THE FOUNDATIONS OF LITERATURE:

an epistemologico-aesthetic enquiry into the nature of the literary work.

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ABSTRACT

Locating the object of literary criticism involves determining an authentic base serving as a text, a proper construal of which yields the literary properties of the work. It is argued that both the determination of the authentic text and its construal depend on the determination of an identity model for the work, in terms of some conception of literature.

The actual construal of the text is accomplished through the adoption of a semantic attitude related to a construal model.

Since literature is a) part of the institution of art; and has b) language as its medium, the natural language construal model, qualified in certain ways by a), which itself dictates choice of the replicatable, unchanging particular identity model, is to be adopted in preference to the codal and technical language construal models.

Partial determination of the work-yielding properties of the authentic text and an analysis of these properties given by a proper construal is achieved by isolating the graphic, phonic, semantic and relational structures as covering the range of literary properties.

The discussion therefore centres on each structure in turn. The complicated semantic structure is dealt with through introduction of the notion of surface and embedded descriptions, the latter largely yielding the world of the work; and by an examination of characteristic manifestations of meaning in literature: symbol, metaphor and deviance.

The complexity of construal is brought out both in the discussion of the semantic structure and quite generally in relation to all the structures of the work. The notion of the work, its structures, properties and nature are clarified through the technique of basic philosophical analysis employed in this work.

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

Our notions about the sort of object the literary work is will influence what we say, what we are prepared to accept, and even what we think possible to be said about it. On the other hand, an analysis of the statements we make about the literary work may reveal them to be incompatible as descriptions of a logically viable object; and if what we hold about the nature of the work involves a logical contradiction, a discipline that accepted such tenets would be hopeless as an academic enterprise. Or again, if it could be shown that we could only guess but never know when we have cornered it, or if, though our concept be coherent and valid, we could devise no criteria with reference to which statements about it could be validated, the point of critical discussion would become obscured or obscure indeed. Whether these fears are actually well founded or not, an investigation into the nature of the literary work is worth undertaking, since it is to such an investigation that critical validity must ultimately be driven.[1]

This study is an enquiry into the nature of the literary work with a view to determine what the object of critical statements is, and to consider the epistemological problems posed by an

1. This is not to ignore or belittle the value of such works as T.C. Pollock's The Nature of Literature, 1942 and 1965.

object of such a nature: problems of how literary properties are ontologically based and how they become cognitively available. We shall want to know in what sense there is a literary work and the implications of its mode of existence for making, proving, validating, refuting statements about a particular work or about literary works as a class. Perhaps implicit in our discoveries will be at least some of the reasons for critical disparity.

Our endeavour, however, centres more on the question of the nature of the literary work, assuming now that there is in some sense a work, than on drawing out the consequences of our findings with respect to the nature of the literary work for the teaching of literature as an academic discipline or the practice of criticism. Also, although we are in part involved in answering the question: what is a literary work? the question is not for us: when are we prepared to call a work a literary work; but mainly how we can locate the properties of those objects we call literary works, what is involved in coming to know what these properties are, how we can know that we are talking about the same work or properties when we claim or assume that we do, whether or how they can become accessible through the structures or forms we claim or assume that we perceive them, what the range of these properties is; that is, what is the full ontological basis for grounding statements about literary works.

Conceived in this way, our study seems to involve an intimidating scope of phenomena and scholarly disciplines. The literature of the world represents a wide range of literary particulars;

and sets of particulars in the domain of world literature referred to generically as poetry, fiction, drama, and perhaps oral literature represent a wide internal span; while types of poetry, drama, fiction represent further modes of classification or differentiation. And if literature is considered one of the arts, then it is also classified with the entire artistic gamut: music, painting and so on.

Now insofar as a literary work is classified in accordance with some distinguishing or defining characteristic(s) of category or genre, generalizations about literature are thereby considered possible; and these generalizations could presumably range from primary categorizations such as the sonnet, say, to the whole class of literary works commonly referred to as literature, and finally on to works of art as a still more comprehensive class or 'megaclass'. So to cope with generalizations of this capacity a formidable array of knowledge and expertize may be required; for our ignorance may lie in the direction of works or genres unfamiliar or unknown to us - a problem of vastness or comprehensiveness of range, or in the kinds of property involved, either simply as elements of the work or as properties of a given category of work - a problem of detail or atomic comprehensiveness.

However, the problems posed by properties of the work are perhaps more formidable than those posed by genres; since many of these properties are themselves the study of specialized disciplines in their own right. Further, consideration of them would appear logically primary, for it is by appealing to properties and elements that classifications and generalizations are proposed or indicated.

We will now notice how some specialized disciplines may become implicated in the analysis of literary properties.

If we take up a novel or a book of poetry, for instance, we may notice that we have before us a set of marks or (linguistic) signs. If we thus recognize the work as being at one level a set of marks, or given by a set of marks, that is, available through some interpretation of a set of marks, we must recognize the possible relevance of semiotics or that discipline that investigates how signs mean or can be interpreted. There might conceivably be some restraints set on signs that would have consequences for literature, if it is to be presented through the vehicle of signs. It is a very short step now from semiotics to semantics, which is concerned with the meaning of linguistic signs; in fact, semantics could be considered a branch of semiotics. If we allow that the novel or book of poetry consists at a primary level of linguistic signs, then at least some consideration of linguistic meaning generally should be relevant to the interpretation of literary works.

Then there is not always a clear distinction discernible between semantics and what goes on in philosophy of language and theory of meaning. One could probably make a distinction between descriptive and theoretical semantics, ruling the latter to be part of philosophy. But one suspects that it is not possible to determine the boundaries in a way satisfactory to both linguists and philosphers.[1]

1. See both 'Theory and Philosophy of Language', by Peter Hartman and Siegfried J. Schmidt and 'Semantics', by Stephan Ullmann, in Current Trends in Linguistics, Vol. 9, ed., Thomas Sebeok, 1972.

We may further notice that within philosophy there is considerable overlap between theory of meaning and philosophical logic. What philosophical logicians say about the logical basis of language or the logical relations that must exist between signs in a language or what must obtain for two sets of linguistic samples or selections to have the same meaning may be relevant to certain problems about literary meaning. Of course, the problem about the nature of the literary work involves the problem of the logical nature of the literary work. For example, since, allegedly, books can be duplicated any number of times, bear the same name and be referred to as the same book, the problem arises as to what it means to say that two numerically distinct objects, in this case, books, are the same. This question is of obvious importance in deciding whether a statement about the book is true; for it may not be clear exactly what is being referred to by 'the book' or which book is being referred to. In other words we have a problem of identity on our hands. And this problem of identity is not only logical but ontological, epistemological and even metaphysical.

There is also the problem as to whether there can be assertions that do not assert (the 'assertions' of fiction), an issue clearly pertinent to the question of how we should understand works of fiction; or whether a statement can be made without a statement's being made (whether a work can imply a statement bearing a truth value) - all problems involved in understanding and giving an account of literature.

But what is most often and easily recognized is that literature in-

volves a use of language - generally a highly stylized and sometimes deviant use of language. Considerable specialist work has recently be done and is going on apace on all aspects of language: in general, synchronic, diachronic, descriptive, geographical linguistics; in grammar, syntax, phonetics, phonology, stylistics, figurative language and machine translation. The old vocabularies used to refer to linguistic phenomena may be now too imprecise; and what is more serious, several of our common sense notions of language may have been proved wrong. So linguistics might have brought or may be expected to have brought a better vocabulary and more accurate notions, an improvement of our understanding of how language is used in literature, fresh tools to deal with rhythm, meter, and the structural characteristics of language as well as dialect literature. We should be more competent to discuss how the structural characteristics of language are disposed or orchestrated in a work. Now if we are expected to deal with certain theoretical problems posed by the purported facts about language as it is used in literature, we cannot be blissfully ignorant of the purported findings of the linguists.

Now apart from noticing that our novel or book of poetry consists of marks such as we find in books generally, we may be told that our book is no ordinary book, but that it is or contains a work or works of art. So that, unless the literary work is already our model for understanding what a work of art is, some knowledge of works of art would need to be invoked. And it is at this point that aesthetics in the sense of involving theories of works of art may be implicated. One may want to know how works of art are read or interpreted (what

has sometimes been called descriptive aesthetics) or how works of art should be interpreted (a problem in philosophical aesthetics). In a broad sense of aesthetics, of course, all philosophical problems posed by works of art form the legitimate province of aesthetics. In this way we would raise both the limited question of how works of art are to be interpreted and the general problems of a philosophical nature posed by literature.

The foregoing illustration of the disciplines that could be involved in any large scale investigating which we may mount with reference to the literary work is not to say that our task cannot be undertaken by one man, though this could be true, but rather to warn that all the facts may not be in. This means both that the philosophical task set by this study cannot be wholly philosophical and that dogmatism is simply ludicrous.

Chapter I

SAYING WHAT THE WORK IS

1. The problem

In discussing a literary work we take it that there is some object, upon which our discussion focuses or is directed, the bearer of such properties as may be ascribed to it by our critical remarks. However, when we try to say with precision what the 'object' is, we realize not only its complexity but the problematic nature of its identity.

For example, how do we locate the work? Is it a graphic, phonic, semantic entity, or all these together ? Is it a physical object? Is the work merely given through a material body, and if so what is the relation between the work and its medium? How do we know which aspects of the medium are essential for yielding properties of the work? Is the nature of the work fixed, or can the work change and grow? If we dispense with sound, or script, or meaning, do we still have the work? Or again, we say that a literary work can be duplicated, but how do we know that we have all the properties of the work intact?

It should be clear from these questions that we need some criteria for identifying and demarcating the limits of the work, some means of knowing what the work is, some device for determining relevant, not to mention accurate, descriptions of the work.

2. Purpose of Dissertation

The purpose of this dissertation is to determine the object of literary criticism, to determine what it is we examine or inspect, what the anatomical structures through which literary properties manifest themselves are, how these structures and properties are to be identified, in what ways they are and are not given, what the notion of the work amounts to, and how generally it is to be accounted for.

Since what we are engaged in could be considered a programme for full identification of the literary work, we shall consider first some general problems posed by attempting to identify objects.

3. On identifying

Very often when we describe an object, say what it is or is like, we do so by mentioning or itemizing a sufficient number of its characteristics or properties as would yield a successful identification. We do not, and probably most often could not, give an exhaustive list of its characteristics. It is usually only when it is brought to our attention that more than one object satisfies our description that we attempt to proffer a more exhaustive statement of its characteristics. And if even these fail, we may point to the object or may finally touch it, when or where this is possible. The carefulness and exhaustiveness of our list depend normally on the context of identification; that is, the purpose of the identification, to whom it is being supplied, as well as the nature of the object requiring identification. A rough idea of the kind of object in question may be all

that is required; or there may be a fairly fully shared context of reference between the one seeking and the one giving the identification, where a single characteristic might be sufficient to distinguish or differentiate the object from other objects with which it might be confused.

One way in which we may equip ourselves so as to be able to furnish an identification of or to identify an object is to consult a definition of that object; and another way is to make or consult an analysis of that object. We may say, then, that an analysis or definition of an object embodies or implies an identifying description of that object. An object can thus be the goal of two quests: that of arriving at its analysis, and that of locating the statement of its analysis (or definition, of course). In the first case the object is already located, while in the second case this is not necessarily so. However, although the object might be located, it does not at all follow that its properties and elements are obvious, transparent or even discriminable. So explorer 2 who hopes to use the findings of explorer 1 to locate the object should be warned against facile optimism. He should be further warned that there can be no guarantee that the analysis of an object, v, say, is not wholly a part of the analysis of an object, y; so that should he locate y he could discover all the elements of v present therein and erroneously conclude that he has located v.

We are for the purposes of this study in the position of explorer 1 and hope for the sake of explorer 2 that our analysis of the literary work will serve as a useful identifying description of the literary work. We offer him , however, no guarantee that he will not

confuse object y with object v, as it were.

It was claimed that a definition and a statement of analysis of an object embody an identifying description of that object. Let us look more closely at the notions of defining and analysing and notice how this may be said to be so. The difference between a definition and an analysis should show why at least in part we shall be engaged in analysis rather than definition, and in what way an analysis of the object can count towards identifying it. It should also emerge that analysis may involve the identifying of elements; so that close logical relationships are seen to exist among the notions of defining, analysing and identifying.

4. Defining

A definition normally both classifies the definiendum (the object, thing to be defined) with other objects with which it shares certain properties and distinguishes it from those objects by specifying its unique properties in relation to the class invoked. So if we define a doe as a female deer, we class it with deer, then distinguish it as possessing the unique characteristic among deer of being female; and if we do not already know what a deer is and need to be told, we will be told that it is an animal and a similar process of distinguishing it from the class of animals will be set going.

It is now easy to see how a definition can embody an identifying description: the classification of the object as an x puts us on a certain track, delimits the area of research without which we might be at a loss to know where to begin; and the statement of its unique property enables us to eliminate or discount members of the class not possessed of the specified property. The purpose of a definition

could be stated as that of displaying that unique, essential or distinguishing feature of the object that sets it off from all other objects. So, clearly, if the programme of definition can be carried through, the resulting formula should be sufficient for the identification of the object, since we would have been told how to distinguish the object from all other objects of the given class.

However, we must not understand a definition as entailing a guarantee of successful identification merely because it embodies an identifying description. An identifying description counts towards the success of identifying the object, but does not determine success. That is, there is no guarantee that there is not an object embodying all the properties stated in the definition, plus additional features which make it something other than the object defined. The letter 'y' of this typewriter includes the letter 'v', for example. But let us take a more fanciful example.

Let there be a Martian who looks up 'man' in his Dictionary of the Earth, which does not contain an entry for ghost'. Further let there be ghosts on the earth such that they share the characteristics of man mentioned in the dictionary, plus at least the following additional characteristics: that they are capable of evaporating at will and of travelling at the speed of light without the aid of a machine or other external motive power of any kind. The Martian on a week-end trip to the earth spots a ghost in its corporeal state or form, 'identifies' it as a man, manhandles it, whereupon to the utter astonishment of the Martian the ghost disappears, evaporates. In such a case, where the Martian does not know of the existence of ghosts a

definition which listed the properties not to be counted properties of men, such as the ability to evaporate at will. In other words the definition would need to state both necessary and prohibited properties. But the list of prohibited properties would be infinite; so that no definition of this type could be given. An identifying description of an object might still result in misidentification.

5. Analysing

It was claimed that one way of saying what an object is would be to define it and another way would be to analyse it. The difference between defining and analysing could be pointed out in the following way.

In an analysis it is not necessary to classify the object with other objects, but to arrive at the elements that compose it. We could say that the object of analysis is to locate or identify the elements or properties of the object, to distinguish them and to give as complete an inventory of them as possible. Now it is, if we accept this understanding of the object of an analysis, perfectly possible to analyse an object witnout referring it to a class or relating it to other objects.

However, one may subject an object to analysis for the purpose of determining its relation to other objects in virtue of the elements it possesses. One may want to compare the analyses of objects to determine whether they are the same or of the same family and so on. But the main burden of an analysis, qua analysis, is to derive a breakdown of the elements of the object under analysis.

We noticed with respect to a definition that it could be used to

identify an object, though it cannot guarantee correct identification. We may now notice with respect to an analysis that it can lead to successful identification of an object as well as to a successful definition of an object. The disadvantage, however, of an analysis is that it is not concerned to tell us with what other objects the object analysed may be classed. So that if we are in search of the object, no clues are given as to how we may delimit the area of search. But if we have a suspect before us and can analyse it, and if we have either a definition of the object or a statement of its analysis, we would be in a good position to determine whether it is the object that we are looking for. Also if we have analysed an object into its constitutive elements, we could use this as a basis for discovering in what way its set of elements differ from the set of elements constitutive of other objects. We could use this, in other words as the basis for a definition.

It is interesting to notice that with an analysis one has to be able to identify elements as such and such elements; which is to know a definition of each element or its analysis or to be able to point it out, if it cannot be further defined or analysed. When we identify an object by pointing to it we call that mode of identifying ostensive definition. We may observe, therefore, that definitions trade on analyses and analyses trade on ostensive definition ultimately and identifying descriptions trade on linguistic and ostensive definitions and analysis.

In setting out to enquire into the nature of the literary work, we may be seen in the light of our discussion of identifying, defining and analysing to be engaged mainly in analysis. However,

analysis may involve identifying and defining.

Before attempting our own analysis of the literary work, we shall look at some definitions of the literary work, if only to make clear how this way of saying what the literary work is does not assist us greatly in saying what a literary work is through analysis.

6. Some definitions

In philosophical aesthetics there has not been a great deal of work devoted to the problem of providing a comprehensive, descriptive definition of the literary work. This is perhaps so because of at least two considerations:

1) philosophers have been more concerned with the wider category of 'work of art', of which the literary work represents but one class;

2) it has been fairly generally doubted, when not denied, that any comprehensive definition of a work of art in terms of necessary and sufficient conditions or properties is possible.[1]

Since the nineteen thirties, however, several critics and a few philosophers have concerned themselves with the problem of stating the differentia of poetry. The search for essence, however, has not been matched with a concern for stating the work's range of properties. It could also be suggested that in aesthetics an interest in discussing aesthetic experience and the response to a work of art has tended to shift attention away from the problem of saying what a work is.

1. Cf., Morris Weitz, "The Role of Theory in Aesthetics", The Journal of Aesthetics & Art Criticism, XV (September, 1956) pp. 27-35.

There is no reason, however, why the scepticism concerning the possibility of definition in terms of essence should inhibit the search for as full a descriptive formulation as we can manage of the literary work.

We shall present only a sample set of definitions, indicating how they do not considerably help in our enterprise. (Though this is not to say that their authors considered themselves necessarily to be engaged in an enterprise *à la* Wiggins.)

W.K. Wimsatt Jr. has made several statements of the form: 'a poem is ...', one of which defines the poem as a concrete universal partaking of the general properties of language, while achieving peculiar particularity through 'irrelevant concreteness in descriptive detail'.[1] In a somewhat similar vein, John Crowe Ransom had characterized poetry as 'A loose logical structure with an irrelevant local texture'.[2] Both Ransom and Wimsatt, we may observe, are proposing what they consider to be a distinguishing feature of good poetry.

For René Wellek and Austin Warren a literary work is a structure of norms and a potential cause of experience:

> A poem, we have to conclude, is not an individual experience or sum of experiences, but only a potential cause of experience. ... The real poem must be conceived as a structure of norms realized only partially in the actual experience of its many readers.[3]

But this way of explaining what a poem is introduces several problems.

1. The Verbal Icon, 1958, p. 76.
2. The New Criticism, 1941, p. 280.
3. Theory of Literature, Peregrine edition, 1963, p. 150.

The 'real' poem is identified with a structure of norms as a cause of experience, that does not give the whole work. It is by no means clear what a structure of norms is, especially 'implicit norms which have to be extracted from every individual experience of a work of art';[1] and, at any rate, Wellek and Warren do not explain how the correct norms are to be derived or how precisely they are related to the potential cause of experience.

According to Susanne Langer, a poem is a type of presentational symbol in which language has been transformed into an appearance of life, 'a piece of virtual life'.[2] Poetry induces the illusion that we are experiencing life directly.[3] But there is no reason why history should not produce the same effect or why all poems must. Further, as Paul Ziff has pointed out, the notion of the work as some kind of illusion is a bit misleading and unnecessary.[4] Of course, Susanne Langer's remarks on the literary work are tied up with her more comprehensive theory about presentational symbols.

Stephen Pepper identifies the object of criticism with 'the perceptual funding of all the relevant details aroused in an aesthetically discriminating person on the stimulation of the control object'.[5] But, surely, the object of a critical analysis is not a set of

1. Op. cit., pp. 150-151.
2. Feeling and Form, 1953, p. 212.
3. Ibid., p. 234.
4. 'Art and the 'Object of Art' ', in Aesthetics and Language, ed., William Elton, 1967, pp. 170 - 186.
5. 'Types of Objectivity in a Work of Art', Proceedings of the Third International Congress of Aesthetics, 1957, p. 157.

perceptions, fully funded or not. Moreover, it would seem that Pepper, not contented with the difficulties of locating one object, would have us seek three - the control object, the composite object of funded perceptions, and the aesthetically discriminating person.

The most basic and comprehensive analysis of the literary work is perhaps that provided by Roman Ingarden.[1] Although he recognizes that the literary work could be analysed in terms of different strata, his inclusion of the stratum of appearance or 'concretization' locates the work in the mind of the reader in such a way as to suggest that what the reader perceives are appearances. According to Ingarden, since the work reappears only in a correct concretization, all concretizations stimulated by the script are not necessarily to be identified with the work. His notion of concretization, based on a phenomenological theory of being which classifies works of art an intentional objects par excellence, leads away from a more careful analysis of the object that gives rise to the experience of concretization.

While Wimsatt, Ransom, Langer, Wellek and Warren propose characterizations of the work at some remove from the text, Pepper and Ingarden are conscious of the 'control object', but do not relate it satisfactorily to the properties of the work.

From a consideration of certain attempts to say what a literary work is we should notice that what we need is an analysis of the literary work which takes seriously the control object that gives rise to the experience of the work, and some general account of how the work may be said to have the properties claimed on its behalf.

1. Das Literarische Kunstwerk, 1960.

7. The Text

I. The literary work is presented through some medium or form, which we may refer to as the text. That is, our acquaintance with the work is through the decoding, construal or interpretation of the medium through which it is presented. Such a medium is of two forms: a) the graphic text; b) the phonic text. The problem, therefore, of discovering the work is that of determining how the text is to be construed and interpreted.

The graphic text is a set of written marks, while the phonic text is a stretch of uttered sounds. Either the graphic or the phonic medium can yield the work, provided that we do not hold the theory that the medium in which the work is composed is a unique, unchanging or unchangeable particular. We can make no progress in determining the nature or identity of the text before discussing the personality, so to speak, of the text.

II. a) that the text is a unique, unchanging particular.

The proposition that the text is a unique, unchanging particular means that for any work there is but one numerically unique text the properties of which remain the same . This in turn could mean either that the text is composed of the kind of material that does not admit of change or that should the properties of the text change it would cease to be the text. Since in all probability no text has ever been produced with everlasting properties, we may take the second interpretation of the thesis. If the text of a literary work is a unique particular, then literary texts have been encountered by very few people. And if it is an unchanging particular, then it has been encountered by fewer yet; since change and decay in all around we see.

A further consequence of this thesis is that if the original manuscript of a work is lost, then the work is lost; for the work is available only

through the text. It also means that no oral work could become available through a graphic text; and that all the oral works of the pre-graphic era are lost to us. It further means that all the oral works of the pre-graphic era were never orally passed on.

It is extremely unlikely that anyone has held this thesis, since there is no advantage to be had by holding that the marks of a verbal manuscript cannot be duplicated in a way that retains the properties of the text necessary for yielding the work.

b) that the text is a unique changing particular

The proposition that the text is a unique, changing particular means that for any work there is but one numerically unique text, that can undergo changes. It could then be held either that although the text undergoes changes, the work does not; or that the work undergoes changes accordingly as the text undergoes changes. The work could be given by the text at time t, but not thereafter; or the work could be given in relation to the condition of the text through time. On the second understanding of the matter, if an editor amends the text of the unique original, the work is amended.

This position has all the disadvantages of the preceding one with respect to uniqueness, and brings with it the consequence, where the work is conceived as changing with the text, that the poor work is at the mercy of the meanest tamperer of the text.

It is not clear what this position would mean in the case of oral works, except that the work would disappear with its utterance, since sounds presumably change from existence to non-existence. But perhaps the sounds could change into script; so that it would be possible on this interpretation to have graphic scripts of oral works by tampering

with the sounds; that is, by writing them down. It would, however, be extremely odd to conceive of the sounds being transformed in this way.

c) that the text is a replicatable unchanging particular

The proposition that the text is a replicatable, unchanging particular means that for any work there is a text such that exact copies can be made of it, that these copies are identical with the text of that work, and that the properties of the text remain the same for all copies of the text.

We shall take the concept of the unchanging nature of the text to mean that the text is authentic so long as it remains in its state at production. So that the position being argued is that all copies of the text that are exact copies of the text in its state at the time of production are true copies of the text.

This concept of the personality or personal identity of the text would seem to be the one implied by the usual practice of endeavouring to determine the text of the work in its original state for the purpose of generating copies.

d) that the text is a replicatable changing particular

The proposition that the text is a replicatable, changing particular means that for any work there is a text such that it is subject to change, that exact copies can be made of it in any given state at any given time, and that such copies are both identical with the text in the given state at the given time and also identical with the text or any of its exact copies in any state at any time.

A consequence of this position is that different copies with different properties are all considered the same text. So that it may become

necessary to specify which state of the text one is referring to in referring to the text.

III. It is now evident that there is an important point the analyst must report on in the preface to his analysis; for without a report on this point his whole analysis might be vitiated or rendered almost useless as an identifying description, and perhaps even as an analysis. As we have intimated, it has to do with the personality or personal identity of the text.

He should advise us whether the object to be analysed, in this case the text, changes to any discernible degree with time, and, if so, at what point in time or in what state in time his analysis is an analysis of the object. This will be particularly important if the text can be identified with any one of its copies, and the work with any of its manifestations through any one of the copies of its text, for we may have maturing or otherwise changing copies of the text or instances of the work for time t, time t' and so on. So that a copy of the text or work at time t may not resemble in all pertinent respects a copy of the text or an instance of the work at time t'. Thus, we may have as many kinds of copy as there are states of the object, with as many states of the object as there are points of time, and any number of copies of kinds of copy of the object in every state at every point in time. If the text is a unique but changing object, then we require to be advised of the time at which the analysis is made; for example: 'An Analysis of O conducted at 13 hours, September 10, 1935'. While if the text is a unique, unchanging object, we need no statement as to the time of the analysis. We shall, of course, need the time again

if the object is a changing replicatable object.

Now any discussion of the personality of the text will involve a discussion of the personality of the work; since the text is conceived as the medium or vehicle for the work. To what extent, then, we may ask, does the personality of the text derive from the personality of the work? This is not only a difficult question; it is a strange one. For if the work is always given through its medium, how shall we consider a question of derivation? In fact, it may appear more natural to suppose that the work derives from the text, rather than that the text derives from the work. So in what sense could the text be derived from the work?

It could be urged that although we find it more natural to think of texts yielding works, it is quite possible that works yield texts. The reason why we do not suppose that works yield texts is perhaps that we never meet works that have no text; another reason is bound up with our ontological theories and our psycho-linguistic theories, which could be wrong. We hold, for instance, that there are no such things as thoughts or meanings floating around unconnected to brains; but we could be wrong. We also hold that there are no thoughts unconnected to words; but we could be wrong. Works might be waiting to be physically expressed through someone's mind and through a physical medium of sound or script. If this is true, then the personality of the work would fashion to some extent the personality of the text. We do not in fact hold this to be true; and so we are inclined to say that what work gets created depends on the personality of the text. But we could avoid a possible dilemma by holding that the work is given with the text. Now what are the consequences of this?

If we hold that the work is given with the text, then it would appear an inconsistency if we maintain that whereas the properties of the work may change, the properties, i.e., the work-yielding properties, of the text cannot; or that whereas the work-yielding properties of the text may change, the properties of the work cannot; or if we say that the text can have copies or replications but the work cannot have instances or manifestations. In other words a parallelism seems to exist between our concept of the personality of the work and the personality of the text.

Certain personality models or identity models were presented through four propositions:

a) that the text is a unique, unchanging particular;

b) that the text is a unique, changing particular;

c) that the text is a replicatable, unchanging particular;

d) that the text is a replicatable, changing particular.

We have concluded that in each case the text may be substituted by 'the work'. Before we go on to see how these models are invoked for making out a case for a given conception of the work or the text, it may be useful to distinguish different types of identity discernible in or among our models.

Models a) and b) represent numerical identity; that is, in each of the two propositions the text is one, discrete, individual identical with itself. Model c) represents facsimile identity; that is, the replications of the text are or photo-copy standing.

Model d) represents approximate identity; that is, where the text changes gradually through time and is replicated at each stage, copies of each stage are approximately the same as (identical with) copies of the preceeding stage; and indeed the copies of all the stages might be approximately identical with one another.

IV. We have already argued that there is no virtue in maintaining that the text, and so the literary work, is a unique particular, whether changing or unchanging. And the proposition that it is could be dismissed without any great show of argumentative artillery. Except that a certain way of speaking, taken literally, might lead us to wonder if we should not, after all, retain something of the numerical model.

We might hear reference made to what has happened to a work in translation; that it has, for example, fared the worse for it. Or a philosopher might find it meaningful to ask: what happened to the Iliad, an oral work, when it was written down?

Now the model for those examples is a unique spatio-temporal entity such as John, a man. It is assumed in terms of this model that some entities are capable of undergoing certain experiences and changes, while remaining the same, while retaining their identity. So we get puzzles about whether the old man of seventy-nine is identical with the son of that lady who gave birth to him as a baby seventy-nine years previously; or whether a tree that has lost practically all of its original molecules is the same tree; or whether Cleopatra's Needle etc.

It must not be supposed that because of the structural similarity between 'The natives did not suffer greatly from being educated' and 'The English Miracle Plays did not suffer greatly from being redacted' anything ever happened to any given Miracle play which could be termed 'redaction'. Or, similarly, that there was a particular called The Iliad which was held in some sense and written down. A redacted version of a work is not numerically identical with the work of which it is a redacted version; neither do they share facsimile identity.

A similar argument can be urged with reference to a translation. Nothing happens to a work when it is translated though, no doubt, something happens when someone attempts a translation of a work. A translation is not something that can affect a work, and a work is not something that can be affected by a translation. There is a context of understanding in which the concept of translation functions, which permits us to say meaningfully that a work has been translated. But we must not think of this as the work undergoing a certain process, changing, as it were, and yet retaining its identity as most probably a man could. But if we hold that something was really done to a work when it was translated, then we are operating on the assumption that the work is subject to change, though not change of identity, on rather a personal identity model.

Translations are clearly attempts at reproducing as closely as possible as many properties as possible of the work translated. And the produced translation actually reproduces only some of the properties of the work, largely semantic , (though there is dispute as to whether exact meanings from linguistic culture to linguistic culture can be conveyed) and fall short most blatantly with respect to phonic properties of the work. But on a rough level of what happened to a set of characters in a novel, say, there need be no discrepancy between the descriptive statements of a person reading the novel in the original and another who reads a translation of it.

Although, the model we have used to deal with the problem of a work in translation is the unique but changing object such as a person, strictly speaking, the model is that of a replicatable, changing particular.

However, since with the replicatable, changing particular the object took on a different organization of properties without retaining the old, except through the replications of earlier stages, the unique changing model is perhaps more appropriate, since a work in translation remains at the same time the original work. That is, the original work does not give way to the translation but exists with it.

Since, according to our discussion, we cannot allow that the work is either of the unique, changing model or of the replicatable changing model, we cannot allow, strictly speaking, that a translated text of a work is a copy of the text of that work or that a translated work is an instance of that work. However, if it could be shown that the translated text of a work incorporated all the textual properties of the original that yield all the properties of the work, then such a translated text would be a copy of the text of the work.

One type of translation that would count as a copy of the text would be the 'translation' of a graphic text into a phonic text. All that would be required of the phonic translation is that it incorporate all the work-yielding properties of the graphic text. In this way we see that both the graphic and the phonic can be media for the work. Thus an oral work can be given a graphic text, and this would in no way affect the identity of the work or the identity of the text. The danger would be that if oral works have no graphic properties and if many graphic works do (strictly speaking, if many works given through graphic texts do) then unless we know that we have a translation of a phonic text, we may attribute graphic properties to the work. But this is an epistemological, not a logical, problem.

The model of the text or work as replicatable and changing appears to us unsatisfactory; but of the models so far rejected it has probably had the most respectable adherents. So we may have to be less high-handed in dismissing it.

There does, however, seem to be a definitel inconsistency in holding, as the users of this model do, that the meaning of the work changes, but that the text does not. It is held that the meaning of the text changes in accordance with changes in the meanings of its words; so that (what is supposed to be an advantage) the work takes on new meaning for each new generation of readers. This last idea is so appealing that we might be tempted to ignore the inconsistency in the position. There is nothing, of course, contradictory in maintaining that the text does not change, while the work does. And it might not perturb the protagonists of this position, if they were told that they are committed to the view that what is really created is the text from which varying or changing works are generated. But the inconsistency as we have characterized it earlier is that of holding that the personality of the work is such that it can change through time, whereas the personality of the text is such that it cannot change through time. What account is to be given of the difference between the properties of the text that yield the work and the properties of the work yielded by the text in terms of immutability or mutability?

The natural answer seems to be that words (and texts are composed of words) change their meaning and their pronunciation as part of the natural phenomenon of language change. And to say that the words change their meaning is to say that the words are still there. At least it is to say that the inscriptions are still there; and the inscriptions are

the words of the text.

But why is it supposed that there is not a natural phenomenon of textual change? The natural agents of weathering have no special respect for texts. Ink fades, words get erased, words even get added, all in the natural course of events. Just as sometimes people agree that a given word in the new linguistic and social circumstances should take on such and such a new meaning, why cannot people agree that a text should have such and such a new word?

All that we have said so far against the position under consideration is that textual meaning should be considered as subject to change too; we have not shown that works do not change certain properties, in this case semantic and phonic properties.

We could challenge the purported fact that works change their meaning even while agreeing that words do. We could, for instance, explicate the notion of change of word meaning by showing it to be a loose way of saying that new words are sometimes created with the same form as certain old words. So that we could make a distinction between a word inscription and a word in such a way that two different words may have the same inscription. So that the fact that a new word appeared in the same inscription form as the old word of a text would have no tendency to show that the meaning of the new word had anything to do with the meaning of the old word in the text. In short, the old word would not have changed its meaning, and that property of the text would not have changed, and the corresponding property of the work would not have changed.

We seem now committed at least by a process of elimination to be

holding the view that the appropriate model for the text and the work is that of a replicatable, unchanging particular. We noted earlier that the changelessness of the text was to be taken in the sense of the text being considered as the text in its condition at the time of production. So the total position is that the text is given with the work, that the identity model for the text and for the work is the same, that the text can have replications, that only those properties that are work-yielding properties are properties of the text, that all copies of the text must incorporate all the work-yielding properties of the work, and that the work can have instances or manifestations.

A text ceases to be in its condition at the time of production when work-yielding properties of the text at the time of production have disappeared. (Or if new work-yielding properties have appeared since the time of production. But this is not a real possibility if the text is given with the work.) We may notice, then, that a defective text is one that does not incorporate all the work-yielding properties that the authentic text incorporates. In other words, it does not lead to all the properties of the work.

It will now be obvious, if it was not before, why a replicated copy must be an exact copy. And when we come to notice the different types of structure of the work and the structure of the text, it will become clear why we say that the copies are of photo-copy standing. However, the notion of photo-copy standing is not crucial to the position, since the stipulation that the properties of the text must be represented by any true copy of the text and that the properties of the text are work-yielding properties would ensure all that need to be ensured.

V. We have argued that for any text the properties of that text are the work-yielding properties of the text. If this is so, then the properties of the text cannot be determined independently of determining which are the literary properties essential to the work.

The question naturally arises as to how we know what properties are properties of the work and what properties of the text yield these properties of the work.

A less ambitious question would be: what are the properties of the work? Next, if these are properties of the work, what are the corresponding active aspects of the text that yield these properties? It is clearly possible to know that p, but not to know how one knows that p or what the proper analysis of knowing that p is.

Now we shall take the question of finding out what the properties of the work are not as a question about a particular work but about works in general. In other words, we want to know what are the different categories of property that literary works possess so that we can determine what aspects of the text we need for yielding these categories of property. So we can arrive at the active aspects of the text by knowing the full range of properties that a literary work can possess; that is, properties that will need a form of manifestation, an accessibility avenue, some textual basis from which to derive them, and then noting what aspect of the text yields each type of property. Unless we include this base in the replication of our text, some of the work's properties will be trapped, as it were, unable to manifest themselves. And it would be far better to include avenues that lead nowhere than to exclude avenues that lead to properties of the work. That is why we need the fullest range of literary properties and the fullest range of textual

aspects that we can discover. If we replicate non-active aspects of the text, they are, at any rate, prohibited from yielding properties of the work.

In going about our problem in this way, we have not, however, determined what textual aspects are active for any particular work. But if our program can be successful in this limited way to begin with, we would be in a pretty good position to identify the text that yields the work, and we would have made some progress towards identifying the literary work in the sense that we would have delimited its avenues of accessibility. And we are aware that the delimiting of the active aspects of the text is a pre-requisite for any further enquiry into the nature of the literary work. We could then investigate this nature through the textual structures isolated as yielding structures of the work; and if we make an enquiry into the range of structures of the work we would thereby make an enquiry into the nature of the work.

If we reflect on the properties of literary works, we shall find that they could be characterized as graphic, phonic, semantic, and relational. Graphic properties are exemplified in shape poems, such as Herbert's 'The Altar' and Apollinaire's 'Le Jet D'Eau'. Phonic properties relate to the sound properties of the work expressed in its recitation. Semantic properties relate to the meaning of the work at various levels; and relational properties refer to relations of the work through interaction or influence of different kinds of property with or on one another. We shall refer to each class of property as a structure; and by investigating the nature of each structure we hope to be investigating the nature of the work.

Recognition of these structures of the work helps us determine what properties of the text should be retained in replication. Word inscriptions set out in the order given in the original or any true copy is the minimum requirement for yielding phonic, semantic, and relational properties, and would seem to be sufficient for the text of a novel. Whereas we would be well advised to retain line spacings and the general graphic layout of the page for poetry, since the layout may yield a representation in the case of shape poems or register modes of organization and emphasis, or serve some literary function, as is probably the case with many of the poems of e e cummings. It has been the tradition to replicate copies of facsimile or photo-copy status for poetry. In this way, one does not have to make a judgment on what properties of the graphic layout are essential properties of the text. (One does, of course, make the judgment that quality of paper or some such property of the text is a matter of no significance.)

We shall take it as established that we now know the range of properties that a literary work may possess; but we have not at all established how it is to be determined that any particular work has all of the structures that a work may possess. It was suggested, for instance, that novels do not have graphic properties as properties of the work.

We might be tempted to hold, if we accept the text and work as given at the time of production, that the producer determines what the range of properties for his particular work is or is to be. But a statement from the producer cannot determine the structures of the work; for, after all, the producer might say anything that he likes. He might say, for instance that his work is to be interpreted without any reference to

phonic properties, that his work has no phonic properties. But clearly he cannot be allowed to make such a ruling. Words have phonic properties whether he likes it or not. Or, what is a slightly less freakish claim, suppose the producer says of an alliterative line that it was a sheer coincidence and it is to be considered no part of the phonic structure of the work. Again we might commiserate with him; but the line does have alliterative properties.

A producer in creating an object might not have realized all that he has created, might not have intended to create that much and so on. But if he is releasing objects in a world peopled with other objects, there is no way in which he can both be in the world of peopled objects and outside it; or there is no way in which he can pretend successfully that in his sub-world certain qualities of objects do not exist, that he has willed them out of existence by ignoring them. If literary works have certain established structures which he uses in creating his product, then he cannot pretend that these structures do not exist or that they do not exist for him or for the particular work. The case is quite different where a novelist claims that his linear organization is not to be considered as embodying a graphic structure, as is the case with at least some poems. We would accept this, since there is normally no graphic structure in novels. And now if a novelist insisted that his novel did have a particular graphic structure that requires the replication of linear organization for his text, we should ask him to make up his mind whether he wants to write a novel or a narrative poem.

This is not to say that it is impossible for an artist who claimed that his work has properties that we would not normally notice from our experience of other works to succeed in showing that his statement con-

cerning the properties in question is valid and correct. It is also possible, that a literary artist could one day convince that his handwriting is an aspect of his work and ought to be replicated. But his work would not be considered to have penmanship properties merely because he said that he created the work with them. Neither would it not have them merely because we denied it. Some justification would have to be given on either side as to how the claim is related to properties that literary works may or may not have. A case could not rely merely on the fact that the producer intended it or would have it that way or that the audience did not like it or would not have it that way. For if this kind of statement from the producer would do, so would the audience's. A justification would have to show how the author's penmanship is related to other properties of that literary work or literary works in general, how it serves in his case or in whoever's a similar function as other aspects of the graphic text accepted as embodying properties of the work, how it fits in with other properties of the work and so on.

It is not obvious, for example, that all of the punctuation and spacing eccentricities of e e cummings have anything to do with properties of the work. He is either making literary points or fooling around with punctuation and paper space. Now at least several of his layouts are effective and acceptable. But we could not have this sort of thing carried to absurd limits by a poet writing a fifty word poem on twenty foot square pages with one word on each page occupying the last word space of the page, demonstrating that thought and ideas and objects and everything are really spaces apart. He can make this point with much less space and fewer pages of paper; and so the supposed active aspects of the text set out as described above are not essential aspects of the text at all.

The text, we conclude, is created with certain properties that yield the properties of the work in terms of the four structures we have suggested. And the active aspects of the text depend on the nature of the particular work and the particular text produced, on the known structures that literary works possess, the relation of aspects of the particular text to known structures of literary works, the relation of aspects of the particular text to known aspects of the work. There is no way of starting from scratch, as though other literary works do not exist; and there is no way of considering an aspect or structure or putative aspect or structure in isolation from other structures of literary works or the literary work in question. Also, there is no way of simply legislating that the author or the audience or pundits or critics or literary popes determine what aspects are active aspects of the text and what properties are properties of the work.

8. The Work Identified Through The Text.

It has proved necessary to identify the object to be analysed, the literary work, by starting off from some material base or medium which we identified as the text, with reference to which the various structures and properties of the work may be shown to arise. We suggested that if we could offer an analysis of the object, an identifying description of the object would be implied by such an analysis.

Although the base is identified with the text, it would be misleading to identify the work with the text, unless we conceive of the text always in terms of the structures it embodies. In this way we would always mean 'text as' - graphic, phonic, semantic or relational structure; or we could mean the text as all these. We cannot, however, afford to dispose of the

text as a neutral base to be interpreted in different ways. Even our habit of taking the symbols on the page to be set out in a certain way, to be read horizontally rather than vertically, for instance, relies on a way of interpreting how the symbols are set down for further interpreting. Also, unless we knew the concept of an acrostic, we would hardly notice that a vertical arrangement of letters in a horizontally significant text could be significant. We see, then, that not even the simplest mode of interpreting the symbols on the page is given with the text. To arrive at the work we need to know how to construe the text. And we have suggested that at least some literary texts require a mode of construal that goes beyond that of arriving at only the sound and the meaning of the words.

The graphic inscriptions, then, as a set of symbols constitute the text to be construed. A certain orthographic, lexical order is observed as defining the most elementary design of the text; for poetry certain linear junctures are recognized as integral aspects of the graphic design; vertical orthographic relations produce acrostics and the total graphic layout may be representational. The base recognized as a linguistic structure is interpreted at a number of levels and in a complexity of modes. In the light of the semantic structure and as embodying the artistic, phonological organization and expressive effects of the language in which the work is executed, the phonic structure is identified. And as a consequence of close structural inter-dependencies and influences, the relational structure emerges. The whole work, then, is identified through the four structures indicated, which constitute the anatomy of the work.

9. Analysing the Form and Analysing the Work

To isolate the four structures through which the work manifests itself is only to isolate the form of the work. It should be evident that agreement concerning the actual nature of these structures is by no means guaranteed by the mere recognition of their existence or general form. The possibility of correctly identifying a given structure while being mistaken about another, or of misrepresenting structural components is a real one. Misrepresentations may result from spurious methods of identification, poor apparatus or defective vision.

It becomes crucial, therefore, to devise a means of determining correct and apposite descriptions of the literary work in whatever structural manifestation. An analysis of the nature of each structure to discover what its properties are and how we can know them would seem to be the way to solve our problem.

10. The problem in part epistemological

If the set of four structures that we have indicated constitutes the anatomy of the work, and if the object before us is a set of marks, then the work must be considered in a sense a constructed object. Having recognized the frame into which the work fits, we have only cleared the way for our real problem - that of recognizing when we have to do with the full, authentic body of the work. We are involved, therefore, in an operation either of construction or re-construction; and our problem is epistemological - that of knowing and that of furnishing some justification for claiming that our constructs are the full, authentic body of the work. We seem to need some maxim, set of principles or rules of

construal that would lead us to the authentic properties of the work.

11. The problem in part aesthetic

Since the literary work is a work of art, a construal of the text that ignores this fact is not likely to be a responsible reading of the text. At any rate, the problem of how a work of art is to be interpreted is a problem in aesthetics. If the text is to be interpreted so as to yield a work of art, we are saying that our principles of interpretation have something to do with aesthetic values. And these aesthetic values may set some constraints on how we interpret the text One maxim may thus be: 'construe the text in such a way that the resulting interpretation yields a (the) work of art'.

The full implications of the aesthetic aspect of our enterprise will be dealt with when we come to consider the nature of the semantic structure of the work. But quite generally, throughout the discussion of the work, that the literary work is a work of art will be an underlying assumption.

12. In this chapter we have discussed various ways in which one may say what a thing is with special reference to the problem of saying what the literary work is. We have decided that one very useful way of doing this is to analyse the object, which analysis could be used as a method of identifying the object. In considering how we would go about analysing the object we realized that we had first of all to analyse the text, but that analysing the text had to be done with reference to our notions about the sort of object the literary work is.

Having satisfied ourselves on this score, we proceeded to isolate four structures of the work through which its properties are manifested; and required that the text provide corresponding aspects through which these categories of property could be expressed or revealed. It remained to suggest that an analysis of each category of property should result in an analysis of the work, and that such an analysis would carry with it strong epistemological and aesthetic interests. In pursuance of this plan we shall now embark upon an analysis of the four structures of the work.

A bit paradoxically, then, the task of this first chapter can only be achieved by the rest of the dissertation.

Chapter II

THE GRAPHIC STRUCTURE

The graphic structure is abstracted from the material base or text in the sense that selected features and relations of the script may be recognized as defining authentic properties of the work.

We shall notice how the text may be interpreted as yielding a representation, produce visual effects, reinforce and contribute to meaning. Then we shall consider how the layout of the text with its junctures is related to certain rhythmic patterns of the work. To discuss this last issue, the phonic structure will find itself implicated, willy-nilly, a bit out of turn.

A. The graphic structure of representation

The graphic structure of the poem is perceived by looking at the page, where words are segmented in certain ways with linear and stanza-ic junctures. In prose this layout is not usually significant, but in poetry the visual design may be related to the meaning of the poem or may be referred to in the poem or there may be a significant pattern of letters such as acrostics, or may be composed in a shape relevant to the content of the poem. Thus, when faithfully reproduced, Herbert's 'The Altar' is set out as it is on the following page:

A broken Altar, Lord, thy servant reares,
Made of a heart, and cemented with teares;
Whose parts are as thy hand did frame;
No workman's tool hath touch'd the same.
A Heart alone
Is such a stone
As nothing but
Thy pow'r doth cut.
Wherefore each part
Of my hard heart
Meets in this frame,
To praise thy Name:
That, if I chance to hold my peace
These stones to praise thee may not cease.
O let thy blessed S A C R I F I C E be mine,
And sanctify this A L T A R to be thine.

The poem is set out in the form of an altar; and the reference, 'this A L T A R', in the last line has as referent the altar representation that the graphic layout forms. So that were the graphic layout other than in the form of an altar, the referential meaning of 'this A L T A R' would be problematic, and indeed different. It is also possible that the words of the poem are to be considered stones in the constructing of the altar that would remain as an expressive monument of praise; so that 'these stones to praise thee may not cease' takes on a significance it could not assume if we ignore the fact that the poem is set out in the form of an altar and that this is an aspect of the meaning of the poem. It is further possible that the capitalization of 'sacrifice' and 'altar' serve to emphasize the sacrifice and altar in a way not open to a recitation of the poem. That is, a corresponding phonic emphasis might be unnatural, discordant or at odds with the rhythm of the last two lines. One would either have the stress more than would be usual the accented syllables of 'sacrifice' and 'altar' or give every syllable the same heavy stress.

It is, of course, a known device to italicize or capitalize a word in the script to signal a phonic emphasis, itself an indication of a certain semantic nuance, which we might otherwise miss. But this is not to say that, granted the nature and possibilitites of script, the author cannot find the script an additional device for rendering shades of meaning more effectively in some cases than phonic pointers.

It matters to our appraisal of the author's achievement in a shape poem that we recognize the representation as a constraint within which he executed the work. Apart from the mellifluous felicity of rhyming verse, we admire and congratulate the poet for his achievement within the constraints imposed by a chosen pattern of rhyme and rhythm. A successful shape poem, therefore, is of a similar , and perhaps even more difficult, order.

The perception of the graphic structure of such a poem is a straightforward matter of looking at the page to see how the inscriptions form the relevant pattern.

B. Other Functions of the Layout

The layout of the text ca rries more subtle significances than that of a representation. Notice how Donne uses the terminal position in

> At the round earth's imagin'd corners, blow
> Your trumpets, Angells, and arise, arise ...

The effect of the strategic positioning of 'blow' is tremendous, perched at the end of the line, enjoying his functions, as it were, to the point of forgetting that these depend upon trumpets and angels.

It is not at all obvious that a recitation of the lines with the prolonged articulating of 'blow' would have the same effect. For part of the effect is not merely that the line ends with an unpunctuated 'blow', but that the line would not normally be expected to end with 'blow' at all. In other words, an unpunctuated 'blow' within a line would carry a different effect. So it would not merely be the way in which the word is articulated in a recitation that would yield a corresponding effect.

Here is Donne again using linear organization as an ironic device:

> I wonder by my troth, what thou, and I
> Did, till we lov'd? were we not wean'd till then?

The playful alliteration of the lines is a phonic property, but the effect of perverse enjambement (run-on lines) belongs to the page. We are surprised at the placing of 'did' in an initial position, particularly after 'I' in a terminal position. Such an effect is clearly different from any parallel recitation that we might attempt.

We have produced examples to show that the visual design of the text deserves to be considered a poetic structure in its own right. We shall go on to suggest how the visual design functions as a determiner of the way in which the poem is organized.

C. The Graphic Structure and Prosodic Form

Poets have used a variety of linear, stanzaic, and verse patterns which are considered to define certain aspects of the phonic rhythms of their poetry. So that the reason why some poems have ended at the precise point where they have ended is that the set number of recurrent rhythms were at that point fulfilled; stanzas were completed

because the set number of lines were completed, and lines were completed because the set number of feet were completed. So long as the poet chose a certain rhythmic organization, he fitted what he had to say to the rhythms defined interms of stanza length, line length and recurring accentual pattern. Of course, some poets, particularly modern ones, accept no pre-ordained pattern, but rather let the patterns reveal themselves or do not think in terms of patterns at all; at least not in any conscious sense.

Now the graphic organization of the page has normally not been considered an aesthetic gimmick, a way of making the page appear attractive. Rather, it has been considered to represent a certain phonic organization which the work possesses. However, on the other hand, a recitation of the poem reveals no acoustic contour unambiguously organized as correlatives to linear and stanzaic junctures of the page.

There is no indication in a recital, for example, whether a poem graphically given as consisting of alternate lines of four and five feet rhyming abab (or even abca) is of that organization rather than consisting of lines of nine feet rhyming aabb and so on. Another example is that of internal rhyme where each line could have been two lines rhyming aa.

However, we could maintain that the poem has the phonic organization which the text fixes in terms of lines and stanza, but that the text when given a recital does not render it obvious. But the text does not give the units internal to the line, the little rhythms of strong and weak beats; it does not give feet. It has even been denied that there are such phenomena as feet.[1] The recitation is probably at its

1. E.W. Scripture, Grundzuge der englischen Verswissenschaft, 1929.

most opaque with reference to division of stanzas and feet. And since the recitation of the text is normally an interpretation of the text rather than a neutral text itself, characterization of the organization of the phonic structure on this basis is open to refutation. That is, the interpretation may be wrong: stresses may be inappropriately applied, to give one way in which it could go wrong.

Then the validity of what we say about the organization of the phonic structure of the work may have to be related to the validity of the phonological theories we employ, invoke or assume in formulating what we consider a proper analysis of the work's phonic system. With the appearance of various phonological theories the notion of a single strong beat or accent versus weak beats or unaccented syllables has been called into question; and consideration of secondary as well as tertiary stress, semantic considerations and the requirements of a responsible recital has brought fresh approaches and new confusion to the problem of determining the metrical form of the poem.

Even granting the old familiar categories of iambic and trochaic, there is yet much recent controversy as to whether a given sample of verse is basically iambic with trochaic irregularities or vice versa; or whether a so-called irregular line is not regular under a different system of analysing verse type.[1]

1. Cf., Halle a nd Keyser's 'Chaucer and the Study of Prosody', College English, Vol. 28, December, 1966, No. 3; W.K. Wimsatt's 'The Rule and the Norm: Halle and Keyser on Chaucer's meter'; and Magnuson and Gryder's 'The Study of English Prosody, An Alternative Proposal', both in College English, Vol. 31, No. 8, May, 1970.

One reason why the matter cannot easily be settled is that more weight may be given by some analysts to the natural performance of the text. If we hold that, in considering the phonic structure of the poem, the standard accentuation of each word must always be preserved, we will obviously differ fundamentally from those who claim that the accentuation of words must always be adapted to the general rhythm of the work's phonic structure. Or if we maintain that the metric form is an abstract structure undisturbed by the natural oral performance of the poem, we will thus be at loggerheads with those who can make no sense of, or at least see no point in analysing, an abstract structure of recurring sounds unrelated to an appropriate delivery style.

The fact is that the conventions of scansion and responsible recitation have been kept separate. So that it has not been sufficiently questioned whether the traditional scansion is really a scansion of the phonic structure at all. Further the notion of the phonic structure has been oversimplified. Wimsatt and Beardley surely under-estimate the problem by emphasizing the public nature of the poem - 'something that can be examined by various persons, studied, disputed - univocally.'[1] Chatman, who conceives of the task of determining metre as an enquiry into the organization of the phonic structure always given in a delivery instance, argues that 'the meter of a poem is not a fixed and unequivocal characteristic, but rather a structure or matrix of possibilities which emerge in different ways as different vocal renditions'.[2]

1. 'The Concept of Meter', PMLA 74, p. 588 (1959).
2. A Theory of Meter, 1965, p. 103.

If we analyse the rhythm of the phonic structure as a responsible recitation, the syntactic and expressive phases will hardly coincide with prosodic categories which appeal to fixed stresses and commit mono-syllables to whatever pattern is established by dissyllables and polysyllables. If we take off, on the other hand, from the visual arrangement on the page with dictionary determined stresses, we are pointing more to a certain organization of the text than to the poem's phonic structure.

The distinction between the poem and the performance, which Wimsatt and Beardsley invoke, has not been made clear. Surely if we think of the poem as sound at all, any such sound no matter how neutral must be theoretically capable of performance. So the distinction would have to be between different types of performance. What Wimsatt and Beardsley would seem to have made a distinction between is the phonic text and the phonic structure of the work. In recognizing that the patterns of the phonic structure of the poem go beyond the concept of metre conceived in terms of dictionary verifiable stresses, they ought to have recognized that a metrical analysis of their type cannot be a responsible analysis of the phonic poem;since if by 'phonic poem' a neutral text is not being referred to, then the phonic structure, which is an interpretation of the text, must be referred to. We must be analysing either the phonic structure, which is given in a performance, or a neutral base, the text, that can be capable of good and bad performances, accurate or inaccurate interpretations.

Because we normally never become acquainted with a poem through a phonic text, but rather either through a graphic text or a recitation, which is an interpretation of the text, we may find it natural to hold that any given sound representation of the poem must be an interpretation. But if we recognize the existence of a phonic text, then, it is being

suggested, we should be able to sort out the problems relating to metrical analysis and the analysis of the rhythmic structure of the phonic structure.

Our contention is that the arrangement of the poem on the page as a parallel of the phonic text can be seen as constituting a certain metrical design in terms of the prosodic categories. However, a metrical analysis of the phonic structure of the poem, or any other analysis of the way in which the sounds of the poem are organized has to wait upon a determination of that structure. The problem of the determination of that structure is the task of the next chapter.

It is perhaps worth observing that many modern poems make no metric sense in terms of the old established types of rhythm. The page is however exploited not to mark off modes of rhythmic organization so much as to achieve other effects:

of evident invisibles
exquisite the hovering

at the dark portal

of hurt girl eyes

sincere with wonder

a poise a wounding
a beautiful suppression

the accurate boy mouth

now droops the faun head
now the intimate flower dreams

of parted lips
dim upon the syrinx[1]

1. "Five Poems" 1, Dial. LXXII, p. 43; quoted in Edith Rickert, New Methods For The Study Of Literature, 1927.

In this poem by e e cummings punctuation is non-existent, and so is rhyme, linear junctures are seemingly erratic and stanza-s would seem to be sometimes two lines long sometimes one, and it is not obvious why the spacing between lines is not uniform. Cummings is, however, exploiting the fact that poems are written, to achieve effects and suggest meaning. He is clearly not arranging lines to suit some metric category.

This discussion of the graphic structure has been concerned to show in how many ways the layout on the page is important as yielding properties of the work and why it ought to be retained. The visual layout may be seen to form a design to which perceptive attention should be directed.

Chapter III

THE PHONIC STRUCTURE

The notion of the poem, in one of its aspects, as an artistic organization of the phonic properties of language has been more often assumed and appealed to than investigated and clarified. Perhaps because literature is more often silently read than recited the problems of identification that this structure presents have fairly generally passed unnoticed. Also, since the problems of meaning are so complex, it has been supposed that the problems of the sound of poetry are very elementary in comparison. It is the office of this chapter to show that, contrary to what has been commonly supposed, the phonic structure of the work is not available in any straightforward way; and then to discover in what direction we ought to pursue it.

1

In the first place, on a very primary level, before we can determine the phonic correlates of the textual inscriptions we have to know their meaning; the same word inscriptions may have two different phonic shapes. Second, it may be that, though the sound is in some respects, or even basically, the same, differences in pitch and tone bear different nuances of meaning or embody different expressive qualities.

The crude notion of standard pronunciation of the individual words of the text will clearly not do. There is a vast difference in phonic

quality between the poetic stretch as a monotone and as a responsible recitation. Although punctuation signals give some indication of how the flow of enunciation is to be broken up and intoned, very often these signals are logico-grammatical and syntactic and do not over-ride or always determine expressive phases. Certain intonation contours that do not violate punctuation directives may be ruled out, notwithstanding, as inappropriate or even misleading. A single line can be read as yielding different meanings accordingly as one word is stressed at the expense of another. Thus in Yeats' line:

He must grow a famous man

different meanings require different emphases. A stress on 'he' would suggest that 'he' in particular, or as opposed to others who might be considered, must grow a famous man. An emphasis on 'must' could mean that the point of his obligation was being made, or that in someone's view he certainly would become a famous man. Now although we could show that 'he must' is not to be read 'she must' by pointing to 'he' in the text, we could not settle whether he was to be emphasised or 'must' in the same clearcut way.

There is no way, then, of knowing how to perform the poem through simply knowing the phonetic directive given in the dictionary. And the graphic text is not organized or equipped to yield the poem's phonic structure after the fashion of a musical score, which gives time, rests, note values, stoccato symbols etc. So that when we say each interpreter of a score gives his own interpretation, he has already been directed to a very great degree of precision how to perform. Thus, if we say that his individual interpretation of the work does not have to be exactly like someone else's, it is not at all that he has been left with

a score as opaque as a script for yielding a phonic work.

Any responsible delivery instance is dependent on the meaning of the text, however the text is to be supplied with meaning. But this is a minimal requirement. A responsible delivery instance must transcend mere correct pronunciation and avoidance of a misleading intonation contour. It is this consideration that leads us to examine the phonic structure more closely and recognize certain difficulties that have generally been avoided.

Literary critics have concerned themselves almost exclusively with metre, without giving any careful consideration to the phonic properties of the work, apart from many pedestrian and a few ingenious indications of alliteration and assonance. The question must be raised whether characterizations of the phonic aspects of poetry in terms of prosodic categories deal with the most interesting and crucial features of phonic quality. Surely the poem in one delivery style as opposed to another expounds or reveals phonic elements crucial to the identification of the poem as a phonic phenomenon. It may be easy enough to identify those features in virtue of which a line may be labelled 'iambic pentametre'; it is quite a different undertaking to identify those features of the delivery instance in virtue of which other characterizations of verbal-phonic style are made; or to rule when a given delivery instance will not do as a performance of the poem. If we are to comment critically on how the poet has organized and exploited the phonetic structure of the language that serves him as poetic medium, we must have a more precise notion of that structure. We cannot assume that the phonic structure is unambiguously given by a notation of words. And when we have located the structure in a minimal way, it cannot be irrelevant

to ask what properties of pitch, tone, stress and so on are integral to the phonic structure of the poem.

But even leaving aside expressive qualities, we still need to establish what the sounds taken in their most naked form are. A foreigner, for example, might construe perfectly a poetic text with but a very vague idea of what it would sound like. And his attempt to perform the poem might be ludicrous. We would not say, in such a case, that he understood how the poet was exploiting the phonic resources of the language.

Wellek and Warren recognized the difficulties here when they referred to 'the special problem of ... the wide diversity of standard pronunciations in different ages and places, the idiosyncrasies of individual poets, all problems which have hitherto been scarcely raised.'[1] If the phonic structure of the poem is an organization of sound, then, for any particular work we need to determine the stretch of sounds with which the poem is to be identified; otherwise the critic cannot be sure whether he is analysing the work's phonic structure. No two critics may be talking about the same phonic poem. Also, the fact that sometimes only a proper reading of a poem convinces that the poem is indeed successful lends urgency to the need of discovering what phonic properties are given with the text or required by it.

We may be tempted to suppose that if there were a phonic manuscript, we should have at least the definitive base from which to set up a distinction between the essential and inessential properties of the work's phonic structure. A tape recording, for instance, might furnish such a text. But we are denied the possibility of solving the problem in this way by the consideration that we could legitimately wonder whether some

essential properties of the work's phonic structure were excluded from that particular reading. It does not, therefore, seem possible to conceive of the phonic structure as given in the way in which a text is given.

We might be warned not to set too stringent a requirement for the phonic structure of the poem, since, it is not after all a piece of music. We could rule out from the start, for instance, any ridiculous requirement as to the accent required for performing the work. We might be told that in music, where one would have expected that these problems more centrally belong, the same piece can be played on pianos of quite different tones. But the matter is not quite so simple; for it is not strictly true that the piano's tones do not matter. Certain pianos badly in need of tuning could rightly be disqualified. Or if we were subjected to Marche Funèbre in a quick fortissimo we should say that it had not been played correctly, although the performer would have got the notes right. Burns read in an American accent would not be so much a question of wrong tones, but of wrong notes. Even if we are to accept a less stringent requirement than for music, we would have to avoid the position that the greatest divergence of delivery sounds and styles is a matter of no consequence. We certainly must not accept the view, that since performance is not the end-product of poetry as it is for music, it does not matter what phonic shape the words are given beyond the dictionary entry. Performance is not the only end-product of poetry, but it is usually more important than in prose. A great deal of poetry, moreover, does nothing to camouflage the fact that sound is centrally involved. We have somehow to provide limits within which a recitation

may be considered a recitation of the poem.

II

We have seen that a delivery instance of the poem is dependent upon its meaning for a definitive structure, although we have not yet settled the question of how the semantic structure is to be identified. Notwithstanding, we can say first of all that the phonic structure must be appropriate to the semantic structure. And if the poem can be shown to have more than one semantic structure, the phonic structure will be any phonic structure that is appropriate to any of the semantic structures. It might be, too, that though there is but one semantic structure, there are several legitimate delivery styles or that for every legitimate semantic structure there are several legitimate phonic structures. In other words, a monistic semantic theory need not commit us to a monistic phonic theory. At all events, our task now is to elaborate on the notion 'appropriate to the semantic structure'.

We have already signalled the danger of permitting too liberal a range of delivery styles; but, on the other hand, having endorsed a style as legitimate, we face a corresponding danger of enjoining too severe conditions of approximation on subsequent candidates. Extreme phonic monism would describe a theory according to which only the poet's delivery style, say, represents a correct performance of the poem. And further restrictions may be imposed on the poet's style, limiting it to a particular delivery instance on the ground that all of his performances are not equally worthy; instances might be produced when the poet is

fatigued, bored, or simply lazy.

The standards of a delivery instance or style would have to be independent of any reader's particular performance; it must be possible to ask of any performance whether it is a responsible interpretation of the poem's phonic structure. So that the poet is for this purpose in the same position as any of his readers. What we are most likely to get from the poet's recital is a performance in the language in which the poem was written. Theoretically, of course, any reader can know the language in which the poem was written. But where a language is understood as including any of the dialects of a given language in a broad sense, and where the poet composes in one of the dialects of the language, his performance is most likely to be in that dialect. This fact has no theoretical weight, for so long as the performance is in the dialect in which the work was written, it does not matter whether the poet or any reader whatever gives the performance. Simply, Burns is more likely to perform one of his poems in the Scottish dialect than an Australian would. If we allow as an instance of the phonic structure of a Scottish poem a recitation in an Australian accent, we would not seem to have a poem which on the phonic level is an organization of Scottish sounds.

The following points seem to emerge from an appreciation of the problems raised:

1) we need to identify the general phonic language required of the recital or delivery style;

2) we need to locate some real or ideal instance or style with which to identify the phonic structure; and

3) we need to establish some criteria for determining the limits of the range of instances or styles that approximate the real or ideal instance or style with which we identify the phonic structure.

Linguists tell us that each speaker of a language employs his own dialect, referred to as his idiolect; each idiolect is a member of a group of idiolects that together form a dialect; and a community of rather closely resembling dialects form a language.

It is obviously too stringent a requirement to rule that a delivery instance must be in the idiolect of the composer. On the other hand, it would be in many cases too liberal to allow as adequate a delivery instance in any of the number of dialects that count as members of the same language; for the whole effect of the work may depend on our recognizing that it is written in a specific phonic dialect. Thus, if the poem is identified as a certain selection of sounds within a certain phonic dialect, all performances in the general phonic language cannot be considered to embody adequately the phonic structure of the work. It may become so impracticable, however, to reconstruct the work's phonic dialect that we have to make do with a very imperfect phonic interpretation. We must be careful all the same, to keep separate the problem of how we go about reconstructing the phonic dialect, or the difficulty of so doing, from the question of establishing the identity of the phonic structure.

It is notoriously difficult to decide what is to be considered standard pronunciation in a given language, and whether different accents coupled with slight differences of orthography constitute a dialect of the language in question or an independent, resembling language. An American reading English (English) poetry with an American accent produces English sounds only if we rule that his accent is an acceptable version of a variety of accents all to be considered English. Quite curious results

might be brought about for the phonic structure of the work. If, for instance, two successive lines of blank verse ended with 'stop' and 'slap' respectively, we could well get a rhyme. This sort of problem exist not only for Americans reading English poetry but also for contemporary English reading Pope, to go no farther back. We could say that we have a case of a distinct dialect with Burns. Anyone reading 'To a Mouse', say, and pronouncing the first syllable of 'cowrin' in the line:

Wee, sleekit, cowrin, tim'rous beastie

a s he would the word for a female bovine rather than that for the soft murmuring sound of doves would be mispronouncing Burns. He has to know something of Scottish dialect, if he is to produce a valid delivery instance of the poem.

The matter has been further complicated by the recent florescence of Commonwealth literature. Much of the effect of West Indian literature, for instance, depends on performing the works in the favoured, but, strictly speaking, deviant, iambic rhythm of West Indian speech. Part of the semantics of many of these works is encapsulated in their phonetics ; where Standard British English phonetics, functioning as a contrastive background, permits an explosive of subtle effects. An English (English) accent quite destroys the effect of many of these works.

We conclude that the first condition to be satisfied by a recital instance is that it is to be in the phonic dialect in which the work was written.

Our contention that the phonic structure must be appropriate to the semantic structure makes it obvious that use of the phonic dialect in which the work was written is by itself insufficient; since a delivery instance in that dialect might run counter to the meaning at various points

a nd may be generally innocent of expressive qualities.

We may say that a recital instance is appropriate to the semantic structure if it does not distort the meaning of the text, and if it satisfies adequately the expressive requirements of the work.

An elaboration of the notion of the expressive requirements of the work is now due.

Expressive qualities of tone, pitch, emphasis, volume and speed (including pause) normally depend on the determination of the semantic structure and the basic phonic dialect of the work. They are naturally attached to words or passages that treat of or express intense emotion, sound, movement, calm, contrast, and attitudes of flippancy, sarcasm, bitterness, irony, cynicism, despair, optimism, ecstacy and so on.

It is evident that we cannot say exactly how much of the given expressive quality is required by the work or a unit thereof, that some latitude must be allowed within which a delivery instance may still be said to satisfy the requirements of expressiveness. In actual practice it is possible to know when a piece is being overdone or when it is too flat. A thorough grasp of the meaning of the work is usually the great arbitrator. It is clearly possible to convey different meanings according to the delivery style we adopt.

We should notice the role that the concept of adequacy plays in determining what is to count as a delivery instance of the work. The phonic structure is in a sense an ideal structure, which delivery styles attain more or less adequately. It would be difficult to be convinced even after the most accomplished reading that improvement is impossible, or that an alternative accomplished reading, which gives a somewhat different nuance of meaning, might not be a more appropriate

rendition.

The ideal instance or style would be that instance or style which conveys most adequately in performance the meaning of the work, with the most successful use of the expressive capacity of the human voice and the expressive resources of the phonic language in which the work is written.

Fortunately, all that we require is that a delivery instance satisfy adequately the expressive requirements of the work. We have argued that in order for it to do so the instance should be in the phonic language in which the work is composed and be the phonic correlate of the semantic structure. The strictly expressive qualities are engaged only when these two conditions are satisfied. The effect of the expressive qualities is to highlight, underline, reinforce and enhance the semantic import of the work, and display the artistic organization of the sounds of the phonic language in which the work is executed. To the extent that the delivery instance succeeds in doing this is it to be considered adequate to the expressive requirements of the work.

It is perhaps worth observing that we can recognize a delivery instance as expressing adequately the phonic structure of the poem, although we ourselves may be capable of no such performance. So ability to perform the structure is not a necessary condition for perceiving it. Also, a given performance may lead us to revise our prior expectations about how the poem is to be recited; so that though we could never say beforehand with any competence or assurance what the delivery style should be, we could always recognize when we were confronted with an adequate one. But in the absence of an adequate performance how can we perceive the phonic structure? We have seen that knowing how the words are pronounced

in the language is necessary but not sufficient to guarantee the production of an adequate instance; and it hardly makes sense to talk about reading the poem through its meaning alone; the text always carries with it expectations of phonic fulfilment.

Let us take again the example of the reader of a foreign language who knows the lexis grammar and syntax of the language perfectly, but whose idea of the phonetics of the language is inadequate. (The analogy would be of no use, if he had no idea whatever of the pronunciation) Such a reader would have a very imperfect idea of the phonic structure , but he would not get it completely wrong. It would seem , then, that we must employ the notion of degrees of perception. A reader who knew the standard phonic structure of each word, but who was unacquainted with phonic devices of expressiveness, would have a more adequate notion of the phonic structure, though still to some extent an imperfect one.

To perceive adequately the phonic structure of the poem is either to be capable of recognizing an adequate delivery instance of the phonic structure or to have an adequate notion of how the delivery instance is to be performed. An adequate notion of how the delivery instance is to be performed involves knowing how the words are to be pronounced and what expressive characteristics they are to embody. It does not require the ability to put the notion into effect through the production of an adequate delivery instance. One can have an adequate notion of the pitch of a given note without being able to sing it. The test would normally be whether one could recognize the note when it was sung.

The problem of determining whether a perception is adequate may derive from uncertainty as to what expressive qualities a delivery instance is to incorporate, and even at a more primitive level, indecision as to when a reader may be said to be pronouncing the words of the language correctly. The pronunciation of words within a language changes with time, and to perform all verse as if it were contemporaneous with our own standard dialect would be to get many aspects of the work's phonic structure wrong.

However, if we hold that the phonic structure of the work can change with changes in the phonic structure of the language in a similar as words may be said to change their meaning, then there would be no need to enquire into the properties of the language of the work at the time of production. We have already had reason to reject this concept of the work's personality. Such a model would upset our notions about what was created; for clearly, a different organization of phonic properties would inform the work at each stage in the process of language change.

The phonic structure of the work is an artistic organization of the sound system of the language in which the work is written, expressive of a particular semantic content. All descriptions of the phonic structure of the work, therefore, must be grounded in an adequate perception of that structure faithful to the semantic and expressive requirements of the work.

CHAPTER IV Part I

Descriptions

1. Introduction

In discussing the semantic structure of the work, I shall try to get along for the moment without launching into the general problem of meaning. Although I shall appear in this way to be beginning somewhat *in mediis rebus* nothing in my ultimate conclusions concerning meaning will have the force of invalidating the analysis I shall have given. Actually, this procedure is consistent with a general emphasis on analysing basic aspects of the work before going on to higher flights of abstraction.

The proposed blueprint involves discussing the text as descriptions, the nature of which is analysed with reference to truth values and the two categories of surface and embedded descriptions. The next chapter will be concerned with the fundamental and absolutely crucial problem of how the text is to be construed, which is to discover how the semantic structure is to be identified. Finally, in chapter 6 I take up once again more concrete manifestation of the semantic structure, applying this time the conclusions of chapter 5 to the interpretation of symbol, metaphor and deviant linguistic forms. Through this approach it is hoped that 'the world of the work' and important issues of meaning in literature will be adequately covered; and we should have a good understanding of what happens in literature.

The confrontation with meaning could thus be considered a tripartite campaign involving anticipation, resolution and application.

2. Literary descriptions - true, false, fictive

The text of a literary work shares the graphic symbolism of a discursive language. That is, the inscriptions are recognized as belonging to lexical, grammatical and syntactic categories. A large body of literature is semantically organized in a way easily identifiable as narrative. It is composed of linguistic descriptions such as are used to report on or describe states of affairs. What we are concerned with now is an examination of those inscriptions of the text recognizable as narrative descriptions.

By narrative descriptions of the text we shall understand not only direct descriptions such as 'I wander'd lonely as a cloud' (Wordsworth), but also conversation descriptions such as ' "I don't believe that old fellow would bet very much on my virginity," she said.' (Somerset Maugham, The Razor's Edge.)

Distinctions will not be made among descriptions appearing in ballads, epics, eclogues, lyrics and odes within poetry; and romances, fables, picaresque, historical, realistic and new novels within fiction (not an exhaustive list). Nor will descriptions be classified merely by appealing to facts concerning their accomodation and classification in libraries, the sub-titles they bear, or their lack of connexion with Fleet Street. Thus we shall not feel constrained to hold that a narrative poem is not true because it is a poem anymore than we would feel constrained to hold that should an item appear in tomorrow's Times it must be true. After all, for any state of affairs there are at

least several styles of reporting or mis-reporting it. Clearly a news entry is not accurate simply because it appears in a newspaper or is written in journalistic style. By parity of reasoning, a narrative poem is not untrue simply because it is written in verse.

It is, consequently, not possible to go along with Laurent Stern when he claims that 'within the literary work of art the author cannot refer to himself either by the subject pronoun "I" or by his name or by any other means.'[1]

It would be readily admitted that there are no states of affairs answering to the vast majority of narrative descriptions in literature. This has led to confusions about the nature of literature and its relation to truth values. The issue is important, because how we settle it has consequences for how literature is to be understood.

Fiction has been defined as a system of invented statements or narrative, and the novel has been classified as a species of that genus. (This definition of course classifies fiction with most false statements made in a court of law, for instance) Now the fact that a work has been traditionally classified as fiction has nothing to do with whether it in fact consists of any invented statements at all. If we hold to a definition of literary fiction which requires that the descriptions of the work be all invented, then we may end up with very few work of literary fiction. At any rate, we need to know when confronted with a set of purportedly invented descriptions that they are in fact invented.

Philosophers who have treated this problem have generally proceeded

1. 'Fictional Characters, Places and Events', Phil & Phen Research 26 (Dec. 1965), p. 206.

as though it is possible to decide the truth value of literary descriptions as being all either true or false; and when the possibility that they might not be all of one logical type has been envisaged, they have proceeded as though it is sufficient to ascertain the meaning of literary descriptions, inspect the world and give a ruling.

What the 'nonpredication theorist' truly recognizes is that fictional statements are not assertions.[1] But the question still arises as to when a statement or a description is a fictional statement or description. For some sentences or descriptions of some novels may well be assertions. Whether or not the description predicates something of the world is not a question that can be answered either by inspecting the meaning of the description or by hearing the book being referred to as a novel or by noting a statement in the preface , introduction, or dust jacket to the effect that the book is a novel. The answer can lie only in the answer to the question whether the 'statement' is asserted or not. And when we move from the field of 'fiction' and include all literature the doctrine is clearly ridiculous. There is no reason whatever why a poet should not make descriptions of actual states of affairs. And to say that a poet cannot refer to himself in a literary work of art is to say something false.

It is best to recognize three categories of description that may all be represented in literature. While these three categories are related to the two traditional truth values of logic, there is no compulsion on these categories to correspond exactly with the categories of logic. The dis-

1. Cf Monroe Beardsley's Aesthetics, 1958, pp.411-414. This reference, p.414.

tinctions made in logic deal exclusively with assertions. We are engaged in describing what happens in literature, the status of what is written; and this goes somewhat beyond assertions.

The descriptions of literature are either fulfilled or vacant A description is fulfilled if there is a state of affairs answering to the predication made by the description.

A description is vacant if 1) there is no state of affairs answering to the predication made by the description; and 2) if no predication is made by the description such that states of affairs are not implicated. On this analysis fulfilled descriptions are true, v1 descriptions are false, and v2 descriptions are fictive.

Fictive descriptions are most commonly found in novels and jokes. The assignment of the logical values of true and false to all descriptions causes some uneasiness, at least partly because in ordinary language the use of 'false' is too crude and insensitive to quite a few distinctions we make among descriptions that cannot be said to be true. Thus, 'he made a mistake', 'he told a lie', 'he misapplied a word', 'he made a joke', may all be taken as involving vacant descriptions, but each suggests a different way in which the description comes to be vacant. That partly explains why we shall prefer to think of the two truth values of classical logic in terms of fulfilment and vacancy; and while we shall refer to fulfilled descriptions as true, we shall classify vacant descriptions as false and fictive as outlined above.

There is nothing really new about the concepts behind these distinc-

tions (who could improve on Russell, Quine, Strawson, Donnellan, Hintikka, and Davidson taken all together?). But what we may suggest has not be properly brought out is that all three are involved in literature in such a way that if we do not recognize them as separate types we cannot be said to be understanding what is happening or may happen in literature.

3. The epistemological problem of determining values

Let us take the opening sentence of Emma:

> Emma Woodhouse, handsome, clever and rich, with a comfortable house and happy disposition seemed to unite some of the best blessings of existence and had lived nearly twenty-one years in the world with very little to distress or vex her.

We would assume such a description appearing in a professed novel to be fictive. We are not going to suppose that there was an Emma Woodhouse unknown to Jane Austen, for all that that would prove is that the description could be used as a true one. Let us suppose, rather, that there was an Emma Woodhouse whom Jane Austin knew. In fact, she wanted to deceive that public that Emma was a creation of her imagination. Let us further suppose that although it is theoretically possible for the deception to be discovered that no one will ever in fact discover it. Then we would all believe a true description to be a fictive one; every critic would treat it as such.

Fiction, therefore, presents us with an epistemological problem. For if the novel is defined as a system of narrative descriptions, most, if

not all, of which are fictive, we may not know when we have a novel. And if it ever matters that we should be able to distinguish between true, false and fictive descriptions in a work, the problem will be a very real one. It may be extremely difficult to determine, or we may have no way of determining, whether a given narrative is fictive or to what extent it is. We happily assume, rightly, no doubt, that most, if not all, narrative descriptions in the novel are fictive because we are acquainted with the conventions of novel writing, which require this. However, knowledge of the conventions does not permit us to know when they are being flouted. If we did discover that what we thought to be a fictive novel was really a history or a biographical history, our whole prior conception of it as a work of art would change. We would not be justified in saying: 'let's forget every word of it is true' and then in proceeding to read it as a novel. We could read all history as a novel; a lot of it reads like a novel. It is further possible for a novelist to use true, false and fictive descriptions inone and the same novel. The false descriptions could be due to misinformation and could appear in a historical novel. Normally in a historical novel the writer is concerned to give an accurate description of some situation in a given historical period. Unless we accept that the background and the situation are meant to be historical and are, we will misunderstand what has been done in the novel. What the historical novelist may then go on to invent could be a fictive set of characters, or historical characters pursuing fictive conversation and so on. Reference to actual people does not make the description true, false

or fictive; but whether they are being described as having featured in the state of affairs as given by the description or being imagined for the sake of a story as so doing. The fact that some cases are difficult to judge does not upset or obliterate the distinction or its usefulness.

The problem of determining the truth value of a given literary description is not confined to the novel. Descriptions occur in poetry and are subject to the same analysis. Thus we may say that the following description from Keats's 'On first looking into Chapman's Homer' is false:

> Or like stout Cortez, when with eagle eyes
> He stared a t the Pacific - and all his men
> Look'd at each other with a wild surmise -
> Silent upon a peak in Darien.

for we know that it was Balboa, and not Cortez, who discovered the Pacific. Whether the false description affects the aesthetic merit of the poem is a separate matter. What we are not allowed to say is that since 'Cortez', 'Pacific' and 'Darien' appear in verse, they must be considered fictive elements of the work. There is every reason to believe that Keats was referring to a state of affairs in the quoted lines, just as he was referring to Chapman and Homer in the title of the work. It is, however, sometimes much more difficult to determine whether the descriptions appearing in poetry are true, false or fictive.

We have seen that the literary text does not automatically commit itself to vacant descriptions. It is not necessary to distinguish between fictive and other descriptions in terms of literary genres. We

have no way of ensuring that the descriptions of any particular genre will be all fictive. Further, since the possibilities open to descriptions are true, false and fictive, there is no ground for the dogma that the 'I' of the poem must be a 'persona', that the author's voice is to be considered an ironic pose always separate from his real voice. In this way a literary technique would have been raised to a literary imperative.

The doctrine that descriptions in literature constitute a special class outside the universe of discourse with which logic deals goes dangerously near to implying that one has to ignore the truth value of a discourse in order to respond to it as art; and given the institution of fictional writing, it sounds as though responding to a scientific work aesthetically alters its truth value.

Understanding literature partly involves understanding the descriptions of which it is composed in terms of the values true, false, and fictive. It can bear emphasizing that the logical problem concerning their truth value must be kept separate from the epistemological problem of how we know that a given description in fact satisfies certain truth conditions. One may try to discover the actual values of descriptions by examining their context of appearance. But knowing and knowing that one knows are two different things. The description 'The monkeys on Mars are equipped with an asbestos type epidermis' could be used as a fictive description, and it could be used as well as a serious attempt to describe a state of affirs existing on the planet Mars. If this is so, then we might not know whether to classify it as fictive , true or false. If there are no monkeys on Mars or no such monkeys, then the des-

cription could be either false or fictive, depending on what use was being made of the description; and if there just happen to be monkeys on Mars with asbestos type epidermis, then the description could be true or fictive, again depending or what use the description was being put to. It is a question of whether a reference is being made or not and even in the case where a reference is made, what reference is made. In the ordinary non-fictive use of language 'The mayor is at home' may be either true or false depending on which mayor is referred to. Epistemological difficulties, therefore, should not be allowed to obscure the nature of the descriptions used in literature or compromise our understanding of them.

4. Literary descriptions and the world of the work.

Our habit of talking about a world of fiction or the world of the work trades upon a metaphor. There is literally, of course, no such world or 'heterocosm'. In a sense 'my world is not your world' is true, and metaphoric. But it would tend to produce more confusion than clarification, if we attempted an analysis of literary works either by attributing them all to a literary world or by setting up a unique world for every poem and for every author (although this should be less productive of difficulties than the one big heterocosm). The metaphor is useful, and by means of it very many penetrating critical perceptions have been possible. But as a comprehensive analysis of the literary work in which true, false and fictive descriptions may all commingle, a world analysis would threaten the very ontic foundations of the world of literature. A world established by

the set of descriptions occurring in literary works, none of which identify objects of the world such as we know it, and in which contrary and contradictory states of affairs subsisted, would invite the most lawless and contradictory speculations.

Whether or not the analysis of such a world is feasible, it is unnecessary and confusing. For instance, the problem of reference to real people and places in a work may force us either to maintain that real people and places cannot be part of a fictive world or that there is an odd commerce and traffic between the two worlds. We probably fare better by sticking to what is before us - a set of descriptions that function in literature in various ways. We understand the narrative by understanding how the descriptions function. By giving an account of the various kinds of description and how they function, we thereby give an initial account of 'the world of the work'. After making a distinction between true, false and fictive descriptions, we can go on to a fuller analysis of how the descriptions of the text are to be understood. We may refer to the full understanding of the work as understanding the world of the work, so long as we recognize the limitations of the metaphor; for whereas the world exists whether we choose to describe it or not, the world of the work, when not identical with the real world, exists only through the descriptions of the text.

Part 2 Surface and Embedded Descriptions

1. The distinction

Categorization of narrative descriptions as true, false, and fictive represents only one aspect of the nature of descriptions. Other characterizations could be made according to whether descriptions relate to events commonly called plot and action, refer to or generalize about the state of mind, emotions, attitudes or psychology of characters, provide commentary on the action, theorize about the human predicament. Thes could all in turn be subsumed under the category of explicit descriptions.

Along with explicit descriptions there are other descriptions relevantly derivable from the text or implied by it, which could be termed implied or embedded descriptions. There are also, of course, forms of language use other than descriptions embodied in literary works, such as exclamation, commands, apostrophes, etc. Apprehension of these forms of language is assured by an understanding of the forms of language generally. Thus, on a primary level of comprehension the majority of expressions in literature present no problem as to their general form. It is evident, however, that to understand the general form of a discourse is by itself no guarantee of an adequate grasp of what is being said. What is described in a novel, say, is not available to the reader through a mere comprehension of the descriptions as units of language. The reader is supposed to see how some descriptions link up with others how character descriptions are related to action and event descriptions

how commentary or suppression of it is related to the characters and action of the story; he is expected to fill in implied descriptions.

Certain implied descriptions are obvious or not according to whether the reader is quick at or experienced in recognizing them, which may involve not only knowledge of literary works but relevant knowledge of the world. Not all descriptions understood in terms of linguistic meaning are surface descriptions; some descriptions are ironic. A crucial problem is, therefore, that of determining what embedded descriptions are derivable from the text such that they can be shown to be implied by it.

It is clearly not enough to specify that such descriptions must be consistent with the text, for consistent descriptions are not necessarily relevant. And we need more than analytic descriptions represented by showing that if the text states: 'Miss Taffety flew to Europe', then an embedded description of the text is 'Miss Taffety went to Europe'. We are not, at any rate, so much concerned with the implications of individual descriptions as with the implications of their conjunction. It is a question of what other descriptions the descriptions of the literary work entail, not so much as individual descriptions but as a related whole. The question of understanding the work as opposed to understanding the sentences of the work is bound up with the question of recognizing embedded descriptions relevantly derivable from the descriptions of the text. The interesting arguments over what is in a novel are clearly not directed at the surface descriptions, apart from the question of their truth value.

The understanding of the narrative world of the work is thus by no means exhausted by an understanding of the narrative descriptions of the text in any direct or simple way. A simple understanding of the text gives us the events in an alm-ost non-interpretative way. This understanding is a minimal basis for an adequate grasp of the work. Such a grasp of the world of the work is explained more in terms of noticing than seeing, although the potential speciousness of the world analogy must always be borne in mind. It is not that a world is given, certain aspects of which we notice, are blind to or misrepresent; it is a question of deciding what world is derivable from the descriptions of the text.

2. Embedded Descriptions and Fictional Characterology

We shall now examine embedded descriptions in relation to character.

Character descriptions are given by the novelist usually quite early in the work, and the characters are supposed to illustrate or confirm these attributions in action. Sometimes, as in the drama, characters are presented through their speech and actions, often supported in various ways by the comments and attitudes of other characters in the work. The authenticity and reliability of character descriptions provided by other characters are normally assessed in relation to our knowledge of the reporters themselves, guided by the degree of identification the narrator has established between the reporter and himself. It is clear that a lot more is true of the characters

presented than the surface descriptions of the narrator reveal; and the motives behind action and intrigue are often deducible not from what the narrator explicitly says, but what characters themselves are made to say and do, along with our notions about what motivates people. There is thus considerable scope for interpretation and filling in. The obvious problem is that of setting up limits on legitimately derivable descriptions.

An interesting point of departue is provided by Morris Weitz in Hamlet and the Philosophy of Literary Criticism :

> However we may explain Hamlet, there are certain données that cannot be denied: that Hamlet is athletic, fearless, vulnerable, dilatory adoring of his father, depressed, as well as, - here, too, Bradley helps us with his descriptions - brutal, callous, obscene, sarcastic, fond of quibbles, and given to repetitions of words. 1

Now it may be true that it cannot be denied that Hamlet is given to repetitions of words; the speeches of the text reveal this. (Although, strictly speaking, we would have to say at least under such circumstances represented in the play; for example, only under tension.) But contrary to what Weitz thinks, it can be denied that Hamlet is adoring of his father. Weitz asks rhetorically:

> Can we accept an interpretation of Hamlet or any other play, that - with no textual evidence in the play to warrant it - asks the reader to controvert, or to change into its very opposite, some given part

1. Hamlet and the Philosophy of Literary Criticism , 1964, p. 230.

of the text and its ostensible meaning?[1]

But such a verbatim notion of textual evidence will not do. Weitz treats the issue as if it were obvious what is and is not given in the text. He seems to assume that a straight reading of the descriptions of the text gives us the play. But a person can delude himself, and pretense must be a possibility in life or in a work. It is only as we observe what the character does, or does not do that we can form an idea of how to take what he says or what is said of him. Weitz goes on to assert:

> No real life Hamlet, let us grant, could love his father and yet act and feel towards a real-life Gertrude or Claudius as the stage Hamlet does in the play. 2

This is tantamount to allowing that it is not an incontrovertible datum of the play that Hamlet does not love his father. The disparity which Weitz observes between Hamlet's profession of love and his performance counts for himas evidence that the thing is only a play, and as such allows such anomalies. But if a real life Hamlet can <u>profess</u> to love his father and yet 'act and feel toward a real-life Gertrude or Claudius as the stage Hamlet does in the play', why cannot a stage Hamlet do the same? If a distinction is to be made between our understanding of character in literature and character in life, it will have

1. Op. cit., p. 24.

2. Ibid., p. 25.

to be based on more than an appeal to the fact that the descriptions that portray the former are to be found in literary works, or texts.

If we employ a very restricted notion of textual evidence there would be very little that we could say, and if the actions of characters were to be understood in quite different terms than those legitimate in real life, we would be wary in making the most elementary predications. Bradley surely uses the vocabulary he would use for real people. But even predicates like 'callous' could be called into question; for it suggests a disposition, and we have no 'evidence' that Hamlet was a callous person. We could at most say that for the particular action of the play Hamlet's behaviour could be described as callous. At this restricted level it would be still open for someone to object. In the circumstances, he might urge, Hamlet's behaviour was appropriate, and certainly not callous.

Weitz uses this notion of what is given to rule out a Freudian interpretation of the play. But this is not the way to outlaw Freud. How we interpret character in literature is bound up with the question of what is to count as evidence for our interpretations not only within the text as surface descriptions but also from the set of implications necessary for an understanding of the work.

The perception of the work involves a range of interpretations of various orders of complexity and abstraction. Thus, by the simplest of perceptual interpretations, for example, we see characters engaged in certain actions; at a higher level of complexity we see these actions related to their characters in certain ways; at a yet higher level of complexity we see the entire set of relationships among the characters

related to the whole action and metaphysics of the work.

In a total perception of such complexity the quality of our perception of character and relationships in the world are eminently implicated. It is thus really a question of discovering the areas and degree of human experience required for each work. There is no doubt but that the great commentators on literary characterology evince a very sound, sensitive and judicious comprehension of human psychology. They have proved themselves good non-professional psychologists. We may suggest, therefore, that although the same psychological categories, apparatus and criteria are not uniformly applicable to all fictional characters, we could not have a fictional characterology which bore little relation to our apprehension of character outside fiction.

It might be argued, however, that fictional characterology is parasitic upon but not equivalent to general psychology; it could be a kind of Abnormal Psychology. The way to proceed would be to observe the behaviour of a large, and preferably disparate, sample of fictional characters to determine the principles upon which their behaviour is to be described and explained. One such psychologist a la Frye might want to distinguish among fictional types according to whether they appeared in the romance, the realistic novel or the confession, and work out the psychological categories appropriate to each genre. We could then probably have a range from the simple psychology of medieval vices and virtues to the stream-of-consciousness protagonist and the existential hero. A very promising field of research would thus be open to the psychologists who hold the view that attempting to understand fictional characters as we would attempt to understand real people is at least unscientific.

There are several difficulties, however, that confront any such program. We would, for instance, need to conceive of the many works of literature as representing different worlds; for among literary works differences are as great as any that could be indicated between literary and historical works. A second consideration is that whether a character in the real world is answerable to the psychological categories applicable to real people is determined simply by his being a person in the world; so that no matter how eccentric or aberrant he may appear, we do not say that he cannot be described by the canons of human psychology. Any difficulties he presented would be a challenge to improve our psychology rather than an inducement to abandon him to the theories of some alien planet. In the case of literary works the world to which we allocate the characters is determined not by what we know to be possible because instantiated, but by some rather arbitrary notion of what kind of character is consistent with what kind of world.

The distinction between real people and literary characters is not always made out as a distinction between the real and the literary, but between those characters that are realistic and those that are not. What seems to count as a realistic presentation is 'rounded' or full portrayal revealing some kind of complexity. The assumption is that human beings are complex.

But it could be anachronistic to suppose that fictional characters can be divided into complex, developed types in the realistic tradition, and flat personifications of vices or virtues in some pre-realistic era. We may well wonder whether so-called pre-realistic writers had a notion of human psychology as a complex of conflicts, repressions, defense

mechanisms, unconscious motivations, sublimations, rationalizations and so on; for it is conceivable that they saw human character as defined by certain clear-cut patterns of good and bad, and certain dominant traits such as miserliness, greed, boastfulness, innocence, magnanimity and the like. So that with reference to their scheme the presentation of what E. M. Forster would call flat characters would be a realistic presentation of human personality.[1] The issue would be that of evaluating a certain kind of analysis of human psychology rather than that of distinguishing between realistic and non-realistic presentation. We have to consider whether the more complex presentation of character in the modern novel, say, is not the result of certain advances in psychology.

There has certainly been a greater interest in character to the subordination of action. Wayne Booth alludes to Virginia Woolf as seeing the novelist "trying to express the elusive reality of character, especially as character is reflected in sensibility."[2] "Robert Humphrey", he further states, "summarizes the purpose of all stream-of-consciousness writers as the effort to reveal 'the psychic being of the characters', an attempt to 'analyse human nature', to present 'character more accurately and more realistically.' "[3] We may thus note that the modern novelist considers character to be complex and elusive, a much more complicated subject for presentation that former writers had supposed.

1. Aspect of the Novel, 1927.
2. The Rhetoric of Fiction, 1961, p. 53.
3. Ibid., p. 54.

And their presentations are tied to their theories concerning human personality. Zola, for instance, professed himself to be a recorder of the behaviouristic determinism that underlies all the actions of mankind. His novels are accordingly based on a certain theory about how people behave. It is highly probable, them, that 'pre-realistic' writers were influenced by the prevailing notions of human psychology, whether possession by gods or spirits, humours or whatever.

It is also possible that the stark simplicity of character portrayal is due to a lack of interest on the part of the author in presenting any great range of the protagonist's personality. That is, the author could be engaged in a novel of action rather than character; so that the conclusion that the character is flat would be unwarranted. This points to the need of determining the rationale of the work. We do not study characters in farce as we do stream-of-consciousness characters. It is usually very relevant whether we understand that we have to do with a character in situational comedy, a Joycean hero, or Camus' Stranger. And clearly the sophistication of our apparatus for comprehending and appreciating character will be directly related to the kind of character with which we have to deal situated in a certain kind of work. We are not forced to view them as either realistic or not. The question is not so much whether a character is realistic or not, but to what extent and with what psychological schema the character has been presented.

The answer to the question concerning the degree of portrayal will guide us in supplying embedded descriptions; it will set limits on how much we are called upon to discover, given the surface descriptions.

An answer to the second question, when available, will be useful for ascertaining the quality of insight revealed in a character presentation, which insight may have to be taken into account when assessing the whole work.

However, limitations in the known psychological scheme behind a presentation cannot always be invoked to limit a character analysis merely on the ground that the author and his time could not have had a certain psychological scheme. We may now illustrate this point with reference to Hamlet.

If Hamlet falls within the class of realistic presentations, Freudian analysis cannot be irrelevant. Nor does Freudian analysis have any special status. The difficulty of knowing whether Hamlet's delay can be explained by a given Freudian analysis is no different from the difficulty of determining the scientific status of Freudian analysis applied to any such problem in real life. Despite the ambiguities of the play, it is possible to isolate a story of delayed revenge no different in kind (theoretically) from a real situation of delayed revenge. Any description that claims to functionsas an explanation of behaviour is open to doubt; even simple attributions are answerable to a demand for evidence. We cannot say that atomic or quantum theory does not apply to eighteenth century matter. Nor can it be more valid to say that Hamlet was suffering from 'melancholic adust' because that was a known syndrome in Elizabethan psychology, than that Hamlet suffered from the Oedipus complex. And it cannot be that both are irrelevant because Hamlet is a character in a play. Throughout Shakespeare we find the humours, so according to this last line of reasoning it should be illegitimate to have characters

in a play described as having them.

Again, it will not do to say that Freudian analysis is inapplicable because Hamlet cannot be summoned. The only importance of that fact is that no more information is available than what the text provides. But we should be faced with the same difficulty if a real person refused to communicate or passed away before the psychiatrist could get information crucial to the success of his diagnosis. None of this would mean that psycho-analysis is impertinent.

Every reader is to some extent, and is expected to be, a psychologist, and brings with him his understanding of human personality. What a Freudian sees in character is partly determined by his Freudian training, convictions and assumptions. A non-Freudian perceptual judgment might be as impossible to him as a Freudian's to a non-Freudian. The status and respectability of our perception of character in literature are related to the status and respectability of our perception of character in the world. We cannot hope to rule out certain explanations of behaviour in fiction by merely complaining that certain psychological theories are too sophisticated or suspect to be applied to fiction.

Notwithstanding, to say that psychological schemes are not irrelevant is not to say that they can provide the perception of fictional character by reference to descriptions, action and speeches alone.

The point of saying that a character is in a play is well taken, if we indicate that artistic conventions and considerations may be relevant in a way that they are not in real life. So any assessment of what a character is engaged in may have to be related to the artistic scheme of the work and the nature of the artistic medium; not that psychological

categories do not apply to him.

The purpose of soliloquies in the drama, for instance, if misapprehended, might lead to quite preposterous conclusions regarding the sanity of characters. And failure to see how the artist is mainipulating a character in the interest of his plot might lead us to take that character more seriously than we ought. Or again, to return to the drama, allowance has to be made for the fact that in a play commentary is almost non-existent, the audience or reader being given necessary information through the speeches of the dramatis personnae.

If we are to reject a Freudian or any similar type analysis of Hamlet, then, we should establish one or more of three points: that as a matter of scientific fact the Freudian analysis, given Hamlet's case, is wrong; that a Freudian analysis distorts the artistic point of the work; that the evidence upon which the analysis relies fails to take account of the restrictions in presentation imposed by the literary medium.

It is perhaps worth remarking that an explanation of why a character behaves in a certain way may have nothing to do with the artistic point of the work; for the author might have presented a pattern rather than an explanation of behaviour. So that it would be a matter of indifference whether Hamlet were explained in terms of the humours or psycho-analysis. The fact that Freudian theory is not a necessary condition for grasping the artistic point of the work does not thereby illegitimate it. On the other hand, there are works written from a convinced Freudian perspective and presented in such a way that it would hardly be possible to understand what was being presented without some knowledge of Freudian theory. Such works may perhaps be said to embody psycho-analytic meaning; that is

they clearly purport to involve what the author considers to be certain truths of psycho-analysis. It would be, no doubt, useful to compare our understanding of a Freudian hero with a Satrian protagonist; for Sartre's anti-Freudianism throws some light on the sort of character Sartre creates. But most frequently, perhaps, an author has no particular theory of personality that he wishes to shape into art. Characters are generally open to any analysis, except where a given analysis is over-ruled by consideration of how the medium affects the evidence for interpreting character, how the character is related to the work as a whole, and what the artistic point of the work is.

We may now give a general conclusion.

The raw materials, so to say, of character perception in literature are presented in the surface descriptions of the text. These descriptions are seen as related in certain ways to yield the perception of character, but are in league with our 'secular' notions about human psychology as we understand it in the world. For relatively uncomplicated characters and 'ficelles' surface descriptions are submitted to quite ordinary comprehension and are thus exhausted. Also, according to the requirements of the work only some aspects of character are presented without need for further development. Even full presentation of character is mounted through a selection of descriptions relating to general traits, attitudes, tendencies and specific situations. The descriptions which we impute to characters are controlled to some extent by the rationale and artistic point of the work.

Thus the perception of character in literature requires the resolution of a complex interaction of surface descriptions, our capacity for

understanding personality, our experience of literature, our sensibility, and a certain sense of balanced relevance. This sense of balanced relevance is for the literary critic what historical imagination is for the historian. It is an ability to grasp the nature of the interaction of the elements of the literary work with their implication of human experience such that each element and factor is given its due weight and place.

An examination of what is involved in the perception of character in literature through the notion of embedded descriptions illustrates that in a sense the work is not given, but is seen to arise, as it were, out of the text. This is not so much to say that the reader creates the work, but that he re-creates it.

Chapter V

THE SEMANTIC STRUCTURE

The problem of locating the semantic structure of the literary work is that of determining how the text is to be construed to yield the meaning of the work. In a very broad sense of meaning or signification all modes and areas of construal constitute the meaning of the work; so that the phonic structure, for example, would form part of the work's total meaning. By the semantic structure, however, we shall be referring to the linguistic meaning of the work in terms of sense and reference or connotation and denotation.

It was claimed in Chapter I that determining the authentic text was partly dependent on determining the identity model of the work and the text. That is, we would have to decide what sort of object the work or the text is. For example, was it to be considered a unique changing object?

But since the work is arrived at only by construing the text, another model comes into focus: the construal model. A construal model is a method, procedure or set of rules for interpreting a set of symbols. Now there is a definite connexion between adopting a construal model for interpreting the literary text and deciding on the identity model for the literary work. One could claim that one had discovered the correct identity model for the work and thus determine which identity model the construal model must be compatible with; or one could claim that one had discovered the construal model for the work and thus determine which construal model the identity model must be compatible

with. If, for example, we hold that the meaning of the work is given at and only at the time of production, we could not adopt a construal model that allowed different meanings at different times. Or if we claim that the model is that of a changing object, then the meaning of the text would not always be identical with the meaning given it by the author at the time of production.

A question that naturally arises is: which model do we determine first? How can we know if we have not yet interpreted the text that yields the work what sort of object the work is? And how can we know how to interpret the text if we have no idea of the sort of object the interpretation is supposed to yield? The fact is that we do know the sort of object the construal is supposed to yield. It is supposed to yield the literary work of art. So the decision concerning both the identity model and the construal model depends heavily on our concept of the literary work of art.

It might be objected at this point that we are going in circles. For how can we know what the literary work of art is unless we already know how to construe the text? But what is at issue here is not an analysis of the literary work of art in the sense of setting out its structure and elements. What is at issue is our concept of the literary work of art. We can surely say a lot about the concept without even knowing whether there are any literary works of art.

Now the concept of the literary work of art breaks down into two concepts: the literary work and the work of art. By a literary work we understand a language composition; so we already know that the symbols are to be construed in terms of a language. The notion of a work of art

is not as simply stated. And there are several theories purporting to give a proper analysis of the notion of a work of art. However, although we cannot here enter into any detailed consideration of the concept of a work of art, we are able to point to certain features about works of art, which are reasonably well established,and this could serve as a good enough guide to the kind of object with which we have to deal.

We know, for example, that works of art involve a clever, skilful or effective organization of materials, that they are often outstanding products of creative imagination, that they are viewed, studied, appreciated, analysed in terms of these factors, that they are thought of as forming a class in which members are related to one another in content, style, and period of production or appearance, for example, within any one art. We also know as regards literature that many works are considered to share the artistic properties of other type works of art; for example, we know that poems often have rhythmic and other musical qualities, that many pieces of description in literature are so vivid, detailed, and imaginatively alive that they are referred to as pictures in words, that the language of literature is often highly refined and stylized, that the concepts and thoughts presented are often so aptly expressed that they give the effect of having been precisely sculptured, that fictional and dramatic characters and plots are so effective as to induce a willing 'suspension of disbelief'.

Even if we know nothing of the properties internal to literary works, the facts we have noted about works of art would put us in a good position to know what to expect. Of course, it could turn out that the fact

that the literary work is a language composition is sufficient to lead us to those qualities of the work termed artistic qualities quite independently of knowing what the qualities of works of art are. But our central problem is not now what kind of qualities the work has. It is the problem of knowing how to give a particular set of qualities to a given work, a problem of determining its authentic properties. And merely saying that it is a language composition is clearly not sufficient; at least not obviously so. Language compositions may be of different kinds; so that construal may have to depend on the kind of language composition in question. If we accordingly ask about the kind of language composition the literary work is, it would seem that we would be led back to the concept of a work of art.

It would seem that unless we can further specify what kind of composition the literary work is, artistic or whatever, then there is no reason for applying any particular construal model rather than any other. If all we can say is that there is a text of symbols to be construed in a completely neutral sense of 'text', then a construal might be offered which could offend even our basic notion of a language.

Before we go on to discuss the construal models for interpreting the literary work, let us formally bring attention to our third concept. It is that of literature as part of the institution of art. We could think of literature as an institution in its own right, or as a sub-institution of the great institution of art. Strictly speaking, we should prefer to limit our notion to that of the institution of literature, since literature could be accepted as an institution but rejected as an institution of art. But since we are going to assume the link between literature and art, not without reason, we have put the complete

formulation of literature as part of the institution of art.

The institution of literature may be conceived as involving the creation and understanding of literary works. The individual literary work is thus not an isolated individual that may be classified in an entirely open way, but is a contribution to a tradition and company of works. So that whatever uniqueness is attributed to it is done so within the institution of literature and in contradistinction from other literary works. The institution has a history in the sense that there is available documentation and records of when the works were produced (with some exceptions, of course), who produced them, what critical remarks were made about them ever since their production, analyses of their structure and properties, classification of their kinds, comparisons of their themes and styles, methods of criticizing them, university courses about them, examinations set on them. Clearly all this pre-supposes that literary works may be grouped together and treated as a class. And this kind of activity surely points to a highly organized and sophisticated enterprise and activity deserving to be recognized as an institution. So that anyone wanting to pretend upon taking up a literary text that he merely is confronted with a set of symbols which he may proceed to treat as he likes would need very strong argument to show why he should not be laughed out of the house. And similarly anyone wanting to contribute a literary work entirely outside such an institution or claiming to have created such a work would have similar problems of inhibiting risibility. Now if we know what the institution of art is about and know of the institution of literature as described, then we have no alternative

but to consider the institution of literature part of the institution of art.

Construal Models

We may distinguish the following three models of construal: the codal construal model, the natural language construal model, and the technical language construal model.

The codal construal model takes or treats the text of symbols as a code, an arbitrary or private assignment of meaning. Such an assignment of meaning is either that of the producer of the symbols or that of the interpreter. Thus, one who employs this model seeks either the private meaning of the producer of the text or provides his own arbitrary or private meaning. It is really irrelevant as far as the employer of this model is concerned whether the symbols have a determinate meaning for other people than the producer or the interpreter, as the case may be.

The natural language construal model sees the symbols or the text as a natural language sample to be interpreted so as to yield the meaning such a text has for the users of a given natural language, that is, the natural language in which the text is composed.

The technical language construal model refers to that mode of interpretation that views the text as yielding meaning at once common to a group as on the natural language model and private to a sub-group of that group more on the codal model. Normally, then, much or the great bulk of the meaning of a technical language text is available to the users of a natural language; but many of its expressions are sectional

to a sub-group. To construe such a text, therefore, it would normally be necessary to discover the 'private' meanings of those expressions in virtue of which the language is considered technical and to discover the ways of contrual, if any, that differ from the established ways of construing a natural language.

There is another way in which we may conceive of a technical language. The symbols in this way have nothing to do with the symbols of a natural language, except possibly coincidentally. Such a technical language is really a shared code. But since we are not prepared to doubt that the symbols of a literary text consist of words, we may ignore this non-linguistic interpretation of symbols.

We now suggest that the three construal models outlined are employed by readers and critics in interpreting the literary work, that a work may be derived by employing any of these models, but that such a work is not necessarily the work. What we shall do is to look at several different emphases in actual criticism, notice how they are related to our three construal models, and try to determine which model is most susceptible of yielding the work.

Semantic Attitudes

A tendency or kind of commitment to interpret the text in a certain way, to seek the meaning of the work in a certain direction, by employing a given construal model, we shall term a semantic attitude. Since we are now describing attitudes and tendencies, the positions presented

may not be consistently held by a given critic nor all the articles of doctrine subscribed to. Notwithstanding, there is no doubt but that the attitudes exist and are discernible.

The Authorial Semantic Attitude identifies the meaning of the text with the author's meaning, and seeks generally to discover what he was up to in the presentation of the text and the creation of the work.

There are a number of positive arguments used in support of this attitude and a number of arguments used to combat objections to it.

It is sometimes argued that we cannot divorce what is said by a text or in a work from the intention that lies behind the saying. Some such view seems to be implied by Richard Wollheim when he says:

> If we ask of a given work of art what is the intention that lay behind it, part of what we're doing, despite the form of words we use, is asking: what is really there? 1

So it would seem according to this view that what is in a work, or at least the baisc meaning properties of the work, can only be determined by determining what the author meant to say and generally what he was up to. And it seems to be felt that what the author was up to is not independent of what he thought or considered himself to be up to.

Another argument in favour of this attitude, or rather used to support this attitude, is that if the author's text is the author's text, and this seems to be a rather obvious tautology, then the meaning must be the author's meaning. The author is in the best position to know what his text means; he gives it its meaning. And the meaning of the author's

1. The Listener, Vol.85, No. 2186, Feb., 1971, p. 203.

work is not to be confused with its significance; that is, its value. So that while the reader may show in what ways the meaning of the author's work is significant or valuable, he cannot determine what the meaning itself is.

A cognate argument in support of authorial autonomy invokes the author's status as artist. The literary work of art being the work of an artist, it should be interpreted in terms of what the artist claims about its meaning, the meaning which the artist himself has created.

It is sometimes pointed out that referential meaning is opaque, unless we know what reference the author is making. So that if we are to discover the referential meaning of the text, we should seek the author's meaning. Here the author is credited only with referential autonomy. And presumably the argument would be that we stand to gain by adopting the authorial attitude, since it yields both sense and reference; whereas other approaches cope inadequately with certain forms of reference. To this might be added the claim that style, deviant language and all sorts of other devices are introduced into the language of literature by the author, and so we could have only a limited understanding of the work if we did not think in terms of discovering the author's meaning.

The proponent of the authorial position may point out that the risk of private meaning is involved in whatever approach we adopt. If the author is not allowed to determine the meaning of his text, then we do not have to bother about his private meaning. But the question of whether an assertion is being made or whether a group of words is to be taken as applying to the actual world is settled with reference to the author's meaning, as well as the referential meaning of or reference for words such as 'this'. So there is no way of avoiding the writer's

or speaker's 'private' meaning in such cases. The opponent of the authorial approach may be said to fear that if the author is allowed to determine the meaning of his text, there would be no way of knowing whether he gives arbitrary meaning to non-referential aspects of the work or in the case where he does give arbitrary meaning whether we are committed to accepting such arbitrary meaning as the meaning of the text. And the proponent of the authorial approach may be said to fear that if the author is not allowed to determine the meaning of his text, there would be no way of knowing whether an arbitrary referential meaning is being given to those aspects of the work for which an author is legitimately allowed to have his own referential meaning, or in the case where an arbitrary referential meaning is allocated whether the author is committed to meaning that meaning. Now if we say that the reader is committed to the arbitrary sense of the author, we seem to claim that the author is to be considerd autonomous in his use of language; and if we say that the author is committed to the reader's reference, we seem to claim that the reader is autonomous in his interpretation of language. And if the reader is, then in a sense his meaning is private, and surely arbitrary.

Now it has apparently seemed to some who are inclined to the authorial approach that if they are to win the case from those who would deprive the author of at least some autonomy, they have got to convince their opponents that they both are really essentially speaking the same language; for if there is not in some sense a common language between them, how could the authorial theorist win the case for referential meaning?

The move then is to say:

> we do justice to the artist's intentions by assuming that the objective reading of the text is what he wanted to produce, and by combining this assumption with the further assumption that he knows we make that assumption.1

But if the author has no special meaning other than the objective meaning then he himself is not adopting the authorial semantic attitude. So the authorial theorist either has to stick to the position that his meaning is the meaning of the text and any other meaning that is the same as his meaning is merely a coincidence or he has to abandon the position that there is a special authorial approach that yields the meaning of the work. This refutation of the authorial theorist only holds, however, if the authorial theorist uses arguments in support of his position from distinctions proper to a system of meaning based on some kind of consensus meaning. But if he says, for example, that the creation of a work of art is the creation of a code, then one would need different arguments to dispose of that position.

The authorial semantic attitude, we may conclude, is of the codal construal model; and insofar that it is not of the codal construal model it would be misleading to refer to it as an isolable authorial semantic attitude. We defer judgment on the model until we have heard all the evidence from the other attitudes and models.

1. Anthony Savile, Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society Vol. LXIX, 1968-69, pp.117-118.

The Semantic Stimulus Attitude represents that tendency to view the text as a sort of semantic stimulus that yields a meaning in accordance with whatever response it provokes from the reader. In its pure form the stimulus approach is the reader's analogue to the authorial position. That is, the reader seeks the meaning of the work in his own individual or idiosyncratic interpretation.

Sometimes the justification for this approach relies on the appeal to the purpose or the use of works of art. The response to the work of art is conceived as a personal encounter with an object that by its very nature means different things to different people. Each reader creates the work for himself. The response to art is not a question of objectivity; it is rather a question of imaginative projection. The text is doubly a symbol: it is a symbol in the sense of a set of marks to be interpreted, and it is a symbol in the sense that the meaning attributed to the work is not captured and recorded by the author and consciously presented by the author, but is sought by both artist and reader. The one's apprehension is as good as the other's.

Sometimes it seems that this approach is adopted through despair at discovering the meaning of the work. That is, in a situation where the meaning cannot be established the sensible approach is to rely on one's own meaning.

Or the attitude may appear in a rather disguised form. It then seems a liberal, undogmatic view of things. The meaning of the text is any and all meanings that it can bear. On this approach multiple construal is favoured, and normally depends on the ingenuity of the reader

to point out significances, complexities, ambiguities, ironies, myths, symbolisms. The text becomes a sort of thematic apperception test. Allen Tate, for instance, describes the meaning of poetry as 'its tension, the full organized body of all the extension and intension we can find in it.'[1] If the meaning of the poem is established independently of what we find, then what we find may simply be what we attribute or think we find. The difficulty in knowing how to interpret 'what we find' as used by the relevant critics is that there is no statement as to how we establish the objective properties of the work so that we can judge claims to discovery. If there is a method other than the arbitrary attributions of the reader then we do not have a stimulus approach. But one way of disguising a stimulus approach is to say that the meaning of the work is all that we find in it.

Insofar as the determination of the meaning of the work rests with the reader, the approach involved is that of the stimulus attitude. In this way the construal model of the stimulus attitude may be seen to be the codal construal model.

The Contextual Semantic Attitude is supported by the contention that literary works are to be interpreted as works defined by the literary context. It is held that literature is constituted by a special body of texts that are read in relation to one another, that literary works have semantic properties some of which are unique to literary works as opposed to other works in the language medium.

1. Cf. "Tension in Poetry", Southern Review IV, 1938.

Further, the ways in which we attend to literary works go beyond the ways in which we attend to non-literary occurences of language, and expressions that would be absurd or incomprehensible in non-literary occurrences of language are often central to literary meaning. In short, the interpretation, the complete construal of literary texts, cannot be patterned without serious loss on the construal of ordinary scripts. This is to say, therefore, that literary texts should be seen as creating their own context of interpretation.

It is apparently assumed that some consensus of opinion can be reached concerning the meaning of the poem so long as the expressions of poetry are understood as belonging to the context of poetry; and there is no attempt to reject totally the language in which the poem is written or to identify meaning with the author or reader's interpretations. The argument seems to be that there is a certain institutional use of language and mode of composition that create a technical context of language.

We are led to suggest, therefore, that the contextual semantic attitude is of the technical language construal model.

The Aesthetic Semantic Attitude is adopted by those who hold the view that the meaning of the work is given by the interpretation which yields the greatest aestnetic success and satisfaction. This position is hardly really an independent one, however, since there is presumably no way of attributing primary meaning to words exclusively in terms of aesthetic directives. So the position either identifies primary meaning with the artist's/reader's meaning, an authorial/stimulus position, or it appeals to a technical language model according to which at certain points technical meanings are introduced. In this way it would represent

a kind of contextualist attitude. However, it would seem that it could be distinguished from the contextual position described in the emphasis not so much on a group of texts that together form a context to be interpreted in terms of such a context as on the emphasis on aesthetic factors that function as qualifiers and modifiers of meaning. The contextualist attitude seems to need the notion of context as determiner of a specific meaning for any language sample more than does the aesthetic attitude. That is, for the aesthetic theorist, whether or not the notion of context has a role in a proper analysis of meaning in a natural language, literary works should be interpreted with their essentially aesthetic nature in mind. A nonsense poem, for instance may have neither natural nor technical language meaning, and yet have aesthetic meaning: it may still be aesthetically successful nonsense. It would not help here to say that it is written in a technical language, for if it is, it can be glossed. All we can really say about the meaning of such a poem is that it is aesthetic.

Now the admission that a work may have aesthetic meaning though deprived of any other may be used to urge that if a literary work can have meaning independently of natural or technical language attributions, natural or technical meanings occur only coincidentally when they do occur.

It is doubtful that anyone would be prepared to argue the case of total linguistic irrelevance (although no-reference theories seem to represent a case of partial irrelevance); but the spirit of this point reveals that the aesthetic position as a tendency and emphasis is discriminable from the general tendency and emphasis of the contextualist

attitude.

The extreme aesthetic view according to which natural meaning is merely coincidental would imply a codal construal model; whereas the view that an aesthetic rationale and interest tend to modify natural meaning at various points would imply the technical language construal model.

The Standard Usage Semantic Attitude derives from the assumption that literary texts are language scripts to be read in terms of the standard usage of their expression in the natural language in which the text is composed. It is argued that since the artist is an artist of language, or with language, his use of language pre-supposes that there is a shared system of meaning rules common to himself and his interpreters, and indeed common to the users of the given natural language.

The standard usage theorist, however, may attach more weight to the concept of shared meaning rules than it can bear; for a code understood by only two persons would satisfy that condition. In fact, so long as the rules are shareable, the most private code could become standard usage. The point, then, must be taken to be, that if the work is a natural language work, then it must be interpreted in accordance with the rules for construing a natural language text; and these rules constitute a shared system. It is still perhaps more discreet for the standard usage theorist to say that a natural language pre-supposes shareable rules, since it is quite possible for the majority of the users of a given natural language not to understand a literary text. The rules for interpreting the more sophisticated works are surely not shared by the majority of the users of that language, except in

the rare hypothetical civilization where most of the inhabitants are highly literate and unusually intelligent. Part of the understanding and communication of meaning depends on certain quality of intelligence. Now if the literary artists of a culture employed the most difficult concepts and wrote in a highly 'literary style', then the meaning of literary works may not be shared by the members of that culture. Yet none of the words and none of the sentences might be used in other than a standard sense. How technical a given text is in a given language can depend on the educational sophistication of its readers. This sense of technical is not yet that of say, a science within that culture. The scientific vocabulary might still be technical to the well educated reader of the language, though both the scientist and the well educated reader of the language may find nothing technical about a text which would be 'technical' for the poorly educated masses.

Despite the fact that the shared nature of standard usage can be called into question, there is a perfectly clear distinction between reading a text in terms of what it would mean to a given linguistic society possessed of a natural language in which that script is written, and reading the text so as to yield a highly idiosyncratic reading, as though the text were not written in a language used by the community. And, after all, from love letters to death certificates are written in such a language recognized as understandable by all without <u>general</u> reference to anyone's idiosyncratic meaning.

The model just described is clearly the natural language construal model. In other words, the standard usage semantic attitude is not a special attitude at all, but the standard language construal model itself.

There is a complication in the standard meaning approach that is worth remarking on at this point. It is that the text may be read with a view to yielding the standard meaning of the work at the time of production or the standard meaning at the time of interpretation. We may refer to the former approach as the historical standard usage attitude and to the latter as the relativistic standard meaning attitude. Then the relativists can be seen as of two sorts: the weak and the strong. A weak relativist manages to claim that there is for any given generation of readers only one meaning - the standard meaning the text has for that generation; whereas a strong relativist manages to allow that all the standard meanings of all the ages are equally legitimate manifestations of the semantic structure of the work.

Now this is a very interesting division within the ranks of the standard usage theorists. For it emerges that the position endowed with the most engaging naturalness - the position that a literary work is a language work - cannot establish that the text must be conceived in one way only, as having one quite undebatable method of construal and semantic personality. Rather it must be argued why a certain conception of the personality of the work or the institution of literature leads to an acceptance of the one standard usage position and not the other. For instance, why should we care that the text was written by x in century y ? Or why should we want to insist that any such object must not be considered as changing?

Choosing and defending the model

We may describe the situation of construal of the literary text as follows: the reader adopts a certain semantic attitude that employs a certain construal model defensible as appropriate through appeal to an identity model determined by the reader's conception of the institution of literature.

We have already suggested that our own conception of the institution of literature is that it is part of the institution of art. And this institution involves the artist, the work of art and the public. Now there can be no doubt that the public considers the artist to be specially gifted in such a way as to produce works worth their contemplation, study and appreciation. And their respect for the artist induces a certain concern to determine the exact product in the exact state that the artist presents his work or makes his contribution to the institution of art. Works of sculpture are protected as far as possible from damage and erosion, paintings are carefully handled, packed and transported so as to preserve their properties, musical scores are carefully copied, and checks are made on the authenticity of literary text. It is clear from all this that in the institution of literature we do not accept forgeries or the tampering with works, that we expect to be presented with the product that the artist has created. So it is largely because we are interested in what he created that we are careful about preserving it in the state in which it was created. We can accept only the replicable unchanging object as the model for the literary work, if the understanding of the institutuion of art as described is correct.

We must hold, therefore, that the semantic structure of the work is whatever particular structure may be given as its meaning at the time of production. This means that the historical standard usage theorist is right in employing the model that he does; though it is not thereby established that he is right in employing the standard usage construal model, or more accurately, the natural language construal model. Several attitudes, as we have seen, may employ the unchanging replicatable object model. But the relativist standard meaning approach must be ruled out.

It is only fair to admit that we do not consider ourselves to have proved the relativist wrong. We merely say that if the institution of literature is to be conceived as we have conceived it, then the relativist attitude cannot be accepted. But it is still in a way open to the relativist to construe the literary text as he wishes in accordance with some other conception of literature or literary texts.

We may now turn to the attitudes we have presented and choose among them.

The assumption on which the institution of literature is partly based- that literary work are artistic constructs in a given natural language prohibit us from accepting eitner the authorial or the stimulus attitude, since, as we have seen, they are based on a codal construal model. Such a model is clearly inconsistent with the assumption that the literary work is composed in a given natural language. Further, if we accept the conception of the institution of literature as involving the public, then a public construal of the text that could only be coinci-

dentally identical with the meaning of the work would mean really that the public is irrelevant to the institution of literature, that the institution of literature is already fully formed without the public; for the language of the work would not be a public or the public language.

It is again only fair to admit that we do not consider ourselves to have refuted the authorial theorist who might want to maintain that the institution of literature involves the public only in the sense that the public must seek to decode or to discover the author's key that unlocks the semantic structure. We might add in parting, however, that if the artist is not an artist of language in the sense that he operates with it in subtle and effective ways, but rather makes his own code out of it our notion of him as an artist is at least almost completely devoid of meaning or content. We would seem to have to be judging him on his success in making a code out of a language.

The author could, though, find his place in a contextualist position. The context in which literary works appear may just be that context in which the author's meaning counts to a greater degree than it does in other texts. It could be claimed that there is more room in the institution of literature for evolving highly idiosyncratic modes of meaning not present or even allowable in non-literary texts. The argument would thus not be that the author takes over entirely, but that in writing of this type we need to consult his perspective and meaning more than we normally do. We might for example consider him to be a more sensitive creature than other mortals, and this sensitivity might find expression in idiosyncratic meanings. In such a case it

would be foolish to insist that he write always in terms of public meaning. The most we could ask is that he write in a way in which his meaning could become public. Why should we seek a guarantee against enrichment?

Now it seems that this sort of argument is compatible with our conception of the institution of literature and at the same time does not fit tidily into any one construal model. In fact it seems to begin to emerge that the models are not completely disjoint and impervious to construal model traffic. Or to explain the matter less clumsily: the attitudes represent only tendencies and the tendencies fit more or less into a certain construal model. Each model represents some aspect of the total language situation. For example, although we all speak a common language (that is within a linguistic community) we often need to know what someone means by a certain word or expression; but because we need to know this we do not cry out 'private language'. The word may have more than one meaning in the natural language, and so the meaning in question would be the meaning meant by the speaker as opposed to how the community might mistakenly interpret the meaning; i.e., the speaker's meaning. So that we need not have a showdown between the utterer's intended meaning and the meaning of the sentence in the sense of the standard meaning. So in all situations to insist on some pure standard meaning model would be quite wrong.

On the other hand, we cannot use the fact that in cases of reference we may need to know to whom or to what the speaker is referring or we may need to know whether the speaker is referring to an actual state of affairs, is making a joke or composing a novel, to argue that the codal model is most suitable for the construal of literature. All

these 'private' activities can be understood within a natural language model of construal. It is not even so obvious that the technical language model is not a distinction made within a natural language model, merely pointing to one way a natural language model permits the members that use it to express themselves and their meaning in terms of specialized interests or for special purposes, all considred legitimate within the natural language. Now a code which made a completely different language out of a natural language could not be described in terms of the expression of specialized interests within the natural language; so a code would clearly represent a different and incompatible model.

We have already hinted that the contextualist position could be considered a kind of technical language position, and we have just suggested how the technical language model, when not a code, may be assimilated to a natural language position. And we have also suggested that when one considers the matter the natural language attitude is one with the natural language construal model, and that it does not really represent a special attitude at all. Where are we left?

We are led to conclude that the central core of meaning in the literary work , a language work, is that as expressed according to the semantic structure of that language in the normal standard meaning interpretation of that language. But the fact that the work is a work of art allows other special considerations to come in in modifying at certain points our way of taking meaning. So the artist might want to use the design on the page as yielding meaning; and whereas in non-literary texts, and even in some literary texts , such a design would

be ignored, it is considerd significant and a part of the meaning of some literary works. Or if we are presented with a nonsense set of words posing as a text in a natural language we could easily dismiss it as nonsense. But if the set were served up as a poem, we might discount the fact that the text has no natural language or standard meaning, but made sense in terms of rhythm, tone, or evocative power. We might say that it is aestnetically significant. But there would be no need to go on to construct a case for an independent method of construal which meant interpreting all texts aesthetically. For what would that mean, and why should it be necessary?

Even the stimulus approach has its place in a total account of meaning. For in language the purpose of certain figures of speech and imaginative modes of expression function to set the imagination in play along certain lines, and there is room enough in this area for one's own imagination to supply meaning. One has no reason, however, to move on from this legitimate semantic phenomenon to erect a method of construal which invites the imagination to do what it will with all the words of the text.

The force of the argument against the recognition of models other than the natural language model and against the attitudes other than the standard usage attitude is not to have the effect of showing that there is no distinction in attitudes and models, that they all can be worked into the standard usage model. Other definite positions can be taken up in terms of a given conception of the institution of literature. But if the institution of literature is what we conceive it to be, part of the institution of art, and if the institution of art in-

volves what we say it involves, then aspects of all the attitudes and models presented have a bearing on the interpretation of the literary work, which is too rich and multifarious (there are so many different kinds of work as well) to be construed from one intransigent position.

The text and the work

We need to clarify the relationship between the text and the work that is implicit in our analysis.

It was remarked in ChapterI that the meaning of the work is to be taken as given with the text. This is seen to refer to the personality or identity model of the work. It does not mean that the work is already fully there to be read off; but that we must not think of the work as acquiring its properties as time goes on or as changing its properties as time goes on. Also to say that the work is given with the text is not to say that all its properties will have the same manifestation in every construal; and so the work does in a sense change. The identity models, as should be expected do not fit exactly . After all, the literary work is in a sense sui generis. But of the identity models available no harm is done in placing the work as we have, so long as we understand the placing to involve an approximation.

There are aspects of the semantic structure that are invariant. The primary meaning of the text would normally be so considered. But we have shown that there is a performance element in our interpretation of the phonic structure much as there is an element of individual performance in music. But throughout the performances one is not

allowed to misrepresent the phonic structure, which must be present throughout all authentic performances. There is nothing very paradoxical about that. The phonic structure of the work is given in one sense and not given in another. In the sense in which it is not given individual variation informs the work.

We could suggest, by analogy, that there is also an element of performance in interpreting the semantic structure of the work, and this at the level of stating the symbolic meaning and similar significances of the work. But we shall treat this in the next chapter.

We have already seen that in the perception of character the work is not given, both at a fairly elementary level and at the level of seeing the entire complexity of the work and understanding it through drawing on experience of life and supplying what we have termed the embedded descriptions hidden, as it were, under the surface of that aspect of the work's semantic structure.

And, very generally, a work is derived only through a certain construal of the text; so that many works may be derived from the text, and even many readings of many works. We have seen that we need to establish what sort of reading of the text yields the work; and we have linked that reading to the conception one has of the institution of literature. This shows in what way the work is not given by the text. We further need to recognize that the work is always manifested through a reading of the work. Our analysis of the text and its relation to the work and our presentation of the construal situation serves as a useful contribution to our understanding both of the text and the work.

Chapter VI

Symbol, Metaphor, Deviance.

In our discussion of the semantic structure we discussed the meaning of the literary work in fundamental and very general terms. We were concerned mainly with how the text is to be given meaning. A sample analysis of modes of meaning should give us a clearer idea of the sort of structure the semantic structure is and the levels of interpretation involved in discovering it.

Most characterization of the meaning of a literary work are not directed at the fundamental problem we discussed in the last chapter. Rather it is normally assumed that we know how to give the literary text its meaning and the issue really is how that meaning is to be characterized. The purpose of such a characterization has sometimes been to show how the literary object is unique or to be distinguished from other samples of linguistic composition.

We have not set ourselves the task of stating the differentia of poetic meaning and feel that attempts to rule out certain modes of meaning tend to result in an impoverished understanding of the literary work. Thus, we showed that meaning both in terms of sense and reference is exemplified in the work. The whole question of the truth value of the work depended on recognizing that descriptions may be used with or without assertive intentions; and indeed our understanding of the descriptions depends on discovering whether or not they are asserted, where by 'understanding' we mean a full understanding of their use and function. Failure to understand that texts frequently refer to states of affairs

in the world at the time of the work's production could lead to the consequence that the work expresses true propositions at one time and false propositions at another.

By way of illustration, let us suppose that while in Saudi Arabia in 1972 the poet composed the poem that begins as follows:

> The veil's not rent from Saud's sandy female features;
> No bare-faced women's lib' of oily eyes and starved, parched lips
> Fronting the glare and glaze like modern desert creatures
> Energy-surfeited; ...

Let us suppose that the poet is referring to the fact (in 1972) that Saudi women are prohibited from appearing in public without the veil. Let us further suppose that in 1979 King Faisal or whoever then rules the country decrees that veils be doffed. Then the poet's lines would be false when read in 1979, even though the language of the poem has not changed in sense in 1979. This is clearly unacceptable and shows that we need to understand the work not merely in terms of sense.

Now we shall be concerned in this chapter with discussing the meaning of the work not in terms simply of understanding the sense of the words but of 'interpreting the sense' of the words, as it were. And the first type of semantic phenomenon to be considered is symbolic meaning.

1. Symbolic Meaning

We shall discuss the symbolic meaning of the work as an aspect of the semantic structure in terms of the category of embedded descriptions proposed in Chapter IV.

Certain consequences follow, perforce from this liaison. It will not be part of our purpose to provide a general account of symbolism; and the semantic phenomenon with which we shall be dealing will not

necessarily be always strictly synonymous with some other uses or the term Also, whatever symbolism turns out to be as a property of the semantic structure of the work it cannot possess criteria of identity wholly outside the criteria of identity which we establish for the general semantic structure of the work. In short, ours cannot be a 'free' analysis of symbolic meaning.

To introduce, and indeed define, the kind of semantic phenomenon to be discussed we shall rely on a number of quotations pre-sented together without commentary, though not in an altogether random fashion. Then we may refer to them at points where they may be considered as required. Here is the prologue reading material:

> And now, when all is said, the question will still recur, though now in quite another sense. What does poetry mean? This unique expression, which cannot be replaced by any other, still seems to be trying to express something beyond itself. (Bradley) 1.

> Symbols in art connote holiness, or sin, or rebirth, womanhood, love, tyranny and so forth These meanings enter into the work of art as elements, creating and articulating its organic form, just as its subject-matter - fruit in a platter, horses on a beach, a slaughtered ox, or a weeping Magdalen -enter into its construction. Symbols used in art lie on a different semantic level from the work that contains them. Their meanings are not part of their import, but elements in the form that has import, the expressive form. The meanings of incorporated symbols may lend richness, intensity, repetitions or reflection or a transcendental unrealism, perhaps an entirely new balance to the work itself. But they function in the normal manner of symbols: they mean something beyond what they present in themselves. It makes sense to ask what a Hound of Heaven or brown sea-girls or Yeats's Byzantium may stand for,though in a poem where symbols are perfectly used it is usually unnecessary. Whether the interpretation has to be carried out or is skipped in reception of the total poetic image depends largely on the reader. The important point for us is that there is a literal meaning (sometimes more than one)

1. 'Poetry for Poetry's sake', in A Modern Book of Esthetics, ed. M. Rader, 1966, p. 322.

connoted by the symbol that occurs in art. (Susanne Langer) [1]

Many poems and some works of plastic art possess what I like to call 'depth meanings' - meanings of universal scope underneath relatively concrete meanings and ideas. (DeWitt Parker) (2)

Every element of a work of art is indispensable for the one purpose of pointing out the theme, which embodies the nature of existence for the artist. In this sense we find symbolism even in works that, at first sight, seem to be little more than arrangements of fairly neutral objects. (Rudolph Arnheim) (3)

Thus when we say that a literary work, such as Native Son, contains a second-order truth-claim, what is meant is that some of the printed meanings imply the truth claim even though it is not expressed in the sense of appearing in print. Truth-claims are second-order, then, because they depend upon and cannot exist without the printed first-order meanings. (Morris Weitz) (4)

La Peste is an account of the fight against an imaginary epidemic - 'the plague' referred to in the title - which supposedly afflicted Oran sometime in the 1940s. Camus describes a particular event (the plague) in a geographical location (North Africa), but he handles his subject in such a way that he extends its meaning beyond the particular to the universal. He conveys a general picture of man's position in the universe, faced by the problem of evil and the necessity of suffering. In a less total fashion Camus also includes a series of indirect references to the German occupation of France and so adds a second level of symbolical meaning to the novel. La Peste is thus an ambitious attempt to combine in one whole a literal and two metaphorical

1. 'Expressiveness and Symbolism', in Rader, op. cit., pp. 256-57.
2. The Principles of Aesthetics, sec. ed., 1946, p. 32.
3. 'Expression', in Rader, p. 268.
4. 'Art, Language and Truth', in The Problems of Aesthetics, ed., E. Vivas & M. Krieger, 1966, p. 167.

interpretations. In this way it contains a network of symbols - situations, characters and physical objects which, while being themselves, also represent other things beyond themselves. (J. Cruickshank) (1)

The true symbol differs essentially from this (Freud's sign or symptom) and should be understood as the expression of an intuitive perception which can as yet, neither be apprehended better, nor expressed differently. When, for example, Plato expresses the whole problem of the theory of cognition in his metaphor of the cave, or when Christ expresses the idea of the Kingdom of Heaven in his parables, these are genuine and true symbols; namely, attempts to express a thing, for which there exists as yet no adequate verbal concept. (Carl G. Jung) (2)

Those forms which do not constitute the presentation of a given concept itself but only, as approximate representations of the imagination, express the consequences bound up with it and its relationship to other concepts, are called (aesthetical) attributes of an object whose concept as a rational idea cannot be adequately presented. ... They furnish an aesthetical idea, which for that rational idea takes the place of logical presentation; and thus, a s their proper office, they enliven the mind by opening out to it the prospect into an illimitable field of kindred representations. (Immanuel Kant) (3)

Whether consciously or unconsciously, or with a profession of this or that, authors make symbols and readers receive them. ... The best equipment for a critic of symbolist literature may be what Keats called Negative Capability: 'being in uncertainties, mysteries, doubts without any irritable reaching after fact and reason,' and 'remaining content with half-knowledge.' (William York Tindall) (4)

Since there is no commonly accepted body of symbols on which poets can draw, they will, as Whalley suggests, tend either to invent their own, or to use ancient symbols as decorative illustrations of their private myths. The first course subjects them to the strain which splits their verse into fragments; the second confuses their

1. Albert Camus, 1959, pp. 166-67.
2. 'On the Relation of Analytical Psychology to Poetic Art', in Vivas & Krieger, p. 167.
3. Critique of Judgment, in Philosophy of Art and Aesthetics, ed. Frank Tillman & Steven Cahn, 1969, pp. 181-82.
4. The Literary Symbol, 1967, pp. 14, 20.

readers by introducing reminiscences of traditional religious beliefs into a highly individual pattern of thought. (John Press) (1)

Nonetheless, until the twentieth century it must have been possible to know what a symbol referred to in broad terms, even if this knowledge, far from being true understanding, in certain cases tended actually to veil understanding. (George Winfield Digby) (2)

In literature, at all event - and I think the same applies to religious writing - the meaning of anything that we recognize as a symbol is determined by a context. To be more exact, there are two overlapping contexts within which meaning takes place; there is the context from which the symbol emerges - namely the work in which it occurs, and the yet wider context of meaning which the artist draws on in making his work; and there is the context into which it enters - namely the moving and developing life of the person responding. (L.C, Knights.) (3)

We have spoken so much abou the significanceeand meaning of the work of art, that one can hardly suppress the theoretical doubt whether in fact art does signify. Perhaps art itself does not intend to signify, contains no sort of 'meaning', at least not in the sense in which we are speaking of 'meaning'. Perhaps it is like nature, which simply is, without any intention to signify. Is 'meaning' necessarily more than interpretation 'secreted' into it by the need of the intellect hungry for meaning? Art - one might say - Is beauty, and therein it finds its true aim andfulfilment. It needs no meaning. The question of meaning has nothing productive for art. When I enter the sphere of art I must certainly submit to the truth of that statement. But when we are speaking of the relation of Psychology to the work of art we are standing outside the realm of art, and here it is impossible not for us to speculate. We must interpret; we must find meaning in things, otherwise we should be quite unable to think about them. We must resolve life and happenings, all that fulfils itself in itself, into images, meanings, concepts; and thereby we deliberately detach ourselves from the living mystery. (Jung) (4)

1. The Chequer'd Shade , 1958, pp. 157-58.
2. 'Content and Communication in the Visual Arts', in Metaphor and Symbol , ed. L.C. Knights & Basil Cottle, 1960, p. 43.
3. 'Idea and Symbol: Some Hints from Coleridge', Ibid., p. 136.
4. Op. cit., p. 174.

Much of what is considered the meaning of the work clearly goes beyond the first order meaning of the text as surface descriptions. So that if we interpret the text as we would a sample from a natural language with its communicatively perspicuous character,we are going to miss much of the significance of the work of art. The natural language model merely sets up the minimal apparatus for approaching and interpreting the work. And the set of directives for discovering this level of meaning is relatively easy to supply. What becomes much more difficult is the establishing of controls on semantic attributions on the higher level. Although meaning at the advanced level may be more difficult of determination, we still need to consider it as a very important aspect of the semantic structure. In fact, literature has sometimes been defined in terms of this level of meaning. It is here, then, that the notion of embedded descriptions appears serviceable; for, linked with the notion of surface descriptions,it allows us to establish the complete form of meaning in literature.

The burden placed on embedded descriptions is massive, since not only are legitimately derivable character descriptions described as embedded but also second order meanings of a very complex kind. But if we regard embedded descriptions as covering generally those aspects of the semantic structure that are not readily available on the surface of the text, we can conveniently transfer the difficulties of clarification of the notion to the individual manifestations of non-surface meaning.

We should resist the temptation, however, of conceiving of the second order meaning of the work as detachable from the semantic structure; 'second order' is to be properly understood as chronological rather than evaluative. That is, after we have understood the

symbols of the text in terms of primary meaning, or what Weitz terms 'printed meaning', second-order meaning is available But since as Susanne Langer notices, 'symbolic meanings enter into the work of art as elements, creating and articulating its organic form', second-order meaning, though posteriorly apprehended, may be a more vital aspect of the semantic structure than the primary meaning. It is at this level that one really needs to invoke one's conception of the institution of literature, and tax and test one's comprehension of the institution of art. And quite naturally it is here that one's attitude to the work seriously matters; an attitude that takes account of the fact that the artist's medium is language in the broadest sense (including the world comprehended within the limits of that language, and, some would say: hints of a dimension beyond), that the artist is an artist, and that as such his work is to be considered a product of art fit for the contemplation of an audience or theatre of spectators.

We shall employ the term symbolic meaning for three forms of second-order meaning, which we now distinguish. We do not however claim that there are no other forms of symbolic meaning.

The first and simplest mode we shall term the denotative symbolic; the second, the metaphysical-symbolic; the third, the transcendental-symbolic.

For the denotative symbol it is always possible to make a statement of the form: 'a is referred to by b', where b is the first order meaning of the text, and a the second order meaning symbolized by b. It is, presumably, this kind of symbolic meaning Susanne Langer has in mind when she speaks of the 'literal meaning' of symbols. In this way

it is possible to say that Byzantium stands for redemption, for instance, or Camus's pestilence stands for the German occupation of France.

Now the question is whether the construal of the denotative symbol is similar to the construal of primary meaning. There is one obvious sense in which it is not. No dictionary will tell us that Byzantium stands for redemption. There is no standard meaning of this symbol. However, there could be and there probably are dictionaries that give the meanings of certain traditional symbols in a given culture. In this way such symbols would have a traditional standard meaning, and it would be possible to distinguish between the symbol as used in the standard way and the idiosyncratic use, in relation to the tradition, of the poet. There is no _prima facie_ reason for ruling that the poet's meaning must be that given by the tradition, any more than there is a reason for ruling that technical terms should be forbidden in any discourse whatever. But just as in a technical discourse the author must state his technical use of the term he is intending to use in a technical sense, the author must give some indication that his meaning departs from the traditional meaning of the symbol. Now the way an author does this, or the way in which a symbol would be allowed to be the same as or different from the traditional symbol, is to include in the structure of his work the background that justifies the meaning of his symbols. The symbol occurs in a certain context, and obviously has its meaning within this context. Words do not have meaning in sentences (grammatical) merely because the words have dictionary meanings. It would be quite naive to hold that the meanings of the words in a sentence, and so the sentence had a given meaning simply because separately each word has a

meaning given by the dictionary. The sentence might be complete nonsense, and it would be no point to say that in the sentence any given word had any given meaning. So a traditional symbol appearing in a given work does not necessarily have the traditional meaning in that work; that is, it might have no meaning at all. And so if an author had a meaning for a symbol traditional or not, which was unrelated to the context of the work, then his private symbol simply would not be a symbol in that work. So there can be private symbols, that is, non-traditional ones, but to be symbols they must have the required context in which they take their place. This means, in part, that although an individual reader might never on his own discover the meaning of a private symbol he could be shown, not simply told.

Camus's La Peste, then, would be interpreted on the level of primary meaning as describing an imaginary epidemic which afflicted Oran, and on the second level the situation of the French under the German occupation of France. Now perhaps no one fact about La Peste establishes this particular reading, but several together do. There was a German occupation of France; it did not pre-date the writing of the novel by several centuries; the novel was written in French; the situation of how the plague created despair and meaninglessness in the novel is similar to the situation of the occupation which created the same response in the French; and so on. In other words, the point of the work or the meaning of the symbol is not something arbitrarily left up to its author Even in the case of private symbols, such as are found in Yates, their meaning must be embedded in the primary meaning of the text. If they are not but are somehow still symbols, then

their presence is irrelevant.

This is not to say that we ought not to listen to an author who offers to tell us what his symbols mean. And it could in some rare cases even be allowed that unless the artist had said what he meant it is difficult to see how we could possibly find out. But theoretically whatever symbolic meanings the artist points out could be pointed out by a reader. The fact that he may sometimes be the only one to point out the meaning of the symbol does not place his indication on a separate logical level. But we must not go to the extreme of ignoring what the artist has to say about his meaning with the slogan 'an artist is a reader of his work'.

The meaning of symbols is usually arrived at with the help of the evidence we have of the artist's metaphysical scheme, the place symbolism is known to hold in his work, the objects and situations he is known to favour as symbols, historical clues concerning the conditions of existence at the time of writing, internal clues such as repetition (imagistic or other) either within a given work or several, the knowledge we have of traditional symbolism and so on. It is only out of a complex body of some such knowledge that highly sophisticated works by a Joyce, Yeats or Sartre are interpreted at the symbolic level. Second order meaning in less ambitious works can largely be determined from indications within the text.

It was politic to raise the general problems of symbolic interpretation after describing the first type of symbolic meaning for two reasons. First, the denotative symbol represents the most simple form of symbolic meaning; and second, we needed to provide a basic con-

clusion in reference to which the forms of symbolism we describe may be discussed. We turn now to the metaphysical symbolic mode.

The work is considered to be symbolic of metaphysical meaning in the sense that it embodies some view of 'the nature of existence' or as implying a propositional truth claim.

We ought to discriminate here between such metaphysical meaning as may be considered tied to the artistic point of the work, and other claims about the metaphysical meaning of the work, where the events of the story are taken as organized in such a way as to suggest that the author holds some thesis about the nature of the world or the meaning of existence. The particular genre of the novel referred to as the roman à thèse is evidence that the novelist may dramatize a metaphysical theory through characters in action. 'Hell is others' may be the thesis of Sartre's Huis Clos, for example Rudolf Arnheim seems to maintain that this is not merely sometimes intentionally the case, but necessarily so.

If one knows, for instance, that Sartre held certain strong philosophical view that merit the label 'existentialist', notes the nature of his narrative and the conversation of the characters, it would not be difficult to conclude that his existentialism is tied up with his art. But to say that every novel implies a thesis or truth claim is to be entangled in a confusion. For if we claim that any selection or presentation of narrative events implies a thesis, then any set of real events implies a thesis. But who is implying the thesis embodied in the set of events? If a thesis is implied , the author has to imply it; the events by themselves imply nothing.

The attribution of metaphysical meaning to a set of events or to a

situation is not at all a primarily artistic or critical activity. It is as old as metaphysics. As Jung says: 'We must interpret; we must find meaning in things . ... We must resolve life and happenings.' And he was prepared to accept that when we indulge in this kind of activity we are standing outside art. That is not necessarily true; but it is certainly true that mankind is given to the kind of interpretation Jung describes. If works of art sometimes offer a representation of life, then to the extent that that representation is faithful certain remarks about the meaning of what is represented would apply equally to the model and the representation. In fact, there are several 'second hand' philosophers. They do not comment so much on life the model, but life presented in the work of art. It would be misleading, then, to claim that the metaphysical meaning we attach to a set of events as described by the author is implied by him or by the work.

In assessing a writer's work, however, it is possible to talk about the vision he presented or perspective he adopted for his work. Certain writers of tragedy might be described as having a tragic vision. But we should always keep separate the statements we make about the author and the statements we make about the work. A writer may write tragedy, but need not have a fatalistic view of the world. Hardy, however, is fairly generally regarded to have incorporated such a thesis in his work. And this is probably true, since in the commentary in his novels fatalistic remarks are made; this is very explicitly done at the end of his novel Tess of the D'Urbervilles.

Sometimes, however, it is not that easy to determine what stance the

author is adopting? This is sometimes so because it may emerge that a traditional symbol or myth is being handled somewhat differently. The traditional meaning and treatment of symbols in the literary or theological heritage are not always a reliable guide to the meaning or position that underlines a given poet's treatment of symbols. The metaphysical thesis implied by Milton's Paradise Lost is not necessarily the thesis implied by the Biblical account of the Fall of Man. It is part of the business of artistic activity to renovate aspects of the mythological heritage; and as the case of Satan eminently demonstrates, the dramatic possibilities in the personification of evil may lead to a development or interpretation quite at odds with the stock significance of its ethico-conceptual content and force. Or apart from the possibilities of the myth for dramatization distorting its original nature, the author might be prey to an unresolved conflict which gets expressed in his work.

It might result in a false perception of the metaphysical meaning of a work (or in the symbolic meaning generally) if we assume that the meaning of myth and symbol is given by some collective unconscious or cultural tradition. We would probably have to make the grand metaphysical assumption that a unitary, timeless meaning is incorporated in the objects, events and tales appearing in the work of chosen artists and narrators early in the development of cultures; so that the tale or myth or set of symbols remains forever the same as regards meaning and valid throughout the various interpretations and uses future generations may make of them. There are, of course, various and

conflicting interpretations of symbol and myth; and it cannot be true that the message of the myth is true in whatever interpretation. Outside literature the metaphysical meaning of the myth is in dispute; and since we have to take account of what is happening in each particular work, we must not suppose that the metaphysical meaning of a myth that occurs in poetry is available through exclusive appeal to traditional iconology or trpology.

What metaphysical-symbolic meaning a work contains, that is, what thesis is implied by the work or what truth claim is being made, must be made and considered internal to the work through aspects of its semantic structure both in the form of surface meaning and denotative symbols and the general style in which these meanings are manipulated. The work, however is not committed to having this sort of meaning.

The third mode of symbolic meaning, which we have termed the transcendental-symbolic, is conceived as somehow encapsulated in the figure or set of figures presented in an attempt 'to express a thing, for which there exists as yet no adequate verbal concept.' Such a symbol is according to Kant an aesthetical idea which sets the mind and imagination after a meaning it does not fully capture; it is as it were on the border between the phenomenal and the noumenal. Jung would prefer to allow this type of symbol a certain living mystery; and Tindall quoting Keats is inclined to think that the symbol is enjoyed as a pa rtially known phenomenon. Benedetto Croce makes a distinction between a symbol and an allegory and while not denying that literal symbols

exist in all harmlessness; only the truly artistic symbol is synonymous with intuition and cannot be translated.[1]

The genius of the artist at this level resides in his ability to create the transcendental symbol. And since, apparently, owing to the richness or the profundity or the elusiveness of its meaning, the transcendental symbol cannot really be paraphrased or put another way. It is difficult, because of the nature of such a symbol to put restrictions on statements that hint at its meaning. Kant could be taken as suggesting that such a symbol is a sort of semantic stimulus that must be allowed to lift the imagination away with it; while for Keats there should be no 'irritable reaching after fact and reason'; one should be content not to know fully.

To a hardheaded, no-nonsense realist such a symbol simply does not exist. But there is no 'real' reason why it should not; though an obvious difficulty is that of recognizing it. Perhaps when we meet a symbol that have had numerous explications and yet seems to have been only scratched on the surface, we may become duly suspicious. It is to be noted, however, that only insofar as the untranslatable symbol is intimately related to the structure of the work are we interested in it in the first place. If our discovery of it does not matter to our appreciation of the work, then it does not matter how ineffable the symbol remains.

One could, of course, attempt to show that a given symbol is transcendental by denying that any explication whatever <u>really</u> got at its meaning.

1. 'Art as Intuition', in Vivas & Krieger, p. 88.

But then one could deny that any explication whatever ever really gets at the meaning of that which it is an explication of.

There is, however, something in the view that some symbols may be 'grasped' in a way virtually impossible to be put in words. But it is always in relation to the part they play in the total artistic structure of the work that we have an interest in them. Also, it is not that the symbols by their nature alone have the significance they do have in the work; it is that they are recognized as an attempt on the part of the author to pass on a certain vision, to present something for which there exists as yet no adequate verbal concept. Such symbols have the strongest ca-se, perhaps, for the need to participate in the imagination of the author. However, the nature of the symbol as described requires a concentration more on the symbol as presented, which then has a certain effect on the reader and calls forth the appropriate imaginative response.

Second order meaning in the light of our discussion is seen to be the most exciting aspect of the search for the meaning of the literary work.

2. Metaphor.

It is not an essential part of our undertaking to account for all the aspects of the semantic structure in the sense of analysing every elemental manifestation of meaning. And, at any rate, granted the emphasis required by the argument of this thesis, the general tendencies of such an analysis are predictable. Notwithstanding,

there is the phenomenon of metaphor, which has been considered to bear so intimate a relation to poetry that some critics have been moved to claim an identification: 'poetry is metaphor'. While the claim is by itself not sufficient to compel us to say what it is for a metaphor to mean, there has been such frequent reference to metaphor in the writings of the critics, and recently 'chez' philosopners and linguists, that we shall have to consider its relevance to an understanding of the semantic structure. We shall try to discover what is meant by saying that poetry is metaphor, to what extent what is meant is true, and what bearing the answer has on the perception of meaning.

Poetry is metaphor may mean either that poetry is

A) language with a nigh incidence of metaphor; or

B) language interpreted generally as one would interpret metaphor.

A) may be taken either as

i) a definition in the sense that all and only those linguistic pieces containing a high incidence of metaphor are literary works or poetry; or

ii) a generalization affording some indication of a prevalent feature of literary works.

Ai is obviously false, as almost any anthology will snow.

Aii seems true.

B) would be indifferent as to whether a given piece contained many or any metaphors; but pre-supposes some comprehension of or competence in interpreting metaphor outside literature.

B may be taken as

1) a definition in the sense that all and only those linguistic pieces

interpreted as one would interpret metaphor generally are literary works;
ii) a generalization affording some indication of a prevalent approach to the construal of literary works;
iii) a stipulative or normative definition for literary explication, claiming that a poem is only properly interpreted when interpreted as one would interpret metaphor.

Bi) is obviously false, since a) - poems do not cease to be poems when not interpreted as one would interpret metaphor; and b) interpreting a piece of language as one would interpret metaphor does not make it poetry. (of course one could treat any piece of language as one would a literary work, though the result would be in many cases curious.)

Bii) seems true; only, it is far from clear what is involved in interpreting a piece of language as one would interpret metaphor. It is certainly true that many critics do not interpret many poems in quite the same way as they would interpret a piece of language that is not a literary work; though it is perhaps true that all critics interpret some parts of some poems exactly as they would a non-literary piece of language. It is also true that many critics interpret some poems as saying one thing and meaning another or something more, as when they give the symbolic meaning of a poem. But if there is no agreed way in which language interpreted as one would interpret is interpreted, the actual clarifying value of Bii will be limited.

There is a measure of vagueness, moreover, as to what precise kind of linguistic construction is denoted by 'metaphor'. The term has been

sometimes used to embrace all figures of speech. In that case it would be a question of understanding how figures of speech are interpreted. Adopting the notions of inapplicability, transference and analogy in Aristotle's definition of metaphor, many critics and some grammarians have considered metonymy, synecdoche, catachresis, personification and simile as all manifestations of metaphor. They have, however, been comparatively silent on how other figures of speech, such as litotes, euphemism and oxymoron, fit into a general analysis of metaphor. As Haig Khatchdourian observes: 'No single account lays bare the nature of all utterances that we commonly call metaphor.'[1] Even on a restricted interpretation of metaphor, excluding some of the figures of speech, a proper analysis would have to consider the variety of expressions to be considered metaphorical in order to determine to what extent they are amenable to a unitary explanation.

By far the predominant enpgasis has been on the cognitive content of metaphor, 'the way in which it gives you two ideas for one', to use Johnson's phrase. It has consequently been considered crucial to determine what the exact relationship between the ideas is: whether interaction, sustitution, comparison, fusion, unification, identity, juxtaposition, transference, confrontation. And the propositional form of metaphor has been treated as the paradigm. The analysts have proceeded as though the conceptual content of that kind of metaphor is available through an understanding of the terms involved

1. 'Metaphor', The British Journal of Aesthetics, Vol. 8. p. 227. (1968)

together with certain standard associations such terms happen to have for the reader. More careful critics have thought it necessary to include reference to the context of occurrence; for example, the whole poem as determining to some extent what the metaphor means or the direction in which the exploration of association should be oriented.

Rather less attention, however, has been paid to the use of metaphor as a determinant of what we are to make of it. It is certainly known that poets have frequently employed metaphor to delight or shock the reader by the boldness, say, of a suggested connexion between apparently dissimilar things, without committing themselves to suggesting that the related objects or concepts should be followed up or through to determine in how many ways a connexion could in fact be established. And it would distort the metaphor to maintain that whatever truth content could be found in the metaphor was affirmed in the poem.

Metaphor is also used to set tone and induce a certain emotional response or attitude to what is being said; and it would lead to a misunderstanding of the work if the metaphors were interpreted as primarily cognitive, in the sense of making some subtle claim about inter-relations in the world. Or again, the choice of figures might be dictated by stylistic considerations; so that recognition of the precise role of metaphor in the work would control the extent to which its assertive content or force is sought. Only in those cases where the assertive force of metaphor is operative would the subtle cognitive approaches be relevant.

If we recognize that there are different accounts as to how metaphors

and different kinds of metaphor are to be interpreted, and that other approaches than the cognitive-assertive may be necessary for the construal of metaphor according to the role it is called upon to play in the particular work, it will be apparent that Bii involves a number of different answers to the question :how is metaphor construed? And the recommendation that poetry be construed as one would interpret metaphor (Biii) would consist of different actual recommendations; even the recommendation that poetry is not to be interpreted at all.

Biii could be linked to Aii , in that if it is true that there is a particularly high incidence of metaphor in poetry, it may well be the case that the non-metaphoric expressions need to be understood in relation to the metaphoric. And if the cognitive content of metaphor is its chief value in poetry, an essentially non-literal approach to the seemingly literal expressions of the work may be required to cope with the metaphoric mode of meaning which the poet may be considerd as employing. This essentially metaphoric approach to the literary work might be restricted to those works showing a high incidence of metaphor; that is, having more metaphoric than non-metaphoric expressions. Or it may be extended to any poem whatever, even those without metaphors. But we are clearly not committed to holding that if some poems are to be treated as completely metaphorical, all poems must be; although it could be recommended that they should be, on the assumption that all poets write in the metaphoric mode, whether or not they use linguistically perspicuous metaphors. Or rather than recommend this through an assumption

it might be argued that the language of poetry is such that a literal interpretation never does it justice. Both assumptions, that all poetry is written in the metaphoric mode and that all poetic language is metaphoric seem extravagant; and reveal more a decision to read poetry in a certain way than an indication of how poetry is either written or read. It may also be based either on a misrepresentation of the meaning of 'metaphor','literal', and figurative' or a desire to find some support for a certain attitude towards the literary work.

Istvan Meszaros'theory that all poetry is metaphoric and that it follows from this fact that poems represent themselves demonstrates how a mistaken thesis about metaphor may be applied to the literary work (or how a theory about the interpretation of literature can lead to a mistaken theory about metaphor); and the gap that exists between any such thesis about metaphor and an account of a responsible construal of the work.

According to Meszaros only figures of speech in which the subject and predicate are both metaphorical are metaphors.[1] Thus, whatever a metaphor establishes it establishes metaphorically, that is, no reference is made to the world. A metaphor consequently refers to itself. But the examples Meszaros relies on to make a distinction between a true metaphor and a simile in the grammatical form of a metaphor do not illustrate his point. Contrary to what he claims, 'Youth's the season made for joys' is essential indistinguishable from 'Beauty's a flower, despised in decay'. The French language, for example, (to use a move à la Moore) employs the same word for 'like' and 'as it were' in such contexts. So that 'Youth's the season made for joys' may become in translation (the English language is more tolerant of the metaphor as

1. 'Metaphor and Simile', P.A.S., 1966-67, p. 157

opposed to the simile form of metaphors than the French) 'Youth is, as it were, the season made for joys.' Also, there is a season made for joys: Spring. What probably leads Meszaros to think that there is no such thing as the season made for joys is his failure to recognize that 'Spring is made for joys' is itself a way of saying that Spring is, as it were, made for joys - which is perfectly true. It would seem that any metaphor of the subject-predicate form which Meszaros could produce would be, according to his analysis, a simile, and hence synthetic and referential.

The means by which he then goes on to argue that Pope's Ode On Solitude, while containing no figures of speech, is metaphorical are suspect. He does not in fact establish that non-figurative language must be metaphorical; he merely states that the seemingly literal expressions of the poem are metaphorical expressions of a conception of life. They become metaphorical because of their 'structural interplay'.[1] But he provides no clarification of the metaphor involved in structural interplay nor relates it to his analysis of metaphorical subject and predicate. So even if his account of metaphor is acceptable, its necessary relation to the construal of poetry has not been explained. What he has in fact done is to treat poetry as he thinks 'real' metaphor is to be treated. He has not succeeded in showing that the structure of metaphor andthe structure of poetry are the same; and meantime he has not succeeded in laying bare the structure of metaphor. Metaphorical and non-figurative statements do have a different semantic structure; that is why we can

1. Op. cit., p. 137.

recognize figurative statements (though not all; mainly the strictly metaphorical type). For the non-figurative statements of poetry to be treated as metaphorical a decision has to be made so to treat them. And this decision is justified, if it can be supported by such considerations as show why in the context of the poem a literal interpretation is unplausible; perhaps the abundant figurative display or a deviant syntax or a much too fantastic conceptual development does not allow a straight reading.

The metaphoric interpretation of poetry on this understanding turns out to be rather similar to symbolic interpretation. However, if we could note certain features of excellent artistic metaphors, we might be able to discern in them a special character and find a meaning for the concept of the metaphorical interpretation of poetry even for seemingly literal expressions.

Aristotle said that 'the greatest thing by far is to be a master of metaphor. It is the one thing that cannot be learnt from others; and it is also a sign of genius, since a good metaphor implies an intuitive perception of the similarity in dissimilars.' 1 We may accept from Aristotle the notion of art and genius evinced by the production of first class metaphors such as we find in the great poets. And we may note with Kant the sort of phenomenon that a good metaphor is - its impression of inexhaustibility, its artistic refusal to commit itself to a completed definitive statement, its stimulating nature, its irreplaceable rightness. And in commenting on the figure:

1. Poetics 1458B

> Ainsi l'astre du jour, au bout de sa carrière,
> Repand sur l'horizon une douce lumière,
> Et les derniers rayons qu'il darde dans les airs
> Sont les derniers soupirs qu'il donne a l'Univers; ...

he speaks of the way in which it stirs up a crowd of sensations and secondary representations for which no expression can be found.[1] Quite clearly the genius of which Aristotle speaks and the sort of figure Kant describes are found characteristically in poetry; and the poet's success and art are frequently defined in relation to his demonstration of this rare skill and fecund felicity of expression.

In Kant's figure the comparison between the deed of a dying king and the last rays of the star, the fact that the star really never sets, the suggestion that the parting rays spread out over the horizon in a way that they could not do at any other point in its career, the associations evoked by the figure of the celestial bodies functioning on a universal rather than on a merely mundane scale, the idea of the day star - its power and persistence, even defiance, are all only some of the elements that go to make up this example of the force and art of the metaphoric mode.

Now if this is an indication of what the literary artist does with language, it is not unreasonable to suppose that even those expressions that do not share the metaphoric garb may require closer attention than in the non-artistic contexts of language. The sort of

1. Op. cit., p. 182.

exhaustive attention commonly engaged for the appreciation and explication of metaphor is by extension employed for the entire language of poetry; the explication of poetry calls for the uncovering of all the subtle ways in which language can mean, with its widening implication of non-linguistic domains of meaning. In this way 'poetry is metaphor' is itself a metaphor.

Biii consequently, receives qualified support. It cannot be accepted that any poem whatever or every poetic expression is to be interpreted as one would interpret metaphor. When any mode of interpretation is inimical to the artistic point of the work it is to be overruled.

3. Deviance

As an aspect of poetic language 'deviant' forms will be discussed against the general background of the semantic structure of the work and certain features of metaphor. The implication of metaphor in the problem of deviance is natural, since metaphor itself represents a certain deviance; so that the way in which we understand metaphor may not be always unconnected with the way in which we understand other forms of linguistic or semantic deviance Also, in a parallel fashion, deviance occurs outside poetry -newspaper headings are an example (and perhaps many sentences written by philosophers) -; We are only called upon therefore to give some account of its meaning as a semantic ingredient of the poem, cheerfully leaving the problem of giving an account of non-poetic deviance to the linguist.

We may signal the analogical nature of metaphor as useful in aiding comprehension of certain types of deviance in poetry. The suggestion of mapping deviant expressions into non-deviant utterances 'which in turn derive their meaning from the semantic interpretation of the sentences with which they are matched' involves employing some notion of similarity between the two types.[1]

Empson in 'How to read a Modern Poem', says with reference to Dylan Thomas:

> He works by piling up many distant suggestions at once, and half the time is not 'saying anything' in the ordinary meaning of the term. (2)

The problem is partly that these 'statements' are not metaphors in the traditional sense. The statements are construed not in strict terms of lexis, grammar and syntax, but through a certain capacity to suggest. They share, though, some qualities of _bona fide_ statements that mean in the ordinary way; there is thus a certain analogy between them.

Frequently a continuous syntactic form is complicated or eschewed and the connexions between the items of meaning are not obviously set out:

> Altarwise by owl-light in the half-way house
> The gentleman lay graveward with his furies;
> Abaddon in the hangnail cracked from Adam,
> And, from his fork, a dog among the fairies,
> The atlas-eaterswith a jaw for news,
> Bit out the mandrake with tomorrow's scream.

1. Roger Fowler, "On the interpretation of 'nonsense strings' ", _Journal of Linguistics_, 5, 1969.
2. _Modern Poetry_, 1968, p. 243.

Then, penny-eyed, that gentleman of wounds,
Old cock from nowheres and the heaven's egg,
With bones unbuttoned to the half-way winds,
Hatched from the windy salvage on one leg,
Scraped at my cradle in a walking word
That night of time under the Christward shelter:
I am the long world's gentleman, he said,
And share my bed with Capricorn and Cancer. (1)

The extravagant, juxtaposed images are not meaningful in the way in which we are accustomed to understand metaphoric meaning. Further, the unfinished, rambling syntax disrupts the discursive structure. As a piece of language Dylan Thomas's poem is sheer nonsense, we are inclined to say, and 'dishing it up' with the segmentations of poetry does not render it meaningful. This would be, however, to dismiss what surely is a liberating force in poetry, freeing it from perhaps worne out conventional grammatical,syntactic and even lexical constraints. On the otner hand, we must resist a tendency to write nonsense or have nonsense accepted as poetry with the argument that the poem is difficult, produced by special rules or liberated. It must still be possible to write a bad or near meaningless poem. But if we give nonsense a meaning as a sort of commitment we run the risk of blurring the distinction between a work of art and a work of words.

To say that deviant poetic structures are to be read metaphorically would be to suggest that their units and phases are to be interpreted by analogy or comparison with other unitary and phasal forms in non-deviant

1. The Collected Poems of Dylan Thomas, 1957.

expressions, aided by the given set taken as a semantic unit.

But this would be only one metaphoric method of construal, in line with an analogy theory of metaphor. The Supervenience Theorist of metaphor could advance an altogether different thesis. According to Beardsley, the Supervenience Theory regards a metaphor as a kind of idiom:

> The meaning of a metaphor does not grow out of the literal meaning of its parts, but appears as something extraneous to and independent of them.[1]

The essence of metaphor is nothing like saying one thing and meaning another, in the sense that a statement of similarity is couched in an identity statement. Dylan Thomas would be seen as working through special idioms, which must be grasped as such. Or his mode of expressing himself might be idiosyncratic; that is, he puts words together in a fashion peculiar to Dylan Thomas.

The view that the poem is a self-sufficient context of meaning is shared by some linguists. Z. Harris in his 'discourse analysis' sets out to provide the means for constructing the grammar of a single text.[2] Although Michael Riffaterre justly observes that 'no grammatical analysis of a poem can give us more than the grammar of that poem',[3] the idea of a sort of internal analysis for poems that cannot be entirely accounted for by the general rules of the language is an interesting and relevant one.

1. Aesthetics, 1958, p. 136.
2. Cf. "discourse Analysis", Language, 28, 1952, and "Discourse Analysis: A Sample Text", Ibid.
3. "Describing poetic structures: two approaches to Baudelaire's Les Chats." Yale French Studies, 1966, p. 213.

It is now clearly illustrated that a general, doctrinaire approach will not do for the interpretation of an institution with such a great diversity of memebers and poetic temperaments. The contextualist emphasis would seem to be required for this type of poetry, although we should be careful not to rule that all poetry sharing a degree of deviance should be interpreted in any one ways. The requirements of the individual work have somehow got to be determined. Certain approached are recommended in sofar as they are serviceable in assisting the explication of poetry in accordance with our conception of the institution of literature. The means to the end of interpretation are assessed in terms of their likely success in this enterprise. In this way, linguistic theories and ways of analysis are not ruled out in principle.

There can be no doubt but that several innovative elements have been at work recently in the production of modern literary art. And it seems reasonable to maintain that the highly individual techniques of a Dylan Thomas or e.e. cummings may require a method of construal uncalled for with respect to more straightforward pieces. In this connexion, an attempt to discover what they themselves consider to be the point and nature of their techniques could be a useful tool to bring to an understanding of their work. Responsible criticism could probably be defined as the ability to recognize when each aspect of the entire critical apparatus requires an application and to what extent. But our actual techniques of artistic discovery will be engaged always on the assumption that the literary artist uses language as his medium in all its available rich complexity.

Chapter VII

The Relational Structure

Part of our strategy for analysing the literary work was to set up the various structures through which the properties of the work manifest themselves. We have so far discussed the graphic structure, the phonic and the semantic. But there are other properties of the work that cannot be said to be manifested directly through any one of the structures so far investigated. Insofar as they would be attributed to one of them such a structure would be the semantic; at least partly because the expression 'the meaning of the work' can be used to refer to all the properties of the work. But perhaps a second reason why the properties we are about to mention have not been considered as forming a structure in their own right is that they seem to be less sloidly and obviously there; we do not see a symbol and simply point to this type of property.

The fact is that these properties are relations whose existence depends on the interaction of the three structures presented. We may refer to them as forming a relational structure. Of course, any two things that may be thought of separately may be thought of relationally; two strangers may be in the relation of non-acquaintance. The ways in which two objects are related might be inexhaustible. Now as the concept of a relational structure applies to the literary work, it applies only in terms of artistically significant relations. That is, the sort of relation between any two structures worth pointing out in the literary

work must be artistically or aesthetically significant. The relation of sound to meaning is one such relation. The phonic structure of the poem may reinforce its meaning or the phonic structure may be at odds with the ostensible meaning of the work. In determining the exact relationship we need to recognize the way in which the purported relation is connected to the artistic point and meaning of the work.

Relations of influence may be more subtle that the relation of sound to meaning. Winifred Nowottny illustrates most perceptively with examples from Shakespeare and Pope not only how sound may be a 'source of sustained ironic commentary' but also how syntactic relations and the rhyme scheme may fruitfully interact, 'how elaborate verbal patterning ... can organize and clarify it (meaning) by giving prominence to syntactic relations, and is indeed capable of such powerful meanings that it can register and suggest intellectual relationships (such as sameness, opposition, continuity) which may even be so strong as to compete successfully with other meanings in the passage, or, if 'compete' is too emphatic a word, at least contribute decisely to their complexity.' 1 Wimsatt, too, argues in The Verbal Icon for 'one relation between rhyme and reason'. 2

Since the happy interplay and harmony of structures may go beyond any one critic's perception, this area of critical comment is fertile for ingenious criticism. But herein also lies the danger. There would

1. The Language Poets Use, 1962, p. 139.
2. Op. cit., p. 153 ff.

be no point to observing the relation of all 'l' sounds to all 's' sounds in a poem merely on the ground that they constitute a relation in the work. The ingenuity of the critic may lead him to make such a case of relations of influence that the semantic structure is thereby refashioned: what was but an accidental arrangement of sounds, say, is taken as meaning that the poem is ironic; or a set of syntactic patterns may be erected into some fantastic mosaic of meaning. After all, the work must have some syntactic and phonic structure. How these structures are disposed and related may not necessarily be significant. There is surely a give and take regarding the proper status of the sense of the work and the relations that compete with that sense; but in most cases, if not all, the sense of the passage or work must be considered primary.

The over-ingenious critic can make a profound poem out of

The cat
sat on
The mat;

and from merely the grammatical, syntactic and rhythmic relations of 'the cat sat on the mat' arrive at the conclusion that the poem suggests that a Cheshire cat was sitting on a Persian rug near the hearth purring absent-mindedly. This would be an example of the unfortunate excesses to which a method of interpretation may be carried, a method which has as object an authentic structure of the work, but which, exalted as the method of interpretation, positively distorts the meaning of many works and makes works of art out of mere relations.

Having noted these qualifications, we must acknowledge that relations

of influence are important aspects of the work. Since such relations are frequently subtle, they depend for recognition on the perceptiveness of the reader; and are sometimes almost made to exist. So long as the general integrity of the work is not impaired relational claims may be allowed as evidence of a certain self-generating capacity of great literary works and the creative component in competent interpretation. There is also this aspect to the interpretation of the semantic and relational structures: that to some extent the work requires a performance on the part of the reader with the individual variation within limits characteristic of playing a work of musical art.

Chapter VIII

Summary and Conclusion

We began by investigating what would be involved in trying to say or determine what the literary work is, the object of literary criticism. The strategy proposed was that of analysing the work into its various categories of property or structures, which could serve as the basis for a definition or identifying description, if ever either of these should be required.

However, we soon noticed that the ability to isolate and analyse the structures of literary works would provide us with no means of determining the properties of any particular work with with we may want to deal; we would not be equipped to distinguish genuine from merely purported properties of a given work. Some reliable avenue of accessibility to the work would be necessary. Such an avenue turned out to be a reliable text, graphic or phonic.

The question then became how to determine the work-yielding properties of the text, necessary both for leading to all the properties of the work and for judging authenticity in the case where we agree that there can be more than one authentic text. It emerged at this point that no headway could be expected in determining the authentic text without first deciding on its identity model; that is, was the text to be considered a unique, unchanging particular, a unique, changing particular, a replicatable unchanging particular or a replicatable changing particular?

But since the requirements on the text depend on the nature of the work, it became necessary to decide on the identity model of the work as well. We were led to the conclusion that the text and the work share the same identity model. Although the full case for establishing one model over another was not to be presented at this point, some preliminary arguments suggested and supported the replicatable unchanging particular model.

With a knowledge of the range of properties literary works possess we were able to establish four structures through which literary properties manifest themselves: the graphic, phonic, semantic and relational.

Since all thes structures are not necessarily present in each work, the question naturally arose as to how we determine that for any particular work a certain number of them are represented. We were forced to adumbrate our argument that literary works were created and released in terms of the institution of literature, an institution of art with language as its medium. Claims concerning the structures present in a given work are to be handled in terms of the concept of a literary work as a public work of art within the institution of literature.

With the general form of the work established in terms of structures we were ready to embark upon an analysis of each structure, recognizing that our problems were at once epistemological, justifying our claims to know that the work has certain properties, and aesthetic, relating the entire discussion and programme to the concept of the work as a work of art.

The graphic structure was seen as a certain organization or layout of the page, which could be a representation or function in subtle ways to suggest meaning and engineer effects. Further the problem of metrical analysis was seen to be based on some minimal interpretation of the text as a phonic linguistic phenomenon, rather than on the phonic structure. Such an interpretation of the form of the text appeared to be the parallel of the graphic structure for the phonic text.

We proceeded next to a consideration of the phonic structure, which could not be conceived as the mere enunciation of the words of the text. It is given through a responsible delivery instance or style. The contention was that any instance of the phonic structure must be faithful to the expressive requirements of the text in terms of the semantic structure of the work and the artistic organization of the sound system of the phonic language in which the work is composed.

The strategy adopted for coping with the complex semantic structure was that of analysing the work first as descriptions. We rejected the thesis that by descriptions of the literary work must be meant fictional descriptions; set up the two comprehensive categories of fulfilled and vacant descriptions, which accomodated both traditional truth values of true and false, while permitting a distinction between false and fictive. All descriptions were then further categorized as either surface and embedded. The 'world of the work', though a metaphor, was seen as given through the surface descriptions in a very superficial way. To perceive the world of the work the reader has to fill in embedded descriptions through some concept of relevance

and the artistic point of the work. As an illustration we examined what it is to perceive and determine fictional character.

In endeavouring to determine how the text is construed to yield the semantic structure it became necessary to introduce the notions of a construal model, and a semantic attitude, together with the already explained notion of an identity model and an elaboration of the concept of literature as an institution in the institution of art.

We distinguisned three construal models: the codal construal, natural language, and technical language. Then we snowed that certain tendencies to interpret the literary work in a certain way or by using a certain set of directives could be considered semantic attitudes and that these attitudes normally operated within the three construal models presented. These attitudes are the Authorial, which sought the author's meaning and was codal, that is, treated the text as a sort of code; stimulus, the reader's analogue to the authorial, and so codal too; contextual, which saw literary texts as a special class to be interpreted in the literary context, but basically with a natural language base, therefore, technical; aesthetic, which sought the aesthetically most satisfying reading either on a codal base model or a technical base model; a nd standard usage, which sought the meaning of the text in terms of the natural language in which it was written. This last attitude turned out to be one with the natural language construal model, and so could not be considered a special semantic attitude.

The question now was: which of the attitudes is susceptible of yielding the work? Here one's notion of the institution of literature is all important. According to our conception of the role the artist, the language medium and the public play in the institution of literature, it is necessary to maintain a standard usage base, which could be modified according to the particular work and artist in terms of the aesthetic nature of literary works. In fact it was suggested that certain legitimate aspects of meaning had been isolated and erected into the sole method of construal through the emphasis of a certain critic or school. The notion of the artist and of art required that a work should be considerd as completed at the time of production, and so the relativistic interpretation of standard usage had to be rejected.

Our final assault on meaning involved an application of our decisions concerning the semantic structure to concrete manifestations of meaning in literature such as symbolism, metaphor and deviant forms of poetic language. Symbolic and second order meaning generally could be accounted for through our already established category of embedded descriptions; and this level of meaning was recognized as an important area of literary meaning. The issue of metaphoric meaning was shown not so much as the problem of the specific nature of this semantic phenomenon but the question of controlling and orienting its explication in accordance with the function it serves in the particular work. Deviant forms, we concluded could be considered in many cases a sort of linguistic metaphor, bearing an analogy to established semantic modes

or could be interpreted in terms of the total context of the work as forming its own unique mode of meaning. There was no reason, however, to hold that all deviant collocations could be either meaningful or aesthetically significant. The general effect of these manifestations of meaning was to make us aware of the complexity of literary phenomena and constantly on the qui vive to guard against extravagant claims or dogmatic monism.

Finally relations of influence such as sound-meaning, syntax-meaning, were recognized as generally subtle but important aspects of the work deserving of the status of structure.

A thorough analysis of the literary work has shown that it is given in only a very subtle sense. We need the concept of the work as some sort of definitive personality, though it is clear that its ontological status has no total similarity with the ontological status of objects on any of the identity models with which we are familiar and through which we make sense of the objects in our experience. But since literary works enter our experience we must speak of them in a coherent way, even if the literary object turned out to be incoherent. Hence the general assumption that there is a literary work that can be examined and described by us all; and hence the multiplicity of critical languages. This multiplicity arises at least partly from the nature of the literary phenomenon. For if there are divergent schemes and accounts of more tractable phenomena such as chairs and persons, how much more scope is there for divergent schemes and accounts of an object given through a text, the authentic nature of which is problematic, subject to the

interpretive theories, abilities, capacities, prejudices, commitments and sophistication of readers of different temperaments, interests, attitudes; and written in a frequently highly compressed and telescoped style of rhythms, symbolisms and implications.

There is little wonder then, that even philosophical discussion of the literary work tends to end in a philosophical and semantic cul-de-sac. For without a proper appreciation of what is involved, concretely involved, in referring to the literary work, philosophical discussion merely picks on some aspect or purported aspect of the literary phenomenon or some aspect or purported aspect of the practice of criticism that can be related to some area or theory of general philosophy and considers the consequences for literature and criticism of the truths of philosophy. But it is doubtful that we shall make any great headway in aesthetics before we have given a thorough examination of the nature and scope of the phenomena we are supposed to be dealing with. That is, if we are to pursue meaningful philosophical discussion of all the arts, we shall have to investigate them more closely one by one, at least to see what the specific problems are in determining the properties of each specific art.

It is now our submission that this dissertation contributes a modest but needed ground study of literature. It is some indication of the vastness of the undertaking that in each chapter at least an entire thesis was sketched and several philosophical fields implicated. But it seems to us that any exhaustive attempt to study any one of the areas to be developed without an appreciation of the

general field of considerations and conclusions into which it would have to fit would be severely handicapped and at worst misguided. Some general attempt at laying the foundations of literature is a prolegomena to any future aesthetics that will be able to present itself as a mature philosophical discipline.

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Key to Abbreviations

British Journal of Aesthetics	B.J.A.
Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism	J.A.A.C.
Journal of Linguistics	J.L.
Journal of Philosophy	J.Phil.
Philosophy and Phenomenological Research	Phil. & Phen. Res.
Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society	P.A.S.
Supplementary Volume	P.A.S. Supp. Vol.
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