

Barnabas Aspray: a philosophy angle

It is well known that Ricoeur preferred biblical exegesis over systematic theologians, especially as regards the nourishment of his religious faith. While he largely affirmed the methods and goals of biblical criticism, his hermeneutic philosophy sought to sharpen our understanding of the relationship between (1) author, (2) text, (3) reader, and (4) the reality inhabited by all three and to which they point. He wanted scholars to ask the question: who are we as exegetes and what are we doing exegesis *for*? This paper explores the metaphysical backdrop to Ricoeur's hermeneutic philosophy, especially as it bears on his approach to biblical interpretation. We shall set Ricoeur against the context of contemporary biblical scholarship, showing how his hermeneutics serves both to affirm and supplement its self-understanding.