2 | Structuralist and Narratological Criticism

Along with reader-response criticism, structuralist and narratological criticism has offered biblical interpreters a crucial entryway into literary theory and the reading of the Bible. The theoretical models and language associated with structuralism and narratology, however, are quite distinct. Readers unfamiliar with these approaches may find the technical terminology complex and confusing. For this reason we concentrate our discussion on five key terms: *structuralism, formalism, semiotics, narratology,* and *poetics.* Their interrelations will be dealt with along the way. Suffice it to say here, by way of explaining the chapter title, that formalism and semiotics will be taken up in relation to structuralism, and that narratology encompasses poetics (which most often appears as the preferred term in Hebrew Bible studies for what New Testament critics call narratology). Of the two dominant terms, *narratology* gives the appearance of a random restriction of scope to the narrative parts of the Bible. But in fact all the methods considered here have been applied overwhelmingly more to the narrative than to other parts of the Bible. In defining our scope, structuralism has the priority over narratology; narratology is our concern to the extent that it grows in some way out of the structuralist impulse.

In its most basic definition, *structuralism* is a general theory of the in-

telligibility of the products of mind based on the view that what makes things intelligible is their perceived relatedness, rather than their qualities as separate items (cf. below). Literary structuralists posit general rules for the creation and interpretation of literature and affirm the priority of deductive over inductive method. Excluded in principle from the scope of this chapter is any work that does not, in some way, relate itself to a model or models (1) drawn from outside biblical studies, and (2) in some recognizable branch of formalism, structuralism, or semiotics.

We begin with two readings of biblical texts which employ the two forms of structuralist narratology that until now have had the greatest impact on biblical studies. One model is the linguistically based structuralism drawing its main impulse from the work of Ferdinand de Saussure; the other is a narratology with more diffuse origins, the most significant of which is the work of Gérard Genette. Our overall concern in this chapter is to engage critical questions rather than to provide a comprehensive methodological survey. To that end, in the third section we assess the extensive critique that has been made of structuralism against a backdrop of postmodern interests and consider structuralism's potential to survive and be reformed by this critique. In the last section we consider the ongoing potential for biblical structuralism in the light of this critical debate.

READINGS OF BIBLICAL NARRATIVES

Structuralist Approaches to 1 Kings 17–18 The text of 1 Kings 17–18 can be read as a *quest* story, specifically a quest for a lost or stolen object. King Ahab of Israel undertakes a quest to recover the rain that the prophet Elijah, representing the God Yahweh, has taken away. This quest is successful; at the end of the story, the needed rain falls.

Quests for lost or stolen objects figure largely among the tales that Vladimir Propp analyzed in his classic study *Morphology of the Folktale.* Propp (25–65) reduced one hundred Russian tales to thirty-one plot-elements or "functions" (e.g., "the hero is pursued," "the villain is exposed") and found that, though no tale included all these functions, those which a tale did include were always in the same order (22–23). Propp's functions fall into the following subgroups:

1. The "villainy" or "lack," that is, the disturbance of the *status quo* which sets the story in motion (functions i–viii in Propp's numeration).
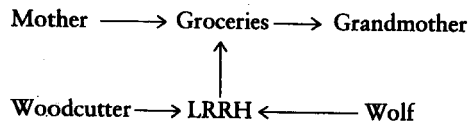
2. The finding, persuasion, equipping, and so on of the hero, and the hero's movement to the place of combat (IX–XIV).

3. The combat, in which the hero defeats the villain or overcomes the lack (XV–XIX).

4. The hero's return home, recognition, marriage, and so on (XX–XXXI).

Read as a quest story, 1 Kings 17–18 fits this pattern. 1: There is a *lack* of rain (in fact, of moisture in general), due to the *villain* (whether Elijah or Yahweh). 2: As *hero,* Ahab initiates the quest for moisture, and undertakes a journey to this end. 3: Ahab confronts Elijah *(combat),* and the result of this confrontation is rainfall. 4: Ahab *returns home.* But such an analysis is likely to perplex the reader. It certainly covers the main action of the story but seems to turn the story on its head. Ahab is no hero, nor is Elijah (and still less Yahweh) a villain! Adopting Propp's categories works well at a formal level but leads to paradoxical conclusions. We shall return to this in a moment.

A second structuralist approach to the story reads it as the carrying out of the intention ("narrative program") of the God Yahweh to restore to himself the allegiance of the people Israel, which they have transferred to the God Baal (see 16:29–34). Such programs can be mapped onto the *actantial model* proposed by A. J. Greimas (see Patte, 1976b:42): a "sender" transfers (or intends to transfer) an "object" to a "receiver," by the agency of a "subject," who is helped or opposed by a "helper" or an "opponent." Each of these positions Greimas refers to as an *actant:*

Sender ⟶ Object ⟶ Receiver

Helper ⟶ Subject ⟵ Opponent
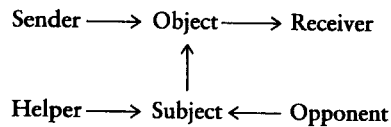
The model is of great generality. We could use it to account for "Little Red Riding Hood":

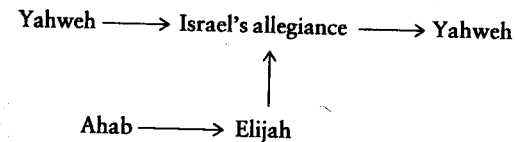Mother ⟶ Groceries ⟶ Grandmother

Woodcutter ⟶ LRRH ⟵ Wolf

This story happens to provide six different actants for the six roles; but roles may be left empty, or the same actant may take more than one role. For example, "The Billy Goats Gruff":
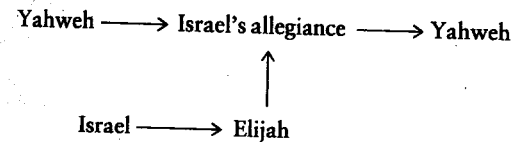
Goats ⟶ Grass ⟶ Goats

Goats ⟵ Troll
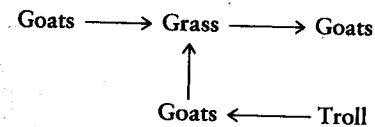
An actantial model for 1 Kings 17–18 might have as its top line or "axis":

Yahweh ⟶ Israel's allegiance ⟶ Yahweh
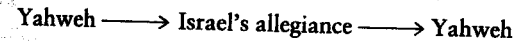
But it is not obvious how the positions in the lower line or axis, especially that of subject, are to be represented. One might intuitively suppose Elijah to be the subject. An analysis has, however, been proposed (Jobling, 1986a:66–88), which contrasts the whole story with a substory enclosed within it—18:21–44, the account of the combat on Mt. Carmel—and suggests the following actantial schemes. For the whole of 1 Kings 17–18:

Yahweh ⟶ Israel's allegiance ⟶ Yahweh

Ahab ⟶ Elijah

For 18:21–40:

Yahweh ⟶ Israel's allegiance ⟶ Yahweh

Israel ⟶ Elijah

(For comparison purposes, the opponent role is ignored; obviously in 18:21–40 it is taken by the prophets of Baal.) In Jobling's analysis, the first program fails, while the second succeeds, so that Ahab's inability to bring about the people's repentance, when confronted with a clear choice, is directly contrasted to the ability of the people themselves to repent when *they* are confronted with a clear choice. Such a reading reveals the point of the paradoxical Proppian analysis proposed above. The commonsense assumption that the prophet will play the central hero role misses the possibility that the king is to be presented precisely as a *failed* hero. If kings cannot lead in the right direction, and if people can move in the right direction without (or even in spite of) royal leadership, then the whole point of kingship is questioned. Elijah's role is to facilitate the drawing of the contrast.

A third and final approach illuminates the specifics of the story by reference to the myth-analysis of Claude Lévi-Strauss. Rain is a form of water,

and not the only form of water mentioned in the story. In the combat scene, Elijah takes water to douse the offering and the wood (18:33–35). In Lévi-Strauss's analyses of myths, water typically has fire as its opposite term, and this opposition is one of the commonest features of myths (1970:passim). It is easy to see why so many myths deal with water and fire. They are basic to human life, which cannot be maintained without them; but they are ambiguous in that they exist in destructive as well as beneficial forms. It is equally easy to see why they are mythic opposites, for either, in a sufficient amount, will destroy the other. Read in these terms, the competition staged by Elijah is to test the gods' ability to produce enough fire (18:24, 38) to overcome the water in which he has doused the offerings.

But such a reading renders problematic the intuitive and common assumption that the story is about a rain-making competition. The goal of the narrative action is not to remove the lack directly, by bringing rain. Rather, the goal is epistemological, to show which god is capable of destroying moisture, and hence of causing the drought the people are experiencing. The people's acknowledgment of Yahweh is the precondition for the drought to end.

A Narratological Reading of Genesis 38 Narratives do not always present events in the chronological order of their occurrence. For example, they use the "flashback" to tell later something that took place earlier. Gérard Genette (1980:33–85) works out a system for nonsequential telling (*anachrony*) and proposes terminology for a great variety of particular cases (we introduce here only the terms relevant to the present analysis). The flashback he calls *analepsis*. Analepsis may be either *internal* or *external*. Internal analepsis is a flashback to a time within that of the whole narrative, external analepsis to a time before the narrative events began (a mixed case is possible when the flashback begins before but ends after the beginning of the time of the narrative). Analepsis may also be *homodiegetic* or *heterodiegetic*. This further pair of terms is necessary since narratives can have multiple story-lines overlapping in time in complex ways. Analepsis is homodiegetic when the flashback is to an earlier part of the same story-line, heterodiegetic when it is to a different story-line.

The events introduced in internal homodiegetic analepsis might in principle have been introduced in their chronological place in the story-line (and the critic will need to consider why they were not). Two cases have to be considered. There may be an actual temporal gap at an earlier point in the

story-line, which the analepsis fills in; such a gap Genette calls an *ellipsis*. Or there may be no such temporal gap, but only the omission from the earlier narrative of some detail that the analepsis supplies. Genette (52) calls this sort of omission *paralipsis*. Apparently discontent, however, that the one term *analepsis* should correspond to two different terms—sometimes to ellipsis, sometimes to paralipsis—he introduces another term to correspond to the latter, *paralepsis*, "giving information that should be left aside" (195). But he does so in a different part of his book, not as part of his analysis of narrative temporality.

In her reading of Genesis 38, Mieke Bal (1987:91–95) both uses and problematizes Genette's terminology. This chapter breaks the narrative sequence in which it appears. The preceding chapter and the following ones tell the story of Joseph—the account of how he and his family came to Egypt—in chronological sequence. Chapter 38 has nothing to do with this story. It has in common with the Joseph story only one main character—Judah—and, far from referring to his going to Egypt, it assumes his remaining in Canaan for an extended period. Our instinct as readers of narrative is to look for some kind of anachrony; taking the Joseph story as the main narrative, we try to read chapter 38 as related to it by analepsis or prolepsis, but neither will work. (Analepsis is ruled out by the implausibility of Judah's returning to his father's house—to participate in chapter 37—after having established himself as a patriarch, as well as by 38:1, "at that time." Prolepsis is no more plausible, requiring all the events of chapter 38 to happen before Judah goes to Egypt with the rest of Jacob's family in chapter 46, and to be made to fit with various appearances of Judah in chapters 42–45.)

Genesis 38 relates to its context as paralipsis, "giving information that should be left aside," information incompatible, by accepted rules of narration, with the context. Bal relates this disturbing conclusion to Genette's failure to include paralipsis within his account of temporality in narrative. Paralipsis is not a temporal figure; rather, it is a figure that calls in question our internalized sense of narrative temporality. This sense has been formed in the framework of "the psychoanalytic nuclear family, which excludes any rival of the same generation" (1987:93). Genesis 38 marks the moment when the family story of Genesis changes character. From Abraham to Jacob, the story has run from father to one chosen son (with other sons being included only in stories of their exclusion). But Jacob has twelve sons, and a mode of narration determined by generational succession cannot cope with this. "It is easy to imagine a story where, from paralipsis to paralipsis,

chronology disappears in favor of a movement of enlargement; rather than from father to son, the fabula would develop from brother to brother (as in Genesis 37–38–39), or sister to cousin, to second cousin, and so forth: what a nightmare!" (94). Judah's story is just as good as Joseph's; why should it not be told? But so is Reuben's, or Levi's, or Issachar's. Genesis 38 is a fragment of a nightmare, the nightmare of a story that cannot move forward because there are no limits on its moving sideways, a nightmare for the urgent sequentiality of biblical narrative, but also for the whole Western view of narration.

SURVEYING THE FIELD

The two foregoing readings are inspired, respectively, by what Robert Scholes (1974:157) calls "high" and "low" structuralism. *High structuralism,* which he sees exemplified in Lévi-Strauss, concentrates on "deep" structures (the static logical relationships among elements), while *low structuralism,* exemplified in Genette's narratology, is more concerned with the modalities of "surface" structures. A second important difference is that narratology has mostly been a native growth within the ongoing practice of literary criticism, whereas high structuralism has been more of an interdisciplinary invasion of the literary realm. Although the distinction is not perfect, we adopt it for working purposes here.

Daniel Patte and High Biblical Structuralism Structuralism originates with the linguistics of Ferdinand de Saussure, which is built on a number of axioms. First, the distinction between *parole* and *langue* (1959:14–15, the French words are retained in the English discussion). Parole is any particular piece of language, typically the sentence; langue is the system of relationships that constitute the language and that makes possible any parole. The langue is an abstraction posited through the study of those paroles that the linguistic community accepts as well formed; the members of the community typically have little conscious awareness of the system, but their ability to judge and to create acceptable sentences implies that they have internalized it. Second, the distinction between *synchronic* and *diachronic* method (79–100). Saussure stresses the synchronic study of the langue at a given point in time at the expense of diachronic study of its development over time. This represents a further level of abstraction, since we cannot stop the constant flux of language in order to examine its structure at a given

moment. Third, the tenet that the elements of language do not have meaning in themselves, but only through their systemic relations to all the other elements of langue (111–20). (A classic example is the noncorrespondence of color terms in different languages; the spectral range that a majority of French-speakers call "bleu" does not correspond exactly to the range that a majority of English-speakers call "blue." The "meaning" of "blue" is that range which a majority of English-speakers do not call some other color! Greimas, 1983a:27.) Fourth, the distinction between two sorts of relation in which linguistic elements stand to each other: the *syntagmatic* relations between the ordered elements that make up a sentence, and the *paradigmatic* relations between a given element and all the elements that could be substituted for it in the same sentence (Saussure, 1959:122–27).

Saussure works at the level of the sentence. The possibility of a structural study of narrative depends on the hypothesis that analogous constraints work on the story. A given story corresponds to Saussure's parole, and the hypothesis is that narrative has its langue, an internalized system which the narrative community unconsciously applies in determining whether a given story is well formed. The findings of Propp, referred to in our first exegetical example, immediately lend plausibility to such a hypothesis. The invariable order in which the narrative functions occur in Russian folktales seems to imply a constraint analogous to word order in sentences; the narrative community is admitting only well-ordered stories (ones that observe the operative system of constraints) in just the way that the linguistic community admits only well-ordered sentences.

The possibility of a narrative syntax, opened up by Propp, was pursued by Greimas. But before turning to him, we must look at Lévi-Strauss's generalization of Saussure's linguistics, through which structuralism was established as an interdisciplinary method (its wide extension to other fields can be seen by reference to the anthologies of de George and de George, Ehrmann, and Lane). An anthropologist, Lévi-Strauss suggested that social subsystems of primitive societies could be seen as analogous to language and analyzed under the assumptions of Saussurean linguistics. In a kinship system, for example, permissible and impermissible marriages are analogous to syntactical and asyntactical sentences, and marriage is organized according to a system that the society has internalized without necessarily being aware of the logic underlying it (in fact, Lévi-Strauss claims, there are only a very few possible "logics" of kinship, and all manifest kinship systems represent quite simple transformations of these; see 1969).

Lévi-Strauss's most extensive work is on myth (Lévi-Strauss, 1963b) and it provides a brief programmatic statement, but for real insight into his approach it is essential to consult his four-volume magnum opus on Amerindian mythology (1970, 1973, 1978, 1981). Myths, like Propp's folktales, are a form of language, so that a structural approach can be thought of as an extension of Saussure's linguistics. But Lévi-Strauss downplays Propp's *syntagmatic* approach, based on establishing a sequence of categories, in favor of a *paradigmatic* approach, which insists on the importance of the particular terms that are substituted for each other in myth. (Lévi-Strauss early recognized the importance of Propp but insisted that an adequate structural approach must deal with the possible meanings of terms and functions, not just their sequence; see his "Structure and Form" [1977:115–45].)

Lévi-Strauss's approach is to reduce a given myth to a complex "sentence," and then to relate it to other myth-sentences from which it differs only in a certain number of terms. For example, he analyzes several South American myths of the origin of tobacco as having one or the other of the following structures:

> A *husband* has a *jaguar wife* [*affine* relative], *destructive* through the *mouth* of a *husband* who has climbed a tree looking for *animal* food that the *wife ought not* to eat (but *does*); disjunction through the agency of the *husband*, the *mother* killed by *affine* relatives.
>
> A *mother* has a *snake son* [*blood* relative] *protective* through the *vagina* of a *son* who has climbed a tree looking for *vegetable* food that the *mother ought* to eat (but *does not*); disjunction through the agency of the *mother*, the *son* killed by *blood* relatives. (Adapted from 1970:104)

By this means, the many myths of a culture can be displayed as a complex set of "transformations" of each other, transformations that, at the most abstract level, are based on *binary oppositions*. Humanity is confronted by a world of oppositions (life and death, male and female, nature and culture, and so on), which it needs to explain to itself in such a way as to make the world livable. This is the work of myth. Myths organize the oppositions, and thus make the world comprehensible. But it must do more than this; it must *mediate,* render controllable, the most intolerable of the oppositions. For example, a myth may mediate the opposition between life and death by substituting the more tolerable opposition between farming and war (1963b:224). Lévi-Strauss suggests there is an innate human necessity to deal with the world in this sort of way.

Greimas takes from Propp the possibility of a narrative syntax. But as he attempts to define the elementary units of narrative and to frame rules governing their acceptable combination, he finds Propp's functions to be far from an adequate level of abstraction. Functions that Propp differentiates have, according to Greimas, an identical logical structure (1983a:222–35). In his early work, Greimas thus produces highly abstract and general models for narrative syntax, of which the actantial model is the most important and best known. But, like Lévi-Strauss, he is not content with a syntactics of semantically empty categories (even the actantial roles, though they can be filled in an endless variety of ways, are subject to constraints at the level of meaning). Thus Greimas intends from the outset a structural approach to narrative that will bring together syntagmatic and paradigmatic structural approaches, and his later work is an attempt to refine such a model.

Daniel Patte has applied Greimas's approach to biblical studies, while at the same time continuing to be one of Greimas's main collaborators in its theoretical development. His first attempt to develop a method (Patte, 1976b) consists (after an opening discussion, still well worth reading, of the relation in exegesis between structural and historical methods) of chapters on Saussure's linguistic model, on narrative structures (Greimas), and on mythical structures (Lévi-Strauss). Under "narrative structures," Patte presents a method whereby the action of any text can be syntactically represented as a set of sequences, each of which is itself represented by Greimas's actantial model. But at the end of this account, he admits that such analysis "yields very limited results" without subsequent "analysis in terms of the mythical structure" (1976b:52). Under "mythical structures," he then applies some basic Lévi-Straussian moves to New Testament texts, but his mythic analysis is felt by most readers to be less successful than the Greimasian narrative analysis and poorly integrated with it. So this first book does not fulfill the urgent need for a way of bringing the two together, but the later work of Patte is devoted to this need. It consists of two major forms of a theoretical proposal (Patte and Patte, 1978, Patte, 1990a), two attempts to show how such theory can undergird a much less technical and more widely accessible interpretation of biblical books (1983, 1987), and a second attempt to present structuralism at the level of "Guides to Biblical Scholarship," consisting mostly of step-by-step exegetical exercises (1990c). This work of a dozen years is not all of a piece because Patte has continued to incorporate the developing thinking of the Greimas circle.

Patte and Patte (1978) represents a major step forward in at least two

respects. First, it defines a precise goal for structural work on the Bible, namely, to identify the system of "convictions" and "values" that generates a text (1–10). Second, it lays out and demonstrates a complete method for moving from a narrative to the mythic structure, or value system, that generates it. The major new tool (vis-à-vis Patte, 1976b) is the *semiotic square* (Patte and Patte, 19; the square is derived from Aristotle's logic, cf., for example, Güttgemanns, 32–33):

(1) A ⟷ B   (2) Life ⟷ Death

Non-B ⟷ Non-A   Non-Death ⟷ Non-Life
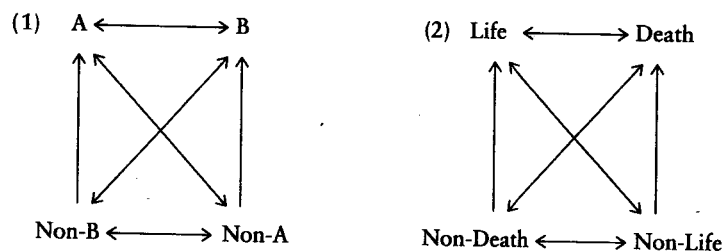
In (1) above, A and B are represented as contrary semantic categories, typically the categories of human experience that function as binary oppositions in Lévi-Strauss's view of myth, for example "life" and "death" in (2). But A and B are not absolute opposites, contradictories; logically, the contradictory to A must be non-A, everything that is not A. But this non-A opens up a whole range of possibilities, any one of which might be substituted for B, and Lévi-Strauss's work of myth can be understood precisely as this work of substitution.

Patte and Patte read a text first of all for its contradictions, narrative units that directly negate each other. In terms of Greimas's actantial model, the same object is transferred to opposed receivers, or opposed objects are transferred to the same receiver, or the same object is transferred and not transferred to the same receiver (Patte and Patte, 27). For example, in Mark 15:17 and 46 opposed objects—purple cloak and shroud—are transferred to one receiver—Jesus (53). Second, by reading these contradictory units in narrative sequence, they are able to create relations of contrariety between the terms of consecutive contradictories and thus build up a linked system of semiotic squares. From this system, eventually, the deep values of the whole text can be read off.

Patte's most recent theoretical statement (1990a) considerably refines the 1978 proposal, particularly in laying out the stages and levels of a narrative analysis in the form of a "generative trajectory." But his prescriptions for

analyzing actual biblical texts (as laid out in Patte, 1990c), though they are expressed rather more simply, do not differ fundamentally from Patte and Patte. In Patte's books on Paul (1983) and Matthew (1987), virtually all the technical detail is absent, but Patte assures the reader that the complete theory is still operating behind the scenes in reaching exegetical conclusions. Throughout all these works, the steps involved are basically (1) the identification of *explicit oppositions* in the text, (2) using these to identify the author's *"faith"* or *"convictions,"* and (3) exhibiting the author's *way of persuading* the reader of these convictions.

Although Patte's work is dominant in the English-language development of this tradition of biblical structuralism, a good deal of other work needs to be mentioned.[1] First, his oeuvre needs to be seen in the context of French biblical structuralism, particularly the work of the Centre pour l'Analyse du Discours Religieux (CADIR), which is dedicated to the application of semiotic theory in general—and the structural semiotics of Greimas in particular—to the exegesis of the Bible (in fact, the development of the Greimasian system as a whole owes a great deal to CADIR). This work is distinguished by its appeal to both scholarly and nonscholarly readers of the Bible and by its commitment to pedagogical as well as theoretical concerns. The main organ for the work of CADIR is the journal *Sémiotique et bible* (1975–). (Cf. also Almeida; Calloud [1976]; Delorme [1973]; Panier [1973, 1984, 1991].) The collaborative and cross-disciplinary practice of CADIR has stimulated the production of numerous co-authored and multi-authored works (Calloud and Genuyt, 1982, 1987, 1989; Groupe d'Entrevernes, 1978, 1979; Giroud and Panier; Chené) and has led to institutional affiliations with universities in North America (e.g., Vanderbilt University). There has been relatively little translation into English of structural analysis of the Bible in French; the most important exceptions are Barthes et al. (including Roland Barthes's own celebrated reading of Gen. 32:23–33 [1974a], for which cf. chap. 3 on poststructuralism), Barthes (1988c), Calloud (1976), Genuyt, Groupe d'Entrevernes (1978), and Marin (who takes a notably interdisciplinary approach).[2] Another European journal owing its origin to the same

[1] For the most comprehensive survey to date of semiotics, in particular Greimasian semiotics, in relation to biblical studies, see Delorme, 1992.

[2] Indeed, the translation of Greimas's work was slow in coming; but see now Greimas, 1983a, 1987, 1988, 1990, and, perhaps most important, the dictionary of Greimas and Courtés.

impulse, and roughly contemporaneous with *Sémiotique et bible,* is Erhardt Güttgemanns's *Linguistica Biblica.* Again, there has been little translation of Güttgemanns's work to date (but see 1976).

During the 1970s, there was a good deal of experimentation by North American biblical scholars with approaches developed out of the work of Saussure, Lévi-Strauss, Propp, Greimas, and Roland Barthes (e.g., Crossan, 1973, 1975; Funk, 1982; Patte, 1976a [the papers of the important 1973 Vanderbilt Conference]); Polzin, 1977; Via; Hugh White, 1979). It was in the context of this movement that the journal *Semeia* was generated, and a number of its early issues were devoted to such work (1, 2 [1974], 6 [1976], 18 [1980], 26 [1983]). During this time, the Structuralism and Exegesis Group in the Society of Biblical Literature became established under Patte's leadership. Of particular interest among the structural work emerging from this group is *Semeia* 18, a large collection of alternative structural exegeses of a single text (Genesis 2–3), with a variety of critical responses (cf. also *Semeia* 26).

Since 1980, aside from Patte, there has been a decline in North American work along these lines. We may mention Elizabeth Struthers Malbon (1986b), whose work on the "geographical code" in Mark remains close to Lévi-Strauss; Hendrickus Boers, who uses the developed Greimasian theory; David Jobling, who in his work on the Hebrew Bible (1986a, b, 1991a, 1992) pursues a line more loosely adapted from both Lévi-Strauss and Greimas and tending toward deconstructive and ideological analysis; Robert Culley, who provides interesting readings with a rather slight theoretical base in structural folklore studies (1976; cf. the Proppian approach of Culley, 1992); and Terry Prewitt, who takes a Lévi-Straussian anthropological approach. The structuralist impulse, particularly from Lévi-Strauss, has had other important impacts on biblical studies outside of any specific literary theory, and they should be briefly noted here. Structural understandings of kinship have been applied to the Bible by Leach (esp. 1969:25–83), Leach and Aycock, and Mara Donaldson (as well as Prewitt). Indeed, Leach's was the first direct application of structural analysis to the Bible (1969:7–23, orig. 1961), and it has important implications for literary study. But Leach treats the Bible as a cluster of Lévi-Straussian mythic fragments, without regard for sequential narrative. Of at least as great importance, but further from our concerns, is Mary Douglas's application of structural anthropology to the Levitical prohibitions. In a quite different direction, Eugene Nida and his associates

have developed the semantic aspects of structural linguistics, particularly for translation purposes (Nida, Nida et al., Louw).

The Narratological Tradition Although Scholes (1974:157–67) uses Gérard Genette to exemplify low structuralism, and although Genette is often included in the early surveys of literary structuralism (e.g., Culler, 1975b), further development along the lines he staked out has almost never used the term *structuralism* of itself, and *narratology* has become the term of choice. Narratology has drawn upon a great variety of literary streams, as can be seen from typical handbooks (Rimmon-Kenan, who mentions "Anglo-American New Criticism, French Structuralism, the Tel-Aviv School of Poetics and the Phenomenology of Reading" [5]; Bal, 1985; Toolan, 1988) or from the recent double issue of *Poetics Today* (11/2 and 4, 1990), "Narratology Revisited." But to the extent that it has maintained the urge to a comprehensive theory of narrative, the "isolating, characterizing, and classifying . . . of features distinctive of or pertinent to narrative" (adapted from Prince, 1990:271), it falls within the area of our concern in this chapter.

Genette's *Narrative Discourse* (1980, a translation of "Discours du récit," a self-contained unit within Genette, 1972) is an elegant dialectic of theoretical and descriptive poetics, in which description gives rise to inductive theory and theory enables further description. This dialectic is built on a firm refusal to give ultimate priority to either theory or description. In contrast to high structuralist predecessors who opted for less challenging primary material (e.g., myths or folktales), Genette adopts Marcel Proust's *A la recherche du temps perdu* as his primary text.

His initial move (1980:25–32) is to distinguish three levels that may be posited of any narrative. First there is that which is given, the *narrative* (*récit*), the text itself, from which can be reconstructed on the one hand the *story* (*histoire*), or signified content (the events that are the object of the narrative), and on the other hand the *narrating* (*narration*), the act of narrating with its spatial and temporal context. Once this tripartite distinction has been established, Genette's theoretical and descriptive activity takes the form of positing and categorizing the many possible relations between the three levels. *Tense* designates the temporal relation between story and narrative—the chronological sequence of events, for example, as opposed to a rearranged textual sequence (cf. our second biblical example, above). *Mood* designates the other, nontemporal modalities of story's realization as nar-

rative—the narrator's filtering and coloring of the story content (e.g., Luke 3:23: "Jesus, when he began his ministry, was about thirty years of age, being the son, as was supposed, of Joseph"). *Voice*, finally, designates the shifting relation of the narrating to the story, on the one hand, and to the addressee(s), on the other (e.g., Luke 1:1–4).

Although Genette may be regarded as the most important founding figure (his is the name easily the most often cited in two recent dictionaries of narratology; cf. Coste, 407), his work represents only a beginning; when Proust is distilled from its pages it consists, as Dorrit Cohn has remarked, of "a slim, highly condensed, not always explicitly connected theoretical text" (1981:158). The work of Seymour Chatman is, in comparison, highly systematized (as is a third notable theory of narrative, that of Franz Stanzel; see 1984). Impelled by the example of Genette, as well as Barthes, Claude Brémond, Tzvetan Todorov, and other French narratologists, Chatman took up the challenge of a comprehensive theory of narrative in his *Story and Discourse* (1978), building on the dualistic distinction between the *what* of narrative (its content) and the *how* of narrative (the way in which that content is expressed): "We may ask, as does the linguist about language: What are the necessary components—and only those—of a narrative? Structuralist theory argues that each narrative has two parts: a story (*histoire*), the content or chain of events (actions, happenings), plus what may be called the existents (characters, items of setting); and a discourse (*discours*), that is, the expression, the means by which the content is communicated" (19). Genette had already begun a critical assimilation of Anglo-American work on point of view into the French tradition, and in Chatman this assimilation becomes synthesis; French narratology in the mode of Barthes, Genette, and Todorov merges with Anglo-American literary theory in the modes of Wayne C. Booth, Ronald Crane, and Northrop Frye. Chatman's synthetic project has been further extended by others, notably Rimmon-Kenan (1983).

Biblical developments along these lines were slow starting. Given the vigorous application of French structuralist theory to biblical texts in North America through the 1970s, it is surprising that biblical scholars did not then begin to draw upon the narratological tradition. It was only in the 1980s, with the decline of high biblical structuralism in North America, that narratological approaches became the preferred way of appropriating literary and cognate studies for biblical research. These developments have been eclectic, drawing on the low structuralist narratology of Genette and Chatman, on

the influential Anglo-American development of narrative theory concerned especially with *point of view* (a term that at its most comprehensive encompasses everything the author does to impose a story-world upon an audience; Wayne C. Booth, 1961, is generally regarded its classic expression), on studies of readers and reading (Iser 1974, 1978; cf. our chap. 1), and on other impulses to be noted. Our criteria for inclusion here are the seriousness of the commitment to identifying formal features, and the nature and quality of ongoing dialogue between particular biblical studies and general narratology.

NARRATIVE CRITICISM OF THE GOSPELS In New Testament studies, it is mainly in work on the Gospels that narratological exegesis has assumed the unified aspect of a movement, under the name *narrative criticism* (see Malbon, 1992; Powell, however, notes that "secular literary scholarship knows no such movement as narrative criticism" [1990a:19]). This movement-like character of New Testament narrative criticism derives in part from its origins: it began in the 1970s in the Markan Seminar of the Society of Biblical Literature. The seminar was chaired first by Norman Perrin and then by Werner Kelber. Its members included Robert Fowler, Norman Petersen, David Rhoads, Robert Tannehill, and Mary Ann Tolbert, all of whom would make influential contributions to the new literary study of the Gospels. (In the 1980s and into the 1990s, work on narrative criticism has continued in the Literary Aspects of the Gospels and Acts Group.)

In 1980, the tenth and final year of the Markan Seminar, David Rhoads presented a paper "Narrative Criticism and the Gospel of Mark" (Rhoads, 1982), which surveyed the 1970s literary work on Mark and for the first time programmatically labeled the new approach *narrative criticism* (Petersen, 1978a and others had already used the term, but not in Rhoads's consistent and definitive way). For Rhoads, it denotes a broad area of inquiry whose principal foci are "plot, conflict, character, setting, narrator, point of view, standards of judgment, the implied author, ideal reader, style, and rhetorical techniques" (412).

He sees the shift to narrative criticism as a shift from "fragmentation" to "wholeness": "We know how to take the text apart to analyze it; adding narrative criticism to our study is an opportunity to reaffirm the original achievement of Mark in creating a unified story" (413). Mark's story-world has "autonomous integrity" for Rhoads, an internal consistency and validity that is quite independent of its resemblance or nonresemblance to the actual

world of Jesus or Mark. Indeed, Rhoads would define narrative criticism precisely in terms of this idea:

> Narrative criticism works with the text as "world-in-itself." Other approaches tend to fragment, in part because their purpose is to put elements of the text into contexts outside the text; so, for example, biblical scholars may identify the feeding of the five thousand as an historical event in Jesus' time or as an oral story emerging from the early church or as a vehicle for a theological truth . . . or as a story which reveals the author's intentions, or as instructions to Mark's community. Narrative criticism brackets these historical questions and looks at the closed universe of the story-world. (Of course, knowledge of the history and culture of the first century is a crucial aid to understanding Mark's story-world, but that is a different matter from using elements of the text to reconstruct historical events.) (413; cf. Powell, 1990a:7–8)

Rhoads's conceptions of the text and of the critical task have marked affinities with those of the New Criticism, which was the dominant mode of Anglo-American literary criticism from the late 1930s through the 1950s (cf. Wellek, 144–292). Rejecting all "extrinsic" approaches to literature— biographical, historical, sociological, philosophical—the New Critics reconceived the literary work of art (epitomized by the poem) as an autonomous, internally unified organism. Rhoads makes a comparable claim for the Markan text. In fact, this holistic conception of the literary text, which is very basic for gospel narrative criticism, derives much less from the narratological tradition than from New Criticism.

A basic New Critical tenet was that form and content were inseparable. Form was no longer to be seen merely as instrumental, the vehicle for an ideational or propositional content or a cultural or historical reality, separable from the literary organism and independent of it. Instead the meaning of the text was said to be indissolubly bonded with its form. Compare Rhoads: having indicated how traditional scholarship might interpret the feeding of the five thousand in Mark (historically or theologically, i.e., in terms of some historical or theological content), he offers a formalist interpretation of the same event: "The feeding of the five thousand is a dramatic episode *in the continuum of Mark's story.*" Within that continuum, each element has its place: "Jesus, Herod, the centurion—dramatic characters. The exorcisms, the healings, the journeys, the trial and crucifixion—vivid elements in the world of Mark's story, each element important and integral" (413–14, his emphasis; cf. Powell, 1990a:8; for the inseparability of form

and content in Mark, cf. also Rhoads and Michie, 4, 62; and Beardslee, 1970:2: "Participation in the form is itself an essential part of the reading of a literary work").
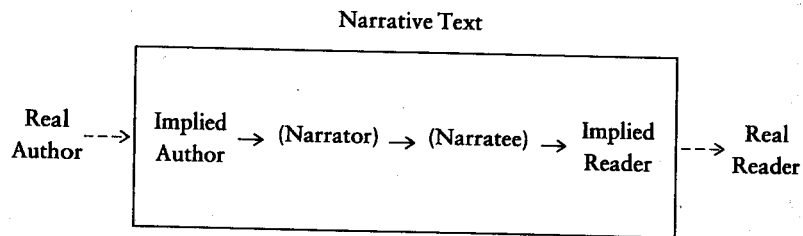
Nowhere in "Narrative Criticism and the Gospel of Mark," or in his subsequent *Mark as Story* (with Donald Michie), does Rhoads acknowledge the similarity of his views with those of the New Critics. Indeed, it is not clear whether or to what extent he is even aware of this resemblance. And he is not alone. His insistence that participation in the narrative form of a gospel is essential for its adequate interpretation is widely echoed by other narrative critics as well (e.g., Culpepper, 4–5; Kingsbury, 1988a:2; Tannehill, 1986:8).

Norman Petersen's article " 'Point of View' in Mark's Narrative" (1978b) was the first published study of a New Testament text to focus on point of view. Drawing on Boris Uspensky, Petersen attempts a schematic analysis of the narrator's role in Mark. He analyzes the narrator's point of view in terms of its ideological, phraseological, spatio-temporal, and psychological dimensions. Ideologically, for example, he finds that everything in Mark is evaluated from one point of view, that which the narrator and Jesus share. Indeed, in Mark only two ideological viewpoints are possible: the divine or the human. This opposition receives explicit expression in Mark 8:33 when Jesus accuses Peter of thinking in human terms. Even demons and other opponents (e.g., 1:24; 14:61) are made vehicles for the narrator's ideology; it permeates every facet of the narrative.

Rhoads and Michie's *Mark as Story: An Introduction to the Narrative of a Gospel* (1982) takes its lead from Chatman's *Story and Discourse*. Rhoads and Michie's opening move is to distinguish between the content of a narrative, its *story,* and the form of a narrative, its *rhetoric.* Here they depart from Chatman's terminology, though not from his understanding of how narrative functions: "The story refers to 'what' a narrative is about—the basic elements of the narrative world—events, characters, and settings. Rhetoric refers to 'how' that story is told in a given narrative in order to achieve certain effects upon the reader. Thus we can distinguish between " 'what' the story is about and 'how' the story is told" (Rhoads and Michie, 1982:4). The authors hasten to assure us, however, that as content and form, the "what" and the "how" are nonetheless inseparable. "Only for purposes of analysis" are they separated, and even then the "fragmentary analysis" (of character or style, for example) is redressed by interpreting each feature in the context of the entire narrative. The organization of *Mark as Story* follows on

from the separation of the "what" and the "how," story and rhetoric. Its first substantive chapter ("The Rhetoric") examines how the story is presented, that is, the role of the narrator, point of view, standards of judgment, style, narrative patterns, and so forth. The succeeding chapters ("The Settings," "The Plot," "Characters") examine the story, or the narrative "what."

In 1983 Alan Culpepper's influential *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel* appeared. Culpepper's book, too (like a number of similar studies, e.g., Kingsbury, 1988, 1989, 1991), is heavily dependent on Chatman, though for different reasons than *Mark as Story*. Both books were faced with the same problem: what should a comprehensive narrative analysis of a gospel treat, and how should it be organized? Rhoads and Michie's solution was shaped, as we have seen, by Chatman's two-tiered model of story and discourse. Culpepper's solution is shaped more by Chatman's narrative communication model (Chatman, 1978:151):

Narrative Text

Real Author $\dashrightarrow$ | Implied Author $\to$ (Narrator) $\to$ (Narratee) $\to$ Implied Reader | $\dashrightarrow$ Real Reader

Chatman's diagram has had a profound impact on the way that New Testament narrative critics conceive of the gospel text (cf. Powell, 1990a:27). The communication from the real (actual, historical) author to the real reader is conducted instrumentally through the narrative personae within the box. Distinct from the flesh-and-blood author is the *implied author* (cf. Wayne C. Booth, 1961:70–76, 151). This term denotes the complex, shifting image of the real author that the reader infers as he or she reads—a selecting, structuring, presiding intelligence, indirectly discerned in the text, rather like God in his or her creation. The *narrator* is also said to be immanent in the text as the voice that tells the story, a voice which may or may not be that of one of the characters (John of Revelation and the "we"-narrator of Luke-Acts are biblical examples of narrators who participate in the story as characters). The *narratee* is defined as the narrator's immediate addressee (e.g., Theophilus in Luke-Acts), and the *implied reader* as the persona presupposed or produced by the text as (in some theories) its ideal interpreter.

Having set himself the task of "understanding the gospel as a narrative text, what it is, and how it works," Culpepper presents an elaborated version of Chatman's communications diagram. The main difference between Culpepper's version of the diagram and that reproduced above is that *story* is put in the space between narrator and narratee as the content of the narrative communication. Such a model will enable a fresh understanding of "what the gospel is and how it achieves its effects" (3), and Culpepper goes on to show how his book will be organized around it. Chapter 2, the first substantive chapter, "is devoted to a discussion of . . . the narrator," along with a look at the real and implied author. "Chapters 3 through 6 are devoted to various components of the story, its time, its plot, its characters, and the implicit commentary [e.g., irony and symbolism] which makes it so intriguing." Finally, chapter 7 is an analysis of the gospel's audience, as implied and circumscribed by the text.

THE POETICS OF THE HEBREW BIBLE Developments in Hebrew Bible studies have been different, though related (some of the gospel developments just considered were in fact anticipated in James Muilenberg's 1969 manifesto "Form Criticism and Beyond," which was similarly colored by Anglo-American formalism; e.g., "The literary unit is . . . an indissoluble whole, an artistic and creative unity, a unique formulation" [369]). The term *poetics* is often preferred to *narratology* or *narrative criticism*; this is the result of the influence (esp. through Meir Sternberg) of the Tel Aviv school of poetics (narratology is properly "a subdivision of poetics" [Berlin, 15], but "poetics" in the discussion usually means narrative poetics). In contrast to the focus in New Testament studies on the differences between the Gospels, there are few suggestions that different portions of Hebrew Bible narrative have special features (Polzin, 1980, 1989, on the Deuteronomic history is perhaps an exception), but there is a strong concern for a poetics special to the narrative of the Hebrew Bible as a whole. This often leads to a reluctance to explore the nonbiblical origins of methods in use.

Thus Shimon Bar-Efrat (1989) organizes biblical "narrative art" under the categories of narrator, characters, plot, time and space, and style but pays no attention to what these terms mean outside the Bible. Robert Alter, a highly prominent literary critic outside of biblical studies, likewise, in his highly sophisticated treatment (1981), applies to the Bible categories current in the wider debate (dialogue, repetition, etc.), while being very sparing in his references to that debate (though in Alter, 1989, he does bring some comments on biblical narrative into the context of a general literary dis-

cussion). The ideal of a special biblical poetics is affirmed by Adele Berlin: "The type of poetics that I am advocating is less foreign to biblical studies because it is derived from and restricted to the Bible. I do not seek a theory that can be applied to all narrative, but only a theory of biblical narrative. Before we can understand general poetics we must understand specific poetics" (19). Despite such statements, Berlin does, in fact, relate her poetics to general narrative theory (making, for example, systematic use of models proposed by Uspensky and William Labov); her insistence on a special poetics is meant to rule out structuralist approaches, which are abstract, and which aspire to reduce the Bible to some lowest common denominator with all other literature (19; cf. Rosenberg's rejection of synchronic approaches [104–6]).

But there are a number of writers on Hebrew Bible narrative who adopt a variety of more interesting stances toward structuralisms and formalisms. Jan Fokkelman (cf. somewhat similarly Eslinger, 1985), in his close analyses of Genesis (1991) and Samuel (1986), invokes a large range of formalist and structuralist figures (the following list is culled from Fokkelman, 1986: Jonathan Culler, Greimas, Eugene Nida, Genette, Bal, Michael Riffaterre, Propp, Roman Jakobson, Frank Kermode). But even he does not in a sustained way bring the Bible into relationship with any particular theory. His thoroughly inductive approach (in which he stands as far as possible from the deductive attitude essential to any structuralism) implies that no attempt at a comprehensive hypothesis will be appropriate until "some 2000 pages" of particular analyses have been completed (1986:1).

The most massive single contribution to the poetics of Hebrew Bible narrative is that of Meir Sternberg, who, as a prominent member of the Tel Aviv school of poetics, is very much a participant in the larger narratology debate in literary criticism (cf., among many contributions, 1978, 1990a—in relation to the latter, note that Poetics Today is published in Tel Aviv). The Tel Aviv school is generally formalist in orientation, with particular affinities to Russian formalism (Mintz, 216). Mintz discusses the founder of the school, Hrushovski, pointing to his scientific rather than aesthetic stance and his anti-hermeneutical concern for what literature is (cf. particularly Hrushovski's schematic diagram [Mintz, 221] whereby he wants to fix the role of every aspect of literary endeavor in relation to a total view of which poetics is the arbiter). Mintz contends (217) that the Tel Aviv school is not pluralistic in outlook and that it tends toward a near-contemptuous critique of the shallowness of most literary criticism (219). But its distinctive contribution to general narratology, particularly to our understanding of "textual energy

and movement," is acknowledged, for example, by Pavel (350; cf. Coste, 405); and a book like David Bordwell's (e.g., 55–58), on film theory, makes clear how broad Sternberg's influence has been.

But the uninformed reader of The Poetics of Biblical Narrative (1985), where most of Sternberg's biblical work is found (but cf. 1986, 1990b, 1991), would guess at little of this theoretical background. The readings of biblical texts in this book do indeed bring to the foreground theoretical issues of great importance (point of view, repetition, and the like). But these issues are treated as inner-biblical; there is little sustained dialogue with narratological theory. And this is only somewhat less true of the three more directly theoretical chapters with which the book begins; the spasmodic references to figures like Booth, Culler, Iser, and Kermode do not establish dialogue. What Sternberg decidedly does bear out, however, is Mintz's remarks about contempt for other critics (cf. Sternberg's remarks on David Robertson [1985:4–7] or his reference to reading "in bad faith" [50]; cf. also Bal's remarks about his "insults" [1991:62]).

A North American critic whose work is closely related to Sternberg's is Robert Polzin. After some early work in the high structuralist mode (1977), Polzin turned in Moses and the Deuteronomist (1980) to a method drawing on the Russian formalists, especially the school of Mikhail Bakhtin. Bakhtin's method is to analyze the interplay of voices in the text, those of the narrator and the characters, especially under the categories of "monologue" and "dialogue," and to correlate different treatments of the voices with different narrative "ideologies" (1980:16–24, with reference to Bakhtin, Voloshinov [= Bakhtin], and Uspensky). Applying this to Deuteronomy, Joshua, and Judges, Polzin finds each of these books to differ in the way it understands divine initiative and human response, divine speech and human interpretation, so that a given book becomes an answer, or a corrective, to earlier ones. This work is of great interest, analyzing the role of the narrator with a depth and complexity rarely found in narratological work on the Bible.

Mieke Bal, even more than Sternberg, is a prominent participant in literary-critical debates over narratology and has written a handbook on the subject (1985). Most of her work on the Bible is found in a trilogy of books which, appearing in the late 1980s, have begun to have a profound impact on biblical studies (1987, 1988a, 1988b; cf. Jobling, 1991b, Boyarin, 1990b). Bal's work developed first under the influence of Genette, and her name is particularly associated with the development of his concept of focalization. But her attitude toward the structuralist origins of her work is a critical one;

while continuing to acknowledge that "going through the early structuralist texts has been decisive for my thinking," especially by instilling the necessity of the "pursuit of rigor" (1991:5), she now claims that "narratology is at an impasse," having "not succeeded in . . . putting itself in the service of any critical practice" (1991:27). Bal's demand for a critical narratology in the service of a general cultural critique is even more important to us than the following particulars of her biblical readings, and we shall return to it below.

Bal's biblical writings draw on a variety of structuralist proposals. Although she is a sharp critic of Greimas's approach, she invokes his use of the semiotic square to present the theological and literary codes of the Book of Judges (1988b:41, 44, 77). In our second exegetical example, above, she critically adapts Genette's treatment of narrative temporality in relation to Genesis 38. But her most far-reaching and usable proposal (again a development of Genette) is for an analysis of texts according to their rendering of *narrative subjectivity*. At the simplest level, she asks of the text "who speaks? . . . who sees? . . . who acts?" How, that is, does the text distribute among the narrator and the characters the functions of direct speech, narrative action, and focalization (providing the eyes through which the events of the text are at a given moment being perceived)? Even a mere quantitative analysis (who speaks, who speaks most, who speaks not at all) is revealing, but the analysis needs to be much more subtle (who speaks first, who speaks with power, who gets to focalize the final result of the narrative events, and so on).

This scheme is capable of fruitful application to biblical texts, and Bal claims that it underlies all her biblical work. But she does not make it sufficiently clear, especially to the reader of her English biblical trilogy, how it is being applied. The scheme is summarized in a chart at the end of *Death and Dissymmetry* (1988a:248–49), and the theory is presented discursively, with useful examples from Judges, in the introductory theoretical chapter (34–38, cf. 234). But the analyses of which the central chapters of the book consist are only spasmodically related to the scheme, and, in fact, it is best to precede a reading of the biblical trilogy by reading the full statement of the theory in chapter 6 of Bal, 1991 (esp. 159–68).[3]

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[3] The problem is that this chapter was part of the material omitted when *Femmes imaginaires* (1986b) was partially translated into English as *Lethal Love* (1987). In the original, the chapter was immediately preceded by one on the story of David and Bathsheba (translated as 1987:10–36), which is why it contains a number of illustrations from that story.

In *Narration and Discourse in the Book of Genesis* (1991), Hugh White draws on theoreticians not otherwise used by biblical scholars, the semiotic philosophy of Edmund Ortigues, the linguistics of Eugenio Coseriu, and the literary theory of Angel Medina. On more familiar ground, he employs a discourse analysis grounded in Bakhtin (and related to that used by Polzin, 1980), the Genettian narratological tradition, and speech-act theory. All this he is able to weave into a convincing whole which breaks new ground in biblical narratology. Before turning to the Genesis narrative, he devotes fully a third of the book to narratological theory, a procedure that other biblical narratologists would do well to copy.

For White, the human subject is created only in *intersubjectivity* as it relates linguistically with other subjects. The child's entry into language is traumatic, as the identity of consciousness and world is disrupted and the immediacy of the image gives way to the distance of the sign. But the trauma is also an entry into open possibility. The child is not merely subjected to an alien system of signs; it becomes, as it develops subjecthood through its intersubjective use of language, a co-creator of the system. The function of literature is to reenact and make the subject reflect on this fundamental process. According to White, the creation of narrative character "replicates . . . the trauma by which language was originally established in consciousness" (1991:45). Using the Russian formalist category of *defamiliarization*, he looks at literature in terms of its "effect upon the subject" (18).

He uses a typology of narrative based on the different modes in which the discourse of the narrator can be related to that of the characters. The typology correlates these modes with three "functions" of literature in general (cf. diagram, 58):

Mode	Function		
	Expressive	Representative	Symbolic
Passive	x	(x)	(x)
Indirect		x	(x)
Active			x

In this diagram, "x" indicates the dominant mode, "(x)" a subordinate mode used by a narrative function.

In simple terms, the representative function corresponds to the "she or he" of the narrator, and the expressive function to the "I" of the character.

In representative narrative, the narrator dominates, exercising control over the characters from a withdrawn, neutral perspective, claiming objective knowledge of the consciousness of the characters. The characters in such narratives generally play out conflicts over desired objects, rather than confronting open possibilities (the image dominates over the sign). Relevant for our purpose, White notes that this is Barthes's "readerly" text (Barthes, 1974b:4), which, according to Barthes (1974b:204), provides the material for structural analysis of the Propp-Greimas type. In extreme contrast is expressive narrative, which, in pure form, is very rare (White alludes to Ivy Compton-Burnett's novels as coming close). Here the characters break free of narratorial control, existing almost exclusively in dialogue with each other. In one sense, this constitutes the epitome of intersubjectivity; the subject is "wholly dependent on the other even for its own presence to itself" (Hugh White, 1991:71). But White sees this intersubjectivity in negative terms; the narrator's abdication looses the characters from the world of real subjects, and the plot can be driven only by "imaginary" conflicts of the characters' own devising; there is thus "an intersection of the dynamics of both the sign and the image."

It is through the symbolic function that this opposition is mediated. The barrier between narrator and character is lowered through the narrative production of an "impersonal consciousness" that belongs to neither narrator nor characters (76), but to which both "belong." The characters are in "inner dialogue within the author" (77). White finds a classic case in the work of Dostoyevsky, where the narrator is "dialogized" through the characters' inner dialogue with a "dominant idea" that transcends both author and characters. The writing that emerges is not fully under control, it is "unfinalizable" (88), in the process of coming to be. The act of writing becomes "a central force in the structure of the plot." There are no unequivocally good or bad personages and no normal resolution in the ending. The sign fully dominates the image.

In biblical narrative, specifically in Genesis, the "mediating language event" that breaks the barrier between narrator and characters and enables symbolic narrative, is, according to White, the divine voice. Formally, God is a character in the narrative. But the divine voice belongs neither to the given, stable world of representative narrative, nor to the relativistic world of expressive narrative. The narrator speaks as one who stands in the same relationship to the divine voice as the characters do; a single cause "im-

pelled his characters to action and him to write about them" (Hugh White, 1991:102).

What constitutes characterhood in the Bible is being addressed by the divine voice, and White organizes his readings around the "micro-dialogues" between this voice and the character. Such characters are "free," but not in a "totally relativistic individualism." The micro-dialogue central to White's reading of Genesis is 12:1–3, a passage providing little referentiality or concrete context and no motivation for Abram's journey except the promise of "a positive relationship to the divine" (111). The time of the promise is, in part, future in relation to the narration, putting the author in the same relation to it as the characters.

But Gen. 12:1–3 requires a context, and it is provided especially by the Eden story in chapters 2–3. This narrative has a double task; to provide a foil for the intersubjective creation of Abram by telling of an earlier objective creation of human character, but to do so in such as way as to leave open the *possibility* of intersubjectivity. The Eden story seems like representative narration based on prohibition, villainy, the object of desire, and so on, and it concludes with objective bounds being set to human possibility and a hierarchical relationship between God and humans. Yet, within this framework, the symbolic perspective is kept open in a remarkable way. The desired object, knowledge of good and evil, lacks any specific content, and there is no human villain—rather, a hero-villain dynamic is set up *within* the humans; what humans lose is open communication with God, which is a source of unlimited possibility; and it is this that 12:1–3 restores.

A CRITIQUE OF STRUCTURALISM

Under the title *Structuralism and Semiotics,* Terence Hawkes tells a story of the development of the cluster of methods dealt with here. It is instructive to summarize this story, since it raises questions of scope and terminology that have bedeviled the entire structuralist debate.

The early chapters of Hawkes's book cover high structuralism, moving from Saussure, Propp, and Lévi-Strauss (Hawkes includes also Roman Jakobson) to the French literary structuralists of the 1960s (along with Greimas and Barthes, Hawkes includes Todorov). But this story does not directly lead anywhere; rather, after dealing with Greimas, Todorov, and

Barthes, Hawkes turns from structuralism to semiotics (chap. 4, "A Science of Signs"), first backtracking to C. S. Peirce, who predates any kind of structuralism, then revisiting Saussure and Barthes, but now from a semiotic angle, and concluding with a consideration of Jacques Derrida. It is not our intention to single out Hawkes's story of structuralism for special critique—its interest lies precisely in its similarity to those of many other commentators—but rather to probe the significance of some features of this typical account. (For purposes of comparison with Hawkes, the reader may refer to Scholes, 1974, and Culler, 1975b.)

First, Hawkes (despite some brief generalizing comments in his introduction) implies a quite narrow view of the scope of the structuralist impulse. Others (Lane, de George and de George, Piaget, Harland) cast the structuralist net wide, to include fields like mathematics, economics, and psychology. Hawkes's primary concern is literature. But who is responsible for the structuralist impact on literature? What, for example, of Marx and Freud? On the one hand, they have both had a profound effect on the recent study of literature. On the other hand, Lévi-Strauss, in a famous passage (1975:55–59), includes them as key influences in his development toward structuralism, and one anthology (de George and de George) opens with chapters on them (ahead of Saussure!). Are they not, then, part of the story of structuralism in literature?

Second, Hawkes deals poorly with the multiple lines of structuralist and related development in literary criticism in the 1960s and 1970s. Through his concentration on Greimas, Todorov, and Barthes he is complicit in the division between what we have called high and low structuralism. He mentions Genette only to suppress him without explanation: "Untreated in the present volume, Genette is an important figure in literary structuralism" (174). He has nothing about developments inspired by Mikhail Bakhtin, very different but related to the structuralist impulse (cf. Todorov, 1984). Like Genesis 38, this story has trouble handling a shift from "vertical" (generation to generation) narrative to a "horizontal" set of parallel and equal developments![4]

Third, Hawkes fails adequately to insert the French literary structuralism of the 1960s into its general intellectual context. All the vast developments associated with such figures as Derrida, Lacan, Althusser, Foucault, Deleuze

[4] Cf. Bal's reference to "the limitation of structuralism to a very narrow body of theory, that represented mainly by Greimas and Bremond in the wake of Propp" (1991:10).

and Guattari, Spivak, Kristeva, and Irigaray have close ties to structuralism. But none of these figure gets substantial treatment under "structuralism." Hawkes seems to assume a distinction between structuralism and *poststructuralism* (perhaps it was imposed on him under the terms of the series of which his book is a part). But the effect is to help establish this distinction, to indicate a story in which structuralism either is passé or has been absorbed into a vastly more comprehensive poststructuralism. However, most of the poststructuralist figures just listed haunt the book, at least through brief references, calling the sharp distinction between structuralism and poststructuralism into question.

Some of them are dealt with more at length, but in the chapter on semiotics (the later Barthes, Kristeva, and, oddly, Derrida), Hawkes seems to suggest that structuralism, as it comes to the end of its story, becomes absorbed in a more general semiotics. He suggests, first, that semiotics has a much longer history than structuralism (not only Peirce, but much further back in medieval sign-theory), and, second, that semiotics is necessary for an understanding of structuralism (semiotic aspects of Saussure must be suppressed in order to make him simply the precursor of structuralism; Barthes's early structuralism needs to be comprehended within his later semiotics). This would make structuralism just one direction within a semiotics that precedes it and comprehends it, and the recent move beyond structuralism could be interpreted as a move toward a much broader and more flexible semiotics.

Hawkes, then, provides an early instance of an account that has since become the prevalent one, an account in which structuralism has been overtaken by poststructuralism and general semiotics. Those who could handle this change ceased to be (or denied having been) structuralists and became leaders in the new developments (esp. Barthes; also Foucault as rendered, for example, by Harland, 101–20, 155–66). Those who could not adapt, notably Greimas, went the way of the dinosaurs. At best, structuralism has now become absorbed in wider currents, which it had indeed a role in initiating but which it was not capable of comprehending. Parts of its impulse can still be profitably developed, but preferably under other names. At the same time, however, Hawkes's book raises doubts as to the adequacy of this account. For example, if structuralism is an instance of semiotics, would he not have done better to set it within the story of semiotics, avoiding the flashback from the 1960s to Peirce? The reader may suspect that part of the reason for the placement of Hawkes's semiotics chapter is to enable him to

deal with certain figures involved in the 1960s ferment not as part of structuralism but still in relation to it. But there is a cost; for example it is surely less plausible to associate Derrida with semiotics than with structuralism.

What, specifically, are the perceived problems in structuralism that have led to such reactions? In order to monitor the recent views of scholars who have been part of the development of narratology from its structuralist beginnings, we refer the following inventory of problems, where possible, to the 1990 double issue of *Poetics Today,* "Narratology Revisited."

First, structuralists have often claimed a global, objective validity for their models, assuming that the degree of scientific exactness supposedly achieved by structural linguistics will be achieved when the linguistic model is transferred to other fields. This, in the view of many critics, has proved a vain hope. Structuralism has tried to pattern itself on the model of an objective natural science; theoretically, any reader using its techniques will discover the same structure. In practice this is not found to be the case. Thus Brooke-Rose refers to "the scientific dream" of "a universal system" of literature (1990:287–88) and "that unfulfilled dream of objectivity" (289). It is in the context of such scientific pretensions that an offensive degree of jargon gets developed, and the study of literature gets bogged down in taxonomy and technical definition.

Structuralism methodologically brackets the role of subjectivity in both the production and the reading of the text. The individual work becomes merely one example of general laws. The contribution of the reader to the production of meaning is neglected (cf. chap. 1), and the attempt is made to withdraw the text from the hermeneutic circle. Structuralist procedures thus have to be reductive. Systems can be created out of the rich variety of real texts only by the programmatic exclusion of certain kinds of text, certain features of texts, certain aspects of the interpretive process, on so on. In particular, it is often noted that early structuralist systems were developed from the reading of relatively simple or homogeneous forms of literature (myths, folktales, popular fiction; cf. Brooke-Rose, 1990:285–86). It is in this light that we should see recent demands on behalf of the free play of semiosis and intertextuality, in counterpoint to the perceived semiotic narrowing involved in structuralist approaches to literature (e.g. Connerty, 398; Bal, 1990:728).

Structuralism is accused of ahistoricality, positing structures that are changeless over time and hence neglecting the embeddedness of the text in a particular history. Related is the accusation of anti-referentiality, the insistence that human productions must be seen as internal networks of meaning

before being referred to anything outside themselves (e.g., Ronen, 825–26, discussing, among others, Propp and Greimas). Narratology is perceived to have concentrated on works of fiction, to the neglect of works of historiography (two essays in "Narratology Revisited," Cohn, 1990, and Genette, 1990, are devoted to this issue, and Sternberg, 1990a, touches on the same problem). The "formalist consensus," according to Pavel (350), has dealt poorly with the whole matter of temporality *within* the text. And there has been blindness on the part of structuralist practitioners to the historicity of structuralism itself. These accusations, different as they are, belong to a single impulse to convict structuralism of an unconcern for historicity (cf. Coste's reference to "narrow-minded structuralism . . . and an uncommitted, ahistorica vision of narratology" [407]).

Structuralism is often directly equated with formalism (cf. Pavel, 351), the notion that the structures perceived in human productions can be reduced to abstract mental categories (this is sometimes expressed in mentalist hypotheses like those of Noam Chomsky, who argues, from the homologous quality of the structures humans produce, for the existence of a structure of the mind itself, perhaps with some neurophysiological base; see Caws, 198). This suggests that structuralism is not only ahistorical but also antimaterialist, unconcerned with the real material world out of which the human productions spring and of which they partake.

Finally, summing up all the foregoing, structuralism is accused of being fundamentally positivistic, holding out the promise of *the* right answer to problems, claiming a point of reference that gives it mastery over texts (Brooke-Rose, 1990:289). Structuralist theories characteristically claim greater comprehensiveness than rival theories, claim to be able to "contain" the rivals; this is a characteristic error of all positivisms, namely, that they miss the point that no system can include itself in the critique it proposes (cf. Jameson, 1987:xv–xvi). Such structuralisms tend to avoid the ferment of a general cultural critique, to remain politically uncommitted (cf. Coste, 407), and eventually to serve conservative ends.

But Peter Caws, in *Structuralism: The Art of the Intelligible,* argues that the retreat from structuralism has more to do with the volatility of academic fashion than with a mature assessment of its achievement and potential. He does not disregard the criticisms just enumerated—indeed, he adds his own weight to some of them—but he considers that they can be answered and that many of them signal a failure to understand what structuralism is.

Structuralism's claim, according to Caws, is nothing less than to offer

the most adequate account of the intelligibility to the mind of the "human" world (the world of the social sciences and the humanities, as opposed to the natural sciences).[5] He sees structuralism as a major philosophical option which "according to the calendar of philosophy . . . has only just arrived" (xiii). He regards as absurd the notion that we could possibly be in a position to close the books on it when it has been with us for so short a time.

To be human is to try to make experience intelligible (36–37), to seek for "congruence" among its "apparently unrelated features" (7). Structuralism implies a particular view of the way humans undertake this search; it is through *"the matching of structured systems,"* which *"is experienced by us as primordially meaningful"* (112; emphasis his). What mind experiences is not isolated particulars but systems of relations among things; hence "structure is fundamental to intelligibility, not merely one aspect of it" (114); it is both a necessary and a sufficient condition for intelligibility (181; Caws sees no philosophic interest in the "weak" kind of structural analysis which fails to make this claim, although cf. Bannet, esp. 228–65 on the relation to poststructuralist thought).

Caws maintains a tight connection between signification and "mattering"—the structures that mind posits as significant are those that touch human existence most closely (at least in the first instance; at more developed stages, structure may be valued for its own sake [184]). "Structuralism . . . aims on the philosophical level not so much to explain facts as to explain why they make sense or matter to us" (170). In the paragraph following this statement, Caws quotes a celebrated remark of Lévi-Strauss, that structuralism might well lead to "the restoration of a sort of popular materialism" (1963a:652). The play on "matter," as noun ("the material") and verb ("to be of concern"), is a leitmotif of Caws's whole book; what matters is precisely what enables humans to live in their given world of matter, and it is particularly in relation to structuralism in anthropology that he orients his discussion. This radical material embeddedness implies that the brain's activity of structuring experience begins with what is at hand, what is local, "relative to us" (38); "we have at our disposal only the present moment and things in the world as they are, . . . our task is to make sense of these from

[5] Caws does not see structuralism as dependent on hypotheses about the nature of mind (though it is not incompatible with them). He prefers to define mind precisely *as the structures it produces*—language, myth, etc.—rather than as "some ineffable reality which lies behind them and from which they are separable" (28; page references in this section are to Caws).

a standpoint within the world" (169). The task of structuralism is "to show that the objects it studies have [the] dual character of systematic interrelation and of adequacy to the appropriate features of the world" (121).

One of the reproaches that Caws brings against most structuralisms, even ones of which he generally approves, is their attempt to get rid of the individual human subject as the locus of the perception of structure and to put in its place "the historical collective" (209). Against this, he insists on the irreducibility of the human subject, the *"radical* particularity . . . of mental functioning" (210). The only locus of intelligibility is individual consciousness (126–27, 154–55, 213–14).[6] However, part of the materiality of the human condition is life in particular communities. Caws describes structures as existing "distributively" in the minds of the multiplicity of individuals in these communities. This means that the structure exists nowhere, because no mind "intends" (borrowing a term from phenomenology) the whole of it, and no two minds intend it identically (220–21; language is an obvious example, see 195–96). The myth of a collective subject arises because the individual experiences structures that exist distributively in her community as objective and necessary, rather than as existing only in subjects like herself.

Caws's concept of structuralism implies answers to—or at least problematizes—the criticisms of structuralism reviewed above. Referring to "the apparently megalomaniac pretensions of some structuralists,"[7] he comes out vehemently for a local as against a global view of the intelligibility available to structuralist investigation and commends the local thrust of the work especially of Barthes and Foucault.[8] Structuralism should claim to be systematic not in the sense of discerning the complete system, but of seeking

[6] Knowledge stored in books and the like is only potential knowledge, which needs to be activated by individual consciousnesses.

[7] Page 153, cf. 159. Elsewhere he calls on structuralists to give up "hegemonic claims" (xiii). General theories of meaning are impossible beyond a very minimal level even in linguistics (78) and are quite out of the question in art (33–34). As to the scientific pretensions of structuralism, Caws excludes the natural sciences from its scope: "Structuralism emerged when it was realized that the intelligible world did not have to be constituted in imitation of the material world" (162, cf. 146–48).

[8] Barthes's local investigations reclaim "for intellect a territory that we had all but abandoned to the Absurd" (38), whereas Foucault's "linked series of micro- (or local) structures . . . seems more faithful to the facts of the matter than the schematic simplicities of early structuralism" (153–54).

the potential of everything for systematic connection (197–98). The quest for global, totalizing meaning diverts attention from local significances.[9]

Structuralist efforts to get rid of the subject must come to grief because they are still efforts by subjects (239). The presence of the subject undoes all claims to objectivity. Drawing on Lacan, Caws asserts that "The subject is an activity, not a thing" (31), and that *"The subject cannot be the object of a science because it is its subject"* (32, emphasis his). It can never be part of its own intelligible world—as Wittgenstein says, "The subject does not belong to the world: rather, it is the limit of the world" (1961:117, quoted by Caws, 237)—and hence prevents any systemic completion; the only world available to me is one that needs me as its complement or supplement (238–41).

Caws insists on a distinction between structuralism and formalism on the basis of structuralism's "material embodiment" (25). He admits that structural analysis may from time to time use techniques akin to those of formalism, but these should not be mistaken as defining its philosophical position. The conditions for a real formalism are hardly ever fulfilled in structuralism (106).[10] He speaks also to the supposed ahistoricality of structuralism, especially in his discussion of *synchronicity* (256–57). This term has not only the weak meaning of "the structural principles [that] remain unchanged over time" (256), but a stronger one, that everything available to thought exists *now,* including accounts of the past, so that "diachronic structures . . . are

[9] For Caws the central intellectual trauma of our civilization is that we no longer believe in universal meaning but cannot be content with meaning that is anything less than universal. As Western civilization has developed (and Caws would agree with Derrida about the need to retrace the steps involved) what has come to matter most is universal significance. We have come to need, or think we need, access to "the Answer" to "Life, the Universe, and Everything" (this way of putting it comes, of course, from Douglas Adams [113]). Caws shows convincingly why things like "life" can't have "meaning," since meaning develops only *within* the framework of life (183). But the chimera of universal significance makes people discontent with the local significance, which is all that is available. Humans must find contentment in local meaning, and a structuralism that has given up its global pretensions can be of great help in this (183–86 for the foregoing).

[10] Although Caws's point here seems correct, he perhaps undervalues the use of formal models in structuralism, and his conditions for "a nonspurious formalism" are too stringent. He sets two conditions: what such a formalism "deals with must be specifiable in formal language," and its use "must make possible formulations and operations *that would not be possible in ordinary language*" (106). The second of these conditions begs all the famous questions about "ordinary language" and denies the experience of those who handle complexity better through diagrams and formulae than through words.

just synchronic structures among others" (257). But this is not to say that the structures are ahistorical. On the contrary, all human structures include the element of temporality and work to render this element, like any other, intelligible.[11]

Caws refuses any sharp distinction between structuralism and poststructuralism. "The indispensable context of deconstruction is structuralism. . . . Deconstruction is one of its moments, one of its truths" (162; cf. Bannet, 4–11). The essential human "activity of seeking out and matching . . . *is* structuralist activity, even if the internal fitting is arrived at deconstructively or the external via critical theory (258)."[12] "A radically decentered view of [the] world . . . is still . . . compatible with everything that is valuable in structuralism" (159); Derrida's work is "in the best sense structuralist, . . . it exploits . . . the multiple layers of matched structure" (161). Conversely, structuralism cannot be itself without being critical in the fullest postmodern sense. Why, Caws asks (6), has no better term been found for what is supposed to have superseded structuralism than the compound *poststructuralism?* Does not this term imply a continuation of the working out of structuralism's own agenda?

Caws argues this theoretically, out of his understanding of intelligibility itself. What mind usually perceives is not a completed structure but a partial one looking for completion, and there will be a multiplicity of "potentially intelligible" ways of completing it.[13] But it is not mainly for such theoretical reasons that he insists on the deconstructive moment in structuralism. He aims to foster out of structuralism a cultural hermeneutic of suspicion. "The need for deconstruction arises when the externalization of knowledge [makes people] acquire ready-made structures . . . uncritically" (214). Past perceptions of the structuredness of the human world become ossified; "we inherit structures that if left undeconstructed will mislead, oppress, or entrap us" (164).

[11] The only place Caws develops this in any detail is in his appreciation of Foucault's view of the synchronicity of history, as a fragmented network that one can traverse in any order rather than a grand scheme that imposes its own rules (153–54).

[12] It should be explained that "internal" and "external" here refer to Caws's basic distinction (13) between structure as the "fitting together" of a single object and as the single object's "fitting into" a larger complex.

[13] Page 206; he uses the example of different ways of completing incomplete drawings. Postmodernism represents an "unwillingness to rule out . . . any kind of . . . juxtaposition," however bizarre it seems, which yields something intelligible (213).

Closing his book, Caws quotes with approval David Lodge's suggestion that we learn "how to work with structuralism, not only in the sense of applying it when it seems useful to do so, but also in the sense of working *alongside* it, recognizing its existence as a fact of intellectual life *without being totally dominated by it*" (Lodge, 7, quoted in Caws, 254; emphasis ours). Caws sees in structuralism a defense against relativism and pragmatism, and hence fundamentalism and superstition. But it is not to be thought of as itself a foundation (one might dwell here on the etymological link between "fundamentalism" and "foundation"), rather as offering "stabilizers, gyroscopes, ... *local* orientation, *limited* structural connections" (255). We should accommodate to structuralism as a philosophical option and a practical tool of the utmost importance, while disregarding its grandiose pretensions.

It is certainly not hard to discern in the classical development of structuralism impulses that, far from being conservative or positivist, are powerfully critical (Jobling, 1979). The enigmatic anagrams of Saussure (1971) indicate, according to Derrida (1976:329), "another text" hidden under Saussure's attempt (1959) at a closed linguistic system; Caws comments on the anagrams that "there is an unlimited number of potentially intelligible relationships among things in the world, and hence of coherent structures, so that . . . no paradigm of coherence can constrain novelty, and . . . no empirical inquiry is immune from it" (82). The best examples of the critical impulse in early structuralism are to be drawn from Lévi-Strauss. He analyzes myths primarily in terms of the category of *contradiction* in all human systems, contradiction that can never be resolved but only displaced (the appropriateness of his claiming Marx and Freud as precursors [1975:55–59] is clear). In his monumental treatment of Amerindian mythology (1970, 1973, 1978, 1981) he makes no attempt to impose on his texts a priori models; rather, he invents as he goes along the structural models that seem best able to account for the texts (cf. the remarks of Jameson, 1981:esp. 77–80). In his initial response to Propp (1977:15–45, orig. 1960), he differentiates clearly between structuralism and formalism.

Again, Genette's reading of Proust, whereby he chose to work out his structural narratology, is calculated more to unsettle than to reassure. As Genette reads it, this celebrated work, "which seems so massively committed to representing a world and a character's experience of it" (1980:12), is fraught with repeated violations, both flagrant and subtle, of the conventions of representation to which it ostensibly subscribes. The traditional,

humanistic, comfortable view of the *Recherche* is repeatedly ruptured by Genette's disclosures of anomalies, impossible combinations, and internal contradictions. Moreover, Genette will not claim for his own book what he denies to Proust's: "readers will not find here [in *Narrative Discourse*] a final 'synthesis' in which all the characteristic features of Proustian narrative noted in the course of this study will meet and justify themselves to each other" (266).

A strong claim can be made on behalf of structuralism, particularly of the Lévi-Straussian type, that it lies behind the insistent interdisciplinarity of current intellectual life. Just as in structural anthropology the various productions of a society have to be studied together, because their structures are transformations of each other, so must we in dealing with our own culture keep its sectors in relation to each other.[14] The early structuralist impulse, however one assesses it now, certainly made itself felt throughout the social and human sciences and has arguably been uniquely productive of the whole current intellectual climate, even if that productivity has been by way of provoking anti-structuralist reaction that has led in new directions.

This history is reproduced in the personal experience of many individuals, even if they now distance themselves from structuralism. Thus Brooke-Rose, though she sees a need to jettison much of early narratology (1990:287), speaks of how she was "considerably strengthened by the rigor learned from linguistics" and "benefited immensely from understanding in every tiny detail how a narrative text functions" (290). Bal likewise acknowledges the decisive contribution of structuralism in instilling in her the critical habit of rigor in the early stages of her career, and refers to "structuralism, already passé for many, internalized by others (including me)" (1991:197–98, cf. 1–24). In an early work, Derrida attests with eloquence to the impact of structuralism: "If it recedes one day . . . the structuralist invasion might become a question for the historian of ideas, or perhaps even an object. But the historian would be deceived if he came to this pass; by the very act of considering the structuralist invasion as an object he would forget its meaning and would forget that what is at stake, first of all, is an adventure of vision, a conversion of the way of putting questions to any object posed before us" (1978b:3).

[14] For the theory of *homology* between the structures of a society see Caws (26; cf. 18), and for a classic myth analysis along these lines, Lévi-Strauss, "The Story of Asdiwal" (1977:146–97). It is interesting to set this structuralist impulse to interdisciplinarity alongside the claim (presented, for example, by Bal, 1988b:135–38) that interdisciplinarity is integral to feminist method. The two impulses need not be in competition, and certainly are not in Bal.

Complaining of politically conservative tendencies in some narratologists, Coste claims that "narratology has a vocation to develop tools for strategies of peace and progress" (410). It is rare to find such a political claim so baldly stated, but grounds for agreement with it can be easily found in political programs, or programs with powerful political implications, relating themselves in very direct ways to the structuralist impulse. We may even begin with Derrida, despite the fierce debate over his political commitment. The starting point for his deconstruction is the structuralist category of *binary opposition* and, specifically, the identification of oppositions fundamental to culture (culture-nature, male-female, presence-absence, and so on); deconstructive critique exposes how culture is constituted by the systematic valuation of one term of the opposition over the other, and this takes us directly into the realm of the political (see Jobling, 1990:83–86).

Fredric Jameson's more clearly political Marxist analysis of texts (1981) is directly informed by structuralism, particularly by Lévi-Strauss and Greimas. In his introduction (1987) to the English translation of Greimas's *Du Sens*, Jameson powerfully reclaims and rehabilitates Greimas. Jameson insists (vi–viii) on his right to "bricolate" Greimas's system, that is, to accept only the parts he finds useful. But he sees in Greimas a tremendous technical advance over any earlier semiotic criticism (xii) and especially commends the dialectic treatment of the cognitive and the narrative as "a ceaseless two-way mediation between two types of language" (xiii). He sees Greimas's development of the semiotic square as a "supreme achievement" (xiv) and concludes his introduction with a lengthy demonstration of how the square can be used in ideological criticism (xvii–xxii, on Hayden White's *Metahistory*).

Jameson (esp. 1981) insists on the historical embeddedness of the text, but not on a facile correspondence between the text and some "history" thought of as independent of the text. The correlation between the world created by the text and the real social formation that generated it is at the point of contradiction. The text's contradictions, the points where it fails to close its structured system of meaning, are to be correlated with the contradictions inherent in the social formation, the points where it fails to close its structured systems of exchange (of goods, power, beliefs, and so on). Texts need, in this sense, to be historicized; but "objective" history needs equally to be "textualized," deconstructed (see chap. 3).

Mieke Bal, with whose biblical work we have dealt at length, is the active participant in the narratology debate who most insistently presses the issue of the relation of structuralism to current critical discourse. It is a "self-

critical narratology . . . which alone can save a discipline grown sterile, by placing it in the service of a general critical theory" (1991:208–9, cf. 226). Her contribution to "Narratology Revisited" (1990) develops this critical narratology in several of the specific directions that our reading of Caws has indicated, keeping a balance between structuralism's critical potential and the need to critique existing structuralisms. Noting that "binarism itself is an ideologeme," she insists that theories based on binarism, like that of Greimas, "must be stripped of the positivistic truth claims often attached to them" before they can be critically useful (1990:740). She pursues the issue of subjectivity, drawing on Evelyn Fox Keller's demonstration, through a reading of scientists' accounts of their work, of how decisive is the presence of the subject in "objective" research (737–43). Against structuralism's ahistoricism, Bal argues that a rigorous "analysis of narrative structure," by countering "interpretations based on prejudice, convention, or ideology," actually "helps to position the object within history" (750). Bal's most far-reaching point is that if narratological discourse is to be truly critical, there can be nothing like a one-one fit between narrative as object and narratology as method. "The very discipline that tends to rigidify its own traditional object is able to de-rigidify other objects" (730). Narratology, in other words, can find new life in being applied to other fields, as Bal herself demonstrates by applying its methods to anthropology, visual art, and natural sciences. But conversely, narratology cannot be a privileged approach to narrative, which must open itself up to critical methods derived from elsewhere (750). Neither the object nor the method can serve a useful critical purpose outside of a radically interdisciplinary framework.

In view of the existence of such critical political impulses throughout the history of structuralism, it seems fair to suggest that the view of structuralism now accepted in much poststructuralist discussion does not correspond to anything that ever was, but is in fact a retrojection by means of which the various poststructuralisms want to indicate what they are not. This "structuralism" is created by, for example, taking at face value the claim that there is an early (structuralist) and a late (poststructuralist) Roland Barthes, a claim that finds little basis in Barthes's own work,[15] or again by accepting

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[15] We actually use Barthes's reading of Genesis 32 (1974a), which by any reckoning must be ascribed to his structuralist phase, as one of our biblical examples in our poststructuralism chapter. An even more celebrated early work of Barthes, *S/Z* (1974b), likewise points the way to poststructuralist trajectory within structuralism.

Michel Foucault's protestation that he was not a structuralist (1970:xiv), when it is perfectly clear, for example, that his historical *epistemes* are best understood as structural transformations of each other (Caws, 152–53). Such a straw-man structuralism can be posited only by taking a very limited view of structuralist phenomena. It is simply not possible to do justice to the history of structuralism without coming to terms with all the recent critical currents in the social and human sciences.

We noted earlier that one of the directions in which the critics of structuralism seek to move beyond it is toward a more general and open semiotics (under the influence of such semioticians as Umberto Eco and Julia Kristeva). Basic to such a move is a turn from the semiotics of Saussure, long dominant in Europe and later in North America, to the very different approach of C. S. Peirce. Peircian semiotics has now established itself as a potent conceptual force in semiotic circles in both the United States (Sebeok, 1977) and Europe. Thomas Sebeok's renowned semiotics program at the University of Indiana at Bloomington has been the vanguard of Peircian semiotic scholarship in North America for well over a decade. Key Peircian terminology was first introduced into the French critical scene by Jakobson (1960) and Barthes (1969). The concepts of index, icon, and symbol (for which Peirce is perhaps best known; Charles W. Morris, 1964; 1971) enjoy a wide currency in anthropology and mythic studies.

Full comparative treatments of Saussure and Peirce are not widely available in English (cf. Deledalle, 1979:29–49). Saussure's concept of the sign is dyadic—the sign is made up of the two parts, signifier and signified (1959:65–70; see Culler, 1986:105–51). Peirce advanced a *triadic* structure of the sign—*representamen, object, and interpretant* (or Firstness, Secondness, and Thirdness). The "representamen" is more or less equivalent to Saussure's "signifier," but the latter's "signified" corresponds to two elements in Peirce's scheme, the "object," or referent, and the "interpretant" (Peirce, 1.339), which is a certain idea of the object to which the sign gives rise. This idea necessarily takes the form of another sign; further, each sign element or the relation between elements can function as a sign or complex of signs in relation to some other sign. Thus semiosis is for Peirce an indefatigable relational process in which a sign serves as an element within or for another sign by virtue of the structural and functional relation that it holds with elements of another sign: representamen, object, and interpretant or a combination of these elements in one sign can in whole or in part serve reciprocally as a representamen, object, or interpretant in another sign; and

each of these elements may in turn function as a different sign with its own triadic elements for another sign, and so forth, ad infinitum (Peirce, 2.292; see Almeida; Phillips, 1982).

The contrast between Peirce and Saussure has prompted a vigorous debate over a number of issues. First, Peirce's controversial notion of interpretant, the category of Thirdness which mediates between representamen and object, has brought to the fore the issue of the limited or unlimited nature of semiosis (Derrida, 1976:49; Kristeva, 1969:206; although see Deledalle, 1979:198 and Calvet, 1975:75). Second, the representamen (Firstness) introduces the pragmatics of reference directly into the structure of the sign itself and is perceived by some as opening up the possibility of a pragmatics of the sign that is absent from Saussure's linguistic semiology altogether. Derrida remarks that the "property of the *representamen* is to be itself and another, to be produced as a structure of reference, to be separated from itself" (1976:49–50).

Thirdly, some commentators compare Peirce favorably to Saussure in respect of the social character of the sign (Amacker, 37). Saussure's psychological and idealist conception of the linguistic system—"a system of signs in which the only essential thing is the union of meanings and acoustic images" (Amacker, 15)—has led to a robust critique in which Saussurean semiology appears "as a persistent occultation of social and political facts, namely those facts of meaning which have a real sociological depth" (Calvet, 1973:84). Eco notes the social determination of the interpretant: "Interpretants are the testable and describable correspondents associated *by public agreement* to another sign" (Eco, 1976:71, our emphasis; cf. Peirce, 2.418). But this kind of claim seems double-edged. Saussure's linguistic model guarantees a social basis for his scheme, since language is a paradigm of the socially produced system ("the role of the interpretant in Saussurean linguistics is played by the *linguistic community*" [Caws, 76, emphasis his]). In contrast to the sociopsychological foundation of Saussure's linguistic semiology, Peirce's system is grounded upon a logico-mathematical base (Deledalle, 198; in this respect, Peirce has much in common with Greimas).

There is no doubt that the movement toward semiotics in general, and Peirce in particular, enriches and sharpens debate over structural and narratological approaches (cf. William Rogers on Peirce and Ricoeur). But a word of caution and clarification, again drawn from Caws, is in order. Caws calls the semiotic turn "a regressive shift" (21). He asserts the priority of structuralism over semiotics, because it claims to answer the fundamen-

tal question of how anything becomes significant; "we will not explain the structure in terms of the significance," but vice versa (111, cf. 112–16). He suggests that the structuring activity of the brain is separate from, prior to, and the ground for, the creation of sign systems. He even calls in question the tightness of the relation between structuralism and semiotics in their historical development. Although Saussure was a key figure in the development of both, "there is no essential connection between the Saussurean doctrine of system that led . . . to structuralism, and the other Saussurean doctrine of the sign" (44). The doctrines of system and of sign are quite different (for example, language would still be a system of differences even if signs were nonarbitrary; 79). Caws's argument here seems to be overdrawn; he fails to note the convergence between recent developments in semiotics and his own desire for a critical structuralism. Nonetheless, his caution reminds us again of the need to clarify our terms in the complex and controverted debate over structuralism and, further, that philosophy and epistemology are necessary partners in the debate.

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

The impulse most basic to the writing of this book is that the practices of biblical criticism need to be brought into the fullest possible mutual critique with the practices of current literary criticism (as these have transcended their traditional bounds in the direction of a general cultural critique; cf. Eagleton, 1983: 194–217, esp. 204). We here ask the question, how are biblical structuralism and narratology related to this general critical impulse, both actually and potentially?

Mieke Bal entitles a review essay (including work of Alter and Sternberg) "The Bible as Literature: A Critical Escape" (1991:59–72). Much of the work on biblical narrative that we have reviewed in this chapter falls under this harsh stricture, as representing an avoidance of radical biblical criticism and an attempt to maintain for the interpretation of the Bible a privileged and protected place. This conservative impulse can enter into various sorts of alliance with tendencies in structuralism. A synchronic view of the text has appealed not only to those rightly concerned to subvert the dominance of the historical-critical paradigm, but also to those who want to avoid historical questions altogether (Polzin, 1989:225). Methodological escapism can reach such an extreme as the following, from the introduction to *The Literary Guide to the Bible*: "Critical approaches mainly interested in the

origins of a text in ideology or social structure are not represented here; nor is Marxist criticism . . . or psychoanalytic criticism. . . . We have not included critics who use the text as a springboard for cultural or metaphysical ruminations, nor those like the Deconstructionists and some feminist critics who seek to demonstrate that the text is necessarily divided against itself" (Alter and Kermode, 5–6). This excludes, from what is intended as an authoritative literary work on the Bible, most of what is being done in current literary criticism, and specifically the methods taken up in the remaining chapters of this book. (The quote smacks more of Alter than of Kermode; contrast Alter's fulminations against theory in Alter, 1989 with Kermode's interesting readings of the Bible in Kermode, 1979 and 1986. Cf. also reviews of Alter and Kermode by Bal, 1989, and of Alter, 1989, by Beck, 1991.)

Gospel narrative critics have shown little interest in theory as such; rather, they have borrowed bits of theory to explicate texts. In particular, they have used narratology to produce sustained interpretations of complete Gospels (e.g., Rhoads and Michie; Culpepper; Kingsbury, 1988a, 1989, 1991; Tannehill, 1986, cf. 1990), interpretations that offer a comforting sense of unity; after the long history of fragmentation and exposure of internal contradictions, it is once again possible, using the methods of literary criticism, to see that the Gospel narratives do after all possess wholeness and internal consistency. But in the nonbiblical development of narratology, it is rare for a theoretical proposal to be developed on the basis of a single text, and, as we have seen, even an exceptional case like Genette's use of Proust's *Recherche* as a specimen text (*Narrative Discourse*) does not produce a comfortable sense of unity (this is a side of Genette not taken up by the Gospel narrative critics who make extensive use of him, e.g., Culpepper, 53–75; Powell, 1990a:36–40; cf. Funk, 1988:187–206).[16] As narrative criticism's influence continues to grow in biblical studies, the impression being fostered among biblical scholars and their students is that secular literary criticism is a discipline preoccupied with the unity of texts and the autonomy of story-worlds—an impression well wide of the mark.

Another favorite assumption of the Gospel narrative critics that needs examination is the contrast of *story* and *discourse*. "Story" denotes "the narrative events, abstracted from their disposition in the text" (Rimmon-Kenan,

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[16] Another of the best-known instances of a theoretical proposal built on the interpretation of a single text—Barthes's *S/Z* (1974b)—contrasts even more strongly with the holistic agenda of narrative criticism.

3; cf. Chatman, 1978:19), while "discourse" denotes the active presentation of the story through the manipulation of point of view, temporal deformations, and so forth. This suggests the neo-Platonic notion of a story-in-itself existing prior to and independently of things people do with it and gives the comforting illusion that there is after all such a thing as "the gospel story." It avoids the radical understanding of "discourse" of a Foucault (cf., e.g., 1967:189), who sees only shifting and unstable discourses interacting with other discourses without any stable terms (cf. our discussion of poststructuralism in chap. 3). The Gospel critics are here seen drawing on the most conservative tendencies in general narratology.

Turning to the poetics of the Hebrew Bible, there is a fine line between the legitimate project of a special biblical poetics and the acritical assumption (which can come in highly sophisticated forms), that *the Bible interprets itself*. In other words, that it contains within its own structures the means to its adequate understanding, rather than needing to be brought into relation with what is outside itself (the structures of comparative literature, of comparative religion, of individual or group psychology, of social formations). Is not the nub of the structuralist/narratological challenge precisely this, to force confrontation between the Bible and theory developed outside it? Is the Bible to be truly "at risk from a critical narratology,"[17] or does it dictate the terms of interpretation?

In a few cases, narratological approaches are overtly complicit in undergirding the authority of the Bible, particularly by establishing on quasiliterary grounds a special kind of authority for the narrator. Writing on Samuel, Lyle Eslinger refers to "the omniscient narrator, the author and finisher of our reading" (1985:75). The allusion is, of course, to "Jesus the author and finisher of our faith" (Heb. 12:2), with a subliminal appeal to (for some) final religious authority. The most extreme and the most influential case is Sternberg (cf. the critiques by Bal, 1991:59–72, Long, and Mintz). The upshot of Sternberg's investigations into the structure of the relationship between speaker and addressee in biblical narrative is a kind of reader-response criticism at the extreme conservative end of the spectrum (cf. chap. 1 above). The reader has to submit to being entirely the implied reader, the creation of the biblical narrator. In this "drama of reading," the

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[17] Mieke Bal's first French language book on the Bible (of which *Lethal Love* is a partial translation) has as its subtitle *L'ancien testament au risque d'une narratologie critique* (Bal, 1986a).

reader is in one sense called upon to make all the decisions; but the ideological omnipotence of the narrator is such that these decisions have to be the right ones. The only difference between readers is their different levels of competence; but the biblical narrator has allowed even for this, delivering the message in so foolproof a way that the less competent "underreader" cannot get it really wrong, only less fully (1985:50).[18]

By this procedure, Sternberg can make a commitment to a certain view of biblical ideology masquerade as a theoretical literary judgment about the essential nature of the biblical literature. (It is striking that even when he is not writing directly about the Bible, the literary judgments he arrives at—for example, his impassioned defense of "chronological telling" [1990a]—are such as to favor biblical over other kinds of narrative.) At the beginning of his book, he announces his intention to show "how far the relationship between literary theory and biblical analysis is from the one-way traffic called 'application'" (1985:xiii). But what he is really doing is trying to set up a one-way traffic in the other direction. "Scripture," he says, "emerges as the most interesting as well as the greatest work in the narrative tradition" (1985:518), and he plainly believes that it has much more to teach general literary criticism than it has to learn. In his account, the Bible demands from the critic something perilously like religious commitment.

The terms of the debate over the critical status of high biblical structuralism are different, but the conclusions are not altogether dissimilar; this approach is also complicit in conservative tendencies. We concentrate on the Greimasian project of Daniel Patte. The brand of structuralism that Patte represents is most often accused of making global claims about how all narrative works, and correspondingly adopting reductive strategies in the reading of particular narratives. In fact, Patte works hard to avoid this—he does not make new findings fit old models but tries to propose models more adequate to the new findings (an excellent example is his review of Bal's *Murder and Difference* [Patte, 1990b]). He struggles here with a paradox that structuralism always finds hard to avoid: the search for more adequate models is a necessary part of the structuralist quest for intelligibility, but

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[18] Similarly, if less extremely, Polzin's second volume on the Deuteronomic history (1989) represents a regression from the first (1980, referred to above); under the influence of Sternberg, Polzin becomes overly concerned with establishing the narrator's ideological control over the text. Consequently, the reader's role is diminished, except, of course, the reader Polzin as critic, who can "construct" the reality of the text.

the quest for *the* adequate model is doomed to failure. The Greimas-Patte
system does not ignore other proposed systems but tries to contain them; a
rhetoric of welcoming a variety of structural approaches is always accom
panied (see, e.g., Patte 1990c:3–5) by the claim that the one approach is
capable of comprehending all others. There is no recognition that any sys
tem is a system of exclusions, defined precisely by what it excludes (relevant
here is White's suggestion that structural analysis in this tradition has con
fined itself to only one of several modes of narrative but has universalized
this mode as if it comprehended all narrative; Hugh White, 1991:69–70).

In some instances, Patte does strike a distinctly conservative note. He and
Aline Patte separate themselves from Roland Barthes' view that "the primary
role of literature is iconoclastic with respect to the power of language" by in
sisting that "literature can also have the role of establishing and reinforcing
semantic universes"; and they claim that since religious texts, including the
Bible, give the establishing of values priority over the unsettling of values,
structural analysis should observe the same priority (Patte and Patte, 9, with
reference to Barthes, 1974a, 1982; these remarks give, however, the impres
sion of walking a tightrope and should be read in conjunction with their
earlier suggestion [5] that the political project of Foucault and Barthes, while
representing indeed a departure from structuralism, "describes the ultimate
object of Claude Lévi-Strauss's and A. J. Greimas's structuralist research").
It is arguable that Patte never, in any of his work, takes the iconoclastic
side seriously (although in a recent piece with Gary Phillips on pedagogy
of teaching the Bible, the iconoclastic function is underscored [Patte and
Phillips]). Very instructive is the way he deals with the category of contradic
tion. The discernment of narrative contradictions is integral to his detailed
method (based on the semiotic square). But in the fundamental structure of
the faith generating a biblical text, no contradiction is allowed (in Patte's
books on Paul and Matthew, "contradiction" is invariably qualified with
"apparent"; e.g., 1983:46, 1987:11, 14 n. 3). The claim (fundamental to
ideological or psychoanalytic approaches) that texts are at every level frag
mented—sites of contradiction—is allowed no force. Patte's insistence on
basing his method so much on explicit oppositions in the narrative is prob
lematic in a similar way, as may be seen by contrast with Fredric Jameson's
use of Greimas. In his ideological critique, Jameson suggests that texts, at
the level of their "political unconscious," repress possibilities too much op
posed to what is culturally acceptable (1981:168, 255); this means that what
will be significantly missing in a text is precisely explicit oppositions.

Finally, though the Bible was obviously not involved in laying the foun
dation (from Saussure to Lévi-Strauss) of the Greimasian system, the large
role it has played in the system's recent development may raise the question
as to whether the Bible is not now providing the theoretical basis for its
own interpretation (cf. our analogous critique of narratology and poetics).
The current development of the Greimasian system is happening very little
in dialogue with alternative semiotic proposals and very much in the bibli
cal work of Patte and the CADIR group. Patte's working out of fundamental
semantics in terms of faith gives a privileged position for religious texts
(1990a:103–215, cf. Phillips's review, 1991a) and his working assumption
that a self-consistent and noncontradictory belief system underlies each text
potentially serves religious conservatism.

To point to such complicities, at various levels and in different degrees,
of structuralist and structural-narratological approaches with conservative
tendencies is not to deny their tremendous contribution to the revolution
going on in biblical studies. They have had a major role to play (along with
other new approaches) in decentering the historical-critical paradigm (Gott
wald, 1985:6–34) and establishing the necessity of paying attention to the
biblical text in its final form. These approaches have begun to generate major
works of biblical scholarship.

Further, despite the conservative tendencies, structuralism has from the
beginning been used in the service of methodologically and politically radical
biblical writing. Perhaps the most important example is the extraordinary
work of Fernando Belo, who as early as 1974 brought together Marxism
with a Barthesian form of structuralism in the service of a revolutionary
reading of the Gospel of Mark. In the heady early-structuralist days of the
1970s, creative, nondoctrinaire forms of structuralism were developed in
biblical studies, issuing in the work of such scholars as Crossan, Funk,
Jobling, and Hugh White. In the late 1980s, Mieke Bal demonstrated the
immense critical potential, in biblical studies as elsewhere, of the Genettian
narratological tradition. We have tried by our two exegetical examples to
show such critical structuralisms at work; the Genesis 38 example in particu
lar shows how the traffic between the narratological model and text is not
one-way—the analysis called in question, even as it made use of, the model.

The direct influence on biblical studies of the turn to Peircian semi
otics—with its raising both of issues related to the hermeneutics of texts
and of broader philosophical questions concerning the nature of text and
meaning—has up to now been very limited. Almeida (46–79) employs

Peirce's triadic sign structure to explain the structure of Markan narrative parables (récits-paraboles) and their hermeneutical effect; and Phillips extends Almeida's application to the parable cluster in Matthew 13 (1982; 1985:120–28), as well as to the intertextual relationship of parable to narrative text and to the pragmatics of parable-reader relationship in the Lucan parable of the good Samaritan (1986:1035–40; 1991b:86–89; cf. Voelz). Lategan and Vorster, even though they do not use Peircian categories directly, depend upon Eco's *semiotic triangle* a variation of Peirce's triadic sign, to account for the "real world reference" (83–84).

But the productivity of structuralism in biblical studies can by no means be fully measured by these palpable achievements. What remains untold is that the structuralist debate, and Daniel Patte himself, have to a unique degree provided the impulse, the context, and the organ for much of the experimental work now going on in biblical studies in North America, as a number of the collaborators on the present volume personally attest. *Semeia* (to which Patte returned in 1993 as general editor) has provided a unique opportunity and encouragement for developments that its structuralist founders could not have imagined; the range of topics that *Semeia* has taken up can fairly be read as an index of the productivity of the structuralist impulse. No less broad has been the variety of approaches taken up by the Structuralism and Exegesis (orig. Structuralism and Semiotics) Group in the Society of Biblical Literature under Patte's long leadership; he has encouraged and participated in the development of approaches not obviously related, or even antithetical, to his own work, including many of the ones developed in the remaining chapters of this book. This group continues under the leadership of Gary Phillips, with the significant change of name to "Semiotics and Exegesis." Nor is it only in North America that structuralist semiotic debate has been and continues to be a cradle for wide-ranging methodological experimentation. Likewise in France, CADIR anticipated the cross-disciplinary collaborative efforts of biblical exegetes who are currently engaged in feminist, poststructural, and ideological analysis of the Bible.

We return to the question with which we began this section: how are biblical structuralism and narratology related to the radical currents in literary criticism? Are these approaches part of the problem or part of the solution? Our survey has suggested both. The general tendency has been for the approaches we have dealt with here to avoid radical critique of the Bible, to fall into Bal's "critical escapism" and encourage conservative programs,

whether with obvious ideological enthusiasm (Sternberg), through the inherent conservatism of New Testament studies (the Gospel narratologists), or, in Patte's case, perhaps *malgré lui*. The Bible's status as a foundational document in both religious and secular institutions puts a powerful pressure on all the methods applied to its interpretation, of course, to confirm it in its privileged position. But are such foundational tendencies inherent also in structuralism as such?

This is a question that divides even those of us who have collaborated on this book. Some of us perceive structuralism as indeed locked into positivist paradigms, as needing to be, along with other positivisms, the *object* of the radical critique we intend. Others of us, perceiving radical tendencies in the development of structuralism and in our own experience of it, would suggest that the structuralist turn was *the* turn in recent critical consciousness, and that the structuralist impulse not only can, but to be true to itself must, be developed into critical paradigms, be the *subject* as well as the object of critique. From this point of view, the prospect for biblical structuralism is precisely the rest of this book.

RECOMMENDED FURTHER READING

Bal, Mieke. 1988. *Death and Dissymmetry: The Politics of Coherence in the Book of Judges*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. The most extended application to a biblical text of Bal's narratological method. Based originally on Genette, this method ranges far beyond Genette into feminist, psychoanalytic, and ideological issues.

Caws, Peter. 1988. *Structuralism: The Art of the Intelligible*. Atlantic Highlands, N.J.: Humanities Press International. In a probing examination of structuralism, Caws concludes that it constitutes a major philosophical option whose potential has hardly begun to be realized. He critiques existing structuralisms for failing to live up to the original radical vision of their method.

Chatman, Seymour. 1978. *Story and Discourse: Narrative Structure in Fiction and Film*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press. Perhaps the best and most influential introduction to North American narratology. Draws heavily on the formalist ("poetics") movement.

Eco, Umberto. 1976. *A Theory of Semiotics*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press. Represents a vein of structuralism which incorporates Peircian semiotics and linguistic philosophy. In his "unlimited semeiosis," Eco moves into a radically poststructuralist semiotics.

Genette, Gérard. 1980. *Narrative Discourse: An Essay in Method*. Trans. Jane E. Lewin. Ithaca: Cornell University Press. (Partial trans. of Gérard Genette, *Figures III*. Paris: Seuil, 1972.). Genette's work remains the most important statement of classical narratology. Contains what is still the best discussion of narrative temporality.

Greimas, A. J., and J. Courtés. 1982 [1979]. *Semiotics and Language: An Analytic Dictio-*