appropriative step into a restructured world of meanings goes beyond mere interpretation as a process of understanding one set of concepts vis-à-vis another. For the religious interpreter, appropriation of the interpretation is the ontological and moral wager of faith. To borrow from the Apostle Paul, anyone living in and through this mental space is a new creation (2 Corinthians 5:17). As Ricoeur puts this principle, the second naïveté aims at "a qualitative transformation of reflexive consciousness."[47] The person who comes to read in the light of faith becomes a new person through interpretation and appropriation. She is converted, we could venture to say, as she allows her outlook on the world of experience, and her interaction with it, to be shaped by the world of the text and the sacred referents it aims to make present. We could even say that this disclosive and evocative function of scriptures constitutes their revelatory capacity. The contextual nature of sacred texts like scriptures dictates that their revelatory capacity is partly a function of their intelligibility. The intelligibility which emerges anew though interpretation relies in many cases on double-scope blending.

4 Variations on a hermeneutical theme

My own interest in Ricoeur's concept of the second naïveté and its ripeness for cognitive linguistic explanation comes through earlier encounters with scholars developing and applying Ricoeur's insights in ways that gave special attention to natural scientific, epistemological, and/or ethical concerns.[48] Reading these scholars and their use of Ricoeur, I began to notice variations on a hermeneutical theme—family resemblances in their theories and procedures for the creation of new meanings through the restructuring of the old. As I became more familiar with conceptual integration theory, I also observed that in their own ways, each of these Ricoeur-inspired theories could be considered an epistemic or hermeneutic exercise of double-scope blending. These variations on a theme include the theory of "metaphoric process" in the works of theologian Mary Gerhart and physicist Alan Melvin Russell, the notion of "rendering the theological tradition" in the theological anthropology of Philip Hefner, and the "hermeneutics of mutuality" found in the biblical scholarship of J. Richard Middleton. The following subsections contain a brief description of these theoretical frameworks and their connections to Ricoeur, and through him to conceptual integration theory.

46 As readers well versed in hermeneutical theory reach the fifth and sixths points of this section, they may notice a similarity between this description of second naïveté hermeneutics as double-scope blending and Hans-Georg Gadamer's notion of a fusion of horizons. Developed in his 1960 monograph, *Truth and Method*, Gadamer's notion that general textual hermeneutics is an empathetic fusion of the writer's and reader's often disparate historically conditioned perspectives is contemporaneous with Ricoeur's hermeneutics of second naïveté. While various similarities can be discerned in their theories concerning the effects of the interpreting subject on the meaning-making process of understanding, there was no extensive discourse between the two. By the early 1970s, Ricoeur did acknowledge and accept Gadamer's fusion of horizons concept, as can be seen in the Appendix to *The Rule of Metaphor*, 319. Philosopher Jean Grondin argues convincingly that the surprising lack of dialogue between these two scholars may lie in the different questions their respective theories seek to address. In a word, Gadamer's interests seem more descriptive, while Ricoeur's appear to be more prescriptive. In "Do Gadamer and Ricoeur Have the Same Understanding of Hermeneutics?," 49, Grondin suggest that "if Gadamer's question is, basically, 'What *happens* to us when we understand?,' Ricoeur's is 'How should we interpret, which methods should we follow, if we want to understand ourselves better?'" (emphasis original). In this sense, therefore, the intentional and constructive application of double-scope blending as a hermeneutical tool in theology and biblical studies has more affinity with Ricoeur's prescriptive aims at the end of *The Symbolism of Evil* than Gadamer's more descriptive claims about the fusion of horizons in *Truth and Method*.

47 Ricoeur, *The Symbolism of Evil*, 356; cf. Klemm, *The Hermeneutical Theory of Paul Ricoeur*, 73, 111, 140-63.

48 I am especially indebted to my mentors, Jame Schaefer and Robert Masson, who introduced me to this body of scholarship and helped me to synthesize it.

4.1 Metaphoric process

Ricoeur himself wrote the foreword to Gerhart and Russell's monograph entitled *Metaphoric Process: The Creation of Scientific and Religious Understanding*.[49] His influence and inspiration are especially visible from Gerhart's side of this bidisciplinary work, as well as in her other scholarship. Gerhart and Russel's book does not seek to give a general theory of metaphor; so it is not a second appendix to Ricoeur's *The Rule of Metaphor*.[50] Rather, they define metaphoric process as an epistemic event in which two known and supposedly disparate concepts are held to be analogous, causing a distortion in the shape of one's world of meanings, altering relationships among concepts and creating space for new modes of understanding. Gerhart and Russell's spatial metaphor for the process of "coming to know and to understand" or "knowledge-in-process" is built upon Gerard Holton's concept of "themata," defined as "recurrent cognitive structures," which can be visualized as interconnecting points on a plane.[51] These points, or concepts, relate to one another in regions of the plane called "fields of meanings."[52] The entire plane constitutes a "word of meanings," which is illustrated in two dimensions, but shown to change shape in three dimensions in order to convey the changing relationships among the concepts within and among the various fields of meanings.[53]

We can translate this visual model into Fauconnier and Turner's basic diagram of a blend in figure 1. Imagine the background of the diagram as a world of meanings and the four circles representing mental spaces as fields of meanings within that larger world. The various dots and lines representing cognitive structures and their projection are already featured in both models. Where the models require the most translation is in the different ways they each represent the qualitative cognitive shift resulting from the forced analogy between the input mental spaces, or the fields of meanings, as Gerhart and Russell call them. In the blended mental space Fauconnier and Turner place a box to represent a new conceptual frame. They move the projected cognitive structures to different respective distances and orientations to represent the emergent cognitive structure of the blend. Gerhart and Russel's illustrations, by contrast, lift the world of meanings off the page, as it were, and bend one mental space around to be closer to the other. This three-dimension change in conceptual distance correlates to conceptual reframing and restructuring in the emergent structure of the blend found in Fauconnier and Turner's two-dimensional diagram.

The uncanny similarity of metaphoric process to *double-scope* blending in particular can be seen in Gerhart and Russell's distinction between their working definitions of metaphor and analogy, when compared to Fauconnier and Turner's distinction between double-scope and single-scope blends. In Gerhart and Russell, a metaphor "is a structural change in a field of meanings," or even more precisely, "a distortion of the world if meanings [via] an uncalled-for analogy between [...] two knowns."[54] Following Ricoeur, they call these tensive analogies "live metaphors" (*métaphore vive*), because of their epistemic forcefulness and ability to generate new ontological horizons.[55] In Fauconnier and Turner's terms, this kind of metaphor is a double-scope blend, because concepts *and* conceptual frameworks are projected from the input mental spaces to create novel cognitive structures in the conceptual framework of the blend.

By contrast, Gerhart and Russel define an analogy as an expansion of a field of meanings achieved by relating one known set of concepts and their interrelationships to another. Similarly, a single-scope blend qualifies, elaborates, or expands a mental space through the projection of conceptual framing material from only one of the mental spaces. In Fauconnier and Turner's CEO-boxer metaphor, the conceptual framework of boxing is projected to qualify the actions and accomplishments of the CEO. But in the blend, there is no sense in which the roles of boxer or CEO are qualitatively different than what they were already understood to be. Thus, in Gerhart and Russell's terms, the boxing metaphor is an analogy, in that it constitutes an

49 Cf. Gerhart and Russell, *New Maps for Old*.
50 See Gerhart and Russell, *Metaphoric Process*, 105-106.
51 Ibid., 89, 93-94.
52 Ibid., 93-94.
53 Ibid., 109-20.
54 Ibid., 95, 120.
55 Ibid., 115-17.

expansion rather than a distortion of the world of meanings. Metaphoric process, like double-scope blending, creates new kinds of significance. For Gerhart and Russell, "There is a sense in which analogies are found—they either exist or do not exist. Metaphors, by contrast, are created. When worlds of meaning are willfully distorted, what is the case was not the case earlier and what was the case no longer is."[56]

Another illustration of the distinction between analogical and metaphoric processes resides in the difference between the discovery of a new planet in the solar system and the insistence that the sun is the center of the solar system, not the earth (ala Copernicus). The discovery of a new planet adds to the field of meanings pertaining to "solar system." The once uncalled-for proposal of heliocentricity changes the contours of that entire field of meanings, allowing for astronomical concepts to relate in ways they never did *or could* before grasping this insight. Much like Ricoeur's account of the second naïveté and its hermeneutical development, metaphoric process creates new understandings through the collision of symbolic worlds.[57] Like Ricoeur's "symbol," Gerhart and Russell's "metaphor" gives rise to thought.[58]

4.2 Rendering the theological tradition

Tucked near the end of Philip Hefner's seminal monograph on theological anthropology is a chapter whose title captures the essence of his Ricoeur-inspired interpretive procedures and goals—"Rendering the Theological Tradition."[59] The expressed aim of *The Human Factor: Evolution, Culture, and Religion* is to propose "a theological anthropology in the light of the natural sciences."[60] Hefner likens his interpretive project to cooking borscht with his grandmother, who had little regard for following a set recipe. He asserts that "[j]ust as borscht has to emerge from what our ingenuity can put together new each time we go to the fridge—it cannot be made from the succulent leftovers we remember from last month—so, too, our theology takes shape from the interaction of tradition with the present situation."[61] In hindsight of Hefner's many constructive references to Ricoeur throughout the book, this cooking metaphor from the preface begs to be superimposed with the concept of the second naïveté. [62] Working backwards through this metaphor, the tradition standing in contrast to present understandings correlates with the first naïveté. The bittersweet memory of the last time we tasted the leftovers of grandma's cooking correlates to the loss of the immediacy of belief through historical criticism. The dish that emerges irreducibly through the cooking process, the new ingredients, and the cooks' imagination is the novel theological understanding, the interpretation, the second naïveté. In this vein, we could just as easily translate "the tradition" and "our present situation" into mental spaces, and view the theology which "takes shape from the[ir] interaction" as a new conceptual framework emerging through this double-scope blend. Although writing too early to cite Fauconnier and Turner, Hefner even uses the phrase "conceptual integration" to describe the construction of his theological theory.[63]

56 Ibid., 113-14.

57 See ibid., 109. Here, Gerhart and Russel translate Ricoeur's hermeneutical circle of belief and understanding into an epistemological circle in which "all observation is theory-laden" and "all theory is observationally inspired."

58 I would be remiss not to note that Gerhart and Russel are wary of second naïveté as an end goal of interpretation. Their real misgivings, however, have less to do with Ricoeur's own description of second naïveté than a worry that the use of original terminology in a second naïveté interpretation will result in a renewed first naïveté. This concern is not unwarranted. However, in *Metaphoric Process*, 64-66, and 127, and 196 n.8, Gerhart and Russell appear to underemphasize the self-consciously post-critical character of the second naïveté. Just as there is a dialectical tension in the creation of meanings through metaphoric process, the second naïveté always stands in tension with the world of the text that comes to be reformed through critical interpretation.

59 Hefner, *The Human Factor*, 229-53.

60 Ibid., xiii.

61 Ibid., xiv.

62 Ibid., 21, 123, 125, 138, 141, 142, 151, 156, 159, 171, 177, 187, 202, 220, 231. Explicit references to second naïveté are found on 142, 187, 202, 205.

63 Ibid., 18, 263.

Hefner's references to Ricoeur begin with the latter's definition of "myth" from *Symbolism of Evil* and continue through Hefner's endeavors to reformulate the myth symbols of biblical anthropology, including the "image of God" and the "knowledge of good and evil." He agrees with Ricoeur that myth is quintessentially human, in that all human cultures make myths which in turn give shape to our humanity through the rituals and moral praxis they make possible. Like Ricoeur, Hefner seeks to make the "myth-ritual-praxis complex" as intellectually and morally credible as possible.[64] Myth challenges its hearers to believe in, but also to understand and validate, the transcendent realities it purports to reveal. In this way, notes Hefner, scriptures and their symbols propose a sacred vision of "what really is," or "the way things really are."[65] Because referents like "God," "the kingdom of God," "love," "forgiveness," "eternal life," and the like are not objects of empirical observation and often seem too good to be true, they require a wager of faith. They challenge us to think and live *as if* they are true. Their validation, according to Hefner, is a function of their "explanatory power" and practical "fruitfulness."[66]

In this way Hefner likens his theological project to a scientific theory which must in some ways remain "underdetermined by the data."[67] What emerges through his integration of a Christian symbolic worldview and a natural scientific portrait of *Homo sapiens*' biocultural evolution is a theological theory of the created co-creator.[68] In a nutshell, the depiction of human beings as created co-creators is a reformulation of the biblical statement that we bear the image of our creator God and/through an ambivalent condition of freedom. We are contingent in our existence and conditioned by the evolving genetic and cultural streams of information through which we—as a species and as individuals—have emerged. Hence, we are "created." At the same time, among earth's living species, we have a qualitatively distinct impact on our symbolic and physical worlds. In the conscientious, but fallible, construction of "what really is" and ought to be, we can choose to cooperate with one another, other creatures, and the God whose purposes we may seek to discern, construe, and make manifest. Hence, we are "co-creators."

Because the natural sciences provide different kinds of data and a host of "novel facts"[69] not belonging to the biblical texts or most of the theological corpus, created co-creator theory is a novel "rendering" of the theological tradition. Hefner prefaces his reformulations of key doctrinal themes by acknowledging that his interpretation imbues these traditional concepts with new kinds of significance. Therefore, some readers may find his interpretations to lack some element that his Ricoeur-inspired theologizing aims to achieve—explanatory power, moral and other practical fruitfulness, and faithfulness to the hermeneutical trajectory of the theological sources. For these reasons, Hefner emphasizes the precarious nature of the interpreter's task. As he puts it, both the first and last words of the phrase, "'Rendering the Theological Tradition' [...] can mean either to convey a treasure with integrity or to betray it in ignominy." This etymological insight, he continues, "stands as reminder to all of us who would revitalize myth and ritual, or renew theology, that we stand on a slippery slope."[70] Yet to retrieve something precious, tackling a slippery slope may be necessary. There is, Hefner claims, a vital

> constructive work that awaits the theologian and philosopher in fulfilling the task that Paul Ricoeur has set before us—to transport the traditional symbols, where they are important vessels of information for us, into the realm of contemporary, second-naiveté [sic] experience, and enable them to coalesce with our experience to provide genuine knowledge of reality, for the sake of our wholesome living.[71]

In light of Fauconnier and Turner's conceptual integration theory, I believe we may justifiably replace the word "coalesce" in this quote with "blend."

64 Ibid., 156.
65 Ibid., 33.
66 Ibid., 26, 32.
67 Ibid., 156.
68 Ibid., 23-51, 255-75.
69 Ibid., 268.
70 Ibid., 229.
71 Ibid., 142.

4.3 Hermeneutics of mutuality

Our last interpreter, biblical scholar J. Richard Middleton, claims a much more tenuous connection to Ricoeur than Gerhart and Russel or Hefner. In his monograph, *The Liberating Image: The* Imago Dei *in Genesis 1*, Middleton constructively cites *The Symbolism of Evil* and its analysis of the Babylonian creation epic *Enuma Elish*, but he never mentions the second naïveté. He never sets out to extend, apply, or even respond directly to Ricoeur's hermeneutical theory.[72] Beyond a single note referencing George Lakoff, Middleton also largely ignores cognitive linguists.[73] So why mention Middleton at all? First, his early references to Ricoeur acknowledge, at least implicitly, the enormous weight of Ricoeur's work within the postmodern hermeneutical sphere; and he does not attempt to escape its gravitational pull.[74] Second, working within this sphere of influence, Middleton develops a set of hermeneutical principles, exegetical conclusions, and interpretive inferences which look a great deal like a second naïveté interpretation of the image of God concept in Genesis. He seeks to make this symbol morally fruitful in our current socioeconomic and ecological contexts. He also aims to make the idea of bearing the image and likeness of a creator God intellectually satisfying to scientifically-informed readers today. Without mentioning conceptual integration theory, his interpretation of God's liberating image blends ancient and contemporary conceptual frameworks in ways that challenge contemporary readers to appropriate and follow the ideological trajectory of Genesis 1. Third and finally, Middleton's work contributes directly to the content of the concluding section below. His masterful exegesis and interpretation help to identify and chart the symbolic worlds of the text and the contemporary reader. Careful to distinguish and map these worlds of meanings, Middleton also forces them to impact and reshape one another.

Noting the many challenges of interpreting biblical concepts today, Middleton cites Ricoeur and other hermeneutical theorists who have exposed the impossibility of retrieving anything like an objective, original, or intended meaning of scriptural texts. Yet, rather than be crushed or flung away by the gravity of this reality, Middleton makes a case for the positive value of subjectivity and the non-vicious nature of the hermeneutical circle.[75] Acknowledging the limits of his own perspective, he also cites the need for "disciplinary debordering" among historians, exegetes, and theologians. These scholars must in turn open themselves to constructive dialogue with feminists, ecologists, and scientists, among others.[76] Again, Middleton is not so much concerned about the credibility that might be lost by failing to engage in such discourse. Rather, he has faith and hope that he and others will gain by their interactions with one another and the world of the text. In this vein, Middleton offers an alternative to Ricoeur's language of the "loss" of the first naïveté and its immediacy of belief, by way of "gaining" critical distance and a more intellectually honest understanding of biblical texts. While not opposing this language, Middleton prefers that of "mutuality or connection—even of love."[77]

A hermeneutics of mutuality does seek to survey the "symbolic world of Genesis 1."[78] However, the initial metaphor for this interpretive perspective does not depict texts, their meanings, and readers' perspectives as worlds, fields, or spaces to be explored, mined, reformed, etc. Rather, Middleton's hermeneutical metaphor portrays texts and readers as speakers and listeners conversing. Viewing the textual and contextual objects of inquiry more like subjects, a hermeneutics of mutuality sees the world of the text as a dialogue partner worthy of love. Middleton never pretends that his own contextuality and subjectivity have no bearing on what he takes the text to mean. However, Middleton's metaphor of mutuality implies that he must not only be open to expanding his perspective, but also willing to alter it in order to be a better listener and relationship partner.

72 Middleton, *The Liberating Image*, 178-79, 252, 254, 257.
73 Ibid., 287n40.
74 Ibid. 17-18, 40, 71.
75 Ibid., 37-38.
76 Ibid., 39.
77 Ibid., 40.
78 See Middleton's title to *The Liberating Image*, chapter 2, "The *Imago Dei* in the Symbolic World of Genesis 1."

Yet to whom is Middleton ultimately listening? Since he acknowledges a religious and ideological stance as part of the subjectivity he brings to interpretation, and because he views his interpretation as a theological act of faith seeking understanding, Middleton implies that he is ultimately listening for a word (*logos*) from God (*theos*).[79] To repeat Ricoeur's sentiments on the value of losing one's immediacy of belief, the "aim at a second naiveté in and through criticism" is a way to renew whatever revelatory significance the text may have to offer. "In short," he says, "it is by *interpreting* that we can *hear* again. Thus it is in hermeneutics that the symbol's gift of meaning and the endeavor to understand by deciphering are knotted together."[80]

In contrast with Hefner's created co-creator theory, Middleton's monograph sets out to renew a biblically-based theological anthropology from a different direction. He does not focus first and foremost on a contemporary portrait of *Homo sapiens*' biocultural evolution and then seek to integrate that perspective with biblical and other theological depictions of humanity. Rather, Middleton spends the vast majority of his time in what Ricoeur would call the critical moment. While never forgetting that he is attempting to listen across more than two and a half millennia of history, Middleton attempts to hear as clearly as possible the voice of the ancient text and the meanings it likely would have conveyed to its earliest hearers. These meanings, he argues, would have stood as an ideological critique against the *mythos* and *ethos* of empire.

Specifically, the most likely conceptual background for the assertion in Genesis that human beings bear the image and likeness of God belongs to a Neo-Babylonian ideology in which the royal and priestly elites of Mesopotamian society act as vicars of the gods. According to the mythology of the Babylonian creation epic *Enuma Elish*, Marduk rose to power among the gods through military might, subjugated his enemies or made the cosmos from their corpses, created human beings to bear the toil of the gods so they might rest, and set Babylonia at the geographical and cultural center of the world to implement a microcosm of this social order. While repeating a surprising number of narrative details from this cosmogony, the *mythos* and *ethos* of Genesis 1:1-2:4a projected a very different view of reality against this conceptual backdrop.[81] The Judeans conquered and exiled by Babylonia in the early sixth century BCE would have readily felt the collision of these symbolic worlds when hearing Genesis 1. In this biblical account the drama of creation features a single deity, and all human beings have been blessed to be this creator's royal representatives. Bearing an agential image and likeness to a single creator, all humans are called to be fruitful and multiply and rule over the earth and other creatures. This Priestly[82] creation account does not depict human labor as slavery to the gods and their royal representatives. Rather, hearers of Genesis 2:1-3, in conjunction with Exodus 20:8-11, are invited to imitate the creator by resting from all labor every seventh day, as God did after creating everything.

Going deeper, the concept of a single creator deity renders the idea of divine ranks and rivalries moot, suggesting that no one bears the image of a better god than anyone else. This concept that everyone, even the least and the lowest, bear equal dignity as bearers of the divine image is visible throughout the first eleven chapters of Genesis, but especially in two of its three explicit references to the image of God. First, the conferral of the royal responsibility in Genesis 1:28 to subdue the earth and rule over its creatures and climes lacks a command to have dominion over other human beings. Second, Genesis 9:6 links the prohibition against human bloodshed to the universal possession of the divine image, suggesting that no one—including the image of Marduk himself, the king of Babylon—has divine license to kill. Though approaching Christian anthropology and ethics from different angles, Middleton and Hefner follow a very similar hermeneutical trajectory in the interpretation of what it means to bear the image of God today.

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79 Middleton, *The Liberating Image*, 37, 41-42.

80 Ricoeur, *The Symbolism of Evil*, 351; emphasis original.

81 Ibid., 118-269. For a brief summary of Middleton's main arguments in this large section of text, see Roberts, "'Fill and Subdue'?," 44-46.

82 The phrase, "Priestly creation account" refers to the contents of Genesis 1:1-2:4a as produced by the so called Priestly ("P") source. This source material and its compilers likely comprised the latest textual stream of the Torah, which dates to around the time of the Babylonian captivity.

5 Conclusion: interpreting the "image of God"

How Middleton projects the ideological trajectory of Genesis into the 21st century showcases the ways in which his hermeneutics of mutuality bears a number of features common to second naiveté interpretation and/as double-scope blending. That is, he explains at various points in his argument how his own particular socioeconomic, ecological, and scientifically-informed worldview has helped to frame and focus his attention on various features in the symbolic world of Genesis 1. In turn, he allows the world of the text to reshape his own world of meanings.

Middleton's interpretive conclusions involve at least three double-scope blends. The first of these is actually located in the world of the text. This first blend then generates one of the input spaces and conceptual frameworks for the other two. In the initial blend, the image of God concept in Genesis emerges in the clash of ancient worlds of meanings. As Middleton puts it, "the primeval history functions both to recontextualize Israel's core theological and ethical traditions in terms of universal human history and the categories for this recontextualization are taken precisely from [...] Mesopotamian traditions."[83] The next blend reframes the notion of divine creativity in Genesis in terms of an evolutionary view of the world. And the final blend generates principles for human action in the image of God based on this reframed concept of divine creativity. These final two blends, it turns out, bear a number of notable parallels to Hefner's created co-creator theory.

We have already seen in the final paragraph of the section above how monotheizing the concept of creation has the effect of democratizing the concept of the divine image in the double-scope conceptual integration of ancient Judean and Mesopotamian worlds of meanings. If we view *Enuma Elish* and the Priestly account of creation as input mental spaces, they turn out to share a rather large generic space. The order and means of creation and the purposes of created entities are similar in Genesis and *Enuma Elish*. Both Marduk and Elohim (the designation for God in Genesis 1) create through fiat[84] and separating—light from dark, waters from waters, heavens from earth, and water from land. Heavenly luminaries also bear similar functions in each account. Both cosmologies define the role of the sun, moon, and stars in marking the passage of days and seasons. However, missing from the generic space are ancient Mesopotamia's many gods. The heavenly luminaries and forces of chaos mentioned in Genesis 1 are utterly depersonified and offer no resistance to God's creative fiat, "Let there be." The omission of multiple gods has a transformative effect on the concepts of God's creativity and the divine image in the blended mental space. Creating, filling, and ordering the world can no longer be an act of violence, since divine rivalry and necessity are no longer the impetus for creation and the raw materials for the world and human creatures are not the bodies of defeated deities. The concept of bearing the image of the creator God has also been reframed. Where only one deity is preserved in the blend, there are no superior and inferior gods for various castes or tribes of people to represent. In this divine image, all are called to have dominion over the earth, not over one another, and no one can shed another's blood with impunity.

Middleton draws an analogy—in the way that Gerhart and Russel use the term—between this ancient theological self-affirmation over against an oppressive ideology and his own experience of growing up as "a Christian in the Third world (Kingston, Jamaica), [where his] sense of identity was decisively shaped by the cultural, geographical, and political shadow of North America."[85] In his efforts to interpret the image of God concept in Genesis, Middleton *hears* the ancient Judeans, and perhaps their God and his, speaking to and through his own experience of living on the margins. This interpretation is then offered in faith and hope of giving voice to others in similar or worse situations today. Now living and working in North America, Middleton's interpretation challenges his readers to place themselves in the contemporized world of the text and ask whether they are in solidarity with the today's exiles or complicit with the *mythos* and *ethos* of today's empires.

83 Middleton, *The Liberating Image*, 201.

84 Ibid., 66. After accepting the challenge to defeat Tiamat on the condition he is declared chief among the rebel gods, Marduk's allies test his potency by placing a constellation before him, which he destroys then recreates by speaking to it.

85 Ibid., 202.

A second place where Middleton's contemporary worldview gives new shape to the meaning of Genesis is where he suggests ways in which the idea of God's creativity may be integrated with an evolutionary view of the world. In the final pages of *The Liberating Image*, Middleton waxes scientific, citing the fractal geometry and the infinite complexity of a Mandelbrot set to describe the literary form and ideological function of Genesis 1 as an account of divine creativity. While Genesis 1 contains a number of identifiable patterns, it also lacks a perfect symmetry or predictability. Middleton proposes that this may be an unwitting and fruitful example of art imitating life. In his words, "If we take the text's rhetorical form as reflecting in some way its substantive message, the literary variations suggest that creation is neither random (stochastic) nor strictly predicable (deterministic)."[86] Middleton sees the creator God in Genesis 1 behaving less like a unilateral dictator of what will be and more like a "strange attractor" of what might be.[87] In the post-critical spirit of the second naïveté, today's reader need not be guilty of anachronism when viewing the emergence of complexity, life, and biodiversity through the process of natural selection and, in so doing, hear the creator enabling and inviting the creation to "let there be...," "let the earth bring forth," "be fruitful...," "fill the earth...," etc. Middleton's reframing of a theological notion of creativity generates a new mental space in which to see the God of the Bible as one who creates through evolutionary processes. This mutual reframing of biblical cosmogony and evolutionary cosmology is the second double-scope blend in Middleton's interpretation of the image of God in Genesis.

While Hefner and other interdisciplinary scholars offer much more comprehensive integrations of evolutionary theory and a theistic view of the cosmos as created, Middleton's brief concluding remarks in this vein dovetail nicely with this emerging theological tradition. For example, where Hefner's created co-creator theory explicitly addresses the concept of the image of God, it harmonizes beautifully with Middleton's interpretation. Just as Middleton emphasizes the manner in which God in Genesis 1 creates a very good, self-filling world through speech, Hefner insists that the "image of God should be interpreted, consequently, in terms of what is the quintessence of human nature, from the perspective of how that nature may be said to be analogous to God." He continues, "I suggest that what is at the core of this analogy today is the character of *Homo sapiens* as free creator of meanings, one who takes action based on those meanings and is also responsible for those meanings and actions."[88]

Hefner's interpretation of the image of God also relates to the third double-scope blend in what amounts to Middleton's second naïveté rendering of the image of God concept. In one input space stands the world of the text in which God shares creative power with creatures, blesses and enables them to be fruitful, makes one creature who is able to relate conscientiously to this created order and the creator, and calls this state of affairs "good." In the other input space stands our contemporary awareness of our evolved and evolving world, our state of ecological crisis and its human causes, a global socioeconomic order marked by multiple forms of injustice and violence, and myriad resources for evaluating and changing this state of affairs. Blending these conceptual frameworks to reshape one another, Middleton concludes with a liberating ethics of the image of God which values ecosystemic sustainability, acknowledges the equal dignity of all human beings, and seeks to ensure that each of us is afforded the means to discover and actualize our creative potential, as we strive to contribute to the goodness of the creation. "Perhaps, then," he wagers, "our practice of reading (which we might call a hermeneutic of love) would be in harmony with the new ethic of interhuman relationship and ecological practice that we are aiming for and that is rooted in the *imago Dei*, an ethic characterized fundamentally by power *with* rather than *power over*."[89]

This exercise of interpreting the image of God concept with the help of Gilles Fauconnier and Mark Turner, Paul Ricoeur, and some Ricoeur-inspired scholars is intended to serve as an example of the ongoing relevance of Ricoeur's hermeneutical scholarship, especially when it is recast in terms of conceptual integration theory. People of faith today have no choice but to blend disparate conceptual frameworks in their efforts to hear what might be considered the word of God in ancient human speech. My own wager of

86 Ibid., 285.
87 Ibid., 286-288.
88 Hefner, *The Human Factor*, 239.
89 Ibid., 297.

faith includes a bet that the theoretical tools of cognitive linguistics will be a fruitful resource in navigating this hermeneutical circle.

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