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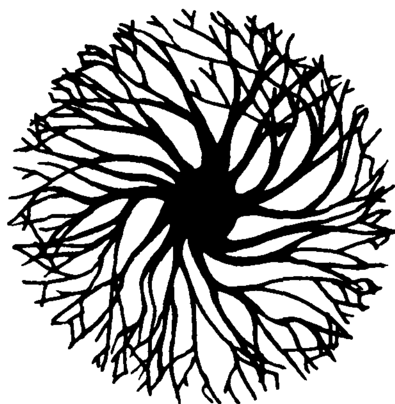

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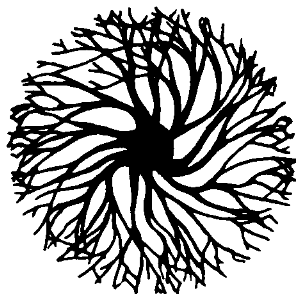

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PREFATORY NOTE

Given its title one might expect _Centrum_ to be out of time, the still point in the turning world; instead it is in time and behind it, perennially one year (more or less) behind schedule. Hence the difference between our cover date and the calendar.

That difference should be made up by two issues now in preparation and due to appear soon. They will include:

- RALPH COHEN / "What is Literary Theory?"
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- DEREK PEARSALL / review of Stanley B. Greenfield, _The Interpretation of Old English Poems_

JAMES NOHRNBERG

On Literature and the Bible

I

The Bible is a text, and therefore a kind of literature. Its organization is a work of both the theological and literary imagination, and yet it is not exactly a literary "work". Nonetheless, the Bible is more literary than, say, mortgages, papal bulls, newspapers, or texts of history or philosophy. To state the problem of the relation between the Bible and literature requires that we bear both of them in mind, without allowing either to migrate completely into the territory of the other. One way to do this is to state their relation as an *inversity*: there are biblical phenomena that seem peculiar to the form of the Bible, and that exist in complementary distribution to phenomena characteristic of literature generally.

We may start from the principle that the Bible is a *canon*, which for our purposes here means a delimited and prescribed literature, and even a consolidated or completed or collapsed one: it is the difference, in astronomical terms, between literature as a cooling red giant and the Bible as an imploded white dwarf. One might compare the growth of literature to the expansion of the orchestra to include all the instruments; the Bible might be compared to the organ, a proto-orchestra and yet a single instrument, *organon organorum*, as it was once called.[1] As the orchestra grew, the organ was reduced to the place of the piano in relation to it. Perhaps something similar has happened to the Bible also. A "collapsed literature," we will see, does not have the normal genetic relations of most literature, for it neither generates other examples of its kind, nor does it exhibit the same array of species. The Bible is often said to be a library, the work of an inspired school of bibliotechnicians; but if so, it is not exactly a select library; rather, it is intent upon a kind of totalization, like an anthology without the cuts--a paradox that overcomes the usual objections to anthologies.

Thus between the covers of the Bible we find not so much a member of the class literature, as a rival kind of organization. The contrast is between a number of poets each producing his own individual canon within the field of a technically

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[*Centrum*, 2:2 (Fall 1974), 5-43]

canon-less literature, and an ancient literature that has become, as it were, all canon.[2] Canon, by definition, is complete canon, and its members form a literature of sufficiency. All members of the class canon, upon its formation, have been identified. Literature, more typically, includes texts that are still waiting to be elicited from the order of words.

In literature it is the individual work that exhibits homogeneity, while literature as a whole seems to seek to multiply diversity. The genres of literature signify, in part, this generativity. In the Bible the homogenizing and heterogenizing tendencies actually coincide, difficult as this is to understand at first. The result is that while literature remains a molecular aggregate, the Bible has become an atomistic unity. The chaos in literature is centrifugal, of the sort produced by all things falling apart; the chaos in the Bible is centripetal, the kind produced by all things merging.

The canon is homogenous, but the actual biblical text, so often being compounded of many texts, is a kind of pastiche, like the dialect of Homer. In literature, where the individual text is pure and individualized, the canon is the pastiche. (This becomes especially clear in attempts to prescribe it.) The Bible, something tells us, ought to have a form, but it will have to be the kind of form that absorbs and digests other forms. The Bible lacks the normal partiality of form to perfection and selectivity, at least until its accumulation is arrested by the fixing of the canon; at that point, its inclusiveness reverses itself to become exclusiveness. Canon, it seems, is actually given us in lieu of form. The exclusive unit in literature, in contrast, is the individual work, with its many indications of its postulate of autonomy or separateness. The Bible contains no such completely individualized works; books like Ruth and Job are easily isolated for literary-critical scrutiny, of course, but they have a curious and symptomatic tendency to treat isolated personalities outside of Israel, and thus to locate these personalities in the buffer-zone of a book. On the whole, the collective personality Israel has produced a collective literature: one produced by schools. Nonetheless, the unity of the Bible is not precisely doctrinal. It would be wrong to derive its authority from its consistency, in contrast to the Constitution. There is one state, but there are many Churches, and many versions of the Bible as well. The Bible preserves many ideological traditions, not all of them in very much agreement. Only the faith of the compilers is there to tell us that these traditions are not ultimately contradictory. We cannot wish this conviction upon the compilation itself.

Overall, the Bible agrees that there is only one God, and that he has given first priority to Israel, despite the apparently grander world-destinies of other nations. We might consider the literary implications of a contrast between a homogenizing and heterogenizing theological tradition. The pagan eventually arrives at the conception of the oneness of God by overcoming most of his original premises: he takes the Stoic-Ciceronian-Hermetic path through natural religion, making an inductive leap from the allness of nature or the cosmos to the singleness of a governing principle; and then he subordinates the proliferation of lesser deities into aspects of this godhead. The Hebrew arrives at the one God by having him have nothing to do with nature at the start at all. The Hebrew first knows his own self-affirming unity of consciousness, and proceeds retroductively: there is only one God for and in Israel: all the other gods of the outlying nations are vanity, at least so far as Israel is concerned. God's people are to have no other gods in his presence, "before him." Though not strictly monotheistic, this commandment is the preparatory discipline for monotheism, which must have its roots in those ceremonies recorded in the Bible where Israel buries or forswears other gods.[3] This exclusive or <u>very</u> God comes to characterize the divine sphere universally, but the pagan process of bringing an endless proliferation of divine conceptions under one rubric is just the opposite of expanding a single conception to a universal application. Doubtless Israel was aided in universalizing her god by exposure to Egypt and Babylon, world-empires being the places where the doctrine of monotheism first turns up in intellectual world-history; but the monopolistic unity of Babylon's idea is the opposite of the individuating character of the election of Israel, and the unity of Israel's god is only secondarily syncretistic. It is typical that the pantheon of the Canaanites should have been absorbed into Israel's belief as the court of sons or angels of God as father.[4]

Monotheism is conceivably a force making for canon: the sacred texts combine to attest to the self-sameness of the god in all his various manifestations. Polytheism, we may speculate, is a force making for a pluralized literature, the various mythologums and god-tales relativizing mythology as a whole and inclining the culture that preserves them, however much or little, towards a sanctification of story-telling for its own sake. Literature is potentially identical with its own subcategory, fiction; fictions are multiple; and there is a broken analogy between polytheism and multi-fictionality. Anyone familiar with the great comic-book heroes will suspect that literature of the most popular kind supplies a kind of satisfaction for the polytheistic religious appetite.

Generic considerations may be offered to extend the "in-versity" of the Bible and literature. If the Bible were a specific literary work, we should be able to specify its genre. It reminds us of epic, because it has two of three basic requirements for an epic: the concept of a total action, and a nearly determinative relation to a culture. Such an epic is among the purposes of a culture. And like the epic, the Bible seems to be somewhat pre-generic, epic often serving as a holotype for narrative genres as a whole. There is even an epic tendency in the Bible in the membrification of the text into verses--to this medieval practice we owe the loss of the distinction between verse and prose in the King James Version. In this case, however, the Bible's repetitive rhythm is somewhat accidental, and cannot make the Bible genuinely epic. And despite the Bible's epic range of subject, the narrative materials seem more like the pre-epic deposit of saga. The exodus story coalesces like an epic--the salvation-epic of quest and conquest--but the burden of tradition and institution imposed upon it, along with the liturgies of plagues and legal promulgations and the actualization of the Passover in it--make it more like an anniversary oratorio.

The miscellaneous character and encyclopedic scope of the biblical accumulation might also remind us of the anatomy-form of prose fiction described by Northrop Frye.[5] But the place of the skeptical or Quixotic or Mennippean point-of-view--which produces such varieties as Shandy-ism, Pantagruelism, and the clothes-philosophy of _Sartor Resartus_--is taken in the Bible by Yahwism and Christianity, which are quite the reverse of skeptical philosophies. The vocational idea of such works appears in the Bible in a vastly different form, but the form of the book as an "institution" is preserved in this comparison.

Finally, it might seem that the Bible is history-writing. History, as its etymology indicates, is a form of inquiry, ultimately an inquiry addressed to witnesses. In many ways the Bible disregards this kind of inquiry: the deeds of King So-and-So, are they not written in the Book of Such-and-Such? In the Bible the real interest is in the witness historical characters bore to God, and the witness history bears to Him: thus such-and-such came about, so that prophecy of so-and-so might be fulfilled. Such a prophecy, being a witness before the event, can hardly be the witness of history, but must be the witness of faith. The biblical interest in the evidence of God's will before the event is not the proper object of historical inquiry, but of the prophetic mentality. Books like Luke begin with a strong gesture towards eyewitnesses, but they are countered by the Jesus of John, whose response to doubting Thomas--"blessed are they who have not seen, and yet believe"--warns us that faith

is not to be solely based upon witnesses, nor even, in fact, upon an affirmation of the literal character of the Resurrection.

If the Bible (and Luke is a good example[6]) condenses history with a theology of history, we might still be able to classify it among narrative forms as a persuasive type, namely "saving history." But narrative implies followability, the sense of a story being told, rather than getting told in spite of something opposed to it.[7] The Bible stories are often more memorable than they are readable--caveat lector. The tradition is too prolix. All growth takes place in a resisting medium, according to a quasi-scientific axiom; here the medium in question is the tradition. We are told that myth owes its redundancy and inorganic detail to its basic conservatism, and the same is rather true of Scripture. The myth stores and preserves in its whole what may get lost or obscured or displaced in its parts.[8] The Bible is conservative in this way too, with its multiple tellings, lack of embarrassment about doublets, reduplicative accounts, and super-imposition of two variant versions of a story. In a novella like the Joseph-legend, the motifs of double-jeopardy, dilemmas of choice, attempts to shift responsibility, and alternative behaviors for good and evil selves seem to have invaded the composition of the text itself, in the very form of its compoundness. The Southern author said that Judah saved Joseph; the Northern author said that it was Reuben who did this--the quarreling brothers are still quarreling.

The redundancy feature of a "teaching" is crucial for understanding the use made of a canon. The standard form of an appeal to Scriptural authority assumes the citation of a plurality of proof-texts: a theological position is commonly supported not by one place in Scripture, but by a variety of places. Insistency upon a tenet is inseparable from an assertion of the consistency or collective character of the witness provided by the Scriptures.

We notice here that a basic feature of Hebrew poetry is the technique of "parallel members," the technique of saying almost the same thing twice. "May the day perish in which I was born,/ and the night in which it was said there is a man-child conceived." (This one is more complicated than it looks, for the annunciation has seemingly been attached to the unknowable event.) An elementary consequence of the Bible's partiality towards repetition is a regular thematic stretto, whereby one learns to expect the duplication of any given motif in some proximity to its first introduction. But the "parallel member" is also a variation, and the result of

this stretto is not pure repetition, but a complication or aggravation of the text. For example, the creation of Eve is a repetition of the original "male and female he created them," but it also is a revision of that creation, and certainly changes man's nature. The creation of the lights in the heavens repeats the original fiat lux, but it also materializes that light, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, it turns it into a sign with a purpose to mean. The abatement of Noah's flood in effect eventuates in a second creation: Noah is the first "second Adam," so to speak, and apparently the waters go down on New Year's Day, the first day of spring. But as this last detail shows, the first creation is now made less absolute, and more cyclic, like the annual draining off of spring floods. The second set of tables that Moses makes are apparently inscribed with the so-called ritual decalogue, suggesting the giving of a second law, or deutero-nomos. Goethe thought this was the first law, but either way the point is not so much a superceded law, as a graciously renewed giving of the old one, such as might happen in every covenant festival when the law was read and the story of its giving re-told. Nonetheless, a provision for a new covenant seems to have been symbolically built into the story about the original one.

The idea of successorship also belongs to this class of stretti; biblical typology develops out of it as well. In the successor figure, the man is not renewed, but rather his office. In fact, the office is created or ratified or authenticated by the accession of the successor; until then, the office is merely identical with the man, usually charismatic, occupying it. As an example of precedent and successor, one might cite the literary imitation of the exodus out of Egypt by the parodos into the promised land, Joshua thereby being advanced as a second Moses. Moses the man is not renewed, only his function is given a new lease on life. Thus the prophet, in turn, is called to office by means of an inaugural vision with affinities to the Sinai theophany. The prophetic office is created by the call, but also authenticated by a Mosaic endorsement. Such an office may also be spiritualized in the process: the second king, to pursue the implications here, would be the first Messiah.

The endorsement of the predecessor's office by the successor, and vice versa, brings us to the fundamental principle of biblical typology, put into the mouth of John the Baptist, the Precursor. Standing, as it were, upon the threshold between the two testaments, he announces the one who to him was probably a Second Elijah: "one comes after me who is become before me; for he was before me."[9] The predecessor has only a premonition

of the successor "before" him. In Deuteronomy, Moses predicts the raising up of a prophet like unto Moses, even though the book concludes by saying that there has never been such a prophet in Israel as Moses was. There is always this relation between predecessor and successor which makes the one, in the Latin of the Vulgate, "ante-posterous" to the other.

We may now feed some of these observations back into the question of genre in the Bible. In a course in "the Bible as literature," I suppose that Saul's story would be taught as proto-tragedy, for that is very much its secular content. Saul is possessed by the spirit, like the tragic hero by his genius or daimon. He is elevated to office, the high place from which the tragic hero is thrown down. He violates sacral orders, like Agamemnon at Aulis--he seems to have committed a ritual fault without evil intention; he lucks into a religious vow that technically condemns his son to death; he crosses the prophet Samuel, and their confrontation may remind us a little of that of Oedipus and Teiresias. He falls prey to an evil spirit of jealousy and finds himself pitted against a younger man, like Henchard in Hardy's Mayor of Casterbridge; he brings a curse upon his house, resorts to magic--like Macbeth consulting the witches the second time--and finally commits suicide.

It would be wrong to think that this story is told to realize the tragedy of Saul, however. Most of the stories about Saul relate to David; the exceptions are the crowning of Saul, where the spirit of Yahweh is still with him, and the tragic complex just mentioned, where the spirits seem against him. Thus the tragic exemplum really belongs with the question John's disciples put to Jesus: "Art thou he who is to come, or are we to wait for another?"[10] Saul's first exploit as king, his rescue of Jabesh from the Ammonites, ends in a misdeed that thereafter deprives his kingdom of the right to exist. Thus the real reason for telling the story of Saul is to delineate not so much the tragedy of the man, as the potential tragedy of the kingship in the case of king who is not the man after God's own heart. It is a question of a great misstep for Israel. The texts offer two accounts of the institution of the kingship: the earlier, pro-monarchial account has the kingship instituted by God as his saving plan for Israel, and the later, anti-monarchial account has the kingship surrendered up to Israel by God with a loss of sovereignty for Him.[11] Thus Saul's nemesis is Israel's later disenchantment with the kingship, so that what was originally Yahweh's gift proves to be hedged with exceptional dangers, not to say almost certain disaster, from the start. In this respect, the gift resembles the evil law that God gave Israel in Ezekiel 20:25, in order to put Israel in the wrong. This reading back of the issue

into the initiative is a frequent "metalepsis" in the Bible, one that charges every precedent with the power of a cause. Every event raises the question of the expression of God's will in the event.

The partiality of form to perfection and selectivity, earlier alluded to, is badly belied by the alternative readings of Saul placed side by side in the texts described above. Saul's story achieves the autonomy of tragedy insofar as it indicates Saul's divagation from the saving history--as Israel's secularization of God's plan more or less smothers that plan in its beginnings. And yet the later, disenchanted author must have known of the success of David's kingship, which was also prophetically established as part of God's plan.[12] The effect is one of reconstructed or even dual divine intentions: God's will is complicated by human subversion of it, and by divine correction in response.

The creation stories also show God engaging in a cessory action towards the world, giving to nature the power of creation, or propagation, and giving to man sovereignty over nature. And yet God "repents" of having made man (or of having given him sovereignty over his will), just as he "repents" of having made Saul king. Thus the two accounts of man, the one emphasizing his sovereignty and the other his presumption, parallel the two accounts of the kingship for Israel. The hamartiology in Genesis and the deterioration of the monarchy run rather parallel: Adam disobeys, and so does Saul; Cain murders, and so does David; man builds Babel, and Solomon imports foreign cults; upon Solomon's death the unity of Israel falls apart, like the unity of languages at Babel. Through such observations we are working towards the larger narrative forms of the Bible. These forms apparently depend upon our generalizing the "saving history" and its jeopardy.

The bridge-building incumbent upon the interpretor of a canon may be exemplified by the presence of Job there. What has this interrogation of the "experimental order" to do with the saving history? Its place in a world literature course seems secure by comparison, or in one of those omnibus General Education courses that also read *Thus Spake Zarathustra* and the *Phaedo*. To find Job's place in the Bible we must start at the other end. The priestly author and the Yahwist author, who compiled the two most extended versions of the national saving history, also both went back behind the election of Abraham to God's activity in the original creation. Accounts of the beginnings of things, philosophically speaking, are necessarily a form of speculation, and hence have a technical relation to the kind of philosophy called Wisdom literature. In Genesis 1 the

priestly author describes how a ministering word, ordinarily addressed to Israel by a man of god or a priest or a preacher, was also, in the beginning, ministered to the waste and void to effect creation itself. The other creation story, the Yahwist one that culminates in the fall of Adam, is speculative in our sense too, since it is emphatically aetiological. At the same time, it contains a notable secondary wisdom theme, namely, the critique of wisdom itself. The lack of sympathy for the professional wisemen in Job and the vanity taught in Ecclesiastes are both examples. The more typical international kind of wisdom merely attempts to build from an elementary knowledge of how to keep out of trouble and how to get as rich as Solomon, towards a deeper appreciation of prudence and justice. But it inevitably reaches an impasse if it reflects upon the impotence or "vanity" of an existence with only the purposes of existence, or the injustice of an existence in which might makes right. Similarly, in praising the divine wisdom or science exhibited in the creation and the wonders of nature, human limitations in following this wisdom must impress upon us the greater wisdom to be found in the fear of the Lord. At the end of the Book of Job, we learn that wisdom ultimately consists in the miraculous revelation of a divine word sufficient to encompass all of God's creatures, including the nearly almighty Leviathan, a comprehension which mere knowledgeability or science--moral science here being no exception--cannot, by itself, accomplish. Thus God's call to Israel, the call to an "answerable" people that created them as a new moral subject, and God's controlling wisdom in the creation and in nature reach out towards each other from entirely different theological standpoints--the one national, constituitive, and historical, and the other international, ontological, and philosophical--and earn each for the other a more secure place in interior of the Bible or canon. The text of Job nowhere identifies the wisdom out of God's mouth with the word addressed to Israel--it remains for Ecclesiasticus to do this--but Job is still a recognizable, if odd, recipient of a version of the divine call. There are dim echoes of this call in the daemonic visitation described in the prologue to the book, and in the revelation addressed to Elihu, which comes in a form with similarities to the word of God coming to the prophet. Even Job's God-forsakeness cannot have its full resonance except in the context of a crisis otherwise found in the biblical saving history.

We may now want to ask what technical features of the Bible form might impel us towards including Job in it in this way.

II

We may begin with our principle that the Bible has no genre. What has it in genre's place? The forms of literature exist to liberate its meaning, to allow that meaning free play, as it were. This liberalism contrasts with the conservatism of Scripture, which is the opposite impulse to fix not the form, but the content of witness. With the abridgement of categories of form consequent upon the Bible's own form being that of a collapsed literature, a literature incapable of fully isolating and articulating individual forms, the place of genre is taken by a variety of pre-generic modes of discourse that only latterly have become un-literary. These include wisdom, which could become properly philosophical and systematic, or else wholly proverbial; patriarchal and national military saga, which could become true history or merely legendary geste; commandments, which could become a fuller jurisprudence or a constitutional synthesis. Wisdom with its gnomes and precepts; saga with its genealogical interest and its anecdotal style of episode; law with its nuclear dictates, its strings of statutes, and its repertory of judgments; prophecy with its oracles and its abbreviated style of delivery; cult with its local legends that, apart from cult, seem incomplete; history with its chronicle entries and its lists of reigns; oral teaching with its sayings, logia, and paradigms for easy rememberance; hymnology with its sequences and reiteration; hagiography with its disconnected miracle stories; sacred history proper with its pericopes and epiphany stories; genealogy itself, with its list of begats: what do these all share?

All these forms are essentially brief, even granulate. Because the units are small, the strength to survive partly comes from numbers. Thus the Bible is not void of forms, but like the prophets, with their appetite for all the forms that could possibly teach or exhort or arrest attention, it is somewhat "beyond formalism." Being short, the forms I have mentioned are often agglutinative or gregarious or inclined towards catena, codification, and anthologization. There is perhaps an only somewhat facetious comparison to be made here between Western and Eastern cuisine. The Western meal arrives in courses: it is sequential and differentiated, and its recipes, like good scientific experiments, are repeatable. Our genres are somewhat similar. In the Chinese cuisine the meal arrives pretty much at once, and typically forms a dense, particulate mass; and no recipe is supposed to be wholly repeatable. We could say that the Chinese meal has lost a distinction between the inter-textual and the intra-textual, and basically that is true of the Bible also. In Job, for example, the later speeches tend to be commentaries upon the earlier ones, because that is how they were originally conceived; but now they are all part of one text.

There are longer units in the Biblical composition. But some of these are found in the class called "Writings"--as if they were rather too literary to be fully inspired.

Not only does the Bible collapse the relation of the text to itself with its relation to other texts, it also collapses a literary history. This process is seen in the constant adoption of materials into larger wholes, with no sense that this activity violates the integrity of a text. The result is roughly the assimilation of the text's "reception history" (the history of the text's reception by early and late audiences) to its "redaction history" (the history of the production of a text from earlier versions or more predecessor texts than one). All that we presently have was received: the evidence is our having it. As for how it was received, the various versions and combinations thereof--the redactions we now have--tell us discrepancies and duplications were always tolerable wherever the quotient of witness might be augmented.

For example: the history of the Judges shows this willingness not to tamper with received tradition, for it faithfully reports that after the great acts of the exodus-deliverance and the conquest, not only did Israel fail to complete its commission to drive out the Canaanites, but the next generation "knew not the Lord, nor yet the works which he had done for Israel." Such a lapse in the transmission of the tradition is quite illogical: when, we may ask, were the Israelites to find out? Later generations apparently remembered what had been forgotten. This startling testimony to a complete hiatus or irruption in the keeping of the tradition of the saving history is complexly reflected in the scheme of the Deuteronomistic author who composed the Book of Judges. For, having allowed the bulk of the saving history to slip back into an almost antedeluvian oblivion, he also imposes on each of the stories of the judges a cycle of apostasy, oppression, repentence, the raising up of a deliverer, and the renewing of Israel's grasp upon the promised land. This cycle recurs at forty year intervals, and thus out of the datum of a complete breach in Israel's knowledge of her savior-god, the author refashions the subsequent saving history to teach the lesson that this history is something that must be re-discovered in each generation. Each generation must find its way back to Yahweh, and having forgotten it, is condemned to repeat the saving history in little.

Such bridging devices as I have been describing will carry us across the whole of the Pentateuch, on a series of

theological stepping-stones; from creative word to word of promise; from the promises to Noah to the promises to Abraham; from the covenant with Abraham to the covenant with Mosaic Israel; from the Mosaic covenant to the Mosaic Law; from the Mosaic Law to the legislation contained in the "Holiness Code" and the prescriptions for sacrifice; from these laws to the devotion of all that is not Yahweh to the "ban," as practiced in the Holy War; and from the Holy War to its fulfillment in the occupation of the Holy Land; and from this occupation to a "rest" in Israel's inheritance. Each prefix and suffix join to get Israel past an annulment of its potential or its actuality: non-entity at the creation; the chaos of the nations at the time of the call of Abraham; bondage at the call of Moses; apostacy at the time of the giving of the Law; pollution in the wilderness; decimation in the wars; deracination in the intermingling in the Promised Land; and Canaanization in the adoption of a settled, agricultural mode upon the land. This progression across the Pentateuch is a remarkable synthesis in the face of the complexities it has subordinated, and it is not the less remarkable for having embedded them serially in a history.

The whole form expresses the will of God to create Israel. It was probably given its first major shape in the time of David, when, under the kingship, Israel seemed to be being created again. The way in which the Bible goes on to annex the rest of itself to this progressive revelation allows its form to be described in terms of prefixes, suffixes, extensions, renovations, histories "to be continued," prophecies and covenant-terms to be fulfilled, and a divine will ultimately to be accomplished.[13]

Because the coming-into-being of God's full will is easily assimilated to the development of the canon, the Bible shows a kind of diachronic form--or formation through time--which makes it a stabilized "work in progress," as well as a complete work. The form is rather polyphonic, not always very aware of parallel developments. Another feature of this diachronicity is the sharpening of the various Biblical dialectics at critical thresholds between installments. The readiest example to hand is perhaps the tidal change from Genesis to Exodus: the revelation of the promises to the Patriarchs is understood as a kind of "gospel," and hence _this_ gospel is a preparation for the Law, rather than the other way around. The longitudinal sounding of motifs throughout the patriarchal saga may be contrasted with the huge chorale of the Exodus traditions to which this overture or genesis now gives birth.[14]

Innovations in the saving history answer to expectations of a prior creation; in the interest of understanding the

consistency of the divine will, innovations are conceived of as renovations, or second installments. Thus later theological reflection came to see that the activity of the founder-figure Moses was an analogy for the creation, and the creation an analogy for the calling-into-being of Israel. Israel, in a way, renews the creation. This renovation is shown in other ways. Moses sets up the twelve stones at Sinai: he renovates the tribal league, the brotherhood of the "sons of Israel." He comes to Israel with a new name for God, and thus renews the divine name among men. On the night that the angel of death passes over the Israelite first-born, he institutes the Passover, putting the commemoration of the deliverance before the deliverance itself, and also putting its month at the head of the months--thus renovating the calendar.[15] The feast of unleavened bread, the feast of first fruits, and the harvest-booths celebration are all agricultural in character; but in Israel these feasts became historical as well, being attached respectively to the exodus, the giving of the Law at Sinai, and the dwelling in tents during the sojourn in the wilderness. Thus the Bible crosses the historical event and the annual cycle in a way that creates Israel's time. It is significant for this theme of the renewal of time that God created time in the first place: not so much the cosmos as the calendar.

As we have seen, the Bible is a matter of installments becoming institutions. A good example of the internal conditions prevailing in a collapsed literature of this kind is the assignment of portions of Scripture to Biblical heroes celebrated within it. Moses is made the patron of the Law, David of the Hymnology and Temple service, Solomon of wisdom, and, of course, the prophets of prophecy. One form of Hebrew prophecy is in fact autobiography, but this is by no means the only form of self-authenticating canon. To see the pressure towards canonization of the text developing from within the text compounds the Bible with itself. At any rate, a history of its earlier forms is readily extracted from the record it provides.

There is a good example of the compounding of the text in II Kings, where King Josiah institutes a religious reform upon the inspiration provided by a law text dug up in the temple during repairs. It helps to have been told that the book dug up in the temple is none other than some version of the book that became Deuteronomy, which is largely put into the mouth of Moses. In turn, Deuteronomy is a kind of Bible of the Bible, though the phrase is contradictory, if we accept the canonicity of the whole. Even if we have not been told this, we will notice that the renewal of religion

prompted by the new text makes Josiah a Deuteronomistic Moses-figure. Everything within Deuteronomy itself suggests the portrayal of a latter-day Moses also: one addressing Israel near its terminus _ad quem_, rather than _ab quo_. Since Josiah's book is found during repairs to the temple, it is clearly a "plant" in some way or other--the book is d scovered in the course of the very renovation it supposedly initiated. It is a major irony of the Bible, that what seems to be its most intensive expression should also turn out to be its major apochryphon. Interestingly enough, the Moses of Deuteronomy addresses the "later" Israel, telling it to respect the wisdom of its fathers, as if the generation that died in the wilderness were the true Israel, whereas the heirs of the Promised Land are likely to have proved the discredited ones. Indeed, the text seems to presume the existence of an Israel that Moses' gloomy predictions have already overtaken, making his offer of salvation almost anachronistic. These two strangely overlapping situations--the king near the end of Kings unearthing the book in which he is dimly foreshadowed, and the book reviewing the Mosaic law in order to produce a revisionary unification of it beyond Israel in the wilderness--a reform that might fall under the patronage of a king in Jerusalem--show that a diachronic form institutes its own processes with a spirited anachronism. It does not so much fall into this, as build upon and fulfill such anachronisms. On the conceptual level, the Law itself is such an anachronism.

I will have to leave my last remark as a provocative epigram here, if we are to get on to other paths out of the Bible's reflection upon itself. A host of instances can be subsumed under the general topic of the interiorization or conceptualization of Israel's orders. This is the deeper form of what we have called the _stretto_ in the Bible. First, there are the biblical repetitions of Israel's early experience: a second exodus, a prophet like unto Moses, a second Temple, a new David, and a new covenant. The exodus, for example, is interiorized in any prayer in which the worshipper confesses to being one with those whom God brought forth from Egypt. In him the historical deliverance of his people is become a personal occasion. An illustration of this general spiritualization of meaning is found in the very name of Joshua, which is chosen for the military leader because of its meaning of "victory." The same word becomes the name of Jesus, because it eventually came to mean "salvation." The God who saved the day, so to speak, will also save the sinner.

This interiorization of the type is abetted by those things in the Bible that make Yahwism and Christianity religions of unmanifested or symbolical or spiritualized or revised intentions.

The Lord comes to require not sacrifice per se, but sacrifice of the will;[16] not circumcision (much less castration), but circumcision of the heart; not the death of the first-born son, but the self-abnegation of the father, and the consecration of the priesthood in the first-born's place. Likewise, it is the mind of the adulterer that incriminates, not the act. Jeremiah, who said that what the Lord wanted was a heartfelt knowledge of Him, treated Temple, cultus, kind, and state as so many expendable shibboleths, and in a time when the existence of these things was about to cease, he was bold to prophecy their replacement by the gift of a new heart. We could also call it a second will.

Insofar as the process of interiorization de-historicises Israel's orders, we may see it as analogous to that general movement toward figurative expression through which abstractions lose their roots in material entities. Ligatures, by becoming less literal, are enabled to become obligations: what once bound Isaac to the altar now obligates his descendents who worship in the Temple. It would be a mistake to take this process, as exemplified in the deracination of the etymon, too far: the Bible understands words not as a system for exchanging signs, but as a means for communicating force. The process does not imply anything like the supercession of the historical event, either; rather, the Bible thinks of events as themselves becoming signs, or registrations of the divine activity in time which extends that activity or promises further activity. Everything God does is potentially a sign. The prophet is such a sign, and when he walks around naked in Jerusalem, as Isaiah did, he means that deportees will soon enough be doing the same thing. The prophets led a life of allegory, and such a sign solemnizes the gloomy event to come--commemorates it, as it were, beforehand.

The typification of Israel forms another topic under the general subject of figural activity in the Bible. There are many historical factors contributing to this typification, namely all those things that made for an Israel not identical with itself. The possibility is symbolized very early, for the biblical character named Israel dies outside of the place named Israel. Similarly, the trans-Jordanian tribes are both in Israel and outside of it. They settle down before the Jordan is crossed, and so become a part of the threshold upon which they chose to abide. There is a more prominent two-nation motif in the Northern and Southern Kingdoms. And there are those things making for the end of the literal Israel, some of which receive symbolical expression from its beginning. Joshua tells the tribes that he gathers

at the covenant-renewal convocation of Joshua 24 that they cannot serve the holy God: Israel is theologically annulled in its very inception. The generation that dies in the wilderness is even more clearly an Israel that never was. Both the "other" Israel and the "limbo" Israel tend to provide the ground for the lifting of an "Israel of God" or a consecrated Israel out of the ruins, apostasy, or defeat of the literal Israel. Paul compares the former Israel to Abraham's concubine Hagar, and the latter-day Israel, or the Church, to Abraham's wife Sarah. In doing this he makes Israel the cast-out bondwoman who was once Israel's wild kinsman the Ishmaelite while he makes the Church Abraham's authentic heir, the true Israel. The same process may be observed in the poet Spenser, who makes his heroine Una an ecclesia-figure, a symbol of the Reform Church. This makes Una's rival Duessa the Hagar who is cast upon the wilderness, the type of the Synagogue who has violated her election. In this case the "Synagogue" is the Church of Rome, the substitution thus continuing the chain of dis-elections. Similarly, in the Bible itself, the elected Israel is placed as a kind of mean proportional between Israel's pre-election in Sarah, and her dis-election, as the Synagogue, in the New Testament. This mediate Israel might well say, with the Precursor, "One comes after me who is become before me, for he was before me."

We have already noticed the presence of a latter-day Israel in Deuteronomy. It is no accident that this book is the one that enunciates the principles for the spiritualization of the letter of the word of God, just at that point, on the threshold of the promised land, where the Word is very near Israel and yet where Mosaic religion is deprived of its chief symbol, Moses himself. This supercession of the elder Moses by the testament representing him also offers a fairly exact parallel for the transvaluation of the literal miracle that Deuteronomy expounds. The manna is given, contradictorily, to show that man does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God. This can only make sense if the manna was not essentially bread at all, but a kind of material word. Similarly, no man knows the place of Moses' burial, because this Moses is not a literal one in the first place: he is spiritual Moses, manifested not by his physical presence, but by his word.

We have noted the fictional component in Deuteronomy, and one might compare this point to the Ithaka episode in Ulysses, an extended meditation on Bloom's prospects, his potential for self-transcendence or for nullity, and his ultimate apotheosis as Darkinbad the Brightdayler and the Jewish Messiah, or his ultimate dissolution in those infinite and silent

vacancies of interstellar space. The whole chapter seems to ask its own question, "Where was Moses when the candle went out?" The same sort of question is raised when Dante's Virgil disappears upon the borders of the earthly paradise. The very emotions of Vespers seem to cling to Virgil, and to draw him back towards Limbo. Whatever the answer to the question, its being asked suggests the orientation of literature towards its own eclipse.

The equivalent to the ending of the literary work, for a collapsed literature, is the closing of the canon, and it is clear that Deuteronomy in some way aspired to close the "incanonic" unit of the canon which we know as the Pentateuch. We may pause here and inquire how a collapsed literature in fact comes into being. Is the logic internal or external?

If it were internal, the form should come about through the fulfillment of a design, in this case a design implicit in the saving history. Or repletion might merely be the result of a process of an accumulation of material. One might compare the stone tracery of the gothic ceiling filling up until it reached a saturation-point, when it could accommodate no further variation or redundancy. Another example would be the elaboration of the form of the fugue in the work of Bach, with whom the form more or less complicated itself out of existence. A completely dense pattern is a texture, not a structure, and at the point such density is reached, figure oscillates into ground, and space for a new form is created. The hypertrophy of form in Finnegan's Wake is conceived in terms of this effect, and is close to being the book's theme.

The Bible does seem to be written over and over-written in this way, and, by many times abridging the separateness of the literary work, has left little room for reworkings, apart from the invention of a new national history. That was not to be, which brings us to the external logic making for a collapsed literature. The literature of a faith-community knows of no sharp distinction between producer and consumer. But when the faith-community ceases to exist, successor communities can only appropriate the literature in question by canonizing it, and establishing principles for its interpretation. The producers are gone, the consumers remain, and rationing begins.

Deuteronomy is especially important here, because of its clear aspiration to function as a charter or "constitution of Israel," as Josephus called it. Conceived as Moses'

"last will and testament," and activated by Moses' death, it offers itself as a kind of trust for Israel as beneficiary. Scripture, or the canon of received texts used by the faith-community, is the "institution" of that congregation, institution being a technical term for a text that edifies, forms, educates, and establishes the community or vocational group subscribing to it. Insofar as such an institution functions in this way for the spiritual life of the community, it functions sacramentally; but it may also have the place of jurisprudence in settling controversial moral or theological claims. Appeals to its witness, or its use as a corrective norm, always give to Scripture a juridical function that ordinary literature might abjure, or purposefully fail to acknowledge.

The question remains, how did the producer community happen to end? Apparently one part of it expired with the death of prophecy in Israel: there was a point in Israel's history, comparable to the time when the classical oracles allegedly ceased to speak, when the Word fell silent. Classical literature did not depend upon the oracles, but in Israel, the relation between literary and prophetic production may have been closer. As to why the prophets ceased, two factors might be cited: one is the loss of Israel's independence as a nation. This independence was lost in the tide of world-political fortunes, and thus Israel ceased to be a prophet among the nations, which is one of the ways in which she is conceived in the Scriptures. The other factor is the general Hellenization of the Near East; an increase in literacy may also figure here, in the course of which a dynamistic component in the prophetic word may have been lost too. Perhaps this quality survived longer in the classical world precisely because it was confined to the sphere of the oracle, rather than being diffused throughout the whole religious-cultural tradition.

III

The existence of the *concept* of the word in the Bible, lying side by side with its actual words, might be cited as one more example of the biblical self-reflection. A deep circularity besets second Isaiah--for example--where prophecy meditates upon its own phenomenology, and where God himself is advanced as a great pronunciatory prophet. History is merely the correspondence to be discovered between events and God's secret declaration of his will; events tend to be understood as previously unspoken words. At the start of Israel's

history, God manifests himself in historical miracles, but increasingly the Bible comes to establish the area of God's interaction with the world as identical with the promulgation of his word. This will-imbued word dispossesses kings and comprehends history.

This understanding of God's promulgation should help us in distinguishing Biblical words from ordinary literary ones. There ought to be specifiable differences between the language that creates a congregation, and the one that creates a mere audience.

The word in the Bible is "dynamistic."[17] God speaks it against Jacob, and it lights upon Israel, Isaiah 9 implies, rather like a ton of bricks. It is never understood to be a mere copy, or a thing without qualities other than those it can appropriate from the thing it signifies. The biblical word is not, so to speak, secondary to the creation, nor is it detached from it. It is in fact prior to the creation, and the creation is something not far removed from a deutero-word. The act of the creation has some features suggesting a verbal conjuration: the form used for "he called" (or named) can elsewhere mean "he summoned." Israel took God out of nature, but left his word in it.

Literature, _qua_ literature, comes into being upon the de-activation of the strictly dynamistic component in words as signifiers, though this component survives in all the affectivity of rhythm, verbal music, meter, and so forth. The dianoia of literature is contemplative. Thus, while literature may move us through tragedy, it does not extinguish consciousness in the ecstasy of the dithyramb. It may conjure up the wonders of romance, but it does not summon the daemons of an actual incantation. It may provide the release of comedy, but it does not exorcise an actual evil spirit, or bless a field or a marriage with fertility. It may tax us through satire, but it does not blight and blast its victims with literal curses. Thus all literature is ironic, in its remove from, or surrender of, those functions of the word which relate the word to events kinetically, rather than reflectively or allegorically. This attenuation of participation is in direct contrast to the biblical word. Indeed, literature minimizes even the word's normal extrinsic referentiality , by maximizing its reference to words of its own kind. All "poetic diction" creates such a privileged speech, a speech privileged to invoke the completion of its own verbal patterns as its _telos_ or end. The enhanced cohesion of the aesthetic object is its defining quality, and the completion of such patterns ensures the literariness of the literary

work, defining it, as the dykes and canals define Holland, by what the pattern isolates or excludes.

Thus the holotype of the literary word is the rime. The holotype of the word in the Bible is the name. The name obtains access to the thing. Adam, in naming the animals, apparently comes to know that none of them are suitable as a partner for him. God quibbles on his own name, reserving himself from a full disclosure to his people. The renovation of the name confers a new vocational identity, and the naming of the name is a summons to a new vocation. God's first words, though they do not belong precisely to this class, do qualify as "performative utterances," that is, as words that accomplish an action in being properly spoken, such as, "I pronounce you man and wife."[18]

Given that words in the Bible are efficacious in this way, we may mount a host of other evidence as to their character . It seems that the prophets originally included among their number weather-seers, men who once predicted literal plague and famine and earthquake and drought and locusts; but these things came to supply the figurative language for describing the action of God in history. They also describe the word itself, which thereby obtains a parity with them as an elemental force. Amos speaks of a famine of the word of God. In Psalm 147 the word goes forth in the way that frost, ice, and wind go forth, out from heaven. In Isaiah 50 the word comes down from heaven like rain and fertilizes the earth; it does not return without accomplishing the purpose for which God sent it--it does not return empty. (The Patristic identification of the agency in the original creation with the classical logoi spermatikoi, or "seminal reasons," might be compared with this text.) Elijah, in contrast to the Isaiah text, says that it will not rain in Israel until he says the word. To judge by the record of Kings, things happen in history "so that the word spoken by the prophet might be fulfilled." The Book of Wisdom shows the word figuratively, as a warrior, leaping out of heaven to execute doom with a sword which is God's command. Albright reports Targums that make the word, rather than the angel, lead Israel through the wilderness.[19] The personification of the word of salvation, or the apperception of its saving agency, has its apotheosis in the Gospel of John; there the Hellenistic concept of an address from the Beyond to a part of itself trapped in the here of this world is condensed with Hebrew and prophetic anticipations of a divine word made flesh. We think of words as vacuous, if their true nature were known, but the Bible thinks of them as eventful. Being efficacious by nature, the biblical word

has even done its work when it is ignored, as in Isaiah 6: the fact that Isaiah's words fell on deaf ears is anticipated by the prophet's being commissioned to go and deepen his people's heedlessness.

Being prophetic, the word in the Bible is imbued with a temporality largely the reverse of that of the literary word. An echo of this difference may be detected in the contrast between typical definitions of biblical hermeneutics and literary criticism. Hermeneutics is engaged in a higher-level version of the activity of preaching, namely the task of accomodating the Bible to the understanding of a secondary audience. Literary criticism is engaged in a more philosophical endeavor, that of producing "a generalization that expands the range of applicability of a statement to a wider area."[20] Both labors, described in this way, suggest the work of allegoresis, but there is still a marked difference, even if it is only a difference of emphasis.

Biblical words, summarily speaking, obtain a purchase upon the future, which is to say, a future audience. They are the kind of signposts that have a pointer at one end. We may consider this accomodation of the Bible text to a future or secondary audience as it occurs within the Bible itself. Here is Moses, wooing Israel in the plain of Moab:

> The Lord our God made a covenant with us in Horeb. The Lord made not this covenant with our fathers, but with us, even us, who are all of us here alive this day.
>
> (Deut. 5:2-3, Jerusalem Bible)

Within the fictional context, Moses means that the new Moab generation, as opposed to the old Sinai one, is the object of God's address. But figuratively, the author means that anyone contemporaneous with the hearing of the text is the object of that address. The text reaches out to catechise and constitute its proper audience, a current and vital Israel identical with a class of elected readers.

Every message of promise in the Bible is such a "sent-before." Consider such a promise as, "In the day that thou eat thereof thou shalt die." How odd, students will remark: they do not die on that day at all. Not so odd, after all, one may reply: the statement must be understood as "a generalization that expands the range of its applicability to a wider area," but the area in question is the future, into which the statement projects. The word is in force

thenceforward, upon the transgression: thereafter the culprits are subject to death, and all their progeny with them. The apparent delay in the execution of the sentence imbues its words with their mysterious power over the future, a power to overtake the sinner: in that day, and on any other after it. Conversely, "This day thou shalt be with me in paradise" --yea, even before Christ's resurrection, for at the moment of conversion, the convert's future is secured. The biblical faith asks for subscription not to a creed, but to a promise;[21] its words exist to create faith in their future efficacy, and it defines faith as an I-believe that is identical with an I-hope-to-know. For doubting Thomas, seeing is believing, but for the author of Hebrews, belief is the substance of things unseen. Belief, then, is "anachronic" to revelation:

> Everybody who believes in the Son of God
> has this testimony inside him;
> and anyone who will not believe God
> is making God out to be a liar,
> because he has not trusted
> the testimony God has given about his Son.
> (I John 5:10, Jerusalem Bible)

As a result of this anachronistic structure, history in the Bible is never merely "past" history, however factual or circumstantially related; it is always a prophetic earnest in which God has disclosed some part of his continuing will, and is therefore also an installment upon what God is yet to do.

The kind of prevenient comprehension required by faith is a subscription to the yet-to-be manifested meaningfulness of the word. It is precisely this kind of faith that the reader of a literary text also requires, but a successful reading ultimately dispels this expectation by fulfilling it. Literary comprehension implies the synchronization of the beginning and the end of the work, which are partly metaphors for the work's "initiative" and its "intention" respectively. Literary understanding suspends, contains, or curtails the work's diachronicity by ultimately taking a comparative or lateral view of it:

> The common end of all narrative, nay, of all Poems, is to convert a series into a Whole: to make those events, which in real or imagined History move on a strait Line, assume to our Understandings a circular motion--the snake with its Tail in its Mouth.[22]

Homer designed this principle into literature once and for all in the conjugation between the first and last movements of the _Iliad_, but this kind of formally pre-induced comprehension _need_ not be present for the same techniques of comparison and conjugation to be applicable. Much in the Bible, despite the efforts of John the Presbyter, discourages this self-enclosure of the literary work. Even the "End" provided by Revelation takes the form of an unending ending, a cycle that keeps re-cycling, somewhat like a Beethoven coda.

The New Testament offers itself as a radical fulfillment of the biblical process, but the versatility implied for the interpretation of biblical words as "future-eventful" should prevent us from closing our minds to further installments upon the word's effectuation. The New Testament argues itself into the canon by claiming to report one such fulfillment, in the "Christ-event"; but there is a paradox here, for the same installment that curtails the Bible also extends it; making the Bible both more literary and less literary. This is the only way a literature can end, we might suppose; open-endedly, facing the successor culture that will collapse it into a single _testamentum_.

The last words in the Bible, it follows, are still creating an expectation that keeps the Bible theoretically incomplete. Any "Amen" in the Bible is properly glossed with a "till Shiloh come"--till the Messiah replace the Judaic sovereign. The Bible makes its origination coincide with the narrative of _the_ beginning, and thus the kind of coherence that depends upon the aligning of the beginning with the end might not be available until _the_ end. And yet understanding of the Bible must anticipate this end, and hence becomes identified with faith.

IV

Having made these brief remarks about the temporality attaching to Biblical words, let us turn to the case with literature generally. All of us are aware, in one way or another, of a deep posteriority in literature, of which one example might be that mute and admiring retrospectivity that overtakes us at the end of a long novel: that moment in which all our surmise is a surmise upon things past, as if the ending of a book were a kind of funeral. This posteriority is found in any assumed secondariness of literary treatment of a subject to the subject itself: narrative's resemblance to history; the recorded words of poetry as a

reproduction of the words of speech; the derivation of literary fictions from myth; the re-presentative character of mimetic art. Literary words might seem like the contemplative left-over from a prior event, a recollective consolation for the loss of such an event's immediacy. A portrait, as Pascal finely remarks, conveys both presence and absence.[23] Literary art often points to its own character in this regard. For example, Achilles retreats from the action of the *Iliad* into his tent, where the lyre-songs he takes up must be about the very kind of action--the "strife-epos" as I call it--from which he has withdrawn. Christian authors identify this same posteriority with the "pagan" aspect of literature: in Dante the classical poets are domiciled in Limbo in the afterlife; in Milton, the devils after their fall from heaven reason and sing together, and enjoy the consolations of philosophy and the Muses, in hell. Indeed, the whole descent-to-the-dead motif in traditional epic shows a deep self-awareness on the part of literature, since what is so often encountered in the dead world is not only secret future knowledge co-present with past history, but a past literary tradition. Such descents are an aggravation of literary fictionality, that is, they are fictions within fictions, and hence they are also fictions about literary limitations that paradoxically manage to extend the possibilities of the fiction in which they are incorporated. An analogous instance of enhanced secondariness appears in the last book of the *Iliad*, which has the symbolism of a descent to the dead, and seems to take place in a kind of post-mortem zone somewhat removed from the preceding poem; this remove allows the characters to talk reflectively about their own former selves, as if they were becoming critics of the literature in which they were formerly characters. A similar point of comprehension in marked in *Don Quixote* by Altisadora's haunting report of her descent to hell's threshold, where she beheld the fate of the apochryphal *Don Quixote* written by Cervantes' rival. "I am not disturbed," Quixote responds, "to hear that I am wandering about in fantastic body in the internal regions or in the light above, for I am not the one of whom that history treats. If it by chance is a true, faithful and worthy account, then it will live for ages, but if it is bad, it will not be a far step from its birth to the grave"--from the cradle of the printing-press to the grave of critical oblivion. But Quixote is hardly to be distinguished from his rival, for a character from the rival book shows up as a character in his own.

The temporality belonging to literary words runs in a direction the reverse of prophetic, because it is determined

by the delays in understanding and registration, the dilation of comprehension, and the belatedness of the word's coming, not into event, but into meaning. The hiatus between what is said, and what is being said, between the positing of the sign and depositing of its significance, is really allegorical: meaning develops in the "meantime"--i.e., in the mediatorial interval between cognition and re-cognition. The first line of Racine's Phédre is "Le dessein en est pris," but such a "dessein" is really the telos of the work, and we do not realize the line's implications until we have finished studying the play. As the etymology of the word "design" might be wrested to mean, there is a point where the literary form closes off its signs, "de-signs" them as it were. It does this by making some claim upon them that suggests their autonomy as a whole, or as an "autotelic" unity.

When the story ends, it ends ever after, just as it began once upon a time. According to this convention, the story-pattern crosses into time and out of it at aligned points. Insofar as the Bible is kept in a concerned or participating relation with the culture receiving it as canonic, the Bible does not want to end ever after, however clear it is that the canon itself is closed. It is precisely this premature foreclosure of the purposiveness of a text which Jesus condemns in his conflict with the Synagogue. He says that the Synagogue has its Moses and its Law, and implies that, in its open-ended faith-relation with God, it has broken faith by regarding Moses and the Law as the full realization of God's intentions, particularly his intentions towards Israel.[24] This short-sighted and pre-emptive conversion of a promise into a possession has blinded Israel to the sign of the future that Jesus is before them, and will also blind them to the Messiah, towards whom Israel has ceased to address its real and proper expectation.

Most literary interpretation--this side of anagogy, at least--must err with the Synagogue. The critic has his Moses and his Law. His criticism aims at possessing a totality presumed to be present in the text, a totality in which he is confident, but with which his audience, and, in a sense, the work itself, is as yet unfamiliar. He essays to familiarize the parts of the text with each other. Literature as a whole, however, cannot conceivably achieve the totality implied by the collective singular form of the noun that names it. If literature really were such a unity, it would be the word, with the implied limitation upon its capacity to generate new words of the literary kind. In the Bible, however, the prophet hears not a word of God, but

the word: what he hears contains the prophet's full message from God, however nuclear this form of it. A collapsed literature would likewise be all nucleus--all else would be apochryphal. Making the Bible merely _a_ word would belie its coherence as a completed literature. Relatively speaking, this happens whenever the Bible is grouped with the Koran and the Upanishads, of course, but in its own terms, the Bible is not _a_ word, it is all the words that the literature it represents now has. The prophetic term, "the word of God," has therefore rightly come to be applied to the canon as a whole. It is _the_ Book, meaning--to borrow a pertinent theological image from Emily Dickinson--that no other candidates need apply.

We think of words as dianoetic in character, to be defined as words by virtue of their being merely words, or possessed of a kind of non-being. Literature is the studied use of such words, the language where words are a second time robbed of their event-makingness as tools, to regain a restricted usefulness as speculative instruments, or toys, or models, or game-counters. In a more intense way than ordinary language, the re-presentational language of literature conveys both presence and absence.

Trying to experience the world as the world through literary words would not be much better than taking in distant prospects by means of a kaleidoscope. We can only improve our vision introspectively with such an instrument. Like the kaleidoscope, literature exists for the purpose of refining sensibility, a process that may differ very little from increasing our awareness of our own subjectivity, or, more nobly, of the mind's constituitive power to realize its own existence. Literature's means are "pseudo-statements," as I.A. Richards called them, echoing Theon the rhetorician, who said a "mythos" or fable is a "pseudo-logos" imaging the truth.[25] But everything possible to be believed is an image of the truth, and only an image. Such images in literature are typically called fictions. Fictions are hardly confined to literature, of course; it is possible to claim that they govern the world. But the world does not generally know this, and can only find out by studying such things as literature. Literature has told us this itself, by having characters within it engage in fiction-making themselves, or refer to themselves as fictions.

The words of fiction have a different authority from those in the Bible. Fiction's authority is placed in our suggestibility, in contrast to a faith-literature, where a more unqualified subscription is wanted.[26] As faith and hope

really share the same ground in the Bible, so in fiction surmise and suggestibility share their ground with a compound of nostalgia and wish. The wish is really a desire to recover experience in a memorable and repeatable form. No wishes, we are told, are entirely free of nostalgia, even if it is a factitious nostalgia for what may never have been. Fictionalizing may be compared to dreaming, but dreaming, though called a form of wish-fulfillment, is also wish-frustration, and only illustrates how very compromised wishing is, when compared to willing. The dream only half-fulfills the wish, being a voluntas or volition that does not issue in a voluptas, or consummation. In the place of such a fulfillment, the dream can only offer a deeper infatuation with the dream. Fiction improves upon the dream, by answering to the one set of wishes that dreams, by definition, cannot satisfy: namely, those wishes concerning the dream itself. --That it be more than a mere temporization of desire; that it not abandon the dreamer; that it be a less oracular form of self-communing; that its autism be sharable; that it be less narrowly fixated on the permissable and impermissable, and be rather more free to explore the possible and the impossible for their own sakes; that its iteration eventuate in an increment of meaning; that it end well, or coherently; and that its suggestibility not cease with our inability or unwillingness to repeat or recover the dream. One concludes that, just as dreams minister to our frustrated or inexpressible desires, so fiction ministers to our frustrations with our dreams. It seems quite proper, from this perspective, that some words for the dianoia of literature overlap with words for volition: a word that "means," means to mean; and an "expression" is an express wish to be expressive. Fiction is self-knowing, as the dream cannot hope to be, and what it knows is its own deep wish to be suggestive. It also knows the dream's deep wish, which is to be dreamed again.[27] Next time we dream, we want to be more in control; we want to dream the dream, rather than having it dream us.

We may add that this rational element in literary production figures heavily in the will to ritual control in literary form: the most important feature of this kind of control is repeatability. The action of drama is rehearsed action; the events of narrative are events that are retailed; the words of poetry are words that rhyme and reverberate and get recited.

V

There are other differences between the Bible and literature , stemming from the ones so far discussed. The Bible differs from the literary work in its inspiration. The poet is inspired, not by the spirit of God moving through the historical hour, but by his Muse. The Muse is the daughter of memory, and hence of memnotechnic: meter, rhythm, poetic diction, and the formulae and conventions common to the poetic mode of utterance. Whereas the prophet's "occasion" might be called the spirit of God, the poet's occasion is the prompting of the Muse. The Biblical occasion is explicitly historical ; the Bible does not transcend this occasion, but extends from it, and conscripts and preserves it for the use of the faith-community. The literary work suspends the historical kind of occasion, or fictionalizes it, or generalizes it, insofar as the literary work becomes typical, translatable, and a part of literature as a whole.

The undisguised occasionality of the Bible is related to its abridgement of aesthetic categories. We have suggested the way in which art-works enhance their status as objects of contemplation by deepening their design to prevent attention from moving beyond their borders. But in the Bible beauty is immediately referred to either the wisdom of the Creator, or his holiness and otherness. Any Biblical aesthetic, it follows, would have to base itself on the literature of theophany and the wisdom texts concerning the Creation. But an aesthetic is not normally a branch of theology, and ideal beauty is, by definition, neither the beauty of something else, nor, in Butler's phrase, "the analogy of religion."

VI

Much of the distinction between the Bible and literature may be set out by means of the first canto of *The Faerie Queene*, in which the sleeping Redcrosse knight is brought a prophetic dream by one Archimago. Archimago's name suggests the Primary Imagination, and indeed, Archimago is one of the few characters in Spenser's poem whose origins remain undeclared--as if he were behind the poem, rather than in it. Redcrosse's dream, which is a demonic imposture (and therefore resembles a classical oracle according to the Christian explanation), concerns the knight's lady, who stands for the oneness of truth. Archimago is shown veiling the very truth that religion reveals, and dividing the one into two, by

making an image of it. Spenser's legend goes on to show that the magician is the pseudo-prophet met many times in Scripture: he tells his dreams instead of the truth, abuses Israel's fantasy by means of flattering prophecies, and fosters the lie of idolatry. Idols are particularly falsehoods, as Aquinas argues in his treatise De Veritate, because they divide, and so falsify, the unity of God.[28] In the words of Cyprian's first treatise, on the unity of the Church, where he describes Satan's recourse at the advent of the redeemer, Archimago

> ...seeing his idols and his fanes forsaken, devises new fraud, under the very titles of the Christian name, to deceive the incautious. He has invented heresies and schisms, whereby he might subvert the faith, might corrupt the truth, might divide the unity. Those whom he cannot keep in the darkness of the old way he circumvents and deceives by the error of the new way. He snatches them from the church itself, and when they seem to have approached the light, and seem to have escaped the world's night, he pours over them again, in their unconsciousness, new darkness...[29]

The first of the heretics to whom Cyprian refers was Simon Magus--he it was who first divided the unity, and he is usually represented by heresiology as the Demogorgon figure of all heresy.

And yet, in spite of all of these negative identifications, one cannot miss Archimago's co-operation with the poet: the poet who is creating an allegory which veils and obscures truth, and divides the one into two diverse meanings as everyone who had read Boccaccio's Genealogie Deorum Gentilium knew that allegory did.[30] The fiction can only take hold when the truth has been put to sleep, and Opinion set free (for that is what the false Una is)--poets are notoriously susceptible to report. What we call fiction the truth calls faction, but Spenser does not evade the point. Just as Archimago divides Una into Una and Duessa, so the poet will divide Ariosto's Angelica into the True and False Florimell. So, once upon a time, did the poet Stesichoros revise the Helen of Homer, distinguishing a loyal and true bride from a false and adulterous simulachrum of her. The analogy between the poet's activity and the doubling of Helen is not mine, nor even Spenser's, but E.K.'s and Mazzoni's. The great Italian critic used classical story to explain that all poetry is a species of "sophistic," one that produces eikastic and fantastic images.

Stesichoros altered Homer for the sake of the fantastic, but also to show how Homer is to be understood in an allegorical manner, with a disregard for the literal.[31] Even Simon Magus was such an exegete, for he went around with a Helen whom he had picked up in a brothel, and whom he claimed represented Truth and who had, in the course of her degradation from the divine mind, been Helen of Troy.

Archimago swears by Demogorgon. Demogorgon was at the head of Boccaccio's treatise containing the first full scale Renaissance defense of poetry. Demogorgon might therefore stand for the demand for parity that "poetic theology" makes, when it discovers the autonomy of fiction and the fictional heterocosm. Thus the poet behind Spenser's first canto can be seen as working precisely at cross-purposes with his biblical-Christian protagonist. The text must labor under a dual anxiety: the image-maker may be either a hypocrite in religion, or an abuser of that truth veiled by allegorical poetry. According to George Puttenham, in his compilation tropes and figures, "allegoria" is a form of dissimulation, and therefore its English name ought to be the figure of Fals-Semblant.[32] All allegory is such a Duessan enterprise. Archimago is also compared to Proteus, whom Spenser says is full of subtle sophisms, which play with double senses. At the same time, Proteus is a figure for truth, which, according to the allegory of Proteus found in St. Augustine, no one can lay hold on if he is deceived by false images, or if he loosens his hold on the nodes of understanding.[33] Thus Spenser tells us that the very things that imply a degeneration of truth in the area of revelation are those things which create a poetry apart from it. Significantly, Archimago moves his arts and makes good his escape when it is time for the poet to begin his second book.

Because we can read the book again, we can re-dream the dream of Redcrosse. Happily enough, so can Redcrosse himself. He does this in the eleventh canto, where he is found underneath the Tree of Life, dreaming as a second Adam. He is dreaming, it would follow, Adam's prophetic dream about the taking of his future bride out of his side. Since Redcrosse is a <u>second</u> Adam, his bride must be a second Eve, for Una is <u>Eve's daughter</u>. She is also the Church, taken out of Christ's side during the crucifixion--typologists were fond out pointing out--as Eve was taken out of Adam's side during his sleep. The false Una is also a "second Eve" of sorts, and biblical tradition knows of an Eve like this too: the fictional or apochryphal wife of Adam, Eve's rival Lilith. Lilith is the stuff out of which legends are made, including, it appears, the Legend of the Knight of the Red Cross.

VII

We may also apply the themes of our discussion to Milton. It will be recalled that the Bible has no genre in the normal sense. Milton may be a "biblical" poet, but he uses traditional genres, and they are one of the things that keep his work intensely literary. On the other hand, Milton is also one of those artists who is almost the ruin of the forms he uses: he always confronts these forms with their own defining limitations. In reading Samson Agonistes, for example, the Dionysan and Apollonian archetypes typical of Greek tragedy are never far from our minds--the play is about a quasi-solar figure who dies blind amid the blaze of noon in the drunken festival of a pagan agricultural deity. Thus the external action of the play makes Samson a perfect tragic gazing-stock; but the internal action, contradictorily, describes a post-tragic action of rehabilitation, showing the hero purging the Dalilah of concupiscence and the Harapha of irascibility, and becoming, through his suffering servant role, the biblical man raised up, and therefore a type of him who is to come. The catastrophe, depending upon one's point of view, occurs either at the beginning or the end of the play, this being an example of the great tension between the content prescribed by the form, and the form prescribed by the content.

The greatest example of a classical allusion as a "counterplot" in Milton occurs in the story of Satan in Paradise Lost. Everyone knows about Satan's pagan heroics, and about the Odyssean mock-Telemachia at the opening of the poem. Satan's quest also proves to be a mock-Telegonia, since, like Odysseus, he meets his own natural son by the Circean concubine figure of Sin, and parracide impends. Further, the action is also epic-Virgilian, with the devils building their infernal Carthage, and Satan seeking for a new promised land for his people. Satan is the typical colonial hero spawned by the epic matter of "wars of migration." But, as calling Aeneas' Italy a "promised land" suggests, the action is more deeply apochryphal, for being in biblical epic, Satan must also be a Moses--or rather, Moses re-cast as Pharaoh, getting out of the land of bondage and trying to get us in. And like Moses, he crosses a howling wilderness until he comes up against alien walls and is made to feel his sad exclusion from the gates of bliss. This mass translation of domain is a typical epic theme, but it does not give us the key to the relation of the fiction to the Bible.

Milton not only begins his epic with a deep irony upon the epic tradition, he also begins his Bible-poem with its least biblical part: the evidence for the fall of Satan is not so very large, and, for its occurence aboriginally, the evidence is hardly Biblical at all. Thus Satan is a self-promoter in several senses, and what he promotes is a notable fiction. A poet must be of the devil's part in this, for the writing of such a poem as Milton's requires an immense act of fiction-making to get it started. In our terms, an immense "once upon a time." And Paradise Lost, which is an extended meditation upon the premeditated nature of the genuine act, certainly has many reasons to reconstruct the anteriority proper to the Fall.

Satan's rebellion in heaven might well remind us of the social breakdown that commences the Iliad: both Satan's and Achilles' rebellion recall Greek myths of such a separation within a divine confederation. But the proud, divisive Satan is not so much separating from the gods, or the godhead, as becoming a numen in his own right. We may try to understand the implications of this process with the aid of some comparative religion.

Milton makes little distinction between pagan literature and pagan religion, and as a consequence he thinks of classical literature as a kind of fallen Scripture. We should therefore seek the sources of Satan's self-promotion, beyond a mere paganization of Moses, in Satan's differences with Moses' God. The fundamental idea of pagan religion is that "there exists a realm of being prior to the gods and above them, upon which the gods depend, and whose decrees they must obey."[34] In the Bible, God creates heaven and earth; in the pagan theogonies, heaven and earth create the gods. This primordial realm is the womb in which the seeds of all being are contained; it comprehends the secrets of the deep, the seeds of time, and the seeds of the elements; and it transcends the heads of pantheons and the cosmocrators who maintain the universe and their various sovereignties therein. This precedent realm, the primordial soup, is full of pre-existent, autonomous forces which have themselves no life-stories, no fables, and no personal wills. Indeed, this sort of primordial type has no perfect sovereignty either--Uranus, for example, is merely spatiality. Gods of his kind are subjugated in the second or third generation by son-figures, who may either rescue or murder their parent. The various gods of the departments of nature also develop out of the primal soup, and nature being various, so are the gods of its departments. The pagan gods are subject to sexual

conditions, even when they are bisexual. The whole procreative metaphor for creation contributes here: the pagan gods generate the cycles of nature, and they themselves may be subject to cycles also: that is, to periods of time, like Shelley's Jupiter. For the believer, these gods are never the only recourse: being subject to fates and times and necessities, they may be circumvented; that is, the believer may also go beyond them, to the primordial realm in which lie the principles out of which all things were generated. These powers wait to be used, and by means of magic and divination one may hope to commandeer them. Nature is not neutralized with the pagan gods in it: such gods may be incarnate in it through every sort of metamorphosis: from animal to emperor, according to the progression traced in Ovid's poem.

Those who have listened to the foregoing description with an ear inclined towards Paradise Lost will have guessed how Satan fits in. Satan transforms himself into a pagan god. He rebels against his father, like Zeus. His fall is accompanied by his subjection to sex, and the ensuing divine copulation creates Death, and thus at least one half of the natural cycle of generation and corruption. He sets up a divine pantheon, makes a creation within his own realm, and becomes subject to a period: the twilight of the gods implied by his situation on the burning lake at the opening of the poem. He emerges out of the primal soup of chaos, and manifests himself in the form of animals. He becomes subject to a variety of mortalisms: he can feel pain, for example. Like Zeus swallowing Metis, he can improve his wisdom, and he claims to have done so by eating the fruit. He consults with Chaos and Demogorgon, Demogorgon being the Renaissance name for the prior theogonic principle; so Duessa addresses Spenser's Night:

> O thou most auncient Grandmother of all
> More old then Ioue, whom thou at first didst breede,
> Or that great house of Gods caelestiall,
> Which wast begot in Daemogorgons hall,
> And sawst the secrets of the world vnmade
> (I.v.22)

Satan is especially like the pagan gods we have described because his action, he says himself, is circumscribed by necessity, and because he treats his rival's power as a usurpation upon his realm. He is a pagan god because he believes himself to have been spontaneously generated, "when fatal course/ Had circled his full Orb, the birth mature/ Of this our native Heaven."[35] Fate created him, he is telling us, in his due time. He is even like the typical second-

generation god in meeting the figures of Sin and Death on his way towards individuation: pagan theogonies, as readers of Hesiod will remember, mix in abstractions with concrete beings. In terms of our larger theme, the most important thing about this new-born god may well be God's remark in Book III that Satan fell by his own suggestion. But, as we have seen, many of the suggestions for Satan come, not so much from Satan, as from literature. Satan, we would have to say, is the victim of a course in "the Bible as Literature."

The phrase in question contains a problem. It means, "the Bible/ also literature." "As" is a form of the word "also," one of a large number of words ultimately derived from the Indo-European root al- , from which we also get the word allegory. The Bible, an allegorical literature. The study of the Bible as literature, it could follow, pertains not to the Bible, but to literary works having an allegorical relation to it.

We often teach our subjects as if they were something "else," and it is easy to believe that the Bible belongs to the gospel of the humanities. The Bible's old rival, Saint Socrates, is also Saints Calidore and Quixote. Erasmus' Folly commends those who have made themselves fools for the gospel, and an ironic comparison of Quixote to Saint Paul implies that the Don has made himself a fool for the gospel of romance. Courses on the Bible as literature seem rather quixotic too. Their very title may be a contradiction in terms. No doubt much that is useful can be done with this contradiction, once we turn it into a comparison. But we cannot do this without first having learnt something about the Bible as the Bible.

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NOTES

[1]Johann Matthias Gesner, in his edition of Quintilian, Institutio oratoria (1738), refers to the organ in this way, in a passage on Bach, cited in The Bach Reader, ed. H. T. David and A. Mendel (New York: Norton, 1966), p. 231. Compare Michael Praetorius, Syntagma Musicum (1619): "...the organ possesses and encompasses all other instruments of music--large and small, however named--in itself alone. If you want to hear a drum, a trumpet, a trombone, cornetts, a recorder, flutes, pommers, shawms, a dulcian, racketts, sorduns, krummhorns, violins, lyres, etc., you can have all these and still many more unusual and charming things in this

artful creation; so that, when you have and hear this instrument, you think nought but that you have all the other instruments, one amongst another." (I owe these references to Edward Mendelson.)

[2]Cf. Pascal, Pensées, IX, 627: "There is a great difference between a book which an individual writes, and publishes to a nation, and a book which itself creates a nation."

[3]Texts are Gen. 35:2-4; Josh. 24:14, 23; I Sam. 7:3. The points here are taken from Gerhard von Rad, Old Testament Theology, Vol. I, trans. D.M.G. Stalker (New York: Harper and Row, 1962), pp. 203-212. Von Rad's "Deuteronomistic" interpretation of the Old Testament has influenced almost everything in the present piece.

[4]See Frank M. Cross, Jr., "Yahweh and the God of the Patriarchs," Harvard Theological Review, 55 (1962), 225-259; Roland de Vaux, Ancient Israel (Les Institutions de L'Ancien Testament) (reprint, New York: McGraw-Hill, 1961), II, 289-294; Albrecht Alt, "The God of the Fathers," in his Essays on Old Testament History and Religion, trans. R.A. Wilson (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1958), pp. 1-100; Aubrey Johnson, The One and the Many in the Israelite Conception of God (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1961). An important biblical example of the subordination of the Canaanite El-deities is Job 38:7. There are awkward impasses on the route to the universalization of Israel's god, of course. The foreign general Naaman, for example, had faith in Israel's god, and came to Elijah to be healed of leprosy. After his cure in the Jordan, he proclaimed Yahweh to be god in all the earth; he then arranged to take some local, Israelite soil home with him, so that he might worship Yahweh on his native ground. The equivalent embarrassment for the pagan process is illustrated in Spenser's Faerie Queene, where the religion of the satyrs in "The Legend of Holiness" (canto vi) passes from the worship of Una (the truth of the "one god") to the worship of Una's ass (Greek onos, vocative onē), and thence back to the service of Sylvanus old, Silvanus otherwise being Pan or All, but also silva, or mere matter. The idolatrous satyrs turn the Creator into the likeness of the creature.

[5]Anatomy of Criticism (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957), pp. 308-312; for the comparison with the Bible, see p. 325.

[6]See the study of Hans Canzelmann, The Theology of St. Luke, trans. Geoffrey Buswell (New York: Harper and Row, 1961).

[7]"Followability" is the term of Martin Price, in "The Fictional Contract," Literary Theory and Structure: Essays in Honor of William K. Wimsatt, ed. Frank Brady, John Palmer, and Martin Price (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1973), pp. 174-184.

[8]So the famous essay of Claude Lévi-Strauss, "The Structural Study of Myth," Journal of American Folklore, 57 (1955), pp. 428-444. See sec. 4.11.2: "...our method eliminates a problem which has been so far one of the main obstacles to the progress of mythological studies, namely, the quest for the true version, or the earlier one. On the contrary, we define the myth as consisting of all its versions...." (A revised version of the essay appears in Anthropologie Structurale [1958].)

[9]John 1:30; see Raymond E. Brown, "John the Baptist and the Gospel of John," in his New Testament Essays, reprint, Image Books (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1968), pp. 174-184.

[10]The interpretation of Saul's place in the kingship narratives, and the use of the question from Matt. 11:3, are taken from von Rad, Old Testament Theology, trans. cited, I, 324-327.

[11]The pro-monarcharial or royalist account is I Sam. 9:1-10:16, chapt. 11; the anti-monarcharial account is I Sam., chapter 8; 10: 17-24; chapt. 12.

[12]God's intentions for the House of David appear in Nathan's prophecy at II Sam. 7:8-16; there is no reason not to date the nuclear form of the prophecy from the time of David.

[13]This teleological impetus is easily adapted--as by Dante, Spenser, and Bunyan--to the form of the quest-romance, which my colleague Edward Mendelson once aptly characterized as "the allegory of purpose." The passage of the divine volition through phases of innovation, revision, maintenance, and renovation, reappears within the phases of the quest--outset, divigation, error, trespass, impasse, intermission, invitation, and the various gradi of initiation that lead to the quest's determination.

[14]For these descriptions, compare von Rad, Genesis, Old Testament Library, trans. John Marks (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1961), p. 20, and Old Testament Theology, trans. cited, I, 133-135, 167-176.

[15]See Martin Buber, Moses, reprint, Harper Torchbooks (New York: Harper and Row, 1962), pp. 71, 111 ff.

[16]I am thinking of Abraham's willingness to sacrifice his son at God's behest. Cf. Lear's "Upon such sacrifices, my Cordelia,/ The gods themselves throw incense" (V.iii.20), and Dante's exposition at Paradiso, V.19-84, where he refers to Jephtha's daughter and, in evil kind, Agamemnon's daughter--the crucified sons of Ugolino ultimately belong to the same comparison.

[17]My source is again von Rad, Old Testament Theology, II, 80-98; a preponderance of my biblical texts are cited there also.

[18]See J.L. Austin, "Performative Utterances," in his Philosophical Papers, 2nd edn., ed. J.O. Urmson and G.J. Warnock (Oxford: Clarendon, 1970), pp. 233-252. The "performative" efficacy of naming is shared with prophetic utterance. The performative character of much literary utterance also deserves some study: Virgil's "Arms and the man I sing" (Aeneid I.1) would be an example.

[19]William Foxwell Albright, From the Stone Age to Christianity: Monotheism and the Historical Process, 2nd edn., Anchor Books (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1957), p. 372, citing longer studies of the agency of the logos and memra.

[20]Paul de Man, Blindness and Insight (Oxford, 1970), p. 26, in an essay on "Form and Intent in the American New Criticism," to which the present study is frequently indebted. There is, however, a prophetic element in all interpretation, as de Man's essay implies for literature, and as I Corinthians 14 implies for Scripture. See Aquinas, Summa Theol., II-II, q. 176, art. 2 ("The interpretation of speeches is reducible to the gift of prophecy") with ibid., q. 173, art. 1 ("the prophet's mind... may be called a mirror, insofar as a likeness of the truth of the Divine foreknowledge is formed therein....The prophets are said to read the book of God's foreknowledge..."). Similarly, the critic reads the author's intentions, the reader's expectations, and the text's self-awareness of whither it tends.

[21]For this formulation, cf. von Rad, Old Testament Theology, II, 380 ff., and G. Ebeling, Word and Faith, trans. J.W. Leitch (London, 1963), p. 214, as quoted by von Rad.

[22]Letter to Cottle, 1815, in Collected Letters of Samuel Taylor Coleridge, ed. Earl Leslie Griggs (Oxford, 1959), IV, 545 (= Griggs, Unpublished Letters, II, 128). For parallel

passages on the ophidian connexity ruling the imagination, see J.B. Beer, Coleridge the Visionary, (London: Chatto and Windus, 1959), pp. 5, 70 ff.

[23]Pensées, X, 677; cf. ibid., no. 676: "A cipher has a double meaning, one clear, and one in which it is said that the meaning is hidden." All representation may have the character of such a cipher, if the two texts are saying the same thing.

[24]So Rudolph Bultman, Theology of the New Testament, 2 vols. in one, i.e. 2 books or 2 sets of page numbers bound in one volume, trans. Kendrick Grobel (reprint, New York: Scribner's Sons, n.d.), II, 27-32.

[25]I.A. Richards, Science and Poetry (New York: W.W. Norton, 1926), chapt. 6; Theon, Progymnasmata III, in Rhetores Graeci, ed. Walz (1832), I, 172.

[26]For this contrast, compare the end of Dante's Commedia with the theophany found in the story of the Burning Bush in Exodus. The whole point of the picture in the faith-text is that Moses is given a minimum: it is the act of faith which improves upon the sign. In contrast, the complexity of the final beatific vision in Dante tells us that its mode is fictional. It is ultimately addressed to the "speculative intellect," rather than the "direction of the will." The emptiness of the divine revelation to those outside it appears in the Gospel of John, where Christ's frequent self-identifications ("It is I" = "I am he") reveal only that he is the revelation, and that his testimonial works are the words he speaks. See Bultman, Theology of the New Testament, trans. cited, II, 59-69.

[27]With my ideas here, compare Geoffrey Hartman, "The Dream of Communication," in I.A. Richards: Essays in his honor, ed. Reuben Brower, Helen Vendler, John Hollander, (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1973), pp. 157-177, esp. pp. 171-173.

[28]De Veritate, q. 17, art. 4, resp. 3; see the trans. of Robert Mulligan, S.J., Truth,(Chicago: Regnery, 1952), I, 113. For similar charges against the imagination, see ibid., q.17, art.2, resp.2, vol. cit., p. 107.

[29]Treatise I, sec. 3, trans. in Ante-Nicene Fathers, ed. Rev. Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson (reprint, New York, 1899), V, p. 422.

[30]Genealogie Deorum Gentilium, I.iii., ed. Vicenzo Romano

(Bari: Laterza, 1951), I, 19; Boccaccio echoes Dante's Tenth Letter, to Can Grande, para. 7.

[31]E.K. on Shepherds Calendar, "Aprill," l. 26; Jacopo Mazzoni, Della Difesa della Comedia di Dante (Cesena, 1587), III.vii, pp. 417 f., and III.xxxviii, p. 565.

[32]The Arte of English Poesie, introduced by Baxter Hathaway, facsimile reproduction of Constable edn. of 1906, ed. Edward Arber (Detroit: Kent State Univ. Press, 1970), p. 197.

[33]Contra Academicos, iv.13; see also Augustine's Divine Providence and the Problem of Evil, xv. 43, for reference to the same allegory.

[34]Yehezkel Kaufman, The Religion of Israel, trans. and abridged by Moshe Greenberg (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1960), p. 21. My description of "Pagan Religion" is a close paraphrase of Kaufman's second chapter. See also Brevard S. Childs, Myth and Reality in the Old Testament, Studies in Biblical Theology, No. 27, (London: SCM Press, 1960).

[35]Paradise Lost, V.861-862. Satan's horror at discovering that he is "the work/ Of secondary hands" (ll. 853f.) also prompts him to claim that he is "self-begot, self-rais'd" (l. 860): the question of origins becomes a major issue just at that point that Satan is falling into pagan godhood.

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New Methods and Theory of Fiction from France

Some recent critical movements--literary stylistics,[1] explication de texte,[2] Structuralism,[3] and nouvelle critique[4]--may be characterized by their internationalism and concentration on fiction.[5] Earlier in the century one might also detect an international spirit in the similar aims of Russian Formalism,[6] the Prague Circle,[7] and the New Criticism although these groups were not primarily interested in fiction. Both Russian Formalism, about which we have been hearing so much in the last ten years,[8] and the Prague School contributed to the very broad movement known as Structuralism, which, as Fredric Jameson tells us, may be said to have begun with Claude Lévi-Strauss's Tristes Tropiques in 1955 and to have flourished in the mid-1960's with the publication of important work by Jacques Lacan and Jacques Derrida. Although Structuralism is not an exclusively French development, many of its leading representatives are French. (One need only glance at the predominance of French names in the table of contents and bibliography of that harbinger of Structuralism in the United States, The Languages of Criticism and the Sciences of Man (1970), which reports the symposium organized at Johns Hopkins in 1966.) Most all of the periodicals that have devoted issues to the subject are French as well.[9] The best-known literary critics of the movement, Roland Barthes, Tzvetan Todorov, and Gérard Genette, are associated with the Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes or the Sorbonne in Paris, with the publisher Seuil, and with the journals Poétique and Communications.[10] It is significant that shortly after Seuil published Qu'est-ce que le structuralisme? and Todorov's translations of the Russian Formalists it brought out a French translation of Wellek and Warren's Theory of Literature, for undoubtedly Anglo-American New Criticism and the Chicago Critics have influenced some of the French Structuralist critics.[11] The French in turn--now having assimilated New Criticism, Russian Formalism, and Structuralism--have developed their own theories and methods for analyzing

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fictional narrative, and a new transatlantic exchange--this time from east to west--is well under way, to judge from recent books and articles by Jameson, Scholes, and others.[12] I do not mean to imply that American critics have not been developing fictional theory and methods of criticism independently. On the contrary, beginning in the 1960's with Wayne Booth's The Rhetoric of Fiction, and continuing on into the early 1970's, there appeared a significant number of books and articles on method and theory, not to mention related studies of individual authors, which were stimulated in great part by linguistic and statistical approaches or simply by other American schools of criticism.[13]

In view of the growing importance of Parisian Structuralism, Gérard Genette's Figures III (Paris: Editions de Seuil, 1972) should prove interesting to Anglo-American readers both as a compendium of certain international critical and theoretical trends and as a development and application of these and new approaches to fiction. Although critics like Jameson, Chatman, and Scholes have written at length about Barthes and Todorov, no Anglo-American critic has given Genette the attention he deserves, save perhaps for Scholes in his recent Structuralism in Literature. Of books by these three French critics only some of Barthes' have appeared in English--though a few articles by Todorov and one by Genette have been translated, and two of Todorov's books are soon to be published in English.[14]

Figures III falls into two distinct parts. The first consists of four essays that deal with the weaknesses of conventional literary history, the goals of structural studies, the nature of metaphor, and "Metonymy in Proust." The second part, with which I am concerned here, is entitled "Discours du récit: essai de méthode." The main title could be loosely translated as "Structure of the Novel" or "Figures [grammar, rhetoric, anatomy] of the Tale." The subtitle promises only "An Essay in Method." Indeed in his "Afterword" Genette is very diffident about the tentativeness of his proposals and terminology, although most of the new terms, which at first seem quite formidable, are derived from standard rhetorical vocabulary. Although this essay is in great part an analysis of Proust, examples are also drawn from other French authors as well as from classical and modern writers of the western world, and the method is advanced as universally applicable.

The first three chapters deal with the order, duration, and frequency of events in the plot (récit), and the ways in which these temporal elements differ from the corresponding elements in the fable or story (histoire), on which the plot

or narration is based. (Many of the essential ideas of these first three chapters may be found in Genette's article "Time and Narrative in A la recherche du temps perdu.") Although the general ideas here are not all original (Genette acknowledges his debts to Plato, Aristotle, German theoreticians, and Barthes), the careful classification and elaboration of them into a method is interesting and illuminating. Close attention to Genette's argument gives us possession of an effective tool for the critical examination of fiction.

Early in the book Genette analyzes deviations in plot order from the chronological fable order, or "anachronisms," that are evident in two paragraphs from Proust. What appears to the casual reader to be a simple chronological report of a character thinking in the "fictional present" contains a very unchronologically ordered series of references to the past. By analyzing closely the time-shifts within the sentences and from sentence to sentence, we realize that the plot carries us back and forth from actual present to memory of the past (a retrospection, or "analepse métadiégétique") and to conjecture about the future (an anticipation, or "prolepse")--this relative future coinciding with the fictional present, but to be recognized as an erroneous conjecture when compared with the "facts" of the present.

One unresolved problem in such relating of smaller events ("micro-structures") or larger episodes ("macro-structures")[15]--that is, in such arranging of sequences in a particular order--is the difficulty of identifying the beginning and ending of an event or episode. Barthes has at least partially resolved the dilemma, with help from Aristotle and the Russian Formalists, by suggesting that a sequence opens when its first noyau has no antecedent and closes when its last noyau has no consequence.[16] Barthes counters the obvious objection that all events are interrelated by admitting that truth and asserting that a micro-sequence is a part of, but a discreet part of, a larger sequence. I might illustrate the problem and the possibilities for solution by referring to an episode from Hawthorne's "My Kinsman, Major Molineux." In the fourth episode, that of Robin's encounter with the girl of the scarlet petticoat, the watch arrives warning Robin to go home and exits laughing, after which Robin flees from the "pleasant titter" of the girl. Is the dialogue with the watch a micro-sequence within the macro-sequence of meeting the girl? Is the plot here constructed according to the principle of what Todorov calls alternation or, perhaps, rather, framing ("enchâssement")?[17] Or is the watch sequel really part of the Robin-girl episode? Although admittedly the watch appears without any antecedent action, might not

his warning be said to have a consequence--that of Robin's fleeing--that occurs after the watch disappears and that ends the Robin-girl sequel, this sequence itself having no apparent consequence? To reduce confusion, might some guidelines be suggested for the division of episodes, such as the change of setting or the elimination or addition of characters present? Such problems may be ultimately insoluble--particularly when they arise in the study of modern or contemporary fiction. Would we be able to agree on the beginnings and ends of episodes in Molly Bloom's soliloquy (to cite not the most difficult example)?

Genette distinguishes internal from external flashbacks and flashforwards on the basis of whether or not the events of the disturbed time sequence are contained in the time limits of the main plot ("*récit premier*"). The obvious question is, How can one determine that an action is contained within the limits of the main plot or not? All actions narrated in the unchronological plot are part of the chronological fable, which has a beginning and end: that is, the ultimate time boundaries referred to in the plot. How does one distinguish secondary action from primary action? When does the primary action open and close? For stories that begin *in medias res*, do we posit as the beginning of the main plot the "date" of that opening action in the plot and relegate all fable action preceding this event to secondary action or exposition? *Lord Jim*, a novel to which Genette refers, begins with a description of Jim as water-clerk that takes place after his early training and the *Patna* experience. Is, therefore, the action aboard the *Patna* and the trial--all of which precedes Jim's water-clerk days in the fable but which is "important" action certainly--is this action to be considered as expository and secondary? In a plot narrated more in chronological order, such as Hawthorne's "My Kinsman, Major Molineux," the distinction between primary and secondary *récit* seems more evident. For example, Robin's memories of his childhood, which I place in the sixth macro-sequence but which stand first in the fable order and which precede the first episode of the plot, would seem to be secondary action, simple exposition. Are there any rules by which the critic decides on such distinctions? These problems become pressing when the analyst undertakes to reconstruct the order of episodes in the fable from a drastically disordered plot such as those in *Lord Jim* or *The Good Soldier*; and concepts such as Genette's "completive," "repetitive," "partial," and "complete" flashbacks or flashforwards, though helpful in making us aware of the nature of the disorder as well as in allowing us to describe it, are only temporary solutions.

Genette's remarks on duration and frequency, though they take us over somewhat familiar ground, are so thorough and logical that we come away with an expanded understanding of the relationships between narrative, fable, and plot. In regard to duration, he identifies four different speeds of narration, or "paces," defined in relation to an isochronous or constant hypothetical pace. In _description_, a pause in the pace always occurs when the duration of the narrative time (time required to read a certain number of pages) is unlimited and infinitely greater than the duration of the plot time (zero). In _scene_ the narrative time is theoretically equal to the duration of the plot time although Genette admits that the equation cannot be perfect. In _summary_, or panorama, the duration of narrative time is smaller than that of plot time (one sentence summarizing the events of several years, for instance). Finally, in _ellipsis_, where narrative is omitted, the duration of the narrative time is infinitely smaller that that of the fable time: that is, no sentences appear in the narrative though time passes in the fable. Ellipses may be explicit or implicit (the reader must infer that time has been left out), determined (the amount of time left out is stated) or undetermined, or they may be somewhat qualified: that is, the nature of omitted time may be briefly described, as in "a number of happy years passed." Obviously there is a fine distinction between qualified ellipsis and very brief summary, a distinction that may be hard or impossible to make. Likewise there are four possible relationships between plot and fable in regard to frequency. An event that happened once or several times in the fable may be narrated, respectively, once or several times in the plot. A story with such a relation between fable and plot is called _singular narration_. A _repetitive narration_ is one in which a single event in the fable is narrated several times in the plot, and an _iterative narration_ is one in which events that occur several times in the fable are narrated only once in the plot. A _pseudo-iterative narration_ is one in which the plot narrates recurring fable events in such detail that it is incredible that those events could have recurred often in exactly the same way. Genette also deals with the time relation between the dramatized narrator and the story he tells. The narration may occur after the events, before the events (stories or dreams of prediction), during the events (interior monologue), or interspersed with the events, as in the diary novel.

The last two chapters deal with point of view, mimesis, and levels of narration. Acknowledging Norman Friedman's seminal essay on point of view, Genette reclassifies Friedman's eight categories into five. _Zero focalization_ is the point of

view of the typical classical novel. I would assume that Genette here refers to the nineteenth-century omniscient implied author were it not for the fact that he illustrates another category, *variable internal focalization*, by citing *Madame Bovary*, which certainly does employ an omniscient point of view, although it exhibits a tendency to what Friedman calls multiple selective omniscience. However, this latter category seems to be Genette's *multiple internal focalization*, which he illustrates by the epistolary novel, in which events are seen from the point of view of different characters. The explanation may be that Genette distinguishes partly on the basis of the absence of the third-person narrator or undramatized implied author: variable internal focalization is equivalent to multiple selective omniscience that employs narration by a third-person undramatized implied author who reveals characters' thoughts separately in different parts of the novel. *The Wings of the Dove* would have been a better example than *Madame Bovary*. On the other hand, Genette's multiple internal focalization may be simply a variation of first-person narration, which of course excludes the undramatized implied author. The fourth variety of point of view is *fixed internal focalization*, which seems to correspond to Friedman's "selective omniscience," *The Ambassadors* being Genette's example.

If my explanation is correct, one wonders into which category Genette would put simple first-person narration. The only other type of point of view which he mentions is *external focalization*, which would seem to be objective point of view revealing no characters' thoughts. The assumption that multiple internal focalization excludes the third-person undramatized narrator may be wrong, however, because Genette admits that in any of the varieites of internal focalization the point of view can switch from character to undramatized narrator. If so, his three varieties of internal focalization become Friedman's "omniscience," "selective omniscience," and "multiple selective omniscience." The problem then is to assign an equivalent to "zero focalization." It would seem that Friedman's classification still provides a wider and more clearly defined range of categories for identifying types of point of view.

Genette's classification of narrators according to whether they are talking about themselves or others and according to whether they are "inside" the story or "outside" (sometimes "outside" would appear also to constitute a frame situation) seems less significant and helpful than his analysis of levels of narration. To say that Scheherazade (talking about others inside a frame) is as different from Gil Blas or Marcel (outside the frame talking about themselves) as Ulysses (talking

about himself inside the frame) is from Homer (outside the frame talking about others) is to construct an unbalanced analogy. Too often variations within Genette's categories might be greater than variations between them. For example, the difference between Homer and the narrator of Tom Jones (both narrators outside the story talking about others) seems greater than the difference between Homer and Marcel or Pip as narrators.

Genette's description of inconsistencies in levels of narration and in point of view is valuable. He locates three levels of narration: outside the story ("extradiégétique"), inside the story ("intradiégétique"), and below the story's level (story within the story--"metadiégétique"). When the author or reader appears in the fiction, what one might loosely call a feature of meta-fiction (absurd fiction, the nouveau roman) results. Genette calls this technique a metalepse, and illustrates it with Sterne's asking the reader to close the door behind Mr. Shandy. Genette observes that in the nouveau roman this device is consciously used to make the reader mix with fictional characters and begin to doubt in his own reality. When a character's memories ("analepse metadiégétique") become a flashback ("analepse")--that is, when they move from the level of metadiégétique to that of intradiégétique--an example of "pseudo-diégétique" occurs. Inconsistencies in a pattern of point of view are called alterations. A "paralipse" occurs in omniscience when the implied author withholds the thoughts of a character at the time he is thinking them to achieve some effect like suspense or dramatic irony. Conversely, when in limited omniscience or the objective point of view the author reveals the thoughts of a character whose point of view had not been previously given, a "paralepse" occurs. These terms by no means exhaust the possibilities; Genette recognizes, for instance, that an author might mix types of point of view--indeed, it is the case of Proust--the result being in Genette's terminology "polymodality."

Figures III, simply as a gathering and application of many ideas from French, German, and Anglo-American criticism, is a valuable book; its original contributions make it doubly valuable. It deserves to be translated into English. I hope that we shall soon have more books by Genette on theory and method to be followed by studies of individual works and writers based on its pattern.

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FOOTNOTES

1. Three handy collections are Thomas A. Sebeok, Style in Language (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1960); Donald C. Freeman, Linguistics and Literary Style (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1970); Glen A. Love and Michael Payne, eds., Contemporary Essays on Style (Glenview, Ill.: Scott, Foresman, 1968).

2. See W. K. Wimsatt, ed., Explication as Criticism (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1963); Erich Auerbach, Mimesis: The Representation of Reality in Western Literature, tr. Willard R. Trask (Princeton Univ. Press, 1953); or Ian Watt, "The First Paragraph of The Ambassadors: An Explication," EIC, 10 (1960).

3. Collections including contributions to an understanding of literary Structuralism as well as of anthropological, sociological, and semiotic Structuralism are Michael Lane, ed., Structuralism: A Reader (London: Jonathan Cape, 1970); Jacques Ehrmann, ed., Structuralism (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday Anchor, 1971); Richard and Fernande DeGeorge, eds., The Structuralists from Marx to Lévi-Strauss (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday Anchor, 1972); Richard Macksey and Eugenio Donato, eds., The Languages of Criticism and the Sciences of Man: The Structuralist Controversy (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 1970, 1972); and John Simon, Modern French Criticism: From Proust and Valéry to Structuralism (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1972). A recent survey of the subject is Fredric Jameson, The Prison-House of Language (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton Univ. Press, 1972).

4. Serge Doubrovsky, Pourquoi la nouvelle critique? (Paris: Mercure de France, 1966); Bernard Pingaud, "Critique traditionelle et nouvelle critique," La Nef (1967), 41-56; and "Réflexions et Recherches de Nouvelle Critique," Annales de la Faculte des Lettres de Nice, 1969.

5. Both the internationalism and interest in fiction among today's critics and theorists are evident in the work of the Bulgarian Tzvetan Todorov, written in French (Poétique de la prose [Paris: Seuil, 1971]); in that of the Russian Boris Uspensky translated into English by Susan Wittig and Valentina Zavarin in the United States (The Poetics of Composition [Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1974]); in that of the Czech Erich Kahler, written in German and now translated into English (The Inward Turn of Narrative, tr. Richard and Clara Winston [Princeton Univ. Press, 1973]); and of Franz Stanzel, who teaches in Austria, written in German,

translated by James P. Pusack into English as Narrative Situations in the Novel (Bloomington: Indiana Univ. Press, 1971). See also Käte Hamburger, The Logic of Literature tr. from the German by Marilynn J. Rose (Bloomington: Indiana Univ. Press, 1973); Eberhard Lämmert, Bauformen des Erzählens (Stuttgart: J. B. Metzler, 1955--the same year Stanzel's book was first published, and two years before Hamburger's); the Swede Bertil Romberg's doctoral thesis, now translated as Studies in the Narrative Technique of the First-Person Novel, tr. Michael Taylor and Harold Borland (Stockholm: Almqvist and Wiksell, 1962); and two recent studies in French, published in Holland: Julia Kristeva, Le Texte du roman: approche sémiologique d'une structure transformationelle (The Hague: Mouton, 1971); and Charles M. Grivel, Production de l'intérêt romanesque (The Hague: Mouton, 1973). In addition, a number of scholarly journals reflect these trends of internationalism and interest in fiction: the Dutch journal Semiotica and the British Journal of Literary Semantics published in The Hague; the Dutch journal Poetics, whose advisory editors are located in such places as Bailrigg, Bucharest, Milan, Tartu, and Lincoln, Nebraska; the French journals Communications and Poétique; and such American periodicals as Sub-Stance, Diacritics, Journal of Narrative Technique, Language and Style, New Literary History, Novel, and Style.

6. See Douglas Day, "The Background of the New Criticism," JAAC, 24 (1966), 429-40; and E. M. Thompson, Russian Formalism and Anglo-American New Criticism (The Hague; Mouton, 1971).

7. Two important works on the Czech Formalists are Paul Gavin, ed., A Prague School Reader on Esthetics, Literary Structure, and Style (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown Univ. Press, 1964); and René Wellek, The Literary Theory and Aesthetics of the Prague School (Ann Arbor: Univ. of Michigan Press, 1969).

8. Good collections are Lee T. Lemon and Marion J. Reis, eds., Russian Formalist Criticism (Lincoln: Univ. of Nebraska Press, 1965); and Ladislav Matejka and Krystyna Pomorska, eds., Readings in Russian Poetics (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1971). Excellent studies are Victor Erlich, Russian Formalism--History, Doctrine (The Hague: Mouton, 1965); Fredric Jameson, The Prison-House of Language (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton Univ. Press, 1972); and Robert Scholes's new study of the contributions of Formalism and Structuralism to the modern theory and criticism of fiction, Structuralism in Literature: An Introduction (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1973).

9. For fuller reference see Josué V. Harari, Structuralists and Structuralisms: A Selected Bibliography of French Contemporary Thought (1960-1970) (Ithaca, N.Y.: Diacritics, 1971).

10. Roland Barthes, Writing Degree Zero (London: Jonathan Cape, 1967, and Boston: Beacon, 1970); Mythologies (Paris: Seuil, 1957, and New York: Hill and Wang, 1973); On Racine, tr. Richard Howard (New York: Hill and Wang, 1964); Essais Critiques (Paris: Seuil, 1964), tr. Richard Howard as Critical Essays (Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern Univ. Press, 1972); S/Z (Paris: Seuil, 1970); and many others. Tzvetan Todorov, Théorie de la littérature: textes des formalistes russes réunis (Paris: Seuil, 1965); Littérature et signification (Paris: Larousse, 1967); Poétique de la prose (Paris: Seuil, 1971); and others. Gérard Genette, Figures (Paris: Seuil, 1966); Figures II (Paris: Seuil, 1969); Figures III (Paris: Seuil, 1972).

11. Genette cites the following Anglo-American critics: Wayne Booth (The Rhetoric of Fiction); Cleanth Brooks and Robert Penn Warren (Understanding Fiction); E. M. Forster (Aspects of the Novel); Norman Friedman ("Point of View in Fiction"); Percy Lubbock (The Craft of Fiction); and others.

12. Reports on and applications of the Formalist-Structuralist methods in recent Anglo-American publications not already mentioned include Kenneth Burke, "Formalist Criticism: Its Principles and Limits," TQ, 9 (1966), 242-68; Seymour Chatman, "New Ways of Analyzing Narrative Structure," Language and Style, 2 (1969), 3-36, and "On the Formalist-Structuralist Theory of Character," Journal of Literary Semantics, 1 (1972), 57-79; William Handy, ed., A Symposium on Formalist Criticism (Austin: Univ. of Texas Press, 1970); Eugenio Donato, "On Structuralism and Literature," MLN, 82 (1967), 549-74; Robert Scholes, "The Contributions of Formalism and Structuralism to the Theory of Fiction," Novel, 6 (1973), 134-51, and Structuralism in Literature (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1974); François Van Laere, "The Problem of Literary Structuralism," Twentieth-Century Studies, 2 (1970), 55-66; Robert Weimann, "French Structuralism," New Literary History, 4 (1973), 437ff.; and special issues of New Literary History, 6 (1975), and L'Esprit Créateur, 14 (1974).

13. For a broad view of the relations between linguistics and criticism, see Karl D. Uitti, *Linguistics and Literary Theory* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1969). Representative examples of recent studies of fiction are Barbara Hardy, *The Appropriate Form* (London: Athlone Press, 1964); W. J. Harvey, *Character and the Novel* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell Univ. Press, 1965); Robert Scholes and Robert Kellog, *The Nature of Narrative* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1966); Eugene Falk, *Types of Thematic Structure* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1967); the essay series "Towards a Poetics of Fiction," which began appearing in *Novel* in 1967; Karl Kroeber, *Styles in Fictional Structure* (Princeton Univ. Press, 1971); Joseph Strelka, ed., *Patterns of Literary Style* (University Park: Pennsylvania State Univ. Press, 1971); L. G. Heller, "The Structural Relationship Between Theme and Characterization," *Language and Style*, 4 (1971), 123-31; J. Hillis Miller, ed., *Aspects of Narrative* (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1971); Seymour Chatman, ed., *Approaches to Poetics* (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1973); Frank Brady *et al*, eds., *Literary Theory and Structure* (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1973); Eric Rabkin, *Narrative Suspense* (Ann Arbor: Univ. of Michigan Press, 1973); and Harold Toliver, *Animate Illusions: Exploration of Narrative Structure* (Lincoln: Univ. of Nebraska Press, 1973).

14. For Barthes' books in English, see footnote 10. The other works alluded to are: Tzvetan Todorov, "Structural Analysis of Narrative," *Novel*, 3 (1969); "Language and Literature," in *The Languages of Criticism and the Sciences of Man*, ed. Richard Macksey and Eugenio Donato; "Meaning in Literature: A Survey," *Poetics*, 1 (1971); "The Place of Style in the Structure of the Text," in *Literary Style: A Symposium*, ed. Seymour Chatman (London and New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1971); "The Notion of Literature," *New Literary History*, 5 (1973), 5-16; "Structuralism and Literature," in *Approaches to Poetics*, ed. Seymour Chatman; Gérard Genette, "Time and Narrative in *A la recherche du temps perdu*," in *Aspects of Narrative*, ed. J. Hillis Miller, pp. 93-118.

15. These episodes would be roughly comparable to Barthes' *noyaux* or perhaps even *catalyses* ("Introduction à l'analyse structurale des récits," *Communications*, 8 [1966], 9) which constitute a sequence or narreme. See also Claude Bremond, "Le message narratif," *Communications*, 4 (1964), 4-32.

16. Barthes, "Introduction," 13.

17. _Littérature et signification_ (Paris: Larousse, 1967), p. 72.

MARCIA EATON

Speech Acts: A Bibliography

As the scope of this bibliography suggests, the work of J. L. Austin in the philosophy of language has been of major importance, and a major influence, during the last twenty years. Speech-act theory has been applied and reapplied, with greater or lesser success, to a large variety of problems in philosophy, linguistics, literary theory and criticism.

Though I do not claim that this bibliography is complete, it does, I think, record a substantial portion of the work stimulated by Austin's ideas. I hope it will prove a useful guide for anyone interested in how we do things with words.

The bibliography is arranged chronologically; an index at the end affords access by proper name. I thank several colleagues in the Minnesota Center for suggesting additional titles.

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Review Article

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Structuralism and Literary Studies

Jonathan Culler. Structuralist Poetics. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1975. Pp. 301. $13.50.

Robert Scholes. Structuralism in Literature. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1974. Pp. 223. $9.50 ($2.45 pap.).

Reading the two books that have appeared in the past few months about the relationship between structuralism and literature, one might be reminded of the flurry of activity, much of it self-conscious and self-defining, that accompanied the last major literary critical movement in the English speaking world. But the similarity between the two movements does not extend much beyond the fact of their being movements. The New Criticism drew much of its philosophy from the critical writings of English and American poets (Eliot, Pound, Yeats, Ransom, Blackmur, etc.; Richards, a psychologist, is a major exception), while structuralist criticism draws its theory primarily from continental European social scientists (linguists, anthropologists, folklorists, semiologists). Probably related to this difference is the difference between the political orientations of the two movements, the New Critics being mostly conservative while many structuralists are political radicals. Further, the New Criticism focused attention almost exclusively on the text of the literary work, and made lyric poetry its primary object of criticism; the structuralists have devoted more energy to the relation between text and context, and have considered the novel in more detail than any other literary form. The differences in short, are wide-ranging and fundamental, while the important similarities, such as their common anti-intentionalist bias, are few. And these differences from the familiar New Criticism compel us to consider in more detail just what is the relationship between

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structuralism and literature, and what is the significance of literary structuralism for students of literature. Scholes and Culler deal with these questions in very different ways.

Scholes' Structuralism in Literature (hereafter SL) is subtitled "An Introduction," which accounts for much about the way the book is put together. The book introduces the reader to literary structuralists by making extensive use of summary and paraphrase. After a brief first chapter which attempts to answer the question "What is Structuralism?", and a short summary of the critical terms and distinctions of Saussure, which Scholes regards as "conceptual tools bequeathed to literary analysis by linguistics" (SL, p. 19), Scholes turns to the presentation of a great variety of structuralist approaches to literature. He begins by summarizing Jakobson's theory of the six functions of language and the definition of poetry Jakobson develops out of the theory. He then considers the practical application of Jakobson's poetics, looking at Jakobson's article with Lévi-Strauss on Baudelaire's "Les Chats," and at Michael Riffaterre's criticism of their reading of the poem. In the third chapter, "The Simplification of Form," Scholes summarizes the ideas of two structuralist investigators of literature whose work is little known in the English speaking world: André Jolles, a Dutchman who proposed that all texts are actualizations of nine "simple forms" that are "as universal as human language and are intimately connected with the human process of organizing the world linguistically" (SL, p. 42); and Étienne Souriau, who proposed that all situations in drama are permutations and combinations of six "functions" (which closely resemble Propp's "spheres of action") seen from different points of view. Chapter IV, "Towards a Structuralist Poetics of Fiction," presents the theories of narrative structure developed by students of myths and folktales (Propp, Lévi-Strauss, Lord Raglan), by the Russian Formalists (Eichenbaum, Shklovsky, Tomashevsky), and by the "progeny of Propp" (Greimas, Bremond, Todorov). From these general or universal theories of narrative structure, Scholes moves to a consideration of applied structuralist criticism of particular literary texts, summarizing Barthes' idea of literary "codes" as he applies it to a Balzac story in S/Z, and Genette's notion of "figures" in his analysis of Proust.

Scholes is an able introducer. He gives each writer he treats a sympathetic reading, essaying to understand the principles and ramifications of each theory, condemning no system before its logic is understood. His re-presentations of various theories condense without being reductionist. Each theory is presented in its inventor's own terms, usually

with several illustrations. Where I already knew the theory in question, I found Scholes' summaries to be thorough reviews; where I did not, I felt as though I was being guided responsibly.

But Scholes does not merely introduce his reader to these structuralist writers, he also evaluates each writer he discusses. And we can learn a great deal about SL by examining the viewpoint from which he makes his evaluations. "In this book," he avows openly at the beginning of Chapter II, "we are concerned with the relevance of structuralism to literature and literary criticism"(SL, p. 13; my italics). At the end of this chapter, after discussing the Riffaterre vs. Jakobson-Lévi-Strauss controversy, he asks, "What, then, has structuralism to offer us that will help in the practical criticism of poetic texts?" His answer to this question is interesting and reveals much about the book's bias:

> In the preparation for reading a poem, structuralism can play a powerful educational role. Properly developed, it can help us to have a clear sense of poetic discourse and its relations to other forms of discourse. It can refine our descriptive terminology and our sense of linguistic process. Because it aims at describing the whole world of poetic possibilities, it can provide us with the best framework available to aid in the perception of an actual poetic text. In our instructional programs it can give new life to the oldest aspects of our discipline by aiding in the creation of a new philology and a new literary history. In our approach to specific literary texts it can make us keenly aware of the communication aspects of the entire poetic process. But it will not read the poem for us. That we shall always have to do for ourselves. (SL, pp. 39-40)

The "us" in this passage, as elsewhere in the book, refers to literary critics. Scholes is a literary critic, interested in "the practical criticism of texts"; he evaluates structuralist writers primarily by their utility toward that end. Structuralist concepts "are merely tools to be used"; at their best, they "enable us to do much" (p. 141).

To treat structuralist inquiry into literature as a mine to be plundered in the interests of literary criticism is, I believe, to behave in a profoundly un-structuralist way. A

true structuralist would treat the social phenomenon s/he was investigating (in this case, the structuralist study of literature) as a self-contained system with its own ends or goals and its own means for accomplishing those ends. If one is to evaluate or criticize the system, the criticism should be based on the efficacy of its means for its own ends. Scholes' book is about structuralism in literature as seen from the outside, as it were. The book is by an outsider and is addressed to outsiders. In this sense it resembles the genre of travel literature.

Jonathan Culler's Structuralist Poetics (hereafter SP) investigates essentially the same writers as SL (Saussure, Jakobson, Lévi-Strauss, Barthes, Genette, Propp and others figure prominently in both books), but does so from the inside, from the essentially structuralist viewpoint of linguistics rather than the un-structuralist viewpoint of literary criticism. In particular, Culler's viewpoint is that of Chomskyan linguistics. In his first chapter, "The Linguistic Foundation," Culler reviews Saussure's definition of semiology, and his distinction between langue and parole, which Culler sees as being the cornerstones of structuralism. He then claims that although "generative grammar plays no role in the development of structuralism,... Chomsky's work can be taken as an explicit statement of the programme implicit in linguistics as a discipline but not hitherto adequately or coherently expressed" (SP, p. 7). The particular element of Chomsky's theory of language that Culler employs is the idea of linguistic competence. Culler claims that the idea of competence--"the implicit knowledge possessed by those who successfully operate within the system" (SP, p. 9)--clarifies and locates Saussure's langue or language system. We learned from Saussure that there exists a language system, that it differs from speech, and that it is the proper object of linguistic investigation. From Chomsky's notion of competence we learn where the system is located and what are its empirical correlates, namely: "the speaker's ability to understand utterances, to recognize grammatically well-formed or deviant sentences, to detect ambiguity, to perceive meaning relations among sentences, etc.... The competence that the linguist investigates is not behavior itself so much as knowledge which bears upon that behavior" (pp. 9-10).

In the next three chapters, Culler criticizes the structuralist activity of several writers in different areas: Barthes (semiology), Lévi-Strauss (mythology), and Jakobson (criticism). Each writer has tried to apply the methods of structural linguistics to the study of phenomena besides ordinary language, but, Culler tries to show, each fails

because of a basic misunderstanding of the nature of structural linguistics. Barthes attempts a semiological investigation of fashion in his _Système de la mode_, but his account fails because Barthes focuses on a corpus of fashionable garments and combinations of garments and not on the knowledge about fashionableness of those who work within the system of fashion. "The analyst must go beyond the corpus to information provided by those who are knowledgeable either in fashion or in clothing. This knowledge of compatibilities and incompatibilities--like the competence of the native speaker--is the true object of analysis" (p. 37). Lévi-Strauss is similarly unsuccessful, according to Culler, in that he too tries to work from a corpus (in this case, of myths) to discover the grammar of a system. In Lévi-Strauss's studies of myths, his difficulty is not so much a failure to investigate the knowledge of those competent in the system of mythology (as it was with Barthes and fashion) as it is that such a competence in mythology really does not exist:

> More than anything else, it is the lack of data about meaning that vitiates the analogy with linguistics, for in the study of language the structural and the semiological cannot be dissociated: the relevant structures are those which enable sequences to function as signs. The lack of a semiological perspective leads Lévi-Strauss to concentrate on the structural, to find patterns and modes of organization in his material, but without evidence about meaning it is difficult to show that these patterns are more relevant than others. (SP, p. 49)

The true semiological (or structuralist--for Culler the words are virtually interchangeable) perspective will enable the investigator not to be misled by the patterns s/he finds in his/her system, but to focus instead on the knowledge of users of the system that enables the patterns to have meaning.

Jakobson is also criticized by Culler for essentially the same reason: he lacks, in many of his literary analyses, the true semiological perspective. His analyses of poems assume that "linguistics provides a determinate analytical procedure for discovering the organization of poetic texts and that the patterns thus discovered are necessarily relevant by virtue of their 'objective' presence in the text" (SP, pp. 65-66). But Culler shows how an analysis of the linguistic features of a text and their distribution can be used to find patterns of symmetry in _any_ text, or "to find in a poem any type of

organization which one looks for" (SP, p. 62). Jakobson should be focusing on the reader's knowledge about these patterns--his/her ability, for instance, to distinguish between meaningful patterns and incidental patterns--rather than on the patterns themselves. And this is precisely what Jakobson does from time to time when he analyzes the poetic function of a particular line or phrase in terms of its effect on the reader, as, for example, when he discusses the slogan "I like Ike" in "Linguistics and Poetics." Culler has high praise for these efforts. But in the analyses of whole poems for which Jakobson is probably best known (in literary circles, at least), Culler finds once more a misunderstanding of the method of structural linguistics.

These critiques of Barthes, Lévi-Strauss, and Jakobson build quite clearly to the central idea of SP, the idea of literary competence, which is "a set of conventions for reading literary texts" (SP, p. 118). Culler's sixth chapter is entitled "Literary Competence," and in it he makes several persuasive arguments that such a thing exists, and that it is the proper object of study for structuralist poetics. Structuralist poetics should cease thinking its goal is to specify the properties of literary texts and concentrate instead "on the task of formulating the internalized competence which enables [literary texts] to have the properties they do for those who have mastered the system" (p. 120). It is primarily a theory, not of texts, but of reading. Structuralism provides "a reversal of critical perspective and a theoretical framework within which the work of other critics can be organized and exploited...Rather than say, for example, that literary texts are fictional, we might cite this as a convention of literary interpretation and say that to read a text as literature is to read it as fiction" (SP, p. 128). Where Scholes spoke of exploiting structuralism for literary criticism, Culler speaks of exploiting literary criticism for structuralism.

Most of the remaining chapters of the book are devoted to an amalgamation of structuralist work on poetics as Culler defines it. Unlike Scholes', Culler's summaries are not so much compendious reductions of the theories of individual writers as they are syntheses of the findings of several writers on individual topics. Where Scholes, in his chapter "Towards a Structuralist Poetics of Fiction," considers separately each author and his various contributions to the poetics of fiction (Scholes defines "poetics" rather more loosely than does Culler), Culler, in his chapter "Poetics of the Novel," considers various aspects of the novel (such as plot, character, theme) separately, looking at the contributions of different authors to the poetics of that aspect of

the novel. And, as was the case earlier with his evaluations of Barthes, Lévi-Strauss, and Jakobson, Culler, himself a structuralist, judges the writers he discusses according to their success or failure in realizing their own goals, namely the treatment of literature as a semiotic system which can be described using the methods of structural linguistics.

I can illustrate the fundamental difference between the viewpoints of Scholes and Culler by comparing their respective evaluations of Tzvetan Todorov's *Grammaire du Décaméron*. Scholes admires Todorov's system, finding it "complicated enough to do something like justice to the grammar of the *Decameron*" (SL, p. 115). He is especially pleased when Todorov admits that some tales cannot be accounted for by his system, and suggests that the "ironic symbolism" of certain complex tales "belongs to another order of narrative which will require a somewhat different grammar for its notation" (SL, p. 117). Happily, Todorov's grammar, though inadequate for some stories, "has been sufficiently adequate to identify the special cases and direct our attention to the most interesting and difficult features in them" (SL, p. 117). The objects Scholes is interested in describing (doing "justice" to) are the texts of stories, and Scholes looks to Todorov's grammar to provide tools for "adequately" describing the various features, especially the "interesting and difficult" ones, of those objects. Culler is less happy with Todorov's work:

> The basic problem seems to be that Todorov has not considered what facts his theory is supposed to account for and so has not considered the adequacy of the implicit groupings which it establishes. He thinks of his grammar as the result of careful study of a corpus and hence as a description of that corpus but has not endeavoured to show why this description should be preferable to others. His neglect of the reading process in which plots are recognized and synthesized leaves him with nothing to explain. (SP, p. 217)

Todorov, too, according to Culler, has basically misunderstood the method of structural linguistics and confused the patterns in the corpus with the system of readerly knowledge that bears on the corpus. His system, however, is not without value: "at least his categories are sufficiently well defined that one can actually apply them and see what consequences they have, which is something that cannot be said of many other theories" (*ibid.*). It may not really be poetics, Culler seems to be

saying, but at least the literary critics might be able to make use of it. There is nothing wrong with using the concepts and metaphors of linguistics in discussing literary works (indeed, Culler devotes a chapter to considering several instances of such an approach), but to do so is not to do structuralist poetics.

We began by asking, what is the relationship between structuralism and literature?, and what is the significance of literary structuralism for students of literature? Culler, the insider, can answer these questions fairly directly and simply. Structuralism is semiology ("it would not be wrong to suggest that structuralism and semiology are identical"--SP, p. 6), and literature is one sign system that can be investigated semiologically through the proper application of the methods of structural linguistics. The semiological investigation of literature differs significantly from literary criticism as we know it. If structuralism were to catch on and revolutionize literary scholarship in the way the New Criticism did more than a generation ago, the new New Criticism, structuralist criticism (perhaps by then it would be dignified by a capital S), would teach us not to be so interested in detailed interpretive criticism of texts, not "to make organic unity a standard of value" (SP, p. 263), not to have the judgment or evaluation of texts play such a prominent role in critical activity. Structuralist criticism focuses instead on the activity of reading, on what a reader does when s/he reads a poem or a novel, on how s/he organizes and makes sense out of a text, and on what are the features of the text that are correlated with these activities. "If we did not revere the literary work quite so much we might enjoy it rather more, and there is no surer road to enjoyment of this kind than a criticism which attempts to make explicit the conventions of reading and the costs and benefits of applying them to various works" (SP, pp. 263-4).

Scholes seems to see structuralism in two ways. For the bulk of his book, structuralism is regarded basically as a methodology--including both structuralist poetics, in Culler's sense, and, more loosely, the general use of linguistic concepts and metaphors in an effort to systematize literary study. By viewing literature from a slightly different angle than traditional literary criticism, structuralism, Scholes thinks, will be significant to literary studies primarily by refining and enriching the existing literary critical examination of texts. He does not see, as Culler does, the possibility of a radical change in literary criticism that would be effected by the new viewpoint of structuralism. In his final chapter, "The Structuralist Imagination," Scholes takes a second, more

general view of structuralism. He is willing there to investigate the possibility of connections between Romantic and structuralist theories of poetic language, to find elements of the structuralist viewpoint in modern and contemporary fiction, to consider the relationship between structuralism and existentialism as alternatives to "modernist alienation and despair." Structuralism in this chapter is not so much a social scientific methodology as it is a philosophy, an ideology, a coherent way of looking at the world. Literature and literary criticism become two manifestations of the structuralist conception of the world, which will also manifest itself in many other ways, including the other arts and sciences, and politics. Scholes regards structuralism as a movement of mind which may ultimately solve (or, although he doesn't say it, botch) many of the world's problems. In this view, structuralism is very significant indeed for students of literature, although no more so for them than for any other humans.

The general structuralist revolution Scholes seems to forsee in his final chapter may well be underway. Some of the signs of it--such as the tremendous interest in structuralist thought evident in the many publications on, about, and by structuralists[1]--are clear and unambiguous enough. Other signs require more interpretation. If we take the work of Thomas Kuhn and Michel Foucault as typifying structuralist history, then we can say that structuralism views history as a succession of institutions (just as Saussure viewed diachrony as a succession of synchronic states). Thus Kuhn, for example, can see the Copernican revolution as the replacement of one system of cosmology, which answered certain needs in the society for a certain type of knowledge about the cosmos, with another, which answered the new needs of a changed society. Since the needs they answered were different, no direct comparison can be made between the Ptolemaic and Copernican views of the universe. One is not absolutely better, or truer, than the other. Presumably, a structuralist view of political history would watch the succession of political institutions with an equally relativistic eye, and see how new social orders may demand new political systems. That American foreign policy appears at last to have acknowledged and to some extent accepted Marxist rule in some nations (Cuba and The People's Republic of China come first to mind) may thus be taken as another sign of the structuralist revolution of mind.[2]

There are also signs of a structuralist revolution, such as Culler forsees, within the discipline of literary studies. Again, the obvious signs include the fact of publication of Scholes' and Culler's books (along with others on structuralism that have implications for literary studies[3]), and the

continuing interest in such early literary structuralists as Frye (both Scholes and Culler regard him as a structuralist). Certainly the clarity with which Culler portrays the goal of structuralist poetics (the description of literary competence) may add direction and impetus to the structuralist movement in literature and literary criticism. Also significant is the rapid growth of stylistics, a field heavily influenced by structuralism.[4] And even some fairly traditional literary critics such as Fish, who is very critical of stylistics, are aiding the move toward structuralism by attending to readerly responses to texts rather than to the texts themselves. The advent of Popular Culture as a legitimate area of study within many English departments in America may be another index of the structuralist revolution, since the study of popular culture requires a more anthropological look at cultural products than does traditional criticism. The signs--once one knows how to look for them--can be found almost everywhere.

To suggest, as I just have, that the futures seen by both books may in fact be coming true is to imply that each book has accurately sized up structuralism from its own point of view. And this is precisely what I wish to imply. Neither book pretends, moreover, to do any more or less than it does: Culler recognizes explicitly his Chomskyan bias (see SP, Chapter 10) and tries to answer objections to it; Scholes makes no effort to hide his literary critical bias either (although he never actually tries to confront it directly). They are honest with themselves and with their object of study. Both in themselves and as signs, these are important books.

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NOTES

[1]Consider, for example, Michael Lane's anthology Introduction to Structuralism (London, 1970) and David Robey's anthology Structuralism: An Introduction (Oxford, 1973), both of which demonstrate the wide range of influence structuralism has had, affecting theory and methodology in mathematics, sociology, anthropology, linguistics, history, literary criticism, and other fields. We have also such books as Howard Gardner's The Quest for Mind (New York, 1972), which concludes by considering "Structuralism as a World View" (with an epigraph from Lévi-Strauss: "The human sciences will be structuralist, or they will not be at all"), and articles such as Gunther Stent's "Limits to the Scientific Understanding of Man" (Science, 187, 21 March 1975, 1052-1057), which considers

structuralism as a possible replacement for positivism in the history of science; these give a sense of the growing, broadening influence of structuralism.

[2]As Scholes points out, structuralism is quite distinct from Marxism as a political ideology. Structuralism takes a less dialectic and less teleological view of history than does Marxism. But it is in no sense anti-Marxist, or anti-revolutionary, since it offers no more resistence to Marxist revolution than it would have to the Copernican revolution.

[3]Such as: James Boon, _From Symbolism to Structuralism_ (New York, 1972), Frederic Jameson, _The Prison-House of Language_ (Princeton, 1972), and Seymour Chatman (ed.), _Approaches to Poetics_ (New York, 1973).

[4]Noted, for example, by Richard Bailey in "Stylistics Today," _Foundations of Language_, 11 (1974), 115-139.

REVIEWS

Stephen R. Schiffer. Meaning. Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1972. Pp. x + 170. $10.50.

This book is concerned with the key notions of meaning relevant to language and communication. It is a short book, but it is packed with detail and covers a large territory. Although it is clearly and carefully written, it is very difficult to read: the discussion is abstract and technical, and many passages are enormously complicated. Anyone seriously interested in the semantic aspects of language and communication will nevertheless find the book worthy of careful study. Reading it has convinced me that we know a lot less about meaning than we like to believe.

Following the philosopher H. P. Grice, Schiffer contends that the fundamental concept of meaning relevant to language and communication is that of S-meaning, or what a person means by (or in) uttering something. In his view, the meaning of a word or sentence is to be understood by reference to what a community of speakers do (or would) mean by uttering it. Since he also holds that the intentions with which a person utters something determine what he means by it, his view is that all forms of meaning relevant to language and communication must be understood in relation to the intentions of a speaker or community of speakers. This kind of view is controversial, at least at the moment, but it is hard to deny that people commonly mean something by their utterances and that words have a conventional meaning only because they are customarily used in certain ways. If we do not take account of speakers' intentions in using words, it is far from clear how we can account for the meanings words are acknowledged to possess.

The first and most difficult part of Schiffer's book is concerned with the analysis of S-meaning. He begins with a critical exposition of Grice's analysis, which is, he says,

[Centrum, 2:2 (Fall 1974), 85-89.]

"the only [previously] published attempt ever made by a philosopher or anyone else to say precisely and completely what it is for someone to mean something." Grice's original idea, roughly expressed, was that a person means something by (or in) uttering x just when he utters x intending thereby to produce a certain kind of intellectual response in some audience by means of the audience's recognition of his intention. Schiffer formulates this original idea in a precise, detailed way, and then subjects it to an equally precise, detailed criticism. His criticism leads him to propose further definitions of S-meaning, which he criticizes in turn. Eventually, in Chapter III, he reaches a definition that he finds satisfactory. This definition provides the basis for his discussion in the remaining chapters.

Schiffer's definition of S-meaning involves a conception of what he calls "mutual knowledge*." Two people, S and A, have mutual knowledge* that p just when S knows that p, A knows that p, S knows that A knows that p, A knows that S knows that p, S knows that A knows that S knows that p, and so on. Given this conception of mutual knowledge*, Schiffer offers the following definition for the special case of S-meaning in which someone means that p by (or in) uttering x:

> S meant that p by (or in) uttering x if and only if S uttered x intending thereby to realize a state of affairs E which is (intended by S to be) such that the obtainment [sic] of E is sufficient for S and a certain audience A mutually knowing* (or believing*) that E obtains and that E is conclusive (very good or good) evidence that S uttered x with the primary intention
> (1) that there be some r such that S's utterance of x causes in A the activated belief that p on the basis of the truth-supporting reason r;
>
> and intending
> (2) satisfaction of (1) to be achieved, at least in part, by virtue of A's belief that x is related in a certain way R to the belief that p;
> (3) to realize E.

Schiffer claims that S meant <u>something</u> by uttering x just when S either meant that p (for some p) or meant that some person or group of persons was to do a certain thing. His definition of the latter notion parallels the definition given above.

Largely because of its complexity, Schiffer's analysis of S-meaning is very difficult to evaluate. Nevertheless, it

seems to me that his key definitions are not satisfactory. For one thing, though I have meant specific things by countless utterances, I do not believe that I have ever made an utterance with the complex intention Schiffer describes. Not having, until I read his book, any conception of mutual knowledge*, I have certainly not intended to bring about a state of affairs whose realization was intended by me to be sufficient for myself and another mutually knowing* something. Apart from this, I am sure that I have meant things by certain utterances without intending that my audience form the belief that Schiffer's definition requires. According to his definition, if I ever meant that p in uttering x, I must have intended that my audience form the activated belief that p. Yet I have often spoken up in faculty meetings when I was fully confident that no one present would believe what I said: I felt it my duty to speak out (to record my opinion) even if no one agreed. In such cases I certainly did not intend my utterance to cause the relevant activated belief in any of my colleagues. Another difficulty with the definition, which I shall not elaborate upon, is that if (contrary to what I have supposed) a person who meant that p by uttering x must have intended to realize a state of affairs E for the purpose Schiffer describes, it would seem he should also intend that he and his audience mutually know* (or believe*) that he has that purpose. Without this additional intention, Schiffer's requirement that all relevant intentions "be out in the open" between speaker and audience would not be satisfied.

Chapter IV is largely concerned with J. L. Austin's well known but controversial distinction between locutionary and illocutionary acts. Roughly speaking, a locutionary act is an act of saying something. Schiffer finds it easy to define such acts in terms of S-meaning: If s is a well-formed sentence, S performed a locutionary act in uttering s if and only if S meant something by s. An illocutionary act is an act one performs in saying something; for example, in saying "Watch out!" one might perform an act of warning someone about something. Schiffer's definitions of various kinds of illocutionary acts are too numerous to be reproduced here; suffice it to say that he is able to define such acts in terms of meaning specific things by an utterance. For example, in uttering x S was performing an illocutionary act of answering A's question just in case S meant by uttering x that the answer to A's question is such and such. Schiffer contends that his approach to the distinction between locutionary and illocutionary acts is clear, in accord with Austin's general theory, and immune to the objections raised by such writers as John Searle and L. J. Cohen.

Schiffer's final chapters, V and VI, are concerned with what Schiffer calls "utterance meaning." He begins with the notion of a noncomposite utterance, contending that such an utterance x means "p" in a community G just when it is mutual knowledge* among the members of G that (1) if almost any member of G means that p by (or in) uttering something, then what he utters might be [is apt to be?] x, and (2) if any member of G means that p by x, he will intend the state of affairs E that he intends to realize by uttering x to include the fact that there is a precedent (or agreement or stipulation) in G for uttering x and meaning thereby that p. Schiffer's next step is to define the notion of a convention. Having done this, he proceeds to define the locution "whole utterance x means 'p' in community G" in terms of a convention prevailing in G for meaning that p by x. To accommodate whole utterances containing demonstratives like <u>he</u> or <u>it</u>, he qualifies his initial account of whole utterance meaning by requiring any member of G who means that p by an utterance containing a demonstrative to intend his audience to recognize that a certain function maps the utterance and a particular sequence of objects onto the proposition that p. I think it is fair to say that few ordinary speakers of English have ever had this particular intention.

The last part of Chapter VI is concerned with an account of the kind of conventions appropriate to Schiffer's analysis of whole-utterance meaning. He points out that these conventions must possess two key features, compositeness and recursiveness. A set of conventions has the first feature when it generates composite utterances; it has the second when it generates an infinite number of utterances. He discusses such conventions in connection with a theory of meaning for a language. In his view such a theory is a finite set of conditions from which follows for each of the infinitely many sentences of the language a true statement of the form "Sentence <u>s</u> means . . . ." He ends his book with a brief discussion (only six pages) in which he sketches such a theory for a simplified language having just three names, three predicates, and two logical connectives. His theory for the simple language is intended as a model for a theory applicable to a full-blown natural language.

Schiffer's model for a theory of meaning does not strike me as promising. Stripped of qualifications, his fundamental idea is that S utters a sentence s in accordance with the conventions Z of the simplified language only if S intends his audience to recognize that the sentence s "C-determines"

an appropriate proposition p. His notion of C-determination is defined in relation to a more fundamental notion of a sentence satisfying a special condition C. This special condition amounts to truth; and by exploiting the strategy of Tarski's semantic definition of truth, Schiffer defines the locution "sentence s (of the simplified language) satisfies C" without employing any semantical notions such as denotes or refers to. There is no doubt that Schiffer's definition is satisfactory for the simplified language he considers, but it is highly questionable whether it could possibly be adapted or extended to cover the complicated case of a natural language like English. The trouble is that English contains countless sentences that are not truth-functional; and unless some semantical term is tacitly employed, a recursive definition of truth or of C-satisfaction covering such sentences does not appear to be possible. Since even the ordinary English if is not truth-functional, Schiffer's simplified model does not impress me as providing a promising approach to a theory of meaning applicable to "full-blown natural languages" (as he calls them).

If I am right here, Schiffer's definitions of S-meaning and utterance meaning are not satisfactory, and his suggestions for a theory of meaning are implausible. But it is always easier to criticize a theory than to construct an alternative. Schiffer's book is clearly an important contribution to the subject of meaning, and a great deal can be learned from it. If we disagree with various details of his book, or even disagree with his general approach, we shall have to do what he has done so well: namely, to say--clearly, precisely, and in detail--what we conceive meaning something to consist in, and to relate our notion of S-meaning to other concepts of fundamental importance to language and communication.

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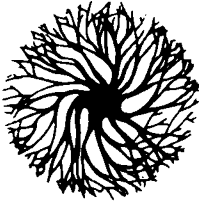

Reuben Brower, Helen Vendler, John Hollander, eds. I. A. Richards: Essays in his Honor. New York: Oxford University Press, 1973. Pp. viii & 368. $12.50.

Robert Lowell ends his poem for I.A. Richards in this revealing and original Festschrift with a farewell that is also an envoi:

> Hob-Alpine Spirit, you saved so much illusion
> by changing its false coin to words--your shadow
> on the blind bright heights. . . absconds to air.

In looking back on Richards, on what he has done and where he has left us, we may see in these lines the alchemical and fading character of his achievement. We have been so changed by him that we find him hard to recognize. As Angus Fletcher suggests in one of the book's several excellent essays, "Richards first showed that poems have too many meanings, and then showed how to control or appropriately cut down on that excess of meaning" (p. 87). Starting with his most brilliant pupil, who translated "too many meanings" into Seven Types of Ambiguity, Richards' generations of readers have admired his diagnosis--then taken it as a cure.

In recent years some have come to suspect that such sponging up and wringing out for the sake of more perfect communication violates the expressive and obsessive nature of speech-acts and texts. And Richards' devotion to the semi-mystical claims of sincerity and Coleridgean imagination seems out of place now, when what is recreated in the finite mind is less likely to be the message from the burning bush than the message from those sacrificed in Celan's Tenebrae: "Bete, Herr, / bete zu uns, / wir sind nah." And Basic English, to which he had devoted so much of his life, has been swept away by polyglot and pidgin dialects whose cunning lies in not putting anything simply. The benevolence of Richards' aims if anything increases the double condescension of his critical and linguistic proposals: the communication therapy of poetry was to cure us of our frenzies and beliefs, while the clarity of Basic was to replace their muddles and hieroglyphics. Richards tried to save the illusions of a world that has refused to be saved.

The biographical reminiscences in a book such as this are usually passed over lightly, but here they deserve a closer look. Taken with the late Reuben Brower's interview with Richards, they reveal how these shifts in attitude and

agreement have come about. They revive both the world of the early *entre-guerre*, a world of eugenics, Alps, and Le Corbusier, and the Cambridge of G. E. Moore and Wittgenstein, whose joint performances gave Richards "the creeps" (p. 27). In setting Cambridge English studies on the evaluative course they have kept to ever since, he had (as Joan Bennett and M. C. Bradbrook make clear) a decisive and dazzling role. In the early freedom of Tripos teaching Richards made affective criticism central, and the glosses he gave to poetry in *Practical Criticism*, *Principles of Literary Criticism*, and *Interpretation in Teaching* transformed the way literature has since been taught throughout the English-speaking world. L. C. Knights and Denys Thompson confirm this from their tutorial and classroom experience, leaving to W. K. Wimsatt a longer view of his critical method.

In his thoughtful examination, Wimsatt notices not only the value of this method but also its oddities. Richards himself engaged in practical criticism only rarely, and with mixed results. Few of the protocols in *Practical Criticism* are even obliquely praised, and what Richards seemed to like best sounds now like clever name-calling based on twenties mannerism. Here, for example, an admired--but unadmiring--protocol on Edna St. Vincent Millay's wretched offering:

> 'This is a studied orgasm from a "Shakespeare-R. Brooke" complex. . . . A sort of thermos vacuum, "the very thing" for a dignified picnic in this sort of Two-Seater sonnet' (5.81).

This protocol, many of us learn here for the first time, was written by Mansfield (Manny) Forbes, one of the founders of the English Tripos and clearly a man of bizarre talents. Anyone who fifty years ago lectured on "ideas of childhood and parenthood in Blake and Wordsworth," as Forbes did, was clearly ahead of his time. That raises an oddity about the after-life of Richards' critical method that shows how thoroughly his lessons have been absorbed. The very subjects students were examined on in 1925, the subjects Richards and his disciples inveighed against--"a knowledge of history, social background, linguistic origins and Aristotle," to quote from Denys Thompson's list (p. 299)--now seem more interesting than Thompson's triad of the *right* questions, fittingly asked about a poem by Coleridge: "What exactly does this poem say? How far is it worth saying? Is this the best way to say it?"(*ibid.*). These questions, which time and influence have reduced to a formula, if not to absurdity, show how Richards' critical method has been outdated by its own success. Like Randall Jarrell's poet he has gained students but lost his audience.

What those three questions presuppose, as William Empson points out in a wise and gritty piece, is Richards' fundamentally Benthamite theory of value. A respectful footnote in Principles of Literary Criticism (p. 48 n. 2) shows Richards' agreement with Bentham, and Charles L. Stevenson shows here how subtly Richards has developed this utilitarian position. It could even be said that his Alpine passion--the private enjoyment of public sublimity--combines that value-theory with an almost mystical cult of integrity and self-control. What lies behind this complex merging of disparate ideas is the "scientism," to use Empson's term (p. 75), that Richards adopted early and has never entirely shaken off. Brower's interview shows that Empson's term is not abusive, for as Richards candidly admits, his early studies in psychology and neurology were sketchy and secondhand (p. 28). Yet from them he developed the confident vocabulary and steely polemics of his critical writings; e.g., "The second condition of infectiousness, the greater or less clearness of the transmission, is more important," or "It would perhaps be difficult, outside Croce, to find a more unmistakable confusion between value and communicative efficacy" (Principles, pp. 188, 255). In accepting the scientific claims made for Richards' critical procedures in passages like these, some of his admirers gain less than they may think. To take one example among several, Helen Vendler's impressive response to Richards' 1970 TLS essay on Jakobson's reading of Shakespeare's Sonnet CXXIX agrees too readily with both Richards and Jakobson on the supposed scientific value of binary correspondences--"the machinery of distinctions" as Richards calls them. But binary correspondences express little more than the limits of early digital computers; nothing compelling, except perhaps to a Manichean, can be inferred from them. More complex machines allow and in time enforce more complex distinctions. Invention is after all the mother of necessity, even at times of insatiable need.

In an important essay that places Richards' work in the wider context of psychoesthetics, Geoffrey Hartman examines his confidence that the theoretical study of language and the reading of literary texts are "capable of opening to us new powers over our minds comparable to those which systematic physical inquiries are giving us over our environment" (Coleridge, p. 232). We may subdue ourselves by reading Faust, but not apparently by going to Dr. Faustus, and certainly not by seeing Dr. Strangelove. An important distinction between Ricardian and both Freudian and semiotic approaches, as Hartman points out, is his hierarchy of significance and his deep skepticism concerning mixed media, including the most traditional. "Even a good dramatist's work," says

Richards, "will tend to be coarser than that of a novelist of equal ability. . . . The Cinema suffers still more than the stage from this disability. . . . The extent to which secondhand experience of a crass and inchoate type is replacing ordinary life offers a threat which has not yet been realised" (Principles, p. 231). This attitude, with its revulsion from the vicarious, evokes not only the warnings against "gross and violent stimulants" in Wordsworth's Preface, which Hartman puts forward, but also the esthetic puritanism of F. R. Leavis, who also speaks of "The Cinema" in that sweeping and dismissive way. Richards proposes instead that we reorder our inner life and redeem the time through reading and dialogue--a proposal advanced in even more exalted terms in his most recent book Beyond (1975). At its most moving, this peoposal becomes what Hartman describes as "the dream of communication," which is "the dream of reason made practicable" (p. 164).

But before the dream of reason comes the sleep of reason, and that has produced monsters. The problem that Richards raises is crucial, and the solution he offers to the vicarious and uncomprehending life is admirable. But in the end it appears poignant and past, a dream remembered, for it never takes into account the centrifugal forces in historical and psychic experience that have made us what we are. We are far beyond the meeting of Bougainville and the old Tahitian in Didérot's Supplément, and even that face-to-face encounter points up the widening distance that divides us. The centripetal force needed to overcome that distance needs to be the equal of Nietzsche's forgetting or Freud's wishing or Bataille's erotic forcing--none of which leads to the perfect communication that Richards has in mind. This world of clear transmission is not only undermined by lies and the deceits of story-tellers. It is also invaded by the hermetic and expressive character of language. We are living, as George Steiner has recently reminded us, long after Babel, and there is no new tower in sight--not even from Mont Blanc.

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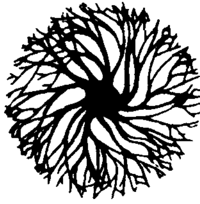

Margot Peters. _Charlotte Brontë: Style in the Novel_. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1973. Pp. 175.

An attractive feature of Ms. Peters' book is that it is not overly technical or reliant on jargon. It is thus available to general students of the nineteenth-century novel, not just those with linguistic or stylistic expertise. The aim of this study is to relate Charlotte Brontë's style to her vision--to the psychology and outlook of the author as these are manifest in her novels. Ms. Peters notes with pride that, "rather than beginning with a predetermined list of stylistic items and testing the prose for their occurrence, I began by reading the prose and then investigating those features which struck me as being the 'carriers' of Brontë's highly distinctive voice" (p.8).

Although it gives Ms. Peters freedom and latitude, this method does raise some questions. It involves a certain circularity of argument, in which a hypothetical facet of Brontë's personality, or outlook, or method of characterization is discovered to be at the same time present in her style. This approach tends to leave one without a clear and convincing sense that an examination of these stylistic features on their own would inevitably lead one to the same statement about Charlotte Brontë's mind. For example, Ms. Peters' major conclusion about the prevalence of various sorts of syntactic inversion in Brontë's sentences is that this expresses "a taste for distortion, a certain contrariness, a delight in negativeness that can be called perverse" (p. 57). This stylistic "perversity" is said to mirror the "perversities" of Brontë's characters--particularly their tastes for unattractive, severe, or even cruel mates. It is difficult, however, to see the connection between syntactic inversion and the elements of perversity in the relationships entered into by most of Brontë's principal characters, except, perhaps, in very general terms. The adoption of an "artful," "poetic," unidiomatic prose style may have signified for this unknown, relatively isolated, provincial author that she had a valid literary aim, thus assuaging her guilt and allowing her to expose in fiction some of her "perverse" fantasies about human relationships.

In other words, only in so far as syntactic inversion signified "literary" composition for Charlotte Brontë, thereby liberating her imagination and enabling her to set down her private thoughts, can it have contributed to the "perversity" in her novels.

One also is left wondering how completely those particular stylistic features that Ms. Peters chooses to discuss can account for the total idiosyncratic effect of Brontë's style. For example, she devotes a very interesting chapter to the "emphatic adverb," in which she demonstrates that Brontë uses adverbs frequently and in stressed positions within the sentence. She also shows that these adverbs often refer emotively to states of mind rather than merely to external areas of time and space. Thus adverbs like *coolly* or *gently* would be more characteristically Brontëan than the more neutral *then*, *now*, or *there*; and Charlotte Brontë is likely to use adverbs which intensify--such as *always*, *especially*, and *thus*--in contrast with the practice of George Eliot or Jane Austen, who tend to employ adverbs which diminish, qualify, or mitigate--adverbs such as *only*, *less*, or *hardly*. This claim may very well be true, though at times one wonders about the representativeness of the passages from various authors which are compared--perhaps computer studies of entire novels are required for a final disposition of these issues. But more disturbing still is the difficulty this reader had in applying Ms. Peters' observations to any paragraph from Brontë's novels selected at random, because in any given sentence or paragraph the Brontëan sense of emotional involvement to which all readers seem to respond may be conveyed by a charged noun, or verb, or adjective--not by an emphatic adverb. Perhaps the large number of different stylistic means available to achieve the same end diminishes the usefulness of any one formula which attempts to offer a significant explanation for the idiosyncratic effect of a writer's style. If emotional intensity is not conveyed by an emphatic adverb in a Brontëan sentence (and in my limited analysis of Brontë's style most frequently it is not), then it will surely find some other means of expression.

The most persuasive portions of Ms. Peters' study are the central chapters which treat "antithesis" in Brontë's novels--the balancing of opposites found in the style, themes, structures, metaphors, and characterizations. These chapters, however, most nearly resemble the more traditional varieties of criticism which study contrasting thematic patterns and imagery; they rapidly depart from the examination of the peculiarities of Brontë's syntax and diction which dominates

the rest of the book. Nor is much attention paid to the question of whether antitheses in Brontë's style really do reflect in any direct way thematic antitheses, or whether these stylistic and thematic elements actually function entirely independently. The implicit argument is, apparently, that antithetical modes of thinking, regardless of how they manifest themselves in the novels, are characteristic of Brontë's vision; but surely the desire to express and try to work through conflicts, tensions, and ambivalences is what drives any author to take up his pen. If conflict and ambivalence are, as I suppose them to be, universal among writers, or indeed among us all, why should antithesis have any special prominence in Charlotte Brontë's style? Furthermore, at one point Ms. Peters seems to admit that the frequent use of antithesis as a stylistic device might imply control and equanimity just as easily as conflict and struggle (pp. 95-6). This in itself ought to suggest that there is no simple or sure way of relating a writer's sentence structure to his psychology.

Nonetheless, Ms. Peters' exploration of the "antitheses" and polarities in Charlotte Brontë's figurative language, characterizations, and themes is informative. She sees, in the imagery of various Brontë novels, privation played off against plenty, illness against health, withering against blooming, fetters against freedom, and reason against passion or feeling or imagination. She also writes well of the symbolic opposition between Brontë characters within the novels, and of the ambivalence within individual characters. Her summation of what Brontë's novels are about would probably win assent from most contemporary critics: "The subject that lies at the heart of Brontë's fiction is...the...problem of asserting and maintaining one's identity in a world that functions upon different and chiefly hostile sets of values" (p. 121).

Ms. Peters' last full chapter is less happy. Again, one is inclined to agree with her premise that an important theme in _Jane Eyre_ is the opposition between individuality and social restraint, between freedom and confinement; but her search for the language of trial and courtroom in this novel is, finally, insufficiently skeptical and selective to be very persuasive. It seems highly unlikely that such words as _judge_, _summon_, _confess_, _condemn_, _seize_, or _deem_ are actually "courtroom jargon" in very many of the examples she cites--especially when viewed from the perspective of her claim that her discussion is chiefly concerned with the _conscious_ employment of this legal imagery (p. 135). No, too much of this chapter is taken up with an overly ingenious pursuit of Empsonian ambiguities.

Still, Ms. Peters' book on Charlotte Brontë is as interesting a study of that writer's basic conflicts and ambivalences as can be found, and her identification of several prominent features in Brontë's style (such as the frequent occurrence of syntactic inversions and certain sorts of emphatic adverbs) is valuable. The problem is that, except for the rather traditional discussion of Brontë's use of figurative language, the link between style and mind is never convincingly established. Many students of literature still hope for a critical study of an author which will bridge the gap between stylistic and psychological criticism successfully; as of this date, however, the reconciliation of these two modes of approaching a text remains largely a consummation devoutly to be wished.

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