A Critical Dialogue of Structure and Reader in Romans 11:16-24

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Abstract

A critical dialogue of structure and reader interprets Paul's allegory of the 'wild olive branches' beyond functionalistic methods of interpretation. Structuralism analyses the antithetical contrasts of the 'wild' and 'cultivated' branches, faith and unfaithfulness, and the kindness and severity of God which abounds in 'double parallelisms'. Reader semiotics identifies the recipient of grace ingrafted by God as participant in salvation. Grace shows no partiality of persons. The symbolism of 'wild olive branches' leads via the 'root' to the righteous servant as interpretant. Neither the Jews nor the Gentiles, as 'wild olive branches', have a claim to any 'prerogative of salvation'. The only privilege which prevails is one of service and allegiance to the divine call. The variegated perspectives generated by this analysis contribute to the polymorphous character of the meaning of the text. The critical dialogue of literary semiotics challenges the reader of every generation to enter into the ensuing debate and interpret the text in a way which is relevant to his/her historical context.

1. THE THESIS

The central purpose of this article is to illustrate that the knowledge of the meaning of a text is perspectival. Our knowledge of the meaning of a text may never be presented in an spirit of ὕβρις. The relative cognitive understanding we have of texts is rooted in a contingent historical setting at the time of interpretation. Interpretation is a contextual articulation of the meaning of a text. The historical contingency of understanding compels us to practice our exegesis conscious of the necessity to exercise *self-restraint*.

Meaning is the result of multiple interpretations provided under changing historical conditions of time. The meaning of a text may not be confined to any one-dimensional cognitive awareness of the text. Meaning results from the dynamic interplay of practice and theory, that is the *Wirkungsgeschichte*, of literary interpretation given under the changing historical conditions of time. A critical awareness of the danger of falling into an one-dimensional cognitive understanding of meaning should urge us to interpret the text beyond functionalistic methods of literary interpretation. Communication is not a single linear process.

1.1 The Problem

There is a tendency among exegetes who follow a 'code theory' to reduce the meaning of a text to a one-dimensional consciousness of the significance of the text. Form critical functionalism reduces meaning to an interpretation of the historical *Sitz-im-Leben*. Formalism and Structuralism reduce meaning to the sum-total of literary devices used in the text[1]. Many sociological surveys reduce meaning to a consciousness of the social interaction of key role players and the early Christian community. A hermeneutic of 'critical responsibility' outlined in this enquiry attempts to surmount the limitations of functionalistic practices in Biblical interpretation.

The New Testament, as many other texts, is an artifact belonging to the category of texts which Eco (1979:49) calls an 'open text'. This characteristic becomes most apparent in Pauline diatribe which draws the reader into the dialogue. A rhetorical question such as: 'What then are we to say about these things?' (Rm 8:31 also 3:1, 4:1) provokes a reply from the reader. The text invites the reader to complete the communication process. Interpreting and understanding the text fulfils the structure of the text. The Pauline discourse is designed to be persuasive. The openness of the New Testament lies in the 'persuasive' character of the text. The main concern of the persuasive text is to facilitate an intended effect on the reader. The intended effect results in variegated reader's responses. Inevitably the text manifests itself as a 'writerly text'. This is how Barthes (1974:4) designated texts which lead to multi-interpretability.

2. THE TEXT

A linguistic analysis of any classical text should begin with a syntactic specification of the sentences and a semantic representation of these sentences. We will begin with aspects of a syntactic analysis of the text[2]

The first stage of theoretically-founded exegesis begins with a syntactic specification of the sentences in the New Testament text. The term sentence in the 'Aspects' — model of linguistic theory is hereby defined as a syntactic unit consisting of a noun phrase (NP) and a verb phrase (VP): (S > NP VP). A sentence is a comprehensive

syntactic unit consisting of a matrix which may dominate nil or more embedded sentences. The sentences in the text will be numbered continuously. Embedded sentences are numbered by the decimal point in the margin.

Romans 11:16-24 will begin with sentence 399 and extend to sentence 414. The sentences may be specified as follows:

399 (16) εἰ δὲ ἡ ἀπαρχὴ ἁγία (ἐστί deleted), καὶ τὸ φύραμα (ἐστί deleted)·

400 καὶ εἰ ἡ ῥίζα ἁγία (ἐστί deleted), καὶ οἱ κλάδοι (εἰσί deleted).

401.1 (17) Εἰ δέ τινες τῶν κλάδων ἐξεκλάσθησαν,

401.2 σὺ δὲ ἀγριέλαιος ὢν ἐνεκεντρίσθης ἐν αὐτοῖς

402.3 καὶ συγκοινωνὸς τῆς ῥίζης τῆς πιότητος τῆς ἐλαίας ἐγένου,

401 (18) μὴ κατακαυχῶ τῶν κλάδων·

402 (γινώσκετε ὅτι deleted)

402.1 εἰ δὲ κατακαυχᾶσαι

402.2 οὐ σὺ τὴν ῥίζαν βαστάζεις ἀλλὰ ἡ ῥίζα σέ.

403 (19) ἐρεῖς οὖν,

403.1 Ἐξεκλάσθησαν κλάδοι

403.1.1 ἵνα ἐγὼ ἐγκεντρισθῶ.

404 (20) καλῶς (ἐστί deleted)·

405 τῇ ἀπιστίᾳ ἐξεκλάσθησαν,

406 σὺ δὲ τῇ πίστει ἕστηκας.

407 μὴ ὑψηλὰ φρόνει

408 ἀλλὰ φοβοῦ·

409.1 εἰ γὰρ ὁ θεὸς τῶν κατὰ φύσιν κλάδων οὐκ ἐφείσατο,

409 [μή πως] οὐδὲ σοῦ φείσεται.

410 (22) ἴδε οὖν χρηστότητα καὶ ἀποτομίαν θεοῦ·

411 ἐπὶ μὲν τοὺς πεσόντας ἀποτομία (γίνεται deleted),

412 ἐπὶ δὲ σὲ χρηστότης θεοῦ (γίνεται deleted),

412.1 ἐὰν ἐπιμένῃς τῇ χρηστότητι,

412.2 ἐπεὶ καὶ σὺ ἐκκοπήσῃ.

413.1 (23) κἀκεῖνοι δέ, ἐὰν μὴ ἐπιμένωσιν τῇ ἀπιστίᾳ,

413 ἐγκεντρισθήσονται·

413.2 δυνατὸς γάρ ἐστιν ὁ θεὸς πάλιν ἐγκεντρίσαι αὐτούς.

414.1 (24) εἰ γὰρ σὺ ἐκ τῆς κατὰ φύσιν ἐξεκόπης ἀγριελαίου

414.2 καὶ παρὰ φύσιν ἐνεκεντρίσθης εἰς καλλιέλαιον,

414 πόσῳ μᾶλλον οὗτοι οἱ κατὰ φύσιν ἐγκεντρισθήσονται τῇ ἰδίᾳ ἐλαίᾳ.

3. THE METHOD

The method employed in this thesis will reflect, as stated above, a consciousness that knowledge of the meaning of a text is always perspectival. Although our interpretations might be *relevant*, they also remain *relative* to the limitations of the historical contingency intrinsic to the theories within which they are constituted. The expressions 'relative ' and 'relevant' are juxtaposed to represent a meaningful dialectical relation. It is conceded that our knowledge of a text, as articulated in interpretation, never exhausts the meaning of the text. The meaning of the text transcends all historical contingent interpretations. Our knowledge of the text is relative as a consequence of this fact. The various truth-perspectives which emanate from text interpretations enhance the polymorphous character of the meaning. Multiple interpretations result from changing historical conditions which stimulate the ongoing quest for meaning. Various perspectives of interpretations necessitate a critical dialogue responsible for verifying our findings. The findings of exegesis are confirmed or disconfirmed in theoretically constituted methods. Methodology is consequently the truth-function of our knowledge. The truth-perceptions of the inferences of the text guarantee the relevance of interpretation.

At this point it has become necessary to introduce the notion of *critical awareness* in the ongoing process of literary interpretation. A hermeneutic of literary critical dialogue, which distinguishes multiple perspectives of interpretation, will guide our exegesis through the Scylla and Charybdis of functionalism and methodological pluralism. A multi-disciplinary reading, which secures multiple truth-perspectives of interpretation will:

*   significantly manifest the polymorphous character of our knowledge of the meaning of a text. It will determine structure, explicate how signifier and signified lead to the interpretant and hopefully fulfil the structure of the text.

*   manifest the multiple perceptions of meaning generated by changing historical contexts, preventing the exegete from slipping into a one-dimensional consciousness of knowledge of the meaning of any text. It will attempt to read and interpret beyond a structural, code or for that matter materialist functionalism.

*   prevent a methodological pluralism in interpreting the knowledge of meaning as the sum of all possible interpretations within different theories of interpretation. Theories often call one another into question or supplement one another. The results of different theoretical approaches justify independent consideration. Ongoing critical dialogue integrates confirmed results of theoretically constituted interpretations with entries of our encyclopedical knowledge of the text.

The following section continues to explicate such a method. In this section we introduce the main principles which will provide a structural perspective (par 3.1) and a readers' perspective (par 3.2) to the text.

3.1 Structuralism

Structuralism had its origins in the turbulent years of Russian history between 1914-1930. Structuralism is perhaps the prime example of 'code theory' in the twentieth century. Russian formalists such as Jakobson (1966), Sklovskij (1966) and Eichenbaum (1965) attempted to establish literary theory as an autonomous discipline against the influence of nineteenth century positivism. After the Bolshevik revolution, Jakobson, amongst other Formalists, established himself in Prague. Hence Prague structuralism.

The study object of the Prague linguists was 'literariness' (*literaturnost*) *vis à vis* 'literature' in the traditional literary scholarship. *The Prague linguist Havránek* (in Garvin 1964:9-10) defined literariness as 'deautomatised' language usage (*aktualisace*). Mukarovsky who subscribed to Havranek's theory, defined poetic language usage as 'an esthetically intentional distortion of the norm of the standard' (cf Garvin 1964:9/10). Structuralism thus basically concerns itself with the relations between parts and the whole that constitute the essential unifying framework that holds a work of literature together. Mukarovsky's 'esthetically intentional distortion' becomes for Leech (1966:141) a 'unique deviation' which he then reserves for syntagmatic foregrounding. Foregrounding is the deliberate highlighting of literary language usage superimposed on the norm of standard language usage. Structuralism includes into foregrounding both syntagmatic as well as paradigmatic relations within the structure of the text. The Paris School is represented by Claude Bremond (1966), Tzvetan Todorov (1966), Roland Barthes (1974), A J Greimas (1966) and Gerard Genette (1980) amongst others.

This discussion concludes our brief introduction to structuralism. The development of the theory of metaphor in the twentieth century, as early as Richards (1936), took its departure in the binary distinctions found in structuralism. Next we shall procede with a discussion of the interaction theory of metaphor.

3.2 The Interaction Theory of Metaphor

Richards (1936:93) indicated that the meaning of the metaphor depends on the interrelationship between the *tenor* and the *vehicle* in the metaphoric sentence. What Richards described as 'two thoughts of different things active together ...' later

1034

became, in Black's terms, the *interaction view of metaphor*. Black refers to the sentence: 'man is a wolf', to illustrate what may be called the interaction view of metaphor. According to Black (1962:41), the copula 'is' relates 'man', the principal subject, to 'wolf', the subsidiary subject, in a relationship of identification. The interaction between *tenor* and *vehicle* or *focus* and *frame* is, according to Black (1962:40 and 44), characterised by:

* The differences between the two distinct subjects being suppressed;
* The analogies between the two distinct subjects being emphasised.

Von Wilpert (1969:771) defines the *tertium comparationis* as 'der Punkt in dem zwei verglichene Gegenstände, etwa-Metapher und Gemeintes, übereinstimmen'. It would thus seem to be the analogies between the *tenor* and the *vehicle* that constitute the *tertium comparationis*. The interaction between the principal subject and the metaphoric expression may become a more elaborate process.

Indurkya (1992:36) defines the metaphor in terms of the dynamics of interaction between the principle subject and the metaphoric term in the following way:

> A metaphor is an unconventional way of describing (or representing) an object, event or situation (real or imagined) as another object, event or situation. The object being described is called the target, and the object that is being used to unconventionally describe the target is called the source. The source participates in the process essentially as a structured set of symbols that have to be applied to the target in unconventional ways so as to render the description meaningful.

This definition is broad enough to encompass all the types of metaphors normally discussed in a grammatical approach to metaphor. The juxtaposition of the conventional term with the unconventional term establishes the definitive characteristic of a live poetic metaphor. MacCormac (1976:76) observes that this juxtaposition creates a tension in the metaphoric expression. MacCormac argues that this tension is a *sine qua non* for a living metaphor. The tension has a great deal to do with the metaphor's ability to create meaning. Indurkhya's distinction of the source *vis a vis* the target is directly relevant for the transfer of symbolism from the Hebrew צַדִּיק to the righteous one in the New Testament.

A metaphor generates meaning not merely by correspondence or similarity but by the interaction between the *focus* and the *frame* of the metaphor. Indurkhya (1992:70) develops an 'interaction view of metaphor' by taking direction from Black's more general theories of metaphor. Indurkya determines the way human cognitive processes work in creating similarity between terms where no such similarity would previously have existed. Indurkhya calls the dynamics of such a process 'similarity creating metaphors'. Similarity-creating metaphors stimulate a cognitive process. Indurkya (1992: 40) explains this idea as follows: Objectively speaking, any two objects are similar in some respect. By creation of similarity, I mean the creation of similarity in the conscious mind of a cognitive agent.

Indurkya replaces what Black (1979:28-29) designated as 'implicative complexes' with his notion of 'concept networks'. Indurkhya defines 'concept networks' as 'potential representations of reality ... they do not necessarily correspond to anything by themselves'. As such they are totally under the control of the cognitive agent and totally internal. There is a coherence between reality and the concept networks of an individual, but this is not necessarily so. Concept networks enable the cognitive agent to organize and thus understand reality. They consist of two parts. They contain symbols, which are object concepts and they contain operators which are functional concepts. The operator consists of ideas about how the symbols can be transformed. Indurkhya uses the example of the vertical line. If the symbol under consideration is a vertical line the operator is the functional idea, within the thinking of the cognitive agent, which facilitates a transformation of the vertical line into a horizontal line. The concept networks enable the cognitive agent to organise a representation of the world and so to understand reality.

Indurkhya explains the interaction view of metaphor in a pragmatic and psycholinguistic framework. This becomes clear from the manner in which Indurkhya deals with another key issue, viz. environment. The environment is that which results from the 'instantiating' of a concept network within a *sensorimotor* data set. Indurkhya (1992:132) regards the *sensorimotor* data set as 'reality that is made available for conceptualisation through the *sensorimotor apparatus* of the cognitive agent'. The *sensori* data set is data perceived through the *sensorimotor* organs of touching, hearing, seeing and feeling. To 'instantiate' a concept network within this data set requires a description of a specific object in terms of an image within the concept network. Such a relation between the concept network and the data set is described by Indurkhya (1992:132) as a cognitive representation or interpretation. This relation establishes a cognitive representation of the world or image which Indurkhya calls 'environment'. The environment is a cognitive representation of the world.

A metaphor facilitates a dynamic exchange of characteristics between target and source in the cognitive representation of an image. Indurkhya defines metaphor as a dynamic 'projective cognitive relation'. The metaphor as a cognitive process begins with the 'target concept network' which is one's cognitive representation of the image which is considered. The target concept network consists of a system of symbols and operators which make up the cognitive ideas which represents the target. The environment, mentioned above, is the *domain*, according to Indurkhya (1992:253), in which the metaphor is interpreted. The reality where the metaphor is encountered is the 'target realm'. The target realm is the level of perception.

Corresponding to the 'target realm' is the 'source realm'. Both the course concept network and the target concept network are explicated by conventional interpretations of their respective realms. A metaphorical relation is established between the target and the source when an aspect of the source concept network is interpreted or instantiated within the target realm.

The distinction between the source realm and the source concept network is significant for the current enquiry. This distinction facilitates the constitution of a 'system of associated commonplaces' relating to suffering righteousness, in Black's terms. Indurkhya's interaction theory enables us to represent the imagery of suffering righteousness in the 'source realm' of the Old Testament and cognate literature. A source concept network may be compiled from a variety of intertextual sources. The semantic characteristics of the source concept network may then be instantiated in the target realm of the New Testament. A conventional description may articulate the semantic characteristics of the suffering righteous one in the target concept network of Romans.

We may now conclude our discussion on the interaction theory of metaphoric language usage. Next we shall consider the contribution of Readers' response criticisim.

3.3 Aesthetics of Reception

Under the changing historical conditions in Germany from 1965 onwards, the theory and practice of literary interpretation crossed a significant frontier. The rapid development in electronic communication systems and language, the turbulence in student societies of the sixties and seventies and a universal awakening of historical code and social consciousness strongly influenced developments in the communication theory of literature. A noticeable paradigm shift occurred. Jakobson (1960:353) postulated his 'addressee' or recipient in literary communication. Historical materialism narrowed the gap between doctrinaire formalism and Marxist theory of literature. Theory became consumer conscious. Interpretation was 'democratised' and the reader empowered.

The gap in the dyadic relation between 'sender' and 'recipient' narrowed. Literary critical investigation shifted from textual strategies and devices to what Mukarovsky (1978:88) termed the 'aesthetic object' of the text. Jauss designated the fulfilment of textual structure in the 'reader's role' as the 'aesthetics of reception'. In the theory of Jauss (1982:20, 29 & 34) the aesthetic object is explicated by the history of reception. Jauss uses the paradigm of Gadamer in fusing the horizons of the text and the reader into the reception aesthetic object. Aesthetics of reception also contributed to the development of reader response criticism.

For Iser (1978:112), who follows Ingarden, the aesthetic object is constantly structured and restructured in the reader's response. The reader's role, which is structured by the text, is fulfilled by the reader's response. According to Iser (1978:34), the reader's role is structured by the text into the 'implied reader'. The *implied reader* is the counterpart of the *implied author*. The implied reader is the reader's role written into the text. The implied reader is the sum of all devices and directions that are provided for the guidance of the actual, even ideal reader in his or his reading and interpreting of the text. It is a sign-like, text-immanent directive which guides readers to many different interpretations. It is a phenomenological reader. The ideal reader, as Holub (1984:100) shows, fills the 'gaps' left by *indeterminacies* in the text. It fills the gap between what was said and what is meant. It fulfils the illocutionary and perlocutionary speech acts of the text.

This discussion concludes the introduction to the historical conditions which developed reception aesthetics. Let us now turn to the structure of the text and its significance for an inferential theory of metaphor.

4. A STRUCTURAL ANALYSIS

4.1 The Structure of Romans 11:16-24

Romans 11:16-24 begins with *sentence 399* and extends to sentence 414. The unit may be divided into to two major parts. The first section consists of *sentences 399-408*. This section deals with the subject of the consecration of the servant. The second section, consisting of *sentences 409-414*, deals with the subject of the grace of God. Let us turn to the structure of *sentences 399-408* and particularly to *sentences 399* and *400*, which introduce the first section.

Sentences 399 and *400* are two synonymous parallelisms. The two sentences realize, in Levin's (1969:33) terms, coupling within the structure of the parallelism. The parallelism consists of two conditional sentences.

In *sentence 399* the protasis contains the condition. 'If the part of the dough, offered as first fruit, is holy then the whole lump is consecrated' *Sentence 400* contains a synonymous parallel to sentence 399: 'if the root is holy then the branches are consecrated'.

The nouns ἀπαρχή and ῥίζα are in syntagmatic equivalent positions and are semantically equivalent. Both the nouns φύραμα and κλάδοι are foregrounded by deletion of the verb ἐστιν. The nouns ἀπαρχή and ῥίζα are vehicles of submerged metaphors. Both the vehicles refer to the 'suffering righteous one (servant)' in the context. The tenor may be identified with Israel in verses 1 and 2, 'the remnant' in verse 5 and 'the elect' in verse 7. Both conditionals contain a statement *a minore ad maiorum*. The imagery refers to the servant as that part of Israel which consecrates true Israel as the people of God.

Sentences 401 to *414* consist of two sections. The first section, *sentences 401.1* to *408* may be recognised by a 'double parallelism', in Jakobson's terms (1966:412). This section contrasts the wild olive and the cultivated olive in a symmetrical structure. The second section consists of *sentences 409.1* to *414*. This section contrasts the subject of the severity of God and the kindness of God in a antithetical parallelism. Let us analyze *sentences 401* to *414*.

The major part of the first section may be called the 'double injunction'. The admonishment contained in each injunction frames *sentence 401.1* and *sentence 408* as a whole. The two sentences are synonymous parallels in the outer circle of the symmetrical structure. The injunction thus creates an *inclusio*. The inclusio is composed by two injunctions: 'do not boast' (401.1) and 'do not be proud (407) but stand in awe' (409). The inclusio frames what Jakobson (1966:412) terms a double parallelism. The dominant theme of the inclusio articulates the theme of humility which is an integral feature of the servant. The addition 'stand in awe' is an elaboration which is consequently foregrounded in the symmetrical structure. Next, we may consider the inner circle of the double symmetrical parallelism:

The inner circle of the double parallelism consists of two antithetical parallelisms which balance one another symmetrically.

In the first parallelism the poetic principle foregrounds the theme of 'grafting' in the chiasmic parallelism realizing the pattern: verb noun noun verb, ABBA:

'you may say:
(403.1) away were pruned (A) the branches (B)
(403.1.1) that I (B) may be grafted (A) in'.

In the second parallel the poetic principle foregrounds 'faith' by antithetical contrast which creates the pattern ABAB:

(405) 'Through unbelief (A) were you cut off (B)
(406) but you — by faith (A) are taking your place (B)'.
(Translated to preserve the word order in the Greek text.)

Both parallelisms in the inner circle stand in a causal relationship to one another. The consequences precede the cause. The process of grafting in the servant exalts the servant. By faith is she/he justified. The symmetry contrasts the humiliation and the exaltation of the righteous servant. Sentence 407 is the epitome of the first major section: 'Do not be proud'. Sentence 408 constitutes the focal sentence of the unit: 'Stand in awe'. The latter sentence is the pivot point of the unit as a whole.

The second major section, *sentence 409* to *sentence 414*, is demarcated by an *inclusio* contrasting two antithetical parallels. Both sentences are conditionals. The antithetical parallels constitute the outer ring of what Jakobson (1966:412) would call a 'double parallelism'. The double parallelism in *sentences 409-414* as a whole contrasts the severity and the grace of God throughout. Consider *sentence 409*:

For if God did not spare the natural branches
perhaps He will not spare you.

The severity of God becomes evident in not sparing the natural branches of the cultivated olive tree. This statement is intended to admonish the proud. Contrasting the severity of God in the outer ring of the inclusio is the kindness of God in *sentence 414:*

414.1 For if you have been cut from what is by nature a
wild olive tree
414.2 and grafted, contrary to nature, into a cultivated
olive tree,
414 how much more will these natural branches be grafted
back into their own olive tree.

The kindness or grace of God is here evident in the contrast of the wild olive and the cultivated olive tree. Because of reluctance to consider extra-linguistic meaning, structuralism is unable to recognize the violation of horticultural conventions. This observa-

tion can only be considered adequately in a relevance framework. The antithesis between the protasis and the apodosis communicates the following suggestion. If God is able to reconcile the wild olive shoot and the cultivated olive he can, by the same token of grace, easily ingraft the cultivated olive back upon their own olive tree. The wild olive shoot does not replace the cultivated olive tree. The Christian community to which the metaphor refers does not render true Israel obsolete. The wild olive branches are given their place in the history of divine salvation. This place is secured by the grafting of the 'wild olive' among the cultivated olive branches. The kindness of God becomes evident in sharing the riches of God's grace. Jew and Gentile alike may share in the grace of God. The inner circle of the parallelism makes the antithesis clearer: *Sentence 410* juxtaposes the kindness and severity of God. *Sentences 411* and *412* contrast the severity and kindness of God in a synthetical parallel:

411 ἐπὶ μὲν τοὺν πεσόντας ἀποτομία (γίνεται)
412 ἐπὶ δὲ σὲ χρηστότης θεοῦ (γίνεται)

Sentence 412 and *sentence 413* contrast faith and unbelief. Grace is contingent on faith. *Sentence 412* states that God's grace becomes immanent to you if you abide in God's kindness. *Sentence 413* draws the synthesis: 'And those (of Israel), if they do not persist in unbelief, *413*, will be grafted in'. The severity and kindness of God are contingent on the unbelief and faith of humankind. The inner circle and the outer circle of *409-414* stand in a causal relation to one another. By faith alone is one ingrafted into the cultivated olive tree.

4.2 Résúme and Critique

The interpretation given above explicates meaning with regard to the text-immanent relations in the structure of Romans 11:16-24. An analysis in the formalist framework provides a vital and significant contribution to our understanding of language devices in the text. Formalism demarcates our text into two major sections. One section contrasts the branches broken off and branches grafted in. Structuralism adequately analyzes structural devices of foregrounding in the text. It demarcates units in the text. It explicates the contrast of the wild olive to the cultivated olive. It identifies the focus: 'do not be proud; stand in awe'. It contrasts the severity and the grace of God. And finally, it recognizes both Jews and Gentile Christians as being equally in need of God's grace. The interpretation given, however, provides us at most with a structural-perspective on the meaning of the text. Though relevant, structuralism and formalism

are relative. Jauss (1982:16) remarked that the formal methods define meaning as the sum-total of literary devices in the text. Structuralism simultaneously reduces the meaning of a text to the dyadic relation of subject/object or tenor/vehicle and sign and significance in the text.

Russian Formalism further neglects extra-linguistic meaning and extra-textual meaning in the interpretation of the text. The hermeneutic of critical dialogue, at this point, calls for the recognition of the socio-historical significance of the text in the ongoing literary critical interpretation of the twentieth century. Interpretation conforming to Jakobson's (1960:353) communication framework correlates the Sender/ Recipient and Message/Context interaction on an one-dimensional synchronical level. A hermeneutic of literary critical dialogue acknowledges a structural perspective, but also a socio-literary and readers' response analysis, contributing, among many other readings to the interpretation of the text. The interaction of text/reader relations results in a multiplicity effect on communication levels. The processing of old and new information in reading and re-reading the text results in a multiplication effect. Interpretation has become an interdisciplinary and multi-dimensional exercise.

This concludes our discussion of the formal structure and code of the text. The discussion needs to cross another significant frontier from the structured text to the reader's role as a structured act. Subsequently, we embark on the domain of the reader. Iser regards the relation between the reader's role as structured text and the reader's role as structured act as a relation between intention and fulfilment. The reader completes the structure of the text.

5. The Implied Reader in Romans 11:16-24

5.1 A Reader's Analysis of Romans 11:16-24

Paul's use of diatribe makes the implied reader become explicit in Romans 11:16-24. The implied author may, among other indicators, be recognized by the interlocutor addressed with $\sigma\grave{v}$ in 401.2. The 'wild olive shoot' is personified by the second person pronoun 'you', addressed by Paul in verses 17, 18, 20, 21, 22 and 24. The personification becomes even more concrete than that. It becomes self-conscious in *sentence 403.1.1*. The olive shoot begins to speak: 'Branches were broken off so that I might be grafted in'. With illocutionary forcefulness the implied author inculcates self-restraint in *sentence 407* 'do not become proud, (408) but stand in awe'. The imagery of the implied author reprimands $\H{v}\beta\rho\iota\varsigma$ and embraces servanthood.

The implied author dispels any claim to the prerogative of salvation to Jews or to Gentiles. The grace of God is impartial. The first parallel antithesis removes the cultivated olive branches and replaces them by grafting wild olive branches. The second antithesis maintains that grafting the cultivated olive branches back onto the olive

tree will be easier for the cultivated shoots than the wild olive shoots. This 'reader's role' is punctuated throughout the epistle. In Romans 1 Paul points out that the Gentiles are as much in need of God's grace as the Jewish Christians in whom God vested his Grace. In chapter two of the epistle the implied author asserts the Jewish need for God's grace. In chapter 3 of Romans the implied author claims the universal need of all humankind for the Grace of God.

In the evaluative point of view of the implied author ἀπαρχή in *sentence 399* is the vehicle of a suspended metaphor referring to the suffering righteous servant. In chapter 11 the righteous servant sets up a chain of vehicles replacing the suffering righteous one as *tenor* of a suspended metaphor. The implied author punctuates the discourse with references to the context of the suffering servant:

Romans 11:2b: 'Do you not know what the scripture says of Elijah, how he pleads with God against Israel?' Verse 3 reads: 'Lord, they *have killed your prophets,* they have demolished your altars; *I alone am left, and they are seeking my life'.* 4 'But what is the divine reply to him? 'I have kept for myself *seven thousand who have not bowed the knee to Baal'.* So at the present time there is *a remnant, chosen by grace'.* The implied author comments as follows on this reference to grace: *verse 7:* 'What then? Israel failed to obtain what it was seeking. *The elect* obtained it, but the rest were hardened' (NRSV). The words in italics refer to the suffering righteous servant. The references in italics and 'remnant, chosen by grace' provide a counter-determining context for the expression ἀπαρχή in *verse 16.* In fact, the nouns 'remnant', 'elect' and the verb 'chosen' become *tenors* of ἀπαρχή in *verse 16.* The references to the 'remnant', 'elect' and 'chosen ones' are the *interpretamen.* The interpretamen includes the 'Gentiles' in *verse 11.* The implied author is the fundamental representation of these symbolic signs. The implied author identifies the Gentiles with the branches of the 'wild olive' tree. The implied author leads signs and the representamen to the interpretant. The implied author fulfils and completes the structure of symbolism in the text.

In Romans 11:16-20 the ideal reader recognises the identification of the ἀπαρχή as 'first fruit' and the ῥίζα as 'root' by virtue of the syntagmatic equivalent positions. Both the ἀπαρχή and the ῥίζα are tenors of the 'cultivated olive', a suspended vehicle in the allegory. The representamen is true Israel. This is the root. The Gentiles do not replace it but are grafted into the this root. Let us immerse our discussion in the *Wirkungsgeschichte* of the text to complete a representation leading to the interpretant. The *Wirkungsgeschichte* provide an array of variegated readings of the 'first fruit' imagery. The wide array of readings is the result of indeterminacies in the text. The implied author fills the gaps left by indeterminacies in the text. The following readings of ἀπαρχή appear in the *Wirkungsgeschichte* of the allegory:

* A number of readings identify the tenor of ἀπαρχή as the fathers or the patriarchs, especially Abraham. Calvin, Sanday and Headlam, Michel, Murray, Käsemann, Schlier, Dodd and Ridderbos choose this interpretation.

* A variety of readers identify the tenor as true Israel, the faithful among the Jews or the remnant. Michel, Sanday and Headlam, Dodd, Bruce, Garrett and Cranfield support this interpretation.

* A number of Greek Fathers identify Jesus as the tenor. This view is represented by the famous masters of Alexandrian allegory, Clement of Alexandria and Origin. Theodore of Mopsuestia from the Antiochene school also supports this interpretation. Hanson, Barrett and Barth are among the modern commentators who give support to this interpretation.

The 'suffering righteous one' as interpretant may reconcile interpretations 1-3. The context of chapter 11 favours this interpretation. In the wider context Gentiles as 'wild olive shoots' find themselves grafted into the suffering righteous one/servant as the *actual referent* of the metaphor.

Ἀπαρχή and ῥίζα are replacement metaphors. The nouns are semantically equivalent by virtue of syntagmatic equivalent positions. The function of the noun ῥίζα is to make the imagery of 'the first fruit', which *pars pro toto* consecrates the 'lump', compatible with the imagery of the cultivated olive tree. De-secularizing the root consecrates the branches. The implied author fulfils this imagery. The Gentiles are consecrated by virtue of this grace. The root consecrates the branches. The wild olive shoots do not replace the cultivated olive branches. There is no transfer of any 'prerogative of salvation'. The implied author only recognizes a sharing of the nourishment of the root. The metaphor of the riches of the root refers to the grace of God manifest in the election. The wild olive shoots do not replace the cultivated olive, they share the nourishment of the root. The imagery of grafting denies the wild olive any merit of the past. The act of grafting provides the wild olive with a commitment to a certain future.

The first double antithetical parallelism is demarcated by an injunction in *401* and *407* which contains a perlocutionary speech act. The speech act determines the interpretant. The faithfulness of the wild olive branches contrasts the faithlessness of the cultivated olive branches. The cultivated olive branches were broken off because of the sterility of faithlessness. The wild olive branches are grafted by faith only. They are not grafted by merit. No merit produced this privilege. They stand by faith alone. The aesthetic object manifests grace as the free gift of God.

In *sentences 409.1* to *414* the interpretant remains conditional. The conditions in *sentences 409.1, 412.1* and *414.1* secure a causal relation between the representamen and the interpretant. Faithlessness provokes the severity of God. These consequences may be reversed by faithfulness, if only Israel would relinquish her stubbornness, *sentence 413.1*. The faithfulness of the wild olive incurs the kindness of God. This privilege may be reversed by backsliding, *sentence 412.2*. The grace of God embraces humankind impartially, whether Jew or Gentile alike. God is no respecter of persons. If God's grace is able to reconcile the Gentiles, then the salvation of the Jews is more readily possible for Him. God's grace is equally sufficient for Gentiles as well as for Jews. The implied author punctuates the discourse with the belief that humankind is universally, Jew as much as Gentile, in need of God's grace. Rebirth in humble sub missiveness roots humankind in the grace of God. The illocutionary force of the imagery coerces humankind into self-restraint. The counterpart of obedience to God's grace is commitment: 'Do not be proud but stand in awe'.

Obedience of faith grafts the faithful onto the root. The root dispenses the riches of the kindness of God. The aesthetic object manifests the faithful servant of God. The Gentiles are rooted in God's grace. Via the root they become benefactors of God's grace. They tap the riches of the root and share the nourishment of their election with Israel as faithful servant. Sharing the grace of God is, in *sentences 401.3* and *412*, contingent on being grafted onto the root. The wild olive shoots become more than recipients. They are sharing participants in the grace of divine salvation. Their shared status is not the result of merit, which might incur ὕβρις, but serve to manifest the grace of God. The reverse is possible. If they relinquish their faith they shall be cut off and be removed. What applies to the Gentiles applies obviously more evidently to the Jews. Faith, nevertheless is a commitment to obedience and servitude. The semiotic relations lead the Gentiles via the imagery of the wild olive tree to identify with the suffering righteous one/servant as aesthetic object of the discourse. The aesthetic object may be represented by the following set of retopicalized semantic features:

(righteousness) (servitude) (humility) (obedience) (elect) (justification) (faithfulness) (human) (benefactor) (remnant) (salvation) (destiny-consciousness) (instrument) (endurance) (perseverance) (grace) (kindness) (glorification) (divine purpose).

5.2 Résúme and Critique

The 'aesthetic object' thus constructed in a/my reader's response also contributes a valuable perspective to the interpretation of Romans 11:16-24. Inasmuch as Iser (1978:25) is conscious of a possible meaning production that 'may lead to a whole vari-

ety of different experiences and hence subjective judgments', he encourages self-restraint in interpretation. He endeavours to establish 'an intersubjective frame of reference that will enable us to assess the otherwise ineluctable subjectivity of value judgments'. Post-structural theories, particularly reception aesthetics, attempt to level subject/object relations between the observing subject and the represented object.

Practised absolutely, however, this reduces interpretation to a one-dimensional existential consciousness. The real reader endeavours to interpret the text and the gaps left by the indeterminacies in the text. Yet 'indeterminacies' might only be over-determinacies which are presupposed by the text and deleted as redundant. Reception theories make a valuable contribution which supplements our knowledge of meaning beyond the constraints of text-immanent methods of interpretation.

The interpretation provided in the reception analytical analysis of the text provides us with totally different results compared with a structural analysis. Even within reception aesthetics we encounter a wide array of readings. The readings may not necessarily call one another into question. The readings seem to supplement one another. They provide different truth-perspectives to the text. Naturally different interpretations may from time to time call one another into question. Different results emerge from the reading and re-reading process. Every reading brings new perspectives which promote a multiplication effect. Human communication is often subject to such a multiplicity effect. In the ongoing process of literary critical interpretation one notices a shift from the 'sender' to the 'addressee' (or the recipient). There is also a remarkable multiplication of 'sender'/'recipient' interaction in the ongoing dialogue of literary critical interpretation. This multiplicity effect, however, may only be adequately accommodated in Relevance Theory.

This discussion concludes a major epoch in the development of literary interpretation of the Gospels in the twentieth century. This epoch is characterized by fulfilling the structure of the text in the process of concretising the reader. The thrust of the communication process particularizes reception aesthetics. The ongoing process of literary critical interpretation constitutes itself, among others, within the communication framework of Jakobson. The dialogue of literary critical interpretation progresses from considerations of the 'sender' to the 'recipient'. Poststructural interpretation narrows, even levels the subject/object relations between the 'sender' and the 'recipient'. Yet the subject/object relation remains dyadic and the process linear.

5.3 Conclusion

Paragraph 4.1 demarcated the major contours in the text. The first section contrasts the 'wild olive' and the 'cultivated olive' branches. It ascertains the finality of faith. It admonishes the proud and encourages awe. The second section admonishes believers to

persevere in faith and attributes the process of grafting to the kindness of God's grace. Paragraph 4.2 concluded that formalism reduces meaning to a structural consciousness of the text. It is relevant to code but relative with respect to the content.

Paragraph 5.1 explicates the structure in a/my reader's response to Romans 11:16-24. The reader's analysis identifies the reader via the branch with the root. The faithful reader is more than recipient. She/he becomes a participant in the kindness of God's grace. She/he becomes a participant in the dissemination of the grace of God. Paragraph 5.2 confirms the relevance of the reader's analysis for the fulfilment of the structure. Although a significant perspective to our knowledge of meaning, a reader's analysis only provides us with a one-dimensional existential consciousness of the text. A reader's analysis is relevant to the fulfilment of the structure of the text, but is also relative with respect to the meaning of the text.

Both a structural and reader's analysis suffice to show that the New Testament text manifests itself as belonging to that category of texts which Eco (1979:49 and 1984: 49/50) terms 'open' texts. An 'open' text is a 'writerly' text, which lends itself to multi-interpretability according to Barthes (1974:4). Such texts are proverbially 'unfinished' only to be completed by readers' perspectives which authentically constitute the aesthetic object.

The article also demonstrates that New Testament interpretation should exceed one-dimensional consciousness generated by sender/recipient relations in a closed hermeneutical circle. New Testament interpretation 'spirals' its way through multiple perspectives of meaning which manifest the polymorphous character of meaning of the text. By integrating 'new information' with 'old information' it hopes to create a 'multiplication effect' in contextual implications. It is believed that the greater the multiplication effect the greater the relevance of interpretation.

These theories call one another into question in the process of ongoing literary critical exegesis. These two perspectives will be followed by a discussion of the principles of relevance theory which we present as an inferential semiotic perspective in the next article. In ongoing literary discussions theories articulate the inadequacies of one another. The continuing literary critical dialogue renders theories relative to the contingent historical conditions by which they have been conceived. Theories, however, supplement one another in the continuing literary critical dialogue. Although controversial in themselves, every theory provides us with a different result and a different truth-perspective upon the significance of the text. The relation between theories may perhaps be explained by the simile of a rainbow. As various layers of colour constitute a rainbow so do various perspectives constitute the meaning of a text. The hermeneutic of literary critical dialogue proposed hereby, safeguards exegesis from the functionalism of one-dimensional consciousness of meaning. The greater the multiplication of interpretation the greater the relevance of the text.

The next article introducing relevance theory will offer a new perspective to the ongoing development of literary critical dialogue. The processing of old information and new information gives rise to a multiplication effect in subject/object relations. Relevance theory not only recognizes a *Wirkungsgeschichte* and 'endless semiosis' of the text, but surmounts the one-dimensional consciousness of code theories in an 'ostensive inferential' communication framework. 'Ostensive inferential' communication applies a multiplicity effect to the subject/object relations, resulting in a multiplication of sender/recipient communication and interaction. 'Ostensive inferential' communication results in a 'vertical' accumulation and reciprocal interaction of inferences, not only a horizontal progression of the communication process. Relevance theory will bring with it the dawning of a new era.

Endnotes

[1] Russian Formalism provides a classic example. formalism regards poetic language usage as the defamiliarisation of language as opposed to the norm of standard language usage (or automatisation as in everyday language usage). In russian Formalism this practice leads to a reduction of literariness to the application of the principle of 'ostranenie', which designates the defamilarisation of ordinary language usage. Likewise, the Prague structuralist Havranek (in Garvin 1964:18) called the highlighting of sentence constituents *foregrounding* (aktualisace). Both the Russian 'ostranenie' and the Czech term 'aktualisace' reduce poetic language usage to a consciousness of structural devices employed in the text.

Philosophers such as Rauche (1985:4) continually warn against the tendency in the humanities to merge practice and theory in functionalistic methods of scientific enquiry. The reduction of society to a mere system of social interaction or to the totalitarian functionalism in doctrinaire readings of Marx, will suffice as examples. In literary interpretation the reduction of interpretation to the application of analytical and structural methods, feminist analysis or a materialist interpretation will run the same risks.

[2] The following exlication of theoretically-founded exegesis systematically compiles material distributed over three articles; cf. Maartens (1977:48ff), (1980:4ff) and (1980:88ff).

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