Chapter 3

Theoretical issues

3.1 Orientation

Even a cursory reading of the Gospel of Luke leaves one with the impression that the question of the *social location* of the people inhabiting this narrative world figures prominently throughout the story. There is much talk here not only of people who seem to be in important positions – the masters, the rich, the powerful, the ones who are 'first' – but also of people who seem to be in positions of little importance in that society – the slaves, the poor, the powerless, the ones who are 'last'. According to Luke's story the people occupying these positions interact with each other, as is analogically described in the parables. What is distinctive about the descriptions is that very frequently (almost consistently) someone in a high position has something to do with someone in a low position. It really seems as if the positions are grouped together in a high-low configuration, for example as master-slave (cf inter alia Lk 7:1-10; 12:35-48; 16:1-13; 17:7-10). The above observations are really descriptions, in 'lay' terms, of what are known in the social sciences as the categories of 'role' and 'status' within a social system, and of what is known in literary criticism as 'characterization' within a narrative.

3.2 Some preliminary methodological considerations

Before asking *why* there might be such a pattern, let us first reflect on the nature of information that might merit social-scientific interest. Is the data readily accessible to social scientific analysis? Or is a prior step required, preparing the 'raw' social data, as it were, for analysis and interpretation by social scientific means?

Furthermore, on the strength of the assumption that this and any other narrative contains and expresses a system of beliefs, that is, an understanding of the world or (some aspect of) society from a specific point of view, the issue of *ideology* should also be looked into.

3.2.1 Transforming *emic* data into *etic* data

Historical descriptions of behaviour contain what is called *emic* data, that is, information about behaviour 'from the native's point of view' (Malina 1986:190).[1] The term 'emic' emphasizes the fact that any information of a social nature within the Gospel is historically 'dated', that is, both its *connotation* and its *denotation* are necessarily different from our own (see Sartori 1984:15-34 for an extensive discussion of denotation/extension and connotation/intension).

According to Sartori the general signification of *connotation/intension*[2] is that it consists of the ensemble of characteristics and/or properties associated with, or included in, a given word, term, or concept. He defines it as follows: 'The intension (or connotation) of a term consists of all the characteristics or properties of that term, that is, assignable to a term under the constraints of a given linguistic-semantic system' (Sartori 1984:24). 'Connotation' or 'intension' therefore refers to 'meaning' (cf Sartori 1984:22), and meaning realized in language, it might be added, is culturally defined because it is rooted in a social system (cf Malina 1986a:190; 1988b:7-8; Nida & Reyburn 1981:14-19). Sartori's (1984:143) own definition of the term 'intension' reads: '[T]he ensemble of characteristics of [included in] a concept. Vulgarly: the associations a word has in the mind of its users.'

According to Louw (1976:61; see also Van Aarde [1980]:1) a distinction should be made between the 'meaning' and the 'usage' of lexemes, lexeme combinations and sentences. This is based on the observation that the usage of a word could be described according to three broad categories – comprehension, reference and implication (Louw 1976:61). The first category is the connection between 'meaning' and 'understanding' (Louw 1976:56-57), where 'understanding' indicates the cognition of the meaning of the words, as distinct from the comprehension of the sense of the utterance. The second category consists of the relationship between 'meaning' and 'reference' (Louw 1976:57-59), where 'reference' indicates the 'process of designating some entity, event, etc. by a particular symbol' (Nida 1975:15, quoted by Louw 1976:58; cf also Nida & Reyburn 1981:6) – in other words, *figurative meaning* (as against *literal meaning*). The third category is that of the relationship and between 'meaning' and 'implication', where 'implication' indicates the meaning of the context (Louw 1976:59-61). These three categories are indicative of a definite distinction between *a word and its meaning* and *a word and its usage*.

The 'meaning' of a word is defined as '...the set of distinctive features which makes possible certain types of reference...' (Nida 1975:15, quoted in Louw 1976: 59). In terms of its definition the term 'meaning' seems therefore to correspond to Sartori's category of 'connotation/intension' discussed above. At the same time the term 'denotation/extension' corresponds to Louw's distinction of the 'usage' of a

word.[3] This 'usage' implies more than the sender-code-receptor scheme. It also implies a *communicative situation*. To stress the importance of this 'situation', Van Aarde ([1980]:2, 24) quotes the maxim from L Wittgenstein: 'Don't look for the meaning, look for the use.'

The significance of the term *denotation* (or *extension*)[4] is that it is complementary to the term *connotation* (or *intension*). The important question is therefore: What is denotation? According to Sartori (1984:24) two different replies are given to this question in the relevant literature. The first is that 'the entire denotation of a word is the complete list of all the things to which the word applies', and that words do not denote classes of things: 'The denotation of a word is always an individual thing' (Hospers 1967:40, 42, quoted by Sartori 1984:24). This would be correct if 'denotation' was extralinguistic (Sartori 1984:24), that is, if reference was made to things that could be identified ostensively (Sartori 1984:66, note 11).

The second reply, however, maintains that the extension (or denotation) of a word 'consists of the class of all objects to which that word correctly applies' (Salmon 1964:90, quoted by Sartori 1984:24). Sartori's (1984:75) own definition of the term 'denotation' reads: 'The denotation of a word is the ensemble of things (objects) to which the word applies', and his definition of 'extension' reads: '...the referent or referents to which a term applies' (Sartori 1984:77). When 'things' is replaced by 'class of things', it is implied that the scope of the denotation is just as linguistic (and mental) as that of the connotation (Sartori 1984:24). Therefore, provided one takes this second reply to be valid (as I do), neither the characteristics or properties (meaning) of a word, nor its denotation (reference) is directly accessible to an interpreter.

In order to try to understand such data of sociological interest, we therefore need to apply analytical and interpretive categories to that material. This really means that we have to 'translate' that information into a type of language that makes it accessible for modern social-scientific analysis and interpretation. This results in an *etic* description of the originally *emic* data. According to Gottwald (1979:785 note 558) the terms 'emic' and 'etic' were coined by a linguist named Kenneth Pike by analogy with phon*emic* and phon*etic*. The following somewhat lengthy quotation should serve to explain the technical meaning of the two terms:

> '*Emics*' refers to cultural explanations that draw their criteria from the consciousness of the people in the culture being explained, so that emic statements can be verified or falsified according to their correspondence to or deviation from the understanding of the cultural actors. '*Etics*' refers to cultural explanations whose cri-

teria derive from a body of theory and method shared in
a community of scientific observers. These cultural ex-
planations constitute 'a corpus of predictions about the
behavior of classes of people'. Etic statements cannot
be verified or falsified by what cultural actors think is
true, but only by their predictive success or failure.
'Emics' systematically excludes 'etics', but 'etics' makes
room for 'emics' insofar as what cultural actors think
about their action is part of the data to be accounted for
in developing a corpus of predictions about lawful social
behavior.

(Gottwald 1979:785, note 558)

Malina (1986a:190) describes *emic* descriptions of behaviour as descriptions *from
the native's point of view*, and indicates that the New Testament writings could be
considered 'an anthropologist's field book full of emic data'. Etic descriptions, con-
versely, are based on a model of how the world works. Such descriptions are there-
fore open to verification, their value depending on the scientific integrity of the
model on which they are based. This distinction between 'emic' and 'etic' is a useful
one – it allows us to understand the fact that we work with material that refers to a
reality vastly different from our own and that we should therefore be sensitive
enough not to modernize the meanings. These accepted perspectives in the social
sciences recognize the conceptual gulf between observer and observed (Malina &
Neyrey 1988:137). At the same time it allows us to investigate more precisely these
original meanings by employing modern abstract research categories, in this case by
the use of the social sciences. Malina (1986a:190) assesses the value of the distinc-
tion between *emic* and *etic* as follows: 'In philosophical terms the articulation of the
emic in the etic mode overcomes the so-called "hermeneutical gap", the gap in un-
derstanding between people in different cultures, whether past or present.' The
concepts *emic* and *etic*, therefore, facilitate the responsible interpretation of the
communication strategies of ancient texts in social-scientific terms. The use of these
concepts substantially reduces the danger of the fallacy of misplaced concreteness
(cf chapter 1, section 1.3.3 above).

     To restate in 'etic' terms, then, the initial observations about the frequency and
varied forms of opposing social positions in Luke (cf 3.1 above), one would intro-
duce social-scientific terms to describe for instance the pervasiveness of the issue of
status throughout the macrotext, specifically as represented by the use of *contrasting
roles* that reciprocally define each other, and by the descriptions of the type of inter-
action between these roles.

The identification of these categories for investigation is based on the assumption that the author of Luke constructed his narrative in such a way as to propose to his intended readers a new form of social interaction. According to this proposal the *attitude* and *action* of any person occupying a role representing high status should conform not to prevailing custom – concerning the expected behaviour associated with that particular role – but rather to the example set by the main character within the narrative, namely Jesus of Nazareth.

This strategy of the author represents what is known in *biblical studies* as the 'theology' of the author – his system of religious beliefs which he authoritatively presents in order to get his readers to share his viewpoint. This same strategy of the author of a literary text is known in the *social sciences* as 'ideology' – a system of beliefs and values that is used consciously or unconsciously to maintain or further the interests of a specific group (Elliott 1981:12, 104-105; Malina 1986a:178). In order to understand *why* the author has chosen to use this strategy, one first needs to know the substance and possible consequences of his ideology.

At this stage it becomes important to define and explicate the concept 'ideology', and to table the similarities (and differences, if any,) between 'theology' and 'ideology'. Some confusion might be anticipated if these terms' references are not clearly documented.

3.2.2 Theology and ideology: surrogate terms?

Sartori (1984:84) defines a *surrogate term* as a term that can be used interchangeably with another in order to avoid pedantic repetition. The issue at stake here is therefore whether 'theology' and 'ideology' really are interchangeable – are they terms that assume an identity of meaning?[5] Furthermore, are they interchangeable within each and between the three disciplines relevant to this study, namely literary criticism, social science and theology? We wish to show that *ideology* in both literary criticism and in the social sciences can indeed be seen as a surrogate term for the concept *theology*, when these terms signify the system of religious beliefs and values exhibited by a group or a document.

The logical place to start would be to delimit the semantic reference of the lexicographic terms 'ideology' and 'theology'.[6]

Ideology
1. Science of ideas. (This sense of the word is now anachronistic, cf Cronin 1987b:13.)
2. Visionary speculation.
3. Manner of thinking characteristic of a class or individual.
4. Ideas at the basis of some economic or political theory or system.

Theology	1.	Study of or system of religion.
	2.	Rational analysis of a religious faith.

According to the lexicographic definition, then, the term 'ideology' signifies a 'manner of thinking' or 'ideas', while the term 'theology' signifies the study or 'rational analysis' of 'religion'. Is there any correspondence between 'ideas' and 'religion'? A further lexicographic study of these two terms reveals the following:

Idea	1.	Archetype, pattern, as distinguished from its realization in individuals; (Platonic Philosophy) eternally existing pattern of which individual things in any class are imperfect copies.
	2.	Conception, plan, of (objective genitive) or *of* (subjective genitive) thing to be aimed at, created, discovered, etc.
	3.	Notion conceived by the mind; way of thinking; vague belief, fancy.
	4.	(Descartes, Locke) immediate object of thought or mental perception; (Kant) conception of reason transcending all experience; (Hegel) absolute truth of which all phenomenal existence is the expression.

Religion	1.	Particular system of faith and worship (*the Christian, Muslim, Buddhist, religion*).
	2.	Human recognition of superhuman controlling power and especially of a personal God or gods entitled to obedience and worship; effect of such recognition on conduct and mental attitude.
	3.	Thing that one is devoted to or bound to.
	4.	Life under monastic conditions.

From the above it is clear that the term 'idea', both in its descriptive and philosophical definitions, has to do with the conception or plan of something to be created, or with a notion conceived by the mind. It therefore has a noetic/cognate element (*noumenon*) with affective overtones that, in Immanuel Kant's terms, transcends all experience. 'Idea' in this sense also has to find practical (or concrete) expression in phenomena (*phenomenon*).

'Religion' is seen as a system of faith and worship, a recognition of a controlling power and the effect of such recognition on conduct and mental attitude. While one gets the impression that within this definition of religion there is something akin to

the definition of 'idea' expressed above, a clear correspondence is not yet evident. The key term that needs further clarification is 'faith'. The following lexicographic definition is given:

Faith
1. Reliance or trust *in*; belief founded on authority.
2. (Theology) belief in religious doctrines, especially such as affects character and conduct, spiritual apprehension of divine truth apart from proof; system of religious belief.
3. Promise, engagement.

The correspondence becomes clearer now: terms such as 'belief' and 'spiritual apprehension' are strongly suggestive of the noetic or cognate, as well as the emotional or affective. In the case of both 'ideology' and 'theology' there seems therefore to be an evaluating aspect with cognitive and affective elements, as well as its practical consequences. On the basis of the lexical definitions of the various related terms, then, one could provisionally say that *ideology* and *theology* do seem to be surrogate terms.

The lexicographic definition of 'ideology' and 'theology' could therefore be expressed in the following formulaic expression:

Ideology/theology = an evaluating aspect consisting of cognitive and affective elements + the practical expression or realization of such elements in conduct and mental attitude.

With the above definition in mind, we shall now discuss the different applications or definitions of the concept 'ideology' within the three disciplines relevant to this study, namely literary criticism, social sciences and theology.

3.2.2.1 *Ideology* in literary studies

According to Van Luxemburg, Bal & Weststeijn (1981:97) *sociology of literature* is the discipline that encompassing the different interests (directions) in literary science that studies literature and its relationship to the social reality within which it functions. Three main approaches are distinguished:

a) The *empirical sociology of literature* is not interested in the literature itself, but in aspects associated with literary production, looking at factors such as the composition of the reading public, the social position of the author, or the correlation between sales figures and the recension of a work. *Quantitative methods* are mostly used.

b) The *historical-materialist sociology of literature* seeks to locate the literary texts in their historical contexts. At stake here is the much debated subject of the rela-

tionship between a work of literature and its socio-historical reality (cf 1.1 to 1.1.1.5 above). The description of this relationship has mostly been dominated by the mechanistic Marxist concept that relations of production in the economic base of society determine the social, political and cultural superstructure. It has been realized, however, that base and superstructure have a certain autonomy over and against one another, so that 'the superstructure is...determined by the base in a weak sense' (Goldberg 1987:30), which really means that the influence of the economic is not directly causal as some Marxists assert (cf Goldberg 1987:30).[7] Indeed, the mechanistic theory of direct causal influence has been criticised by later Marxists, for instance by the French Marxist philosopher Louis Althusser. Althusser held that the productive relations had as much influence on the cultural superstructure of society as the other way round – base and superstructure have a dynamic, dialectical relationship (cf Van Luxemburg et al 1981:101).

c) *Ideology critique* is the approach within sociology of literature that is concerned with the analysis of the ideologies within the literary text itself and in its reception.[8] The *analysis of the text* is the main purpose of this approach (see the interesting discussion by Du Plooy 1989:114-141 on the subject of text and ideology, especially pp 121-122 on ideology critique). The *methods of analysis* used are those developed in *literary criticism* (cf Van Luxemburg et al 1981:103). Differing from the historical-materialists, ideology critics do not a priori regard ideologies in a negative sense. Those who understand 'ideology' in a pejorative sense to mean 'false consciousness' must make the premise that it is in fact possible to avoid ideology. They hold the (ideological) opinion that there is a non-ideological, non-evaluating, 'neutral' position (see also Du Toit 1989:84). This is, of course, impossible. Every person has a perception of his/her relation to reality, which constitutes 'ideology' (Van Luxemburg et al 1981:103). The philosopher *Habermas* has had considerable influence on the field of ideology critique. He maintained that 'critical science', which is a type of science dependent upon critical selfreflection, can be used to identify ideologies that are detrimental precisely to those who recognize their validity and are governed by it. He advocated a systematic ideology critique that would be able to expose the mechanisms of ideological influencing. According to Van Luxemburg et al (1981:103) a confrontation between intratextual ideologies and ideologies relating to the reception of the text could provide some insight in the development of the ideologies. Religious texts (Bible stories) inter alia are deemed to be especially suitable for such analysis, because they have a well documented reception owing to their canonicity.

In *literary criticism* the concept 'ideology' is an analytical category expressing the viewpoint that a literary – in this case, narrative – work originates and survives in an

extratextual world. According to Van Aarde (1988c:235) a narrative therefore involves a *network of themes and ideas which are intended to have meaning within a particular context*, and which are therefore presented in narrative form from a specific perspective. This *network of themes and ideas presented from a specific perspective* constitutes the *ideology* of the work.

In an interesting discussion Van Aarde (1988c:235-237), referring to Uspensky (1973) and another work by Lotman and Uspensky discussed by Danow (1987), designates 'culture' as the mechanism generating texts. According to a remark quoted by Danow (1987:352) from the work of Lotman and Uspensky and taken up by Van Aarde (1988c:236-237), the understanding of a text is provisionally bound up with its relation to the culture, or the behaviour of the people contemporary with it. The term 'culture' is replaced by the term 'social context' by Van Aarde (1988c:237), and the latter is shown to be an indirect mechanism behind the generation of texts. *People* are regarded as directly responsible for the production of texts (Van Aarde 1988c:237).

While I believe that Van Aarde is correct in regarding the social context as an indirect mechanism behind the generation of texts, the fact that he seems to equate or assume identity of meaning between 'culture' and 'social context' could become problematic. Schnell (1987:142-145; 169-170), for instance, using the Parsonian model, indicates that groups in society could be distinguished in terms of (i) culture, (ii) social system, (iii) individual personality and (iv) physical organism. According to this model the four components interact functionally (cf Schnell 1987:144). Culture provides an overall conceptual pattern which supplies the other parts with information so that the whole may survive in integrated fashion. The social system converts the information it receives into viable social structures, that is, norms and organizations (Schnell 1987:144).[9] Parsons then divides each of these components into four subgroups (cf Schnell 1987:144), where *culture* comprises the elements of *religion, morality, art* and *rational science*. The *social system* is divided into *fiduciary agencies* (judiciary, schools, churches), *the community, politics,* and the *economy*. Schnell uses this distinction between the cultural and the social systems to categorize the substance of the texts, and then to inquire into the functional relations between the cultural system (mainly the religious subsystem) and the social system in Jesus' preaching. He uses the same model to place Jesus in his social context, to interpret the differences between the preaching of Jesus and its interpretation by Mark and John, and to study Jesus in terms of our own cultural and social system (Schnell 1987:145).

Without a discussion of the merits and deficiencies of the Parsonian model, at this stage it will suffice to point out that 'culture' and 'social system' cannot be

equated as easily as Van Aarde seems to have done above.[10] The whole Parsonian model depends precisely on maintaining the distinction and dialectical relationship between these two concepts. Also, within the social sciences in general there are very definite differences between cultural systems and social systems, as evidenced in the definitions of these two concepts. When we speak of a 'social system', we have in mind the orderly functioning or patterned behaviour (structured interaction) of a society or group of interacting persons, such as family, government, education and religion, around common concerns or purposes (cf Malina 1981:19-21). *Culture*, on the other hand, is a system of symbols relating to and embracing people, things, and events that are socially symbolled. That is, culture assigns meaning and value in such a way that all members of a group mutually share and live out of that meaning and value in some way (Malina 1981:11). Culture 'marks the area of the "we" over against the "they", the area of collective communication and sharing, the area of the limited and finite range of persons, things and events that a given group of people holds in common...This is the area of the *social*' (Malina 1986a:7). It marks the area of the social by 'symboling persons, things and events, endowing them distinctive functions and statuses, and situating them within specific time and space frames' (Malina 1986a:9).

Corroboration for maintaining the distinction between 'social system' and 'cultural system' is found in Steyn and Van Rensburg (1985:29-30), who distinguish three basic subsystems of action within a general action system – the concepts 'personality system', 'social system' and 'cultural system' (cf Steyn & Van Rensburg 1985:30).

Within the *personality system* the action is regarded as the result of the acting person's orientation to the situation. The concept 'personality' applies to the actions of a single person. These actions are organized around the structure of his/her needs, and they exhibit a certain cohesiveness and integration in the process of satisfying the needs of the individual (cf Steyn & Van Rensburg 1985:29).

Within a *social system* the action is understood as *interaction*, involving more than one person. The relationship of such a collectivity of persons towards their situation and towards each other is defined, mediated and directed by a system of shared symbols and norms (cf Steyn & Van Rensburg 1985:29).

In contrast to the two subsystems of action just mentioned, the *cultural system* is not regarded as a system of action. It consists rather of (a) the organization of values and norms that give direction to the choices the acting persons have to make (or it restricts the types of interaction that can manifest between people); (b) the organization of symbols that mediates this interaction between people; and (c) the or-

ganization of knowledge (concerning science, philosophy, ideology and religion) that gives direction to behaviour within social systems (Steyn & Van Rensburg 1985:30).

To return, then, to the initial discussion – it is true that texts can be understood only in terms of culture. Texts consist of language, and language is a very important aspect of culture, embodying and expressing the values and meanings shared by the users of the language codal system (cf Sargent & Williamson 1966:303-306; Popenoe 1980:106-108; Malina 1981:12; 1986a:1-12, especially 2, 11-12; Petersen 1985:17-20). Nida & Reyburn (1981:14) distinguish five classes of underlying (cultural) presuppositions about world and life:

a) Presuppositions about the physical earth and human beings, comprising views about creation (taking place within a time structure of seven periods of 24 hours each), purity classifications (classifying living beings as clean and unclean), et cetera.

b) Presuppositions about history and destiny, comprising the concept of covenant within the scope of which both past experiences and future expectations are contained. Knowledge or hopes about the ultimate destiny of individual human beings form part of these presuppositions.

c) Presuppositions about supernatural beings, for instance about a personal sovereign God, or about the existence of other supernatural beings such as angels, demons, and the devil. Those beings are regarded as having the power to bless or curse, to reward faithfulness or punish neglect. They communicate through apparitions, dreams, visions, and the drawing of lots, and human beings can communicate with them by means of prayer, sacrifices and offerings.

d) Presuppositions about personal relations, often of the most complex kind. The acceptance, for instance, of slavery as a legal institution, or of the dominance of husbands over wives, is based on important presuppositions about personal relations.

e) Presuppositions about valid intellectual activity, comprising the acknowledgment of the contemporary canons of proof (the use of scriptural reference in the New Testament). Such use of Old Testament quotations rests on presuppositions about verbal proofs that are not compatible with present-day customs.

While these presuppositions, which are basic to any adequate comprehension of the meaning of any communication, are not always verbalized, they definitely do exist. Nida & Reyburn (1981:17) emphasize that 'they are constantly manifested in the daily life of the people of any culture, both in the recurring cultural patterns of behavior and in the ways in which people understand and interpret events'.

Van Aarde (1988c:237) distinguishes between *linguistic* and *perceptual* dimensions in verbal communication (such as texts).[11] The *linguistic* dimension concerns the configuration of language symbols in a text, and the text as a language symbol in

a constellation of texts.[12] The *perceptual* dimension 'refers to a particular social context in a network of textual themes and ideas',[13] and constitutes 'no more than evaluative imagining of particular social contexts'[14] (Van Aarde 1988c:237).

I understand this *evaluative imagining* to be done by the author of the text. In that case, however, the ideological perspective as evaluating point of view would be the same as the ideological perspective as perceptual dimension in the communication act. Is this possible? The perceptual dimension, being a particular reflected social context (the time of the earthly Jesus in Palestine or the time of writing?) in a network of textual themes and ideas, is an analytical category used by the reader/ interpreter to distinguish an object of study in his approach to the text. Surely this cannot be identical to the evaluating point of view, which is exactly the network of textual themes and ideas ascribed to the author, and which constitutes the ideological perspective of his work? I would therefore suggest that we differentiate for analytical purposes between the social context which provides the backdrop for the evaluating point of view (perceptual dimension), and the evaluating point of view (ideological perspective) of the author itself.

The means of communication of the ideological perspective depends on the form of the speech act – if the speech act is in the form of narration, the evaluating point of view (ideological perspective) of the author is communicated by means of a narrative act. A text therefore presupposes an ideology (a network of themes and ideas) which is communicated and has meaning only in a certain social context (cf Van Aarde 1988c:237).

In the communication process there are intratextual and extratextual components (Van Aarde 1988c:237; Rousseau 1985:95-96; Petersen 1984:38-43). The extratextual component has a bearing on the social context. To construct this social context knowledge is needed of other texts, of the frame of reference of the text, comprising the sociocultural aspects of both the sender and the receptor, of the linguistic and the philosophical backgrounds, and of the actuality experience of both (cf Rousseau 1985:96).

Van Aarde correctly asserts that extratextual factors have exegetical relevance only in so far as they manifest themselves in a specific text, and that the construction of the social context of a specific text depends on the text being read (1988c:237). It is not quite clear, however, what he wishes to assert in his following argument, reversing the procedure to that of first constructing a social context, and then reading the text against such context. Such an argument presupposes of course the existence of other texts from the same period, as well as information from other sources (e g, archaeology) from which to construct such a social context. In the case of the New Testament this is possible. At most, however, we would only be able to

construct a generalized social context, making vague assertions about the perso-
nality type of the Mediterranean people or about economics or religious affiliations.
While such a general background can indeed provide a starting point for exegesis,
we can only arrive at specifics by going through the gateway proffered by the
medium of the text itself (Rousseau 1985:95; cf also 2.4.6 above).[15] While my own
position on this issue is in agreement with that of Petersen (cf 2.4.6. above) rather
than Van Aarde, the latter is correct at least to the extent that the general back-
ground, constructed from several texts that witness to the same period, should be
utilized as a plausibility test for the interpretation of a single text (cf chapter 4, note
3 for the model implicit in Van Aarde's approach).

The concept of 'ideology' as a network of themes and ideas that occur in a
narrative as an 'imagined' version of a specific reality is used increasingly in narrato-
logy by various scholars (cf Van Aarde 1988c:236 for references to scholars who
make use of the concept). The representation by Van Tilborg (1986) of Althusser's
philosophical theory of the practical functioning of an ideology as a literary device
for the interpretation of biblical literature is a case in point. As a point of depar-
ture, Van Tilborg accepts the Marxist base-superstructure metaphor, where econo-
mics form the base (*Unterbau*) that 'ultimately' determines the social, political and
cultural superstructure (*Überbau*) of every society (cf Van Luxemburg, Bal & West-
steijn 1981:99), that is, the juridical, political and ideological constellation of every
existing social formation (cf Van Tilborg 1986:3). According to Van Tilborg
(1986:1) the individual sayings of the Sermon on the Mount should be seen as 'ideo-
logical interventions in the context of an existing social practice'. Van Tilborg
(1986:2) quotes the philosophical argument by Althusser which states that an ideo-
logy does not represent 'ultimate reality' as it exists in the productive relationships
of the economic base of society (which is regarded as reality *per se*). *Ideology* rather
represents an 'imaginary' relation of individuals to that Marxist 'ultimate reality', the
economic base: 'Ideology, therefore, does not represent the system of real relation-
ships which affect the lives of individuals, but rather the imaginary relation of these
individuals to the real relations under which they live' (Althusser 1976:104, quoted
by Van Tilborg 1986:2). Every ideology therefore has a binary structure (Van Til-
borg 1986:2). It has as its base the existing productive relationships (cf Cohen 1968:
80), but the expression of its own relation to the productive relationships is only
given in the imaginary order (that is, according to the individual's understanding) of
metaphors, symbols, word games, et cetera. Therefore, according to Van Tilborg
(1986:2) every ideological statement reveals and hides the truth at the same time.
While it touches on the real interest of the people because of its reality base, it
simultaneously obscures that interest by expressing it in language which is part of

the imaginary order. An ideological statement therefore provides a distorted insight into someone's relation to socially existing, politically realized and economically determined relations between people. The *expression* of such a relation is necessarily imaginary, however, because it promotes interests that are not reflected upon in ideology (Van Tilborg 1986:2). Texts, according to Van Tilborg (1986:9), belong to the sphere of ideology – a sphere of human life which expresses itself in fantasies, images and thoughts that are expressed in any society in language.[16]

Van Tilborg's adherence to the Marxist understanding of the functioning of society can be criticised for being too simplistic and unable to escape the mechanistic tendencies of that model in positing the economic component as the primary causal substructure of society (cf 2.5.4 above for Malina's discussion on the dominance of any of the religious, political, economic or kinship components in a specific society, and the embeddedness of the other in the dominant component; cf also chapter 2, note 9 above for a similar notion in the sociology of knowledge). In the discussion of Althusser's theory and the subsequent arguments, Van Tilborg imparts the impression of being negative towards the concept of 'ideology'. This reflects the typical Marxist attitude towards ideology, namely that the dominant ideology in any class-divided society is always that of the ruling classes (cf Van Tilborg 1986:6-7), and that such ideology serves to effect a 'false consciousness' in the people in order to get them to accept their inferior position as being inevitable. In this sense 'ideology', being used as *social weapon* (Smit 1988:446), constitutes for Marxism the instrument for the maintenance of privilege (Cohen 1968:81), and therefore acquires a pejorative sense.

In spite of imparting the impression of a negative assessment of the concept of 'ideology', Van Tilborg must be credited with perceiving that 'ideology' can be a valuable heuristic device in the determination of meaning in biblical texts. Three observations by Van Tilborg deserve special mention:

(i) The previously mentioned statement that the individual sayings of the Sermon on the Mount are perceived as 'ideological interventions in the context of an existing social practice'. From this it is but a short step to recognize that a text in its entirety may also constitute such an ideological intervention in the context of an existing social practice. If 'ideology' is defined as *an imaginary expression of the relation of someone to reality, which has the intention of persuading or inducing others to concur with this view on reality*, the above statement provides possible clarification of an aspect of the relationship between a text and its social context.

(ii) The second valuable contribution is made by calling attention to the fact that every ideology has a specific 'tendency' that indicates how that ideology is connected with the dominant structures in a society (Van Tilborg 1986:6). This opens

the possibility of ascertaining which interests are pursued by whom and for what purpose, and what this concretely means for those affected by the success or failure of the dominant ideology. In the case of a text this aim calls for the literary-critical analysis and description of the main ideological point of view presented in the narrative, and a corresponding social-scientific analysis by means of *conflict theory*, which is the theoretical approach that focuses on different (conflicting) interests (cf section 3.5.2 below).

(iii) Finally, the emphasis on the text as 'imagined' accounts of reality corresponds to the notion in narratology of the 'narrative world' or 'referential world' of a narrative text. This 'narrative world' is intratextual, and is to be differentiated from the 'real', historical world from which the text has come.

Within a communication model all pertinent factors that may influence the understanding of the message of a text are to be taken account of. The different constituents of the communication process are interrelated with each other in such a way that the exegetical-hermeneutical model will have a circular, cross-referential and double-checking effect (Rousseau 1985:98). According to Rousseau (1985:97) the basic constituents of the communication process, the linguistic-literary and the historical, are determined by the sender's perspective: '"Perspective" [in the sense of "ultimate commitment"] is the final and decisive contextual element determining the content and understanding of the message.' He also makes the following important observation: 'The author's perspective on reality [which includes his life and world view, values, commitments, etc.] dominates his entire message and is therefore the key to understand him.' Only when the audience shares the perspective of the author and reacts according to his intentions, can it be said that communication has succeeded (Rousseau 1985:97).

The term 'perspective', as used here, corresponds to the concept of *ideology* discussed above, constituting a network of themes and ideas within a narrative that has the purpose of eliciting concurrence amongst its readers. This *network* is an *imaginative perception* of a *contextual world* by a particular author.

From the discussion above it could be stated that there seems to be a correspondence between the understanding of 'ideology' in literature expressed by both Marxist materialistic exegesis and non-materialistic literary criticism (cf Van Aarde 1988c:236 for the distinction between the two viewpoints). The Marxist 'imaginary expression of an individual's relation to reality' corresponds to the literary-theoretical 'network of themes and values', both of which are reminiscent of the first component (the evaluating perspective) in the lexicographic definition of ideology (cf 3.2.2 above). Furthermore, in both the Marxist and the literary-theoretical explication the evaluating component finds practical expression in the inducement of others to

accept the point of view that is expressed in that evaluation. The evaluation itself is contained in the 'imagined' relation to reality or the network of themes and values associated with a specific group (or literary work). This 'inducement of others' corresponds to the second component in the lexicographic definition of ideology, namely that the evaluating component should be realized in the conduct and mental attitude of others (cf 3.2.2 above).

While we have voiced appreciation for Van Aarde's treatment of the subject of 'ideology', this same treatment is assessed and commented upon by Smit (1988). It might contribute to clarity to note and evaluate the main arguments brought forth by Smit.

According to Smit (1988:444) the term *ideological reading* as used by Van Aarde covers at least four different phenomena:

(i) 'Ideology' refers to the evaluating viewpoint of the narrator, who communicates that evaluating point of view by means of a speech act. This is referred to as the ideological point of view of the narrator (cf Van Aarde 1988c:247-248). Smit directs attention to the fact that in this sense there can be only one evaluating point of view in a narrative – that of the narrator who uses language in an attempt to manipulate the (implicit) readers into accepting his ideology.

(ii) According to Smit, Van Aarde (1988c:247-249), following Resseguie (1982), asserts that there can be more than one ideology present in a narrative. Smit (1988:444) contends that the use of the term 'ideology' for the phenomenon 'opposing points of view' is confusing. He argues that such a phenomenon is not evaluative or manipulative – it is simply a synonym for 'viewpoint' or 'perspective'.

I believe that Smit confuses the issue here. Surely the evaluative and manipulative aspects are to be found precisely in the contrasting of the opposing ideologies, and in vindicating the one against the other. Van Aarde is correct in speaking about ideological perspectives (plural), because these perspectives do indeed represent .conflicting networks of themes and ideas. To negate this fact could make one lose sight of the really important question, namely: where, in what realm, do these themes and ideas originate, these networks of values and beliefs, and why are there different evaluating perspectives or ideologies vying for acceptance? An understanding of anyone's perception of the essence of life is only to be reached through an analysis of their ideology. I differ substantially from the Marxist contention that one's ideology represents a distorted view of his relation to reality. Who defines what objective reality is? I strongly believe that perceived reality, as expressed in an evaluating perspective or ideology, in fact constitutes 'objective reality'. This 'perceived reality' (narrative world) is based on both the socio-cultural system in which there is a shared understanding of symbols (contextual world) and on the symbolic

universe that provides the integrative ingredient to actions and experiences that could otherwise be seen as disparate and disconnected and artificial.

(iii) Smit refers to Van Aarde's distinction between 'ideology' as understood from an ideal, non-materialistic viewpoint, and 'ideology' as understood from the Marxist viewpoint (cf Van Aarde 1988c:236). He relates these distinctions to those made by Cronin (1987a:111) between 'aesthetic ideologies' and 'sociopolitical ideologies'.

The *aesthetic ideology* within a text is, according to Smit (1988:446), the conscious and deliberate 'evaluating point of view' of the narrator, which comprises the main themes and ideas propagated through the medium of the story (Smit 1988: 445). The narrator is trying to manipulate the reader into his own evaluating perspective (cf Smit 1988:445). In order to discern this 'aesthetic ideology' or 'evaluating perspective' from the narrative, one 'moves within the field of narrative analysis, and one stays within the limits and strategies of the story, the language, the characters and the plot' (Smit 1988:445). The 'aesthetic ideologies' present a set of notions about what constitutes the 'beautiful', the 'proper', et cetera (Cronin 1987a: 111).

The *sociopolitical ideologies* within the texts, on the other hand, may be expressed unconsciously. They furnish answers to the sociopolitical question of who (what individual or group) stands to benefit most if the evaluating viewpoint of the narrator is accepted. In order to obtain these answers one has to move into the field of 'social analysis'. This means that one has to understand the 'public ideological discourse that serves as backdrop for the narrative or text, in order to understand the way the narrative serves to strengthen or weaken social relationships' (Smit 1988:445-446).

I believe that Smit is correct in pointing out that Cronin's distinction between *aesthetic ideology* and *sociopolitical ideology* in fact entails two distinct reading strategies that complement one another while answering different questions (Smit 1988: 446). I also believe, though, that while an understanding of the aesthetic ideology of a text can be pursued independently of the sociopolitical ideology, the reverse is not true. Understanding the aesthetic ideology of a text (the evaluating viewpoint of the narrator) is a prerequisite for attempting to understand its sociopolitical ideology.

I am not quite clear on what Smit understands by the term 'social analysis', defining it as the method by which to determine the sociopolitical ideology within the text. Presumably it entails the methodological procedure one would follow to come to an understanding of 'the public ideological discourse that serves as backdrop for the narrative or text' (Smit 1988:445). The term 'social analysis' leaves one with several choices as to its connotation – namely, compiling a social history from and

for the text; embarking on a social description, analysing the text for data of social interest; or conducting a social-scientific analysis, seeking to explain tendencies of interpersonal behaviour or human interaction described within the text by methods that are scientifically sound. The term 'public ideological discourse', however, is completely opaque to me. What does Smit have in mind when he uses this term? Does 'discourse' refer to a *written* text, expressing the (dominant) ideology prevailing in the contextual community? Does it refer to *oral* discussion, expressing the same, and where is that to be found? Perhaps the term is simply meant to designate the *social system* within which the text was produced, or to which the text refers. It is very confusing.

According to Smit (1988:445), then, pursuing the aesthetic ideology of a text is a *literary endeavour*. To this he contrasts the ascertainment of the sociopolitical ideology of the text with the instrument of *social analysis*. Is this also a literary endeavour? Smit (1988:446) states that one needs 'to understand the way the narrative serves to strengthen or weaken social relationships'. I take it that the 'social relations' he refers to are those that exist in the social context *outside* of the text, in the *contextual world* of the text. This, I believe, would be the correct conclusion drawn from Smit's (1988:445) understanding of 'sociopolitical ideology' as referring to the *effect* of the text on *society*. In this context he ascribes a pejorative sense to the term 'ideology'. The words, ideas, themes and stories of which the ideology consists are used as *social weapons* (Smit 1988:446).

The contention of this work is that the demarcation of the *sociopolitical ideology* of a text is as much a literary endeavour as is that of the aesthetic ideology. There is no way to determine the effect of the text on its socio-historical context other than through the text. To do it any other way would amount to a construction of a specifics-based socio-historical context merely on the basis of general truisms and descriptions of the time, procured from other sources. Such a procedure would be methodologically problematic. The answer, I believe, lies in a literary category identified by Petersen (1984:38-43), namely that of the intratextual *encoded reader*. According to Petersen (1984:39-40) 'the intratextual encoding points (deictically) to extratextual communicants, to people who belong to the text's historical, interpretive context'. At the same time this encoding of a reader creates another 'hermeneutically significant distinction' between *authorial readers* and *non-authorial readers*. Authorial readers are the 'authorially intended addressees of the textual communication', and they belong to the text's own interpretive context (Petersen 1984:40). Non-authorial readers belong to other interpretive contexts. The interplay between intratextual encoded reader and extratextual authorial reader provides the point of

mediation between the literary text and its extratextual context, and simultaneously presents us with the key to the sociopolitical ideology of the text.

(iv) Smit (1988:446) distinguishes a *fourth* phenomenon that can be referred to by the term 'ideological reading'. This includes the ideologies at the *reception end* of the text, involving the printing, publishing, distributing, performing, reading, teaching, examining and critical commentary of a text (cf Cronin 1987a:111-112). In this view the critical reading of the literary critic may itself serve as a social weapon (cf Smit 1988:446). This corresponds to the understanding of literature as a *social force*, as articulated in the sociology of literature (cf 1.1.1.4 above).

One may not agree with everything Smit says, but for the sake of methodological clarity it is important to be cognisant of his differentiation of the references of the term 'ideology'.

3.2.2.2 *Ideology* in the social sciences

> Mainstream sociology, for the most part, continues to insist that it is capable of producing scientific, objective knowledge, relevant to the solution of major social problems in contemporary society.
>
> (Kinloch 1981:3)

The attitude described in the above quotation is not surprising, considering that for a very long time it has been ingrained in students that the attainment of value-free, neutral knowledge is not only possible, but should be the ultimate goal of anybody who aspires to be somebody in the knowledge business.

There is, however, a growing awareness that all 'knowledge' is ideological, 'in that it represents the vested interests and viewpoints of particular social groups in specific situations' (Kinloch 1981:3). Indeed, the claim to 'value neutrality' for itself might stand in the service of a covert attempt to get certain values accepted. On the basis of this recognition there seems to be a growing interest in what Berger & Luckmann (1967) called the *social construction of reality*, with *knowledge* being regarded as part of that reality. Attention is directed towards the *social context* of knowledge.

Several aspects covered in the discussion of the preceding section (3.2.2.1) not only apply to the use of the term 'ideology' in literary criticism, but also belong to the more generic reference of the term. To get a better perspective, we will have a brief look at the origins of ideology.

3.2.2.2 (a) The origins of *ideology*

According to Kinloch (1981:4) the term *ideology* originated during the French Revo-
lution. Referring to Lichtheim (1967), Kinloch (1981:4-5) ascribes the concept to
'liberals concerned with systems of normative ideas and the critique of absolute
norms in an attempt to place "ideal" aims above the more "material" goals of post-
revolutionary society'. He states that the term was first used in 1797 by Destutt de
Tracy to refer to a newly invented discipline – the *science of ideas* (Kinloch 1981:5).
The purpose of this new science was to support the formation of a new social and
political order as opposed to the 'unscientific' past. Kinloch (1981:5) describes the
programme of the science of ideas as follows:

> This new 'science' adopted an antimetaphysical ap-
> proach to reality, attempting to create more 'scientific
> institutions'. Articulated by an important group of *Ideo-
> logues*, this viewpoint focused on purging old concepts in
> order to develop 'correct' reasoning and bring about a
> state and social system based on 'ideology' – the scien-
> tific analysis of ideas in the search for 'natural' order...
> Thus, the notion of ideology originated in the philoso-
> phical search for truth in postrevolutionary France as
> ideas were subjected to 'scientific' analysis to provide a
> 'natural' foundation for a new society.
>
>   (Kinloch 1981:5, indebted to Drucker 1984)

Fanaeian (1981) also connects the origin of ideology with the time of the Enlighten-
ment. He maintains, however, that ideology was at that time considered a 'kind of
falsity' which was contrary to 'reason', and that this viewpoint constitutes the basis of
the rationalist definition of ideology (Fanaeian 1981:46). This is in fact contrary to
the point made by Kinloch (rendered above), namely that 'ideology' emphasized
precisely the desirability of *science* over and against the unscientific approach. It
would seem that Fanaeian is guilty here of an anachronism, ascribing a somewhat
later assessment of ideology to its time of origin. At that time ideologies consisted
of sets of ideas evolved by thinkers who reacted to political and social problems by
attempting to develop *scientific* solutions. Ideologies were therefore 'philosophical,
problem-orientated sets of ideas with political implications' (Kinloch 1981:5).

3.2.2.2 (b) Subsequent definitions of *ideology*

As indicated above (cf 3.2.2), the understanding of *ideology* as the *science of ideas*
later became outdated. This happened primarily because of the influence of Marx,

who saw ideologies as blinding, self-reifying ideas, a form of false consciousness. In this sense, according to Kinloch (1981:5), ideology represents false ideas concerning reality, in so far as they reflect the exclusive interests of a particular class, and become a determining factor in human existence. Such ideologies would as a consequence mask the social context of ideas,

> making consciousness passive and uncritical, creating
> social blindness and determinism. In such a situation,
> consciousness (ideology) defines social being, producing
> alienation and an irrational order determined by blind,
> unconscious material necessity. As a result, creation of
> rational order requires emancipation from this materia-
> listic determinism of social consciousness and move-
> ment towards the conscious production of social life,
> rising above existence and transcending alienation.
> (Kinloch 1981:5, based on Lichtheim 1967:21)

Discussing subsequent definitions of ideology in the Marxist tradition by Habermas (1970) and D'Amico (1978), Kinloch (1981:6) identifies a major dimension of ideology – namely, *the manner in which certain ideas are limited to particular class interests and determine social being.* He isolates the following common viewpoint: 'Ideology represents the conceptual dominance of the particular material situation by an elite that equates social reality with characteristics of its own economic system through particular abstractions.'[17]

Apart from representing the 'conceptual dominance' of a material situation, ideologies also function to *legitimate* particular group interests, as in the case of Marxism, liberalism, communism and fascism (Kinloch 1981:7, referring to Seliger 1976). Based upon the conviction about the reinforcing and legitimizing functions of ideologies, four major types of ideologies are differentiated: conservative, revolutionary, reactionary, and counter-ideological (cf Kinloch 1981:7). Based on these observations, Kinloch (1981:7) identifies a *second* major dimension of ideology, represented in the way in which ideology:

> represents a belief system that intellectually legitimates
> the political interests of its advocates, constraining the
> behaviour and ideas of those subject to the dominance
> of an elite. This 'false consciousness' is rational in that
> it furthers the interests of its adherents.

He deduces that ideologies in general represent integrated, symbolic world views. Such world views reflect particular social motives, they simplify political and social environments, and they are legitimated through ultimate sources of causation and order. Hence, ideologies not only represent false consciousness and group interests, but they also involve particular definitions of reality (Kinloch 1981:9). A typical characteristic of such ideologies is 'their intolerance of opposing viewpoints with respect both to political ideologies (conservative versus radical) and intellectual standpoints (science versus metaphysics)' (Kinloch 1981:9). Ideologies therefore claim exclusive authority with respect to what is *true* and *politically expedient*, and from the highly integrated character of these belief systems it follows that they exclude opposite or different definitions of reality.

Ideologies *operate* by the total or unilinear abstraction and reduction of phenomena or occurrences. This represents a *third* major dimension of ideologies, that is, *the manner in which they reduce reality to abstractions and premises that reflect predominant characteristics of the social system.* Kinloch (1981:10) formulates the following provisional definition of 'ideology':

> Ideologies, therefore, are highly integrated and exclusive world views which represent forms of false consciousness by legitimating group interests through reductive abstractions. Ideology is the limited perception of a specific social situation by a particular group, thereby underlining the relevance of the social context to these thought forms....
>
> (Kinloch 1981:10)

By now it must be clear that ideologies do not just emerge *ex nihilo* – the social environment is seminal both to their origins and to their continued mode of existence. Kinloch (1981:10) maintains that symbols (social signs) as the basis of ideology may be viewed as a function of a society's division of labour system. Kinloch's schema for positing the *labour system* and the *division of labour* as the basis for the symbols of which ideologies consist reduces everything to a single cause, namely labour (Kinloch 1981:10-13). This looks suspiciously like the base-superstructure schema of Marx, who also reduces everything to a single cause, namely economics. This is especially evident in the following quotation, in which Kinloch (1981:13) formally defines ideology as:

> the symbolic reaction of particular socioeconomic groups to specific division of labor situations, representing attempts to reassert social order through highly integrated

and exclusive world views. These symbolic models of reality are forms of false consciousness in the sense that they legitimate such group interests through reductive abstractions. As societies become more structurally differentiated and specialized in their divisions of labor, specific groups react to these changing social relations, attempting to legitimate political arrangements which serve their vested socioeconomic interests by imposing their own symbolic world views on others. Whether termed 'knowledge,' 'science,' or 'sociology,' these group definitions of reality are ideological and reflect specific group interests. Thus ideology generally has widespread significance in society – sociological significance.

This explanation in itself exhibits exactly the operating procedure that Kinloch described as the third major dimension of ideologies (see preceding discussion), namely 'reducing reality to abstractions and premises that reflect predominant characteristics of the economic system' (Kinloch 1981:10). Concerning this aspect of his explanation of the influence of the social environment on the formation of ideologies, his own words can serve as indictment against himself: 'Such abstractions are self-fulfilling and reinforcing in that they become reified and viewed as explanatory, thereby obscuring their limited and ideological nature' (Kinloch 1981:10). Kinloch's explanation itself is highly ideological!

Several other definitions (representing different perspectives) of the concept 'ideology' are given by Van Straaten (1987:4-8). While they are instructive for the different perspectives they represent, practically all have in common a description of ideology as a *system of ideas/beliefs* (cf Van Straaten 1987:5-7). It is also said that it is characteristic of ideologies that they involve consequences for moral and political behaviour – in other words they also have a pragmatic or practical side (cf Van Straaten 1987:5). A provisional formulaic expression, reflecting both the definitions formulated by Kinloch above and those tabled in Van Straaten, would be: *ideology = value-laden reflection (system of ideas/beliefs) + practical imperative (for attitude and conduct), on the basis of which one group can clearly be distinguished from another.*

This definition also describes the understanding and application of the concept 'ideology' in the social-scientific study of the Bible. Elliott (1981:267-270), following Davis (1975) who follows Berger & Luckmann, defines ideology as 'an integrated system of beliefs, assumptions and values, not necessarily true or false, which reflects the needs and interests of a group or class at a particular time in history' (cf

Berger & Luckmann 1967:6, 9-10, 123-125, 127-128, 180). Malina (1986a:178) states in this connection: 'Ideology refers to the articulation of a social group's views and values that legitimate and reinforce the present order and practice against competing groups.' He uses the term *mode of ideological implication to refer to the 'ideological* setting' of the story, by which is meant 'an assessment of the world along with a set of prescriptions for taking a position in the world and for acting upon that position' (Malina 1986a:178). The ideology determines whether the current condition of the world should be changed or maintained. The mode of ideological implication therefore indicates how the audience of the storyteller 'must view the present because of the continuities with the past discovered by the historian' (Malina 1986a:179).

Malina (1986a:179) distinguishes four basic ideological positions that can be connected to the mode of ideological implication regarding action in the present. They are the following:

First, the position of the *anarchist*, where the purpose is to abolish society and set up a community based on fundamental humanity. Malina cites the Gospel of John as an example of this ideological position.

Second, the ideological implications of the *liberal* position, where the best option for the present is seen to reside in adjusting social arrangements for maximum efficiency. This will result in maximizing the current social scheme (Malina 1986a: 180). This view, according to Malina, is not found in the New Testament.

Third, the ideological implications linked to the *conservative* standpoint wish to allow and enable society to develop according to its own internal forces and natural rhythms, like an organism such as a plant. This view is not found in the New Testament either (cf Malina 1986a:181).

Fourth, the ideological implications linked to the *radical* standpoint lead to the conclusion that society should be restructured on an entirely new basis. Malina (1986a:184) maintains that all the New Testament writings – apart from the Gospel of John – exhibit the radical standpoint.

These descriptions by Malina perhaps properly belong in the preceding section on ideology in literary studies (3.2.2.1), because they pertain to the literary works contained in the New Testament. So does the following definition by Neyrey (1988: 5), in which 'verbal communication' is understood to include *literary communication* such as that found in the works of the New Testament:

> Verbal communications, such as confessions, can indeed imply a system of cognitive or moral maps of the universe and urge a social behavior in keeping with this world view.

However, since they so obviously reflect an understanding of 'ideology' that is derived from the social-scientific definition of the concept, both Malina's and Neyrey's definitions are retained here.

Gottwald clearly uses *ideology* and *theology* as synonyms, stating: 'The consensual constitutive concepts and attitudes of early Israel, which I choose to call "ideology," are more commonly in biblical studies called "religious ideas or beliefs," "religious thought or symbols," or "theology."' (Gottwald 1979:65). He explains his preference for the term *ideology* by referring to its ability to set a methodological distance between sociological inquiry and the more familiar historical and theological approaches (Gottwald 1979:65). *Ideology* therefore denotes a field of study that consists of the way in which internally coherent religious ideas are systematically related to the fundamental system of social relations.

Gottwald (1979:66) states:

> ...when I refer to ideology in ancient Israel, I mean the
> *consensual religious ideas which were structurally em-*
> *bedded in and functionally correlated to other social phe-*
> *nomena within the larger social system*, and which served,
> in a more or less comprehensive manner, *to provide ex-*
> *planations or interpretations of the distinctive social rela-*
> *tions and historical experience of Israel* and also *to define*
> *and energize the Israelite social system oppositionally or*
> *polemically over against other social systems.*

And again:

> ...Israelite ideology is the religious beliefs as part of a
> system of social relations in which those beliefs serve
> explanatory and polemical functions intimately related
> to the specific social relations of the people who enter-
> tain the ideas. Ideology in this context is religious belief
> viewed from the angle of its social structure and func-
> tion.

While Gottwald's definition of ideology here is narrower than the other definitions discussed above – in the sense that it focuses only on *religious* ideas[18] – it seems to have essentially the same thrust.

Proceeding from the entire discussion under the present heading, it can be said that the concept *ideology* in the social sciences can be defined in the same terms as

those used to describe the concept in literary studies (cf 3.2.2.2), and that *ideology* and *theology* are deemed to be surrogate terms within the social sciences, as well.

3.2.2.3 *Symbolic universe* in relation to *theology* and *ideology*

Malina (1981:7) distinguishes three types of knowledge about others as well as about the self:

- Awareness knowledge or that-knowledge: information about the existence of someone or something, its/his/her location in space (where) and time (when).
- Usable knowledge or how-to and how-knowledge: information necessary to use something or interact with someone properly or to understand how uses and interactions are generated (how).
- Principle knowledge or why-knowledge: information about the cultural scripts and cues, about the cultural models behind the applicable facts, combined with the commitment to the presuppositions and assumptions that make the cultural scripts, cues, and models evident. Why-knowledge is about the implied values and meanings that ultimately explain behaviour.

Both biblical commentators and historians focus on meaning – the first on the meaning of a literary form or of words in that culture, and the other on the meaning of behaviour. The question of meaning is a *why-question*. Malina (1981:10) states that the why-questions can only be answered in terms of cultural story.

Culture, as we have seen (cf section 3.2.2.1, inter alia p 78 above), relates to the sphere of the symbolic in society, that is, to the way everyday phenomena are symbolled and endowed with meaning so that they come to refer beyond their regular signifieds. When we engage the level of the symbolic, we are exercising the essence of social-scientific interpretive application and, at the same time, we are on the threshold of transcending the scope of this discipline. Inquiring into the ultimate meaning that integrates all discrete experiences that man may have, we are led to a reality whose objective existence can be neither described nor validated. What *can* be studied by social-scientific means is the *body of theoretical tradition about that reality* – that is, what men have come to *know* about that 'ultimate reality'. This is to say that the social sciences are restricted to very definite boundaries – they can analyse and study every single facet or element that is applicable to man, be it on the level of the concrete (physical, material) or the abstract (mental, theoretical, psychological, symbolic). However, when the realm of the transcendent or the metaphysical is reached, the social sciences must refrain from making ontological state-

ments or validations about such realities, or they would become susceptible to the charge of reductionism.

Having indicated our awareness of the limitations of the social sciences, we are now squarely confronted with the problem of trying to define and describe the relationship between ideology/theology (in the usage described above in 3.2.2.2) and the concept *symbolic universe*, which refers to that *body of theoretical tradition* about the 'ultimate reality' referred to above. What, precisely, is to be understood in respect of the concept *symbolic universe*? For instance, is ideology/theology to be equated with symbolic universe, or are they different entities?

First, let us consider the argument by Berger & Luckmann (1967:95) about symbolic universes being instances of legitimation. *Legitimation* is described as a process by which new meanings are produced – meanings that serve to integrate those other meanings already attached to disparate institutional processes (Berger & Luckmann 1967:92). It is a process of *explaining* and *justifying* which occurs when the institutional order has to be transferred to a new generation, but the self-evident character of the institutions has eroded to such an extent that both the cognitive and normative aspects of the institutional order have to be made intelligible again. The order is *explained* by ascribing cognitive validity to its objectified meanings, and *justified* by imparting a normative dignity to its practical imperatives (Berger & Luckmann 1967:93).

Analytically, four levels of legitimation can be distinguished: *incipient legitimation*, the most important form of which is the linguistic objectification of human experience – for example, kinship vocabulary legitimates the kinship structure; *theoretical propositions* in rudimentary form, found in highly pragmatic explanatory schemes directly related to concrete actions, such as proverbs and moral maxims; *explicit theories* that serve to legitimate an institutional sector in terms of a differentiated body of knowledge; and *symbolic universes*, which are bodies of theoretical tradition that integrate different provinces of meaning and encompass the institutional order in a symbolic totality[19] (cf Berger & Luckmann 1967:94-96).

The symbolic sphere therefore relates to the most comprehensive level of legitimation; the sphere of pragmatic application is transcended (Berger & Luckmann 1967:95). All sectors of the institutional order are integrated in an all-embracing frame of reference. This frame of reference constitutes a literal *universe* within which all human experience take place (Berger & Luckmann 1967:96). Symbolic universes are regarded as social products with a history – in order to understand their meaning, one has to understand the history of their production. Their function is to provide 'order for the subjective apprehension of biographical experience' (Berger & Luckmann 1967:97). More specifically:

> ...the symbolic universe orders and thereby legitimates
> everyday roles, priorities, and operating procedures by
> placing them *sub specie universi*, that is, in the context of
> the most general frame of reference conceivable.
>
> (Berger & Luckmann 1967:99)

The universe is symbolic, therefore, 'because the realities of everyday life are com-prehended within the framework of *other realities*' (Petersen 1985:59).

As cognitive constructions, symbolic universes are theoretical – they do not re-quire further legitimation. They are constructed in processes of subjective reflec-tion, are then socially objectivated, and result in the establishment of explicit links between the significant themes rooted in the several institutions (Berger & Luck-mann 1967:104). However, as soon as a symbolic universe acquires an objectivated status as the product of theoretical thought, it becomes possible to systematically re-flect upon the nature of that universe (Berger & Luckmann 1967:105). Such syste-matic reflection upon or theorizing about a symbolic universe is regarded as 'legiti-mation to the second degree', and all legitimations may in turn be described as 'machineries of universe-maintenance' (Berger & Luckmann 1967:105). Berger & Luckmann maintain that no specific procedures of universe-maintenance are needed as long as the symbolic universe remains unproblematic or unchallenged or naïvely held. In that case the symbolic universe 'is self-maintaining, that is, self-legitimating by the sheer facticity of its objective existence...' (Berger & Luckmann 1967:105). This is taken by Petersen (1985:59) to mean that a symbolic universe *cannot* be legitimated, only maintained:

> Technically and strictly speaking, as the *ultimate* form of
> legitimation it cannot be legitimated by anything else; it
> can only be *maintained*.

Berger & Luckmann (1967:106-107; cf also Petersen 1985:60) proceed to argue that if and when a symbolic universe is challenged by internal failures of the universe or by an external deviant version of reality held by 'heretical groups', a systematic theo-retical conceptualization of the challenged symbolic universe is constructed in its de-fence. They cite Christian theological thought as an example of the conceptual machineries used to maintain – and thereby legitimate – a symbolic universe threatened by heresies (Berger & Luckmann 1967:107). The most conspicuous types of conceptual machineries for universe-maintenance are, in order: mythology, theology, philosophy, and science (Berger & Luckmann 1967:110). For our purpose the most important of these are the mythological and the theological, because the New Testament documents seem to fit both these categories (cf Petersen 1985:60).

That the mythological concepts are not simply replaced by theological ones is evident from the fact that:

> the populace may remain relatively unaffected by the
> sophisticated universe-maintaining theories concocted
> by the theological specialists. The coexistence of naïve
> mythology among the masses and a sophisticated theo-
> logy among an elite of theoreticians, *both* serving to
> maintain the same symbolic universe, is a frequent his-
> torical phenomenon.
>
> (Berger & Luckmann 1967:112)

Mythological and theological machineries for universe-maintenance are described as follows:

Mythology is regarded as the most archaic form of universe-maintenance, closest to the naïve level of the symbolic universe where there is the least necessity for theoretical universe-maintenance. Mythology is defined as 'a conception of reality that posits the ongoing penetration of the world of everyday experience by sacred forces' (Berger & Luckmann 1967:110). A high degree of continuity is envisaged between social and cosmic order.

Theology is regarded as a more elaborate and refined form of its mythological predecessor (Berger & Luckmann 1967:111). Theological concepts present a greater degree of theoretical systematization and are further removed from the naïve level than mythological concepts. While *mythology* concentrates on the *conti-nuity* between the world of the humans and that of the gods, confirming the impression that 'all reality appears as made of one cloth' (Berger & Luckmann 1967:110), *theology* is concerned with *mediating* between these two worlds because of a per-ceived and experienced *discontinuity* between the two orders (Berger & Luckmann 1967:111; see also Petersen 1985:60). Petersen directs attention to the fact that while social scientists have long distinguished between *social facts* and *theological facts*, the sociology of knowledge à la Berger & Luckmann 'treats theology as a so-cial fact also because it is a social form of knowledge that is dependent upon another social form of knowledge, a symbolic universe, not some "real" universe that is directly accessible apart from prior knowledge. We only "have" reality in the form of knowledge, and knowledge is dependent upon both social conventions – language – and cultural traditions' (Petersen 1985:271 note 7).

Berger & Luckmann provide us with another insight which I regard as of funda-mental importance in our understanding of symbolic universes:

> ...the symbolic universe is not only *legitimated* but also *modified* by the conceptual machineries constructed to ward off the challenge of heretical groups within a society.
>
> (Berger & Luckmann 1967:107; my emphasis)

Added to this, Petersen's (1985:60) description of the different machineries for universe-maintenance, to be 'at best' legitimations of the second degree, must not be understood to mean that symbolic universes are persistent, unchanging structures. On the contrary. Petersen (1985:202) concurs with Berger & Luckmann when he compares the knowledge comprising symbolic universes with the knowledge contained in an encyclopedia – virtually inexhaustible and subject to change over time. He elaborates:

> The knowledge is possessed in the form of pieces or clusters of pieces, or of frames, and as inherited communal products they are subject over time to alteration and re-arrangement by individuals...as well as communities...In this light theology is, as a *systematizing* form of reflection on the contents and structures of symbolic universes, one means of introducing *a new or revised order*, and therefore new meaning, to certain segments of the universes, or even to the whole.
>
> (Petersen 1985:203)

The importance of this insight will become obvious when – being able to draw conclusions from the data generated by the model – we consider the effect of the Gospel itself (as conceptual machinery intended for legitimation or universe-maintenance) on the body of traditional knowledge that constitutes the symbolic universe. For the moment it will suffice to say that the postulate that a symbolic universe is susceptible to change is fully consistent with the fact that while a symbolic universe may refer to an external reality, that reality is only known and knowable *as the body of traditional knowledge* of which it is made up, and knowledge is subject to change (cf discussion above).

To recapitulate: Symbolic universes and theology represent two different kinds of knowledge. In Petersen's words:

> Broadly, a symbolic universe is the 'world' *as it is known* and therefore as the knowledge of it shapes one's experience of it, not as something that exists apart from what

is known. A symbolic universe is the 'world' *as it is viewed*, not as something that exists apart from the way we view it. To be sure, there is something out there outside of us and apart from our knowledge of it, but it is not a 'world' apart from what we know about it...Theology, on the other hand, is for the sociology of knowledge a kind of knowledge that is the product of systematic reflection upon a symbolic universe, and indeed of reflection that serves to maintain that universe when it is in some kind of jeopardy, as for example from the threats of doubt, of disagreement, or of competing symbolic universes. Theology is, therefore, a kind of knowledge that is produced to defend and maintain the knowledge comprising a symbolic universe, and for this reason we can speak of a symbolic universe as a primary (pre-reflective) form of knowledge and theology as a secondary (reflective) form that is dependent on it.

(Petersen 1985:29-30)

This distinction between *theology* and *symbolic universe*, where the former is regarded as dependent upon and a legitimation of the latter, will be maintained as one of the assumptions upon which the rest of the investigation will be based.

To complete this discussion, one relation remains to be determined – that between a symbolic universe and ideology. If theology is defined as a reflective form of knowledge developed to defend and maintain a symbolic universe, it follows that theology is ideological in nature – in fact, in this sense theology *is* ideology (see definitions of ideology in 3.2.2.1 and 3.2.2.2 above). Is it only the reflective form of knowledge that is ideological, then, or can the pre-reflective form (= symbolic universe) itself already be ideological? Kinloch (1981:3; see also 3.2.2.2 above) maintains that *all* knowledge is ideological. Gager (1975:83; my emphasis) likewise makes a straightforward identification of the two concepts, asserting that 'any challenge to a group's *ideology or symbolic universe* will be treated as a threat to the existence of the group itself'.

On the basis of what has been determined so far, we can draw a schematic representation of the relation between *social universe*, *symbolic universe* and *theology*:

Fig 1 Institutional order, symbolic universe and theology
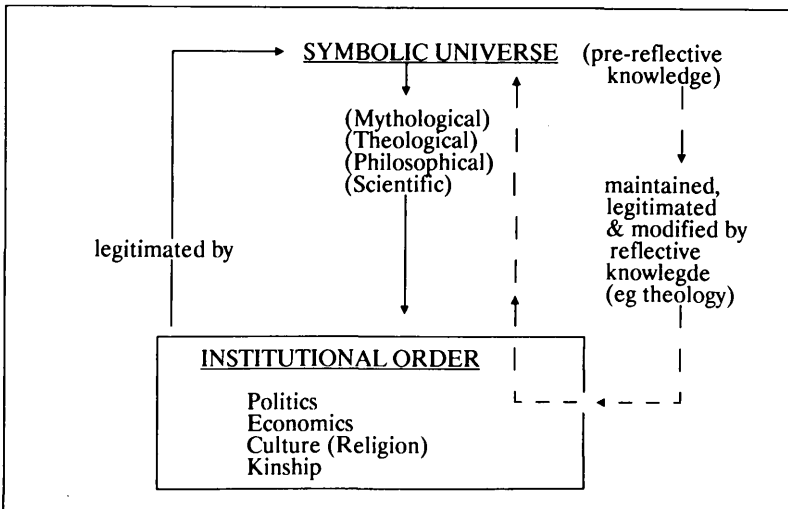
The arrowed solid lines testify to the fact that the symbolic universe is constructed subsequent to the institutional order, which is legitimated and integrated by the symbolic universe. The dotted line indicates that the symbolic universe, when in jeopardy, is maintained and legitimated by a reflective form of knowledge that is produced in the institutional order. This reflective theorizing, having a social base, *modifies* the symbolic universe or parts of it. The implications are that a dialectical process of reciprocal influencing between institutional order and symbolic universe is established through the medium of reflective thought, which provides the link between social and symbolic universe.

Does it follow, then, that *symbolic universe* is the same as 'world view' or 'ideology'? Kinloch (1981:13) emphasizes the importance of the 'social self' and the influence of symbols in the process of self-communication, and indicates that ideologies function on both the group and the individual level to assert social order through an exclusive world view. He argues that the *social self* represents a symbolic link between the individual and the social environment through social relations. In this process ideology is important because it is involved in the individual's attempt to conceptually relate his/her *self* and significant groups to the surrounding physical and social world through symbols (conceptual names or signs) (Kinloch 1981:13). Kinloch (1981:14) argues further that ideology is central to social organization, re-

presenting an index of changing social environments in which affected groups react to such change, attempting to re-integrate themselves symbolically with that situation through world views and related policies. This is done by creating reductive abstractions and exclusive world views, which provide insight into group interests: 'Cultural, political, and intellectual ideologies provide social portraits of social systems as indices of the structure of need-fulfillment and its ongoing change' (Kinloch 1981:15). In this way an analysis of ideology can reveal a group's self-defined position in society. Kinloch is adamant that all modes of thought are ideological in that they represent group interests, and consequently 'symbolic models of reality are inherent in all sections of society as the ultimate foundation of social structure and order...Social order is not simply a matter of political, economic, and institutional arrangements; it also involves sets of symbolic models of order which define and control behavior' (Kinloch 1981:15).

Kinloch stresses the fact that the creation of ideologies is a consequence of individual or group needs: '...ideology represents the manner in which human beings meet their needs in the context of society through symbolic models of reality which legitimate individual and group interests through reductive abstractions' (Kinloch 1981:16). It would appear that Kinloch's concept of 'reductive abstractions' (the reduction of reality to simplistic concepts) refers to explanations of the social order relating to the natural (pecking order, homeostasis), historical, ideational, metaphysical (theological) or scientific. Furthermore, he considers such 'reductive abstractions' to be the basis of symbolic models of reality that legitimate individual and group interests (Kinloch 1981:19).

I have some difficulty in following Kinloch's arguments on the distinction between ideologies, reductive abstractions, and symbolic models of reality – I therefore use such tentative terms as 'would appear' and 'seem'. It has become clear, though, that there is a definite distinction between 'ideology' and 'reductive abstraction', the first being based on the last. 'Reductive abstractions', on the other hand, described as 'representing the foundation of symbolic models of reality' (Kinloch 1981:18-19), correspond more or less to the concept of 'symbolic universe'. If this interpretation is correct, Kinloch is in agreement with Berger & Luckmann and with Petersen in so far as 'ideology' can be regarded as expressing symbolic values, or as contained in reflective knowledge about symbolic models of reality.

Now – can the symbolic universe be treated as an ideology? Berger & Luckmann (1967:123) give the following description of 'ideology' which I find to be very clear: 'When a particular definition of reality comes to be attached to a concrete power interest, it may be called an ideology', and they elaborate: 'The distinctiveness of ideology is...that the *same* overall universe is interpreted in different ways,

depending upon concrete vested interests within the society in question' (Berger & Luckmann 1967:124). Therefore, although one might regard symbolic universes as ideological in nature to the extent that they serve to answer certain needs in society (cf discussion on Kinloch above), and because they comprise knowledge which in itself is ideological, the matter of the ideological nature of symbolic universes will not feature prominently in the study, because I consider the different ideological viewpoints expressed in the Gospel of Luke as different *internal* conceptions of the symbolic universe, and not as an *external* threat to the (then) current symbolic universe by a deviant version of reality (cf p 95 above).

3.2.2.4 *Ideology*: Concluding comments

The ultimate purpose of the discussion on *ideology* is to vindicate the scientific discipline of *theology*. This has become necessary, because theology tends to lose its autonomy as science when brought into a cross-disciplinary relationship with the other human sciences that involve the pragmatic application of abstract values and norms.

The important question is: wherein lies the autonomy of theology? To amend this question in the light of the stated primacy of the text in this work: How does the New Testament retain its autonomy as theological expression when it is being read social-scientifically? According to Gottwald (1979:667) it boils down to exploring the relation between *biblical-sociological method* and *biblical-theological method* in order to obtain a 'social hermeneutic of the Bible that will be both scientifically and religiously cogent'. Gottwald – whom I find thoroughly deterministic – argues that we are heirs of the Cartesian-Kantian and Hegelian-Marxian break-ups of the metaphysical and epistemological harmony and union of perception (1979:704). This fact results in our not being able to fully grasp the fact that religious symbolism occurs within social and intellectual conditions, which makes it extremely difficult if not impossible to understand such inherited religious symbols (cf Gottwald 1979:705). For Gottwald 'the only way out of the impasse is to fix our attention on the relation between the persisting theological game patterns and the social conditions in which they are played from age to age, including our own social contexts' (1979:703). Gottwald regards religion as the function of social relations rooted in cultural-material conditions of life (1979:701). This leads him to the deterministic assertion that the concept of 'God' (or Yahweh) in Israel was a *transcending image* that stood in service of the praxis and ideology of intertribal egalitarianism – the really unique feature of Israel (cf Gottwald 1979:700). Gottwald sums up the relation of biblical theology and biblical sociology as follows:

> ...the most important contribution of a sociological ana-
> lysis of early Israel to contemporary religious thought
> and practice is to close the door firmly and irrevocably
> on the idealist and supernaturalistic illusions still per-
> meating and bedeviling our religious outlook.
>
> (Gottwald 1979:773)

With the terms *idealist* and *supernaturalistic illusions* he refers to the transcendent reality that people project in the future: 'Symbol systems that blur the intersection of social process and human freedom – by talking fuzzy nonsense, by isolating us in our private souls, by positing "unseen" worlds to compensate for the actual world we fear to see... – all such symbol systems, however venerable and psychically convenient, are bad dreams to be awakened from, cloying relics to be cast away, cruel fetters to be struck off' (Gottwald 1979:708).

With this functional analysis, Gottwald seems to have completely gone the Marxist way, regarding religion as instrumental, although this time not for false consciousness but for 'human freedom', consisting in 'meeting our genuine human needs and actualizing our repressed human potentialities' (Gottwald 1979:708). My assessment of Gottwald's argument is that by dissolving the metaphysical and the transcendent reality into the sociohistorical experiences of man he negates precisely that which he so fervently wishes for: the attainment of human freedom.

The answer to the matter of the autonomy of theology, it would seem, lies in the approach towards a (biblical) literary work as expressive of a certain kind of knowledge about a certain kind of reality that is to be distinguished from the 'everyday' reality consisting of personal interaction within social institutions within a social system (cf section 3.2.2.3 above).

The proper question from a social-scientific perspective would therefore concern the cause of the emphasis on Luke's part – *why* was this theme taken up by the author? The answer to this question will embody the intended goal of the current study, and will therefore be stated in the form of a thesis or proposal. To give credence to the argument about the relationship between literature and society (cf 1.1-1.1.1.5 above), the thesis will first be formulated in terms of the literary aspect of the research object, namely the Gospel as narrative world, and from this description certain proposals will be made as to the communicative purpose of the narrative within the author's real world.

If the above thesis is borne out by the evidence, some interesting inferences as to the Lucan community, the ideology (theology) of the author and even the time of writing might be made.

The method by which this study will seek to validate the thesis stated above, should be appropriate (a) to the *object* being studied, namely a *literary text of narrative nature*, and (b) to the *subject* being studied, namely *the symbolic universe that served as implicit motivation for the construction of the text, and the text itself as a mechanism for the maintenance of that symbolic universe by recommending to its readers a network of norms and values and the proper mental attitude and conduct associated with those values* (= the ideology of the text, cf Malina 1986a:179). This will entail defining and explicating the appropriate and relevant theoretical concepts from the field of literary theory, as well as from the social-scientific field. The only important prerequisite for the building of such a theoretical structure is rather obvious, namely that the different concepts from the different fields of study should not contradict one another. The theory, of course, needs to be applied, and therefore an interpretive model that takes account of the salient variables that could influence the outcome must be constructed.

In the rest of this chapter some issues pertaining to general science theory will be dealt with first. Then the attention shifts to the field of literary theory, and finally to the social sciences. In the next chapter an interpretive model will be constructed that takes account of the analytical requirements from these fields.

3.3 Theoretical issues: science theory

In this section we shall first explore the endeavours denoted by the terms *construction* and *reconstruction*, and then we shall attend to the question of whether the use of the social sciences in theology signifies a *paradigm shift* from the analytic to a holistic approach in the sciences in general.

3.3.1 Construction or reconstruction?

The ideal, surely, is to *reconstruct* the socio-historical setting within which a text had its origin. To reconstruct is to describe 'wie es eigentlich gewesen ist', in order to get to know what forces and/or interests gave rise to or had an effect on the composition of the text. However, we are temporally, spatially, historically, culturally and conceptually removed and different from both the contextual history and the referential history (cf 1.1; 1.1.2) of the text. Thus we do not know all the pertinent facts, and are probably ignorant of some important factors that may have influenced the formation of the text. Because much of the information we need is forever lost, there is no way in which we could ever attain the ideal of total reconstruction.

Apart from that there is also the philosophical and logical question of whether it is at all possible to even contemplate something like reconstruction. In order to answer this question, one must be clear about the following:

If we do want to reconstruct the socio-historical background of a text, what would we be reconstructing? Would it be a replica of that reality?

From the evidence provided by archaeological artefacts and/or literary and graphic description, one might be able to reconstruct the structure of an ancient building, or the means and methods of warfare of an ancient people. This would amount to a *social description* of those subjects. However, we would still not know what the offensive or defensive strategies would be on the battlefield in actual combat. One would have to be cognisant of all the possible choices in order to attain a responsible reconstruction. Even then it could only be an approximate reconstruction because the affective and intuitive possibilities are unknown, and perhaps unknowable. In other words, any such reconstruction, even in the case of social description, could of necessity only be a partial one. A total reconstruction, in the sense of an exact replica, is just an elusive ideal.[20]

It is interesting to note that Dibelius [1929] (quoted by Hahn 1985:26) had, even at that early stage, formulated some definitive standpoint on the matter of *construction* versus *reconstruction*:

> Eine 'Paläontologie der Evangelien' kann also nur auf
> dem Wege der *Konstruktion* geschaffen werden. Dessen
> ist sich die Forschung seit langem bewusst.

My own thoughts on this issue have been strongly influenced by what I found in Dibelius. As seen in the quotation above, he differentiates between the terms 'reconstruction' and 'construction', but at the same time he uses the terms practically as synonyms. This can be clearly seen when his references to the issue, all within an argument in defence of his standpoint, are isolated and strung together:

> Es kam mir darauf an, die Bedingungen zu rekonstru-
> ieren, unter denen sich jene ersten unbeabsichtigten
> Formungen des evangelischen Stoffes vollzogen haben
> ...An dieser Konstruktion ist vor allem der Begriff der
> Predigt kritisiert worden...Man vergisst dabei, dass es
> sich um eine Konstruktion handelt....
>
> (Dibelius [1929] in Hahn 1985:27)

It seems that to the mind of Dibelius *construction* and *reconstruction* are not mutually exclusive terms. Indeed, Dibelius seems to say that the criticism levelled against him would only be valid if the *Sitz* he proposed were a total reconstruction, a replica of the original setting. That was not his pretension. His proposal was a *construction*, that is, not quite a reconstruction. *Construction* in the argument of Dibelius seems

therefore to consist of a *partial reconstruction* combined with some careful, informed construction that completes the picture.

The evidence provided by a narrative text, furthermore, is not the same as archaeological evidence, artefacts or literary description. Narrative is to be seen as a commentary of sorts on (some aspect[s] of) society (see, however, 2.4 below), and commentary is never unbiased. It presupposes a specific value-order on the part of the author, which he/she may or may not share with others. Because of this idiosyncratic order of norms and values, the author (as commentator) looks at reality from a certain angle, selects certain aspects of it, combines them in a new order, and presents his interpretation as a description of reality (cf the discussion of Roman Jakobson in Petersen 1978:38-40, 45-48). A narrative, therefore, is a commentary on reality, based on the author's interpretation of (some aspect[s] of) society .

A reconstruction of reality or society, based on the narrative, would in fact be the reconstruction of an author's interpretation of reality.

This means that the job at hand is a dissecting one, cutting through the layers of 'interpretational tissue', assessing each in its own right as to ideological bias, until one arrives as close as possible to the realia which were interpreted. This statement, suggesting methodological direction, does *not* imply a movement *a minori ad maiorem*, as a value-judgment. After all, it would seem that the greater impact on our own present-day society was not effected by the society commented upon in the New Testament, but indeed by the commentary itself. The statement does suggest that, by following this method, we might be able to better understand both the commentary *and* the society/reality commented upon.

3.3.2 Social sciences in theology: A paradigm shift?
Lately, biblical scholars have begun to express misgivings about the ability of the historical-critical method to open up untrodden paths in biblical studies (cf Edwards 1983:431; Best 1983:181; Scroggs 1980:165, referring to Theissen). Indeed, mention is made of a paradigm shift in the offing, away from historical criticism to a more 'holistic' approach (cf Martin 1987:370-385). In their contributions to a recent work W S Vorster and A G van Aarde have given excellent treatment to the issue of paradigms as present and directionally functional within scientific endeavour. Referring to Kuhn's definition of 'paradigm' as a 'disciplinary matrix' which constitutes the framework within which solutions are sought for acknowledged problems, Vorster (1988b:31; see also Martin 1987:370-373, 381), states: 'The point I wish to make is that New Testament scholarship is heading for a new paradigm, that is towards a post-critical science.'[21]

He reaches this conclusion after comparing the present-day situation within New Testament scholarship to Kuhn's notion of 'normal science':

> *Normal science*, that is when there is a generally accepted para-
> digm, is normally preceded by a *pre-paradigmatic* period. This is
> when different explanations are offered for one and the same
> problem, and different convictions are held because of different
> views and theories about the same thing. Normal science is cha-
> racterized by agreement among scholars in the same discipline
> and about standards of solutions for problems. The methods
> and ways in which problems are solved are certain. Members of
> the scientific community share common beliefs, they have a
> similar world view and use the same concepts in explaining pro-
> blems they investigate.
>
> (Vorster 1988b:33)

Obviously, for Vorster New Testament scholarship is not in a state of 'normal science' today. This is indicated by changed views about what a text is and how it means (cf Vorster 1988b:36-40, especially p 39), and by constructing possible social contexts within which the different texts could have originated. Vorster (1988b:41) emphasizes that such social construction is

> ...totally different from constructions based on the so-
> called historico-critical paradigm...Social construction as
> a means of historical study of early Christianity is not an
> attempt to reconstruct. It is an attempt to construct
> possible social relationships of meaning.

The lack of 'normal science' would therefore indicate a crisis or 'revolution' (Vors-
ter 1988b:33) within the accepted paradigm, which places us in a pre-paradigmatic phase (Vorster 1988b:45), or rather in the transitional phase between the replace-
ment of one paradigm by another.

Both Elliott (1986:8, note 15) and Van Aarde (1988a:59) disagree with Vorster (and Martin) – they would prefer to see the vitality of this new direction as a supple-
mentation and improvement/restoration of the current paradigm.

Kuhn's definition of 'normal science', quoted with affirmation by Vorster above, seems to rest on a basically *functionalist* (cf 3.5.1 below) view of society, where everything is seen to be in a state of equilibrium that tends to persist, and all the parts function to keep it that way (cf Malina 1981:19; see Turner 1982:19-114 for a more elaborate discussion). This view is sometimes called the 'consensus model'

(Tidball 1983:28) to indicate the harmonious integration of the system effected 'by consensus on meanings, values, and norms' (Malina 1981:19). According to this view, an upsurge in differences of opinion between scholars in the same disciplines would indeed signify a transitional phase towards a changed way of thinking and a different world-view.

However, there are also other perspectives on the functioning of society.[22] One such is *conflict theory*, which considers disagreement, conflict and force, as well as cooperation and consensus, the *normal* state, while 'absence of conflict would be surprising and abnormal' (Malina 1981:20). Without an analysis of all that conflict theory presents (cf sections 3.5.2-3.5.2.2 below; see Turner 1982:117-196 for a full discussion), at least it is clear that the notion of a paradigm shift, as articulated by Vorster above, is associated with a specific interpretation of the composition and functioning of society. Vorster's arguments in favour of a paradigm shift can be contested on the basis of the existence of other perspectives on the functioning of society.

Furthermore, Vorster's argument – that the social-scientific research on early Christianity differs from the 'historico-critical paradigm' in that it is not an attempt at *reconstruction*, but at a *construction* of 'possible social relationships of meaning', and therefore supports the idea of a change in paradigms – is inappropriate. The distinction that is made between the two terms is meant to suggest a different epistemological assumption whereby 'construction' would refer to a new, more creative understanding of the way in which texts 'mean', and *what* they mean (cf Vorster 1988b:36-44; see Van Aarde 1988b:3, 7-8 for a similar denotation; see 1.2.2 above for my own approach). However, my own view on the matter is that any such 'construction' would inevitably presuppose a measure of *reconstruction* if it wishes to retain some credibility concerning its integrity as a trustworthy, normative piece of literary communication (cf the discussion in 3.3.1 above).[23] Social-scientific study of early Christianity does not differ from the traditional historical-critical means of historical study because the former is *construction* while the latter is an attempt at *reconstruction*. A social-scientific approach differs rather to the extent that it introduces theoretical concepts and methodological procedures that are new and strange and even threatening to the traditional 'theological' way of thinking. The strangeness of these concepts and methods does *not* signify a transition to a new scientific paradigm. It signifies, rather, the fact that social scientific disciplines came into being within the same scientific paradigm as historical criticism, but had a different field of interest and, to a certain extent, developed their own distinctive epistemology and methods. To be sure, the social sciences differ substantially from historical criticism, both in their operational procedures and in what they aim to accomplish.

Elliott (1984) compiled the following table of general points of comparison between the social sciences and history:

	Social Sciences		History	
General	a.	Social	a.	Personal
	b.	Collective	b.	Individual
	c.	Commonalities	c.	Peculiarities
	d.	Generalities	d.	Specificities
	e.	Ordinary, usual	e.	Extraordinary, unusual
	f.	Patterns of relationship	f.	Independent properties of parts
	g.	Systems	g.	Component parts
	h.	Synchronic structures and process	h.	Diachronic movement and change
	i.	Embeddedness	i.	Distinctiveness, independence
	j.	Explicit abstract conceptual models and theory	j.	Implicit models and theory, focus upon concrete
	k.	Regularities, recurrences, repetitions, typicalities	k.	Irregularities, rarities
	l.	Interconnections, interstices	l.	Independent features
Method	m.	Comparative (cross-cultural, cross-class, cross-strata)	m.	Singular focus on one society, culture, period
	n.	Sensitivity to etic/ emic distinctions	n.	Hazy distinction and tendency to prefer emic reports devoid of etic interpretive theory
	o.	Explication and justification of research design	o.	Intuitive procedures favored by the guild

This recognition and acknowledgement of the differences between the two kinds of discipline allows for the cross-disciplinary use by biblical scholars of theoretical and methodological concepts from the social sciences for the purpose of a better under-standing of the texts. Such better understanding was always the purpose of the his-torical-critical approach to the study of the Bible. Therefore, while a social-scienti-fic study of the Bible can be conducted for its own sake, it also 'complements and improves the prevailing method of biblical interpretation...' (Elliott 1981:1).

There is a remarkable correspondence between the notion of 'paradigm' ex-pressed here, the concept of 'symbolic universe' within the sociology of knowledge (cf Berger & Luckmann 1967:92-104; see 3.2.2.3 above), and the philosophical con-cept of 'world-view'. All three these terms, in fact, denote the imposition of some type of causal structure on the institutions and events of this world in order to make sense of it. No human being can function properly without such sense-making.

3.4 Theoretical issues: literary theory

> (O)ur major sources for the social reconstruction of ear-
> ly Christianity are literary. We may expect to gain in-
> sight elsewhere – for example, from archaeological data
> and modern social theory; but eventually we are driven
> back to literary sources...(S)ociological study of early
> Christianity therefore cannot slight literary criticism.
> We must persist in seeking to determine the character
> and intention of different types of literature if we hope
> to discern how they functioned in relation to the com-
> munities with which they were associated...What is
> called for is greater appreciation for the different types
> of literature with which we are concerned.
>
> (Malherbe 1977:15-16)

In support of the view expressed above, it has repeatedly been emphasized (cf 1.1; 1.1.2; 2.4) that our main source of information for proving the hypothesis of this stu-dy is a *literary* one, and should be honoured as such. This implies that our study will be conducted in accordance with the principles formulated in the discipline of litera-ry theory relevant to the genre we wish to study. Those principles and the methodo-logical procedures of their application are indeed seminal in that they have to be in-tegrated with social-scientific concepts to become the operational strategy of this work. However, given the fact that the relevant concepts from literary criticism have been thoroughly investigated, catalogued and described (cf inter alia Wellek &

Warren 1963; Chatman 1978; Petersen 1978; Van Luxemburg, Bal & Weststeijn 1981, Van Aarde 1982a, 1990b), and forged into models with which to interpret literary works, we shall not repeat that process. It will suffice to have a short general discussion on the importance of genre, and to indicate which literary concepts specifically we shall make use of.

3.4.1 General

First of all then, the macrotext (in this case the Gospel of Luke) must be categorized according to literary *type* or *genre* – as argumentation, exposition, narrative, apocalypse, et cetera. (Vorster 1981, 1984; Du Toit 1980:1-3; Van Luxemburg, Bal & Weststeijn 1981:153-163; Van Aarde [1982b]:58, 1990b:1). This is important, because the genre would indicate what methodological approach to use in the literary analysis of the work. The premise is that in the New Testament the genre of the Gospels, among others, is that of *narrative* (Du Toit 1980:2; Van Aarde [1982b]:58; Vorster 1988a:168). Van Aarde (1990b:1) defines narrative as:

> ...a discourse in which language is organized in terms of
> characters who move in a particular structure of time
> and space, and which entails a chronological sequence
> of episodes with a causal relationship to one another (a
> plot).

It follows therefore that narratives should be studied by means of an appropriate form of literary criticism, known as *narrative criticism* (Moore 1987:30)[24] or *narratology* (Van Aarde 1990b:1) – that is, the science that focuses on narrative discourses.

While the genre of a text is regarded as very important, it is also recognized that it does not constitute part of the intrinsic meaning of a text. Genre rather originates as cultural media, products of the surrounding society (Du Plooy 1986:6). This means that 'extrinsic relationships can be regarded as the sine qua non for both defining genre and determining its function as far as readers are concerned' (Du Plooy 1986:7). The question of genre could therefore be significant in respect of a social-scientific analysis of a text. It has been suggested, for instance, that the genre of *narrative* might represent the need of humans to impose order on society – a need which they cannot satisfy successfully in real life, but for which they can find a substitute in the creation of a narrative.

3.4.2 Narrative theory

In order to integrate concepts from the literary-critical and social-scientific fields successfully for the purpose of analysis, we need to familiarize ourselves with those aspects of literary criticism – narrative criticism in this case – that may serve as key elements for the conceptual integration of the salient elements from both disciplines into an interpretive model. Among the familiar elements of narrative like *plot* (the sequential course of events – cf Petersen 1978:33-48; Van Aarde 1990b:1-2), *point of view* (the manner of presentation – Van Aarde 1990b:2-4), *narrated time* as *story time* (Van Aarde [1990b]:15-16), et cetera, there are four that are especially significant when conducting a social-scientific study on narrative material. These are the concepts of characterization, narrative world, ideology and the so-called transparency theory:

- Narrative world as analytical category distinguished from the actual world of the author has been adequately discussed (cf chapter 2, section 2.4.6 above). What is important about the concept is that it provides, on the macro-level, the point of contact between the literary and the social perspectives of this study. 'Narrative world' namely corresponds to the concept of 'social system', in that it provides the researcher with an imaginary social world which he can study with social-scientific techniques.

- Characterization as an aspect of narratology is important for the same reason – it provides the point of contact on the micro-level between literary and social-scientific approaches (status and roles) (cf Van Aarde 1990b:18-20; [1982b]:66ff).

- The ideology/theology of the narrator is arguably the most important aspect in such a study. Information on that score provides us with clues to the society of the author.

- The transparency theory is a very important methodological concept in the interpretation of ancient texts. It refers to the fact that a historical narrative simultaneously refers to two worlds – it concerns people and things from an earlier time while the later period in which the narrative arose and communicated is transparent in the text (Van Aarde 1990b:8).

> In the gospels the world of Jesus, the disciples and the others is generally the most transparent. Nevertheless, the world of the early church is more transparent in certain places. The one world is never manifested totally isolated from the other. The world of the early church and that of Jesus and the disciples are, in a dialectical sense, simultaneously taken up in the gospel as a narra-

tive record. These two worlds are presented in accor-
dance with the narrator's ideological/theological pers-
pective.

(Van Aarde 1990b:8-9)

## 3.5 Theoretical issues: social science theory

Even the name given to the exegetical subdiscipline devoted to this branch of exege-
sis – Sociology of the New Testament – is a misnomer, since it promotes terminolo-
gical confusion by using as umbrella term a word that has become associated with a
specific discipline in the field of the social sciences, namely sociology. This exegeti-
cal subdiscipline does not make use of sociology alone, but of other disciplines in
the field of the social sciences as well, namely anthropology and psychology (cf Bain
& Kolb 1964:678 for a discussion of psychology and anthropology contending with
sociology for the position of the 'basic generic social science').

In order, therefore, for any terminological confusion to be cleared up, the fol-
lowing standardised terms are used:

- As an umbrella term denoting the branch of exegesis availing itself of what
  the social sciences have to offer, the term *social scientific study of the New
  Testament* is used.
- Specific social science disciplines that are presently used are sociology, an-
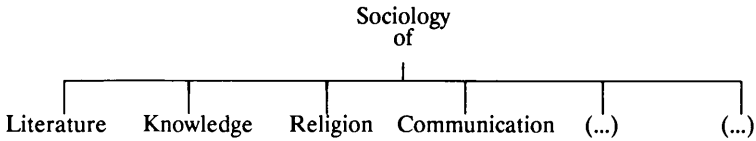 thropology and psychology.

Schematically it can be shown as follows:

Fig 2 Social sciences

Social-scientific study of the New Testament

Sociology   Anthropology   Psychology
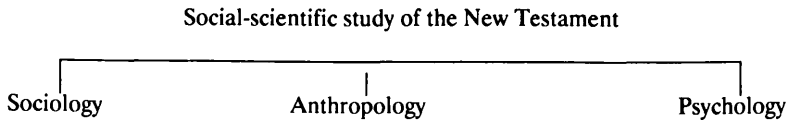
Each of these disciplines can be shown to have its own relevant substructure again:

Fig 3 Sociology

Sociology
of

Literature   Knowledge   Religion   Communication   (...)   (...)

The discipline of sociology proper is a relatively recent development, compared to some of the older sciences. According to Steyn & Van Rensburg (1985:1; see also Cilliers & Joubert 1966:5; Brown 1979:15-16) the term 'sociology' was first used by Auguste Comte (1798-1857) in 1839. Apart from Comte, four other great scholars are named whose work had a decided influence on the development of modern sociology during the nineteenth and early twentieth century, namely Herbert Spencer (1820-1903), Karl Marx (1818-1884), Emile Durkheim (1857-1917) and Max Weber (1864-1920) (cf Cilliers & Joubert 1966:5; see Sorokin 1928 for a wide-ranging discussion of the different approaches and their exponents within the field of sociology). In the 150 years since the discipline of sociology received its current name, the sociological tree has sprouted many branches, each of them concentrating on some aspect of human society – culture, economics, politics, religion and lite rature, to name but a few. Underlying all of these specializations, however, a common basic theme remains: sociology is the study of society, or of systems of human interaction (cf Steyn & Van Rensburg 1985:1; see also chapter 2, section 2.1).

Fig 4 Anthropology

Anthropology

Social
Anthropology
(Own group)

Physical
Anthropology

Cultural
Anthropology
(Alien group)
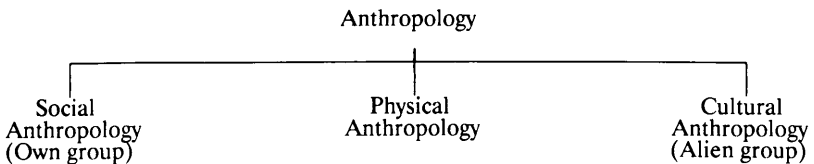
According to Malina (1983:128-129; cf also Homans 1951:192-193; Cilliers & Joubert 1966:16) 'sociology' applies to the study of the *own* group, and 'anthropology' to the study of an *alien* group. *Anthropology* can be further defined as 'social anthropology if it deals with the social structures of alien groups, cultural anthropology if it deals with their values and meanings' (Malina 1983:129; see also 1983:133, note 25, for further bibliographic references on this distinction; cf also Mandelbaum 1968:

313-319 and Firth 1968:320-324 for concise discussions of cultural and social anthropology respectively). According to Greenberg (1968:306) the separation of cultural and social anthropology is really a distinction between two different approaches to what is basically the same objective phenomenon of group behaviour.

Fig 5 Psychology

Psychology

| Social Psychology | Industrial Psychology | Clinical Psychology |
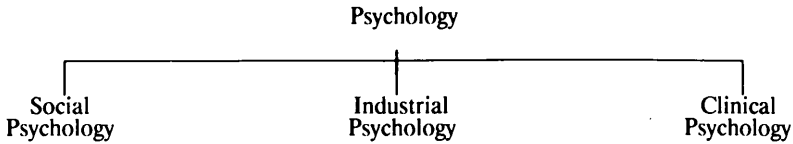
Psychology is the scientific study of the thought processes and behaviour of individuals (cf Cilliers & Joubert 1966:15). The bridge between sociology and psychology is formed by the approach called *social psychology*, defined as 'the overlapping portions of psychology and sociology which are particularly concerned with describing and explaining how selves are modified through interaction with others and how their reciprocating behaviour is directed accordingly' (Foote 1964:663). A further distinction can be made between *psychologically oriented* social psychology, encompassing three main theoretical approaches (the psychoanalytic, behaviourist and gestaltist), and *sociologically oriented* social psychology, whose representatives are known as symbolic-interactionists because of the emphasis 'upon social interaction and communication as the matrix from which human selves arise' (Foote 1964:664).

In like manner, a tree structure can be completed for the whole of the social scientific study of the New Testament and all its parts. The 'social' and 'sociological' approaches would include the *descriptive approach* and the *explanatory approach* (cf Best 1983:185-186), both contained within the boundaries of the discipline of sociology as two different operational approaches/phases of analysis.

Before proceeding to the matter of choosing a specific approach and constructing a model for this investigation, it should prove beneficial to provide a description and evaluation of the different theoretical approaches or perspectives within the social sciences.

3.5.1 *Functionalism* or the *structural functionalist* approach
'Functionalism' as a theoretical approach tends to treat societies as having characteristics similar to those of organisms (Cohen 1968:34; Brown 1979:17; Gottwald 1979:238, 622; Turner 1982:19-25; Pilch 1988:31; Strauss 1988:165-176), and it emphasizes the 'systemic' properties of social wholes (Cohen 1968:14; Strauss 1988:

145-152, 160-162). The reason for such analogies is suggested by Brown (1979:17) to be the highly abstract nature of sociological theory. This factor resulted in explanations that used references to other, more concrete or known phenomena, in order to understand the mechanisms of society. This organic analogy was first proposed by the Frenchman Auguste Comte (1798-1857), and then taken up and added to by a British sociologist, Herbert Spencer (1820-1903) (cf Cohen 1968:34-35; Brown 1979:18; Turner 1982:20-25; Pilch 1988:31). It was subsequently adopted and refined in anthropology by persons such as A R Radcliffe-Brown (1881-1955) (cf Cohen 1968:37; Brown 1979:19-21; Turner 1982:28-31; Pilch 1988:31) and Bronislaw Malinowski (1884-1942) (cf Cohen 1968:37; Turner 1982:31-33; Pilch 1988:31). In the French sociological tradition it was especially Emile Durkheim (1858-1917) who acted as the inheritor and supporter of Comte's organicism, which he brilliantly expounded upon (Cohen 1968:35-37; Brown 1979:24-34; Turner 1982:25-28), while in America this concept is connected to the name of Talcott Parsons (Cohen 1968:45-46; Brown 1979:23, 36-43; Turner 1982:38-59). Three main processes relating to the existence of living organisms are used to explain how society functions – *growth*, *structure*, and *equilibrium* (Brown 1979:17).

Growth as analogy is combined with Darwinism to produce the concept of *development* – both organisms and species develop by evolution from basic, simple entities to increasingly complex structures. What is involved is an increase in *size*, the development of a *definite shape*, increased *specialization* of the different parts, and finally, loss of function and even replacement of the individual parts, while the organism lives on. Societies seem to go through these same processes (Brown 1979:17-19). Herbert Spencer is credited with the analogy of growth[25] (Brown 1979:18; Turner 1982:22), but he also introduced another concept from biological terminology into sociology, namely the concept of functional 'needs' (Turner 1982:23). According to Turner (1982:24) this concept was to become extremely problematic for the functional perspective, 'since it could be taken to imply that events are caused by the social needs they meet', and that would amount to illegitimate teleology.

The organic analogy is also used to compare the *structure* of an organism with a society. Related to the previously discussed analogy, it nevertheless differs to the extent that it ignores the growth element and concentrates on the *social structure*. The British anthropologist Radcliffe-Brown is regarded as the classic exponent of this version of organic analogy, and he and his pupils referred to themselves as *structuralists* rather than *functionalists* (Cohen 1968:42; Brown 1979:19). Radcliffe-Brown based his *structural analysis* on the following assumptions:

> (i) If a society is to survive, there must be some minimal
> solidarity between its members; the function of social

> phenomena is either to create or sustain this solidarity
> of social groups, or, in turn, to support those institutions
> which do this. (ii) Thus, there must be a minimal con-
> sistency in the relationship between the parts of a social
> system. (iii) Each society, or type of society, exhibits
> certain basic structural features, and various practices
> can be shown to relate to these in such a way as to con-
> tribute to their maintenance.
>
> (Cohen 1968:42; cf also Turner 1982:29)

Radcliffe-Brown therefore understood society as an autonomous reality, and main-
tained that for this reason cultural items such as kinship rules or religious rituals
were explicable in terms of social structure – particularly its needs for solidarity and
integration (Turner 1982:29).

Finally, the term *homeostasis* serves to express a third aspect of the organic ana-
logy. Brown (1979:21) discloses that the term was first used in 1932 by an American
biologist called Walter Cannon, in a book entitled *The wisdom of the body*. With
this concept Cannon tried to describe the phenomenon by which the body maintains
an equilibrium between internal and external states, namely temperature regulation
through shivering and sweating (cf Brown 1979:21). *Homeostasis* would therefore
indicate the *automatic regulation to maintain a steady state* (cf Brown 1979:23; Tur-
ner 1982:24). According to Brown (1979:21) Cannon himself suggested that the or-
ganic concept of *homeostasis* be applied to societies as well, because a societal sys-
tem operates much like an organismic system, and is subject to defects as well. Any
departure from some notional state of equilibrium in a society would set in motion
homeostatic mechanisms which would return society to 'normal' functioning (Brown
1979:23).

Turner (1982:24) indicates that the conception of society as an organism intro-
duced three assumptions that typify sociological functionalism:

- Social reality is visualized as a *system*.
- The processes of a system can only be understood in terms of the *interrela-
  tedness* of its parts.
- A system, like an organism, is *bounded*, with certain processes operating to
  maintain both its integrity and its boundaries.

According to Turner functional theorizing in its most *extreme* form includes the fol-
lowing conceptions or assumptions:

1) Society as a bounded system is self-regulating, ten-
ding towards homeostasis and equilibrium.

2) As a self-maintaining system, similar to an organism,
society perhaps has certain basic needs or requisites
which must be met if survival is to ensue, if homeostasis
is to be preserved, or if equilibrium is to be maintained.

3) Sociological analysis of a self-maintaining system
with needs and requisites should therefore focus on the
function of parts in meeting system needs and hence
maintaining equilibrium and homeostasis.

4) In systems with needs, it is probable that certain
types of structures *must* exist to ensure survival/homeo-
stasis/equilibrium.

(Turner 1982:24)

These assumptions have been the cause of much debate regarding functionalism for
nearly a century, with the following questions being asked:

Organisms do display homeostatic tendencies, but do
societies? Organisms might reveal stable sets of survi-
val requisites or needs, but do societies? Organisms
may display interrelated parts that must exist to meet
system needs, but is this a viable assumption for socie-
ties.

(Turner 1982:24)

In summary: functionalism as a methodological concept for the analysis of a society
proceeds from the theoretical assumption that the normal and desired condition of a
group or society is to be in equilibrium, because the collective parts of society can
function effectively and properly in such a state. Theissen, as we have indicated (cf
2.5.1 above), uses this concept to analyse the text in terms of (a) *roles*, investigating
typical patterns of behaviour, (b) *factors*, investigating the way in which this beha-
viour is determined by society, and (c) *function*, investigating the effect of a group
on society.

3.5.1.1 Evaluating the functionalist perspective

Criticism of functionalism has been mainly of three kinds: logical, substantive and
ideological (Cohen 1968:47; cf also Turner 1982:102).

The main *logical* arguments against functionalism are the following:

(a)   It encourages teleological explanation (cf Cohen 1968:47-51; Turner 1982: 102-108). This refers to an explanation that treats an effect as a cause, that is, showing that religion exists to undergird the moral foundations of society, whereby the consequence 'moral order' is used to explain the existence of religion (Cohen 1968:47; see also Turner 1982:26). Turner (1982:102) defines illegitimate teleologies as follows: 'Illegitimate teleologies exist when statements do not *document the causal sequences or mechanisms whereby end states (goals) set into motion the creation and/or operation of the structures and processes that are involved in their realization.*'

(b)   A functionalist hypothesis is really untestable. That is, statements cannot be deduced from it that, if disproved, would lead one to reject or modify that hypothesis (cf Cohen 1968:51).

(c)   The approach inhibits comparison and generalization. If a social or cultural element is to be examined within the totality of a society, it must be treated as unique, for the totality of one society is never the same as another (Cohen 1968:53).

The main *substantive* criticism of functionalism refers to the fact that it overemphasizes the normative element in social life; it minimises the importance of social conflict at the expense of social consensus; it stresses the harmonious nature of social systems; and it fails to account for non-adaptive social change and even treats it as abnormal. It is therefore said that functionalism reflects an ideologically conservative bias, tending to suggest that the existing system is the desirable one and should persist (cf Cohen 1968:58; Brown 1979:47; Turner 1982:109). However, Turner (1982:110-111) does not accept the validity of this point of criticism without qualification.[26] He states:

> It should be emphasized that many of the critics of functional analysis have assumed that the concepts of 'equilibrium' and 'homeostasis' *necessarily* connote a vision of the social world as unchanging and static. This interpretation is incorrect, for notions of equilibrium can also provide an analytical reference point for observing instances of change and disequilibrium. Thus, there is no logical reason for assuming that the concept of equilibrium allows only a static image of the social world.
>
> (Turner 1982:25, note 8)

Gottwald (1979:622) is basically in agreement with Turner on this point:

> The provisional strength of the functional model of so-
> cietal unity-amid-diversity is that it astutely circumvents
> premature or dataless speculation about cause or effect
> in social process. It does this by a methodological sus-
> pension of the diachronic and genetic plane, or at least
> by a rigorous subordination of the diachronic/genetic
> concern to the synchronic/ metabolic concern. How-
> ever, 'suspension' or 'subordination' is not 'annulment'
> or 'annihilation'. Functionalism on its own grounds
> gives rise to precisely those issues of processual deve-
> lopment which it initially suspends, i.e., to questions
> about the origins of a system..., about change within a
> system..., and about the impact of systems one upon
> another....

He recognizes, though, that the functional orientation is deficient at least in the scope it affords to diachronic change: 'The limited diachronic span in a functional model does not, however, provide a wide enough horison to examine change factors satisfactorily, i.e., with sufficient controls' (Gottwald 1979:623). It is inclined to be *ahistorical*, emphasizing part-to-whole causal relations and how part and whole mutually affect variation in each other (Turner 1982:110).

Finally, a major criticism of functionalism is that it does not provide an explanation of its *own* assumptions, that is, *why* functional interrelationships exist in social life, and why the degree of interdependence in societies or sectors of societies varies (Cohen 1968:66).

In conclusion, a few comments should summarise the critique on the functiona-list perspective in the social sciences.

Cohen (1968:64) is of the opinion that much of the criticism against functiona-lism is just, and maintains that 'theories which seek to explain the existence of social phenomena in terms of the contribution which they make to the preservation of a larger "whole" *are* quite unacceptable'. His argument is based on the fact that func-tionalism creates models which abstract certain features from 'the recurrent ongoing flow of social reality and presenting these *as though* they constituted totalities. But such totalities – or "boundary maintaining systems" – are not the totality of any real social phenomena; they are constructed totalities only' (Cohen 1968:65). He there-fore maintains that functionalism not only cannot explain social change, but that it cannot even satisfactorily explain social persistence (Cohen 1968:65).

Contrary to the negative assessment by Cohen, Turner grants a much more useful role to functionalism. He concedes that functionalism has rather severe logical problems of teleology and tautology (Turner 1982:112), but thinks that some of these logical traps can be avoided by focusing on causal relations between parts and wholes, and abandoning notions of functions and hypothetical states of integration and equilibrium (Turner 1982:112-113). Another shortcoming of functionalism is its inability to properly analyse history or non-orderly change (cf Turner 1982:113). To remedy this, functionalism will have to develop additional concepts that can explain the more revolutionary forms of change. A last but significant point is that some social systems seem to be conducive to functional analysis, while some do not. The interpreter will have to decide which perspective would best suit the analysis of a specific society.

3.5.2 Conflict theory or coercion theory

The conflict perspective is not new. It derives its existence from the works of two sociologists-cum-philosophers, namely Karl Marx and Georg Simmel (Turner 1982: 118). Marx had a practical or pragmatic goal in pursuing the theory of conflict – he wished to change society in such a way as to eliminate capitalism. He realized that there were abstract laws operative in society according to which the world was organized into patterns, but he viewed those laws as different 'sets' applicable only to a certain historical period, namely the period of feudal or capitalist society (Turner 1982:119).

Simmel, on the other hand, had more of an academic and scholastic interest – he wished to reflect upon and understand social life. In contrast to Marx he did not wish to uncover the 'set' of abstract laws that was linked to a specific time slot. He rather sought to discover *universal laws* which transcended space and time (cf Turner 1982:119).

Both Simmel and Marx emphasized the pervasiveness and inevitability of conflict within social systems. They differed substantially, though, regarding their assumptions about the nature of society. Referring to an article by the sociologist Pierre van den Berghe (1963), Turner (1982:121, note 8) directs attention to the fact that 'the ontological differences between Marx and Simmel have inspired vastly different theoretical perspectives in contemporary sociology'. Simmel saw conflict as the *cause* of various outcomes within society (Turner 1982:125). Marx, on the other hand, understood conflict as the *result* of contending powers and interests in society (Turner 1982:125). From the work of these two historical figures the two dominant contemporary conflict perspectives grew. They are the *dialectical conflict theory* propounded by scholars such as Ralf Dahrendorf,[27] and *conflict functionalism*, advo-

cated by, inter alia, Lewis A Coser (Turner 1982:138). Dialectical conflict theory owes its inspiration to Marx, while conflict functionalism was inspired by Simmel.

Dahrendorf argued that functionalism created a *utopian image of society* (Turner 1982:139), providing a view likened to a 'still photograph' (Brown 1979:46; see also Malina 1981:19).[28] The functionalist perspective, however, did not adequately explain the incidence and intensity of conflict in some societies. Dahrendorf therefore evolved from the works of Marx the so-called *dialectical-conflict* perspective (cf Turner 1982:140). He perceived the social order to consist of *imperatively coordinated associations* (ICA's) created by the process of institutionalization (cf Brown 1979:93; Turner 1982:140). Such ICA's represent a distinguishable organization of roles (Turner 1982:140). The roles are organized in groups or clusters, where some role clusters have the power to force others to conform. Such power relations within an ICA 'tend to become legitimated and can therefore be viewed as *authority* relations in which some positions have the "accepted" or "normative right" to dominate others' (Turner 1982:140, referring to Dahrendorf 1958b:170-183; 1959:168-169; 1961; 1967). According to Dahrendorf, the social order is maintained by processes creating authority relations within the ICA's. Depending on Max Weber, Dahrendorf sees authority as *legitimated power*. Discussing Dahrendorf's position, Brown (1979:93) states:

> A person in authority is one who has power over others
> who agree that he is the rightful owner of that power.
> By acknowledging his right to power they transform it
> into authority; this process is known as legitimation.
> The characteristic of power in most organizations is that
> it adheres to legitimated positions and is therefore ex-
> perienced as authority.
>
> (Brown 1979:93)

Power is therefore positional, not personal, and becomes authority. It is this differential distribution of the scarce resources of power and authority that creates conflict amongst, and change within, the competing subgroups in an ICA (cf Brown 1979:93; Turner 1982:140-141). In every ICA there are certain 'clusters of roles' which are typified in two basic types, namely the *ruling* and the *ruled* (Turner 1982: 141). Any single role therefore adopts a position of either domination or submission towards other roles. The ruling cluster seeks to preserve the status quo for obvious reasons, while the ruled cluster seeks to have power or authority redistributed. The ICA polarizes into two conflicting groups that contend for authority (cf Turner 1982:141). When the contest is resolved, it inevitably leads to a redistribution of

authority, which in turn leads to the institutionalization of newly defined clusters of roles. These roles are again polarized into dominating and a subjugated groups, and under the right conditions they start another contest for authority. This understanding of institutionalization as a dialectical process where conflict becomes the cause for social change, has led Dahrendorf to identify three key causal relations (cf Turner 1982:142):

- Conflict is seen as an inevitable process occasioned by opposing forces within social-structural arrangements.
- Such conflict is promoted or inhibited by a series of intervening structural conditions or variables.
- When conflict is resolved at a specific point in time, a new structural situation is created which, under certain conditions, unavoidably leads to further conflict among opposed forces.

Like Marx, Dahrendorf explains conflict as the result of a causal chain of events that is directed at the procurement or redistribution of authority.

Lewis Coser, in his theorizing, criticised functionalism, especially the Parsonian variety, for not giving sufficient attention to conflict (Turner 1982:154). At the same time he followed the lead of Simmel rather than that of Marx and Dahrendorf, by emphasizing the *integrative functions* of conflict for social systems, rather than its disruptive effects (cf Turner 1982:155).

From the vantage point of conflict being a process that can, under certain conditions, function to *maintain* social systems, Coser's image of society stressed the following aspects:

1. The social system can be viewed as a system of variously interrelated parts.
2. All social systems reveal imbalances, tensions and conflicts of interests among variously interrelated parts.
3. Processes within and between the system's constituent parts operate under different conditions to maintain, change, and increase or decrease a system's integration and adaptability.
4. Many processes, such as violence, dissent, deviance, and conflict, which are typically viewed as disruptive to the system, can also be viewed, under specifiable conditions, as strengthening the system's basis of integration as well as its adaptability to the environment (cf Turner 1982: 156).

These assumptions have led Coser to try to establish the causal chains that are involved in the way that conflict 'maintains or reestablishes system integration and adaptability to changing conditions' (Turner 1982:157). The following consistent series of basic causal nexuses was abstracted:

> (1) Imbalances in the integration of constituent parts of a social whole leads to (2) the outbreak of varying types of conflict among constituent parts which, in turn, causes (3) temporary reintegration of the systemic whole which, under certain conditions, causes (4) increased flexibility in the system's structure which, in turn, (5) increases the system's capability to resolve future imbalances through conflict, leading to a system that (6) reveals a high level of adaptability to changing conditions.
>
> (Turner 1982:157)

There are problems with this causal scheme, the most important being the emphasis on processes that *contribute* to system integration and adaptation. Nevertheless, Coser's conflict perspective is regarded as most comprehensive, as is evident from his investigations of the following propositions: (i) the causes of conflict; (ii) the intensity of conflict; (iii) the violence of conflict; (iv) the duration of conflict; and (v) the functions of conflict (cf Turner 1982:158).[29]

In a section of his work entitled 'The future of conflict theory', Turner (1982: 175-193) attempts a synthesis between the different strands of conflict theory. *Conflict* is defined as 'a process of events leading to overt interaction of varying degrees of violence among at least two parties' (Turner 1982:183). Although the interdependency of social phenomena is recognized by conflict theory,[30] the interpretation of society is quite different from that of structural-functionalism.

Conflict theory views society as generating conflict because of the inequality of resource distribution (cf Lenski 1966:43-93 for a discussion on distributive systems and the distribution of resources), and therefore regards inequality as the ultimate source of conflict (Turner 1982:181). The following schematic presentation, taken from Turner (1982:181) shows the 'over-all causal imagery of conflict theory':

Fig 6 Conflict theory
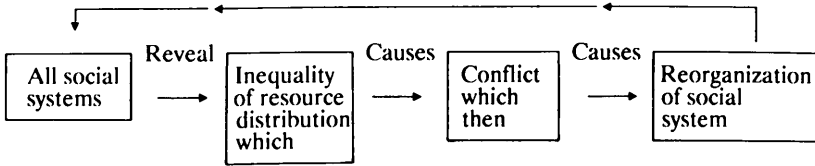
To summarise: conflict theory explains the order in society as being mainly the result of the power some men have in demanding compliance from others (Cohen 1968:21). Malina (1988b:9) defines conflict theory as a perspective according to which human social relations develop, are maintained and change because people are motivated to act in terms of their own interests, which normally impinge on the interests of others. Conflict theory therefore explains order in its various aspects and also explains the breakdown of social order and the occurrence of change. Societies are unstable systems – normally they tend to change (Cohen 1968:169). Social conflict therefore exists where the goals of one group are pursued in such a way as to ensure that the goals of another group cannot be realized (Cohen 1968:184-185; cf also Steyn & Van Rensburg 1985:89). Conflict theory really wishes to give account of the causes of social change. At issue is not the sporadic formation of groups that happen to be in conflict with one another, but the existence of *structural conflict* between groups or social sectors which are likely to have enduring interests (Cohen 1968:184). According to Malina (1981:20) the conflict model presupposes that all units of social organization – persons and groups in a society – are continuously changing unless some force intervenes to correct this change. The basic presupposition of conflict theory is the existence of some sort of grievance on the part of someone who is or believes to be oppressed (Malina 1988b:10).

3.5.2.1 Evaluating the conflict perspective

Conflict theory is not as unified a theoretical perspective as is the case with functionalism (Brown 1979:108).[31] The label 'conflict theory' has but recently been applied to a diverse body of theories whose common denominator is the view that societies are always in a state of conflict over scarce resources. *Power* is regarded as one of the most important scarce resources, and consequently society should be viewed as an arena in which there is a constant struggle for power (Popenoe 1980:93). Conflict theory, like functionalism, seeks to provide an explanation for the order of society. It regards functionalism as deficient in explaining the forms of non-adaptive change perceived in some societies, and wishes to provide a remedy:

> A major assumption of most conflict theorists is that,
> rather than being held together by the 'glue' of shared
> values, societies and social order are maintained by
> coercion and constraint.
>
> (Popenoe 1980:93)

However, functionalism and conflict theory are not seen to be mutually exclusive, because they are not genuine alternatives (Cohen 1968:170; Brown 1979:91). The difference between them is one of emphasis rather than of kind – both are necessary to understand the complexity of society.

More substantial criticism on Dahrendorf's *dialectical conflict theory* has been given by Weingart (1969) (cf Turner 1982:144-153). Turner (1982:145) restates Weingart's charge that 'in deviating from Marx's conception of the *substructure* of opposed interests existing below the cultural and institutional edifices of the ruling classes, Dahrendorf forfeits a genuine causal analysis of conflict, and therefore an explanation of how patterns of social organization are changed'. Because of this, Dahrendorf is forced to reduce the origins of conflict to whims associated with individuals and groups, and thereby succumbs to a reductionist imperative dictated by his causal imagery (Turner 1982:145, dependent upon Weingart).

An important point of criticism of Dahrendorf's perspective is his failure to conceive of crucial concepts such as authority, domination-subjugation, and interest, as *variables*:

> He refuses to speculate on *what types* of authority displaying
> *what variable states* lead to *what types of variations* in domina-
> tion and subjugation which, in turn, cause *what variable types*
> of opposed interests leading to *what variable types* of conflict
> groups. Thus, Dahrendorf links only by assumption and defi-
> nition crucial variables that causally influence each other as
> well as the more explicit variables of his scheme: the degree
> of conflict, the degree of intensity of conflict, the degree of
> violence in conflict, the degree of change, and the rate of so-
> cial change.
>
> (Turner 1982:148-149)

The solution to this is to conceptualize his units of analysis (ICA's), legitimacy, authority, domination-subjugation, and interests as variable phenomena, and to attempt to describe the intervening empirical conditions that might influence their variability (Turner 1982:149).

A *methodological* problem is posed by the very general definitions Dahrendorf gives to concepts, 'a strategy that insures confirmation of his assumptions about the nature of social life, but which inhibits empirical investigation of these assumptions' (Turner 1982:150).

Finally, Turner (1982:151) points out that commentators have noted a remarkable similarity between Dahrendorf's units of analysis -the imperatively coordinated associations (ICA's) – and those of Parsons (the social systems). This is remarkable because Dahrendorf has criticised functional forms of theorizing – such as Parsonian functionalism – as reflecting an ideological utopia, and has proposed his dialectical-conflict scheme as the road out of utopia (Turner 1982:150). However, Dahrendorf is not able to explain how conflict and change emerge, because he does not adequately explain the problem of order:

> How and why is the organization of ICA's possible? To assert that they are organized in terms of power and authority defines away the problem of how, why, and through what processes the institutionalized patterns generating both integration and conflict come to exist... Yet it is from the institutionalized relations in ICA's that conflict-ridden cycles of change are supposed to emerge.
>
> (Turner 1982:152)

Dahrendorf has therefore fallen into the analytical trap he has imputed to functional theory: 'Change inducing conflict must mysteriously arise from the legitimated relations of the social system' (Turner 1982:145).

As far as Coser's *conflict functionalism* is concerned, the main problem the approach presents concerns its bias towards *functions* – that is, forces promoting system integration – of social conflict (cf Strauss 1988:196). The problem is really with the implicit assumptions behind the concept of *function*:

> If some process or structure has 'functions' for some other feature of a system, there is often an implicit assumption about what is 'good' and 'bad' for a system...In Coser's propositions on the functions of conflict, this problem is evident: Conflict is 'good' when it promotes integration based on solidarity, clear authority, functional interdependence, and normative control. In Coser's terms it is more 'adaptive'. Other conflict theorists might argue that conflict in such a system is 'bad' because integration

> and adaptability in this specific context could be 'exploitive'.
>
> (Turner 1982:168)

Coser's approach therefore represents an analytical one-sidedness which would produce a distorted view of the social world if followed exclusively (Turner 1982:172; see also Strauss 1988:196).

To conclude: it seems as if the most basic issue to be resolved regarding conflict theory is that of the definition of conflict (Turner 1982:176). What constitutes conflict, and what does not? Current definitions are so broad as to include practically '*any* overt or covert state which hints of antagonism' (Turner 1982:177) under the label of 'conflict'. As an example of such broad definitions Turner quotes the formulation by Fink, stating that conflict is:

> any social situation or process in which two or more entities are linked by at least one form of antagonistic psychological relation or at least one form of antagonistic interaction.
>
> (Turner 1982:177)

Antagonism, in turn, refers to such states as 'incompatible goals', 'mutually exclusive interests', 'emotional hostility', 'dissent', 'violent struggle', et cetera.

There are also *unit of analysis* problems in conflict theory. Very little attempt is made to indicate exactly what units would typically be in conflict with each other – individuals, groups, organizations, classes, nations, or communities? On the positive side, leaving the units vague keeps the theory abstract and therefore applicable to all social units (Turner 1982:179). On the other hand, it is surmised that the nature of the units influence the nature of the conflict among them, and that one could benefit by being more specific. Presently, conflict theory reveals a bipolarity – on the one hand it consists of abstract schemes such as Dahrendorf's and Coser's, and on the other there are several specific theories of international, interpersonal, racial, class, sexual, religious, ethical, organizational, community, and occupational conflict (Turner 1982:179).

Lastly, the question of the *implicit functionalism* imputed to conflict theory should be addressed. By this is meant that 'end states or the consequences of conflict often take analytical precedence over the causes of conflict' (Turner 1982:180). Conflict is regarded as 'both a dependent variable – that is, a process which is caused by other forces – and an independent variable – that is, a process which causes alterations in still other processes' (Turner 1982:181).

In his overview of the different conflict theories Turner (1982:192) remarks:

> In many ways, the problem with much conflict theory is
> its excessive claims: to visualize all social relationships
> in all social systems as rife with conflict. The only way
> to sustain this claim is to define conflict so broadly that
> virtually any social relationship will reveal conflict.

Still, if the three problems – the definition of conflict, the units of conflict, and the confusion over causes and functions – can be overcome, much could be won 'in understanding how and why patterns of social organization are created, maintained, and changed' (Turner 1982:193).

3.5.2.2 Comparing the functionalist and conflict perspectives
The following table (taken over from Cohen 1968:67) provides a direct comparison between the salient points of the functionalist/consensus/integration approach and the conflict/coercion approach to society:

Functionalist model	Conflict model
a) Norms and values are the basic elements of social life.	a) Interests are the basic elements of social life.
b) Social life involves commitments.	b) Social life involves inducement and coercion.
c) Societies are necessarily cohesive.	c) Social life is necessarily divisive.
d) Social life depends on solidarity.	d) Social life generates opposition, exclusion and hostility.
e) Social life is based on reciprocity and cooperation.	e) Social life generates structured conflict.
f) Social systems rest on consensus.	f) Social life generates sectional interests.
g) Society recognizes legitimate authority.	g) Social differentiation involves power.
h) Social systems are integrated.	h) Social systems are malintegrated and beset by 'contradictions'.
i) Social systems tend to persist.	i) Social systems tend to change.

3.5.3 Interactionist theorizing

In the late 1800s European thinkers like Simmel, Weber, and Durkheim began to express interest in the micro-sociological concern for the relationships between society and the individual as exhibited in the interaction among individuals. Questions were being asked about the way in which society shapes individuals, or how individuals create, maintain, and change society. 'How are society and the personality of individuals interrelated, and yet separate, emergent phenomena' (Turner 1982: 305)? Interest was diverted from macro-social structures and processes – class, state, family, religion, evolution, the nature of the body social – to the study of processes of *social interaction* and their consequences for the individual and society. The term *social interaction* denotes the 'reciprocal influencing of the acts of persons and groups, usually mediated through communication' (Becker 1964:657).[32]

While Simmel is recognized as the one who pioneered the micro-sociology of interaction (Cohen 1968:126; Parsons 1968:435; Turner 1982:306), modern interactionism can be regarded as the legacy of the American philosopher *George Herbert Mead,* who taught at the University of Chicago during the years 1893-1931 (Brown 1979:114; Turner 1982:308). Mead borrowed key concepts from others – William James, John Dewey and Charles Horton Cooley – and combined them with his own insights to produce a synthesis that serves to this day as the base for modern interactionism (Turner 1982:308).

James, a psychologist, developed a clear concept of *self* – described as 'perhaps the most important and central idea in interactionism...which gives interactionism a base from which to switch away from the concerns of macro-sociology, and which roots it firmly in the concerns of the individual' (Brown 1979:115) – which refers to how people see themselves. *Self* can be defined as follows:

> Just as humans can *(a)* denote symbolically other people and aspects of the world around them, *(b)* develop attitudes and feelings toward these objects, and *(c)* construct typical responses toward objects, so they can denote themselves, develop self-feelings and attitudes, and construct responses toward themselves.
>
> (Turner 1982:308)

Based on this insight, James recognizes that the *self* is built up through social interaction, and that a person has as many social selves as there are individuals who recognize him/her (Foote 1964:664; Brown 1979:115; Turner 1982:309).

Cooley refined the concept of self to the extent that he regarded self as the process by which individuals see themselves as objects, along with other objects, in their

social environment (Turner 1982:309). He also recognized that self emerges out of communication with others – in other words, the individual's image of himself is formed on the basis of how others evaluate him (Brown 1979:116). Cooley called this process *the looking-glass self*: 'The gestures of others serve as mirrors in which people see and evaluate themselves...' (Turner 1982:309). He also perceived that some groups were more important than others in the genesis and maintenance of self. These he termed *primary groups*, stressing the fact that *self* arises out of symbolic communication with others in group contexts (Turner 1982:309-310).

Dewey's contribution was in terms of *human consciousness* or *mind*. *Mind* is seen as a 'process of denoting objects in the environment, ascertaining potential lines of conduct, imagining the consequences of pursuing each line, inhibiting inappropriate responses, and then, selecting a line of conduct that will facilitate adjustment' (Turner 1982:310). *Mind* therefore becomes an instrumental activity[33]: 'What usually are considered to be the units or aspects of purely psychological events – for example, attitudes, beliefs, motivation, perception, thought, or choice – are here interpreted as ingredients or aspects of instrumental activity' (Swanson 1968:441). *Mind*, as a process of adjustment rather than a thing or an entity, therefore emerges and is sustained through interactions in the social world (Turner 1982:310).

Using these concepts, Mead was able to indicate how *mind*, the social self, and society emerge and are sustained through interaction. His synthesis appears to have been based on two assumptions:

> (1) The biological frailty of human organisms force their cooperation with each other in group contexts in order to survive; and (2) those actions within and among human organisms that facilitate their cooperation, and hence their survival or adjustment, will be retained.
>
> (Turner 1982:312)

Proceeding from Dewey's contribution (cf discussion above), Mead uses the terms *imaginative rehearsal* (the process of using symbols or language to covertly rehearse lines of action) and *conventional gestures* (gestures that have acquired common meanings and thereby facilitate adjustment and efficient interaction among individuals) to refine the concept of *mind*. An organism possesses *mind*, accordingly, when it develops the capacity (1) to understand conventional gestures, (2) to employ these gestures to take the role of others, and (3) to imaginatively rehearse alternative lines of action (Turner 1982:313-314; see also Strauss 1988:212-213). *Taking the role of the other* (put oneself in another's place or seeing things as others see them)

refers to the capacity of individuals to *assume* the perspective of those with whom they must cooperate for survival on the basis of the interpretation of conventional gestures (Brown 1979:120; Popenoe 1980:56; Turner 1982:313).

A very important aspect of the *self*, used by Mead, is that of the *significant other* and the *generalized other*. He distinguishes three stages in the development of self – an initial stage called *play*, where the infant organism is only able to assume the perspective of a limited number of *significant others* such as parents (Berger & Luckmann 1967:129-132; Brown 1979:122-123; Turner 1982:314); a secondary stage called *game*, designating 'the capacity of individuals to derive multiple self-images from, and to cooperate with, a group of individuals engaged in some coordinated activity' (Turner 1982:314; see also Foote 1964:664-665; Parsons 1968:436; Brown 1979:123). The final stage in the development of self is indicated by the ability of an individual to take the role of the *generalized other* – that is, to assume the general beliefs, values, and norms of a community (Turner 1982:314; Strauss 1988:214-215). The concept is also described by Manis & Meltzer (1972) as the 'composite representation of others, of society, within the individual' (quoted by Brown 1979:123), and by Berger & Luckmann (1967:133) as the 'abstraction from the roles and attitudes of concrete significant others'.

To complete the picture of Mead's synthesis of *mind, self*, and *society*, it should be pointed out that Mead regarded *society* as dependent upon both *mind* and *self* as described above. Society and its institutions are maintained, perpetuated *and* altered through the adjustive capacities of mind and the mediating impact of self (Turner 1982:316). Yet, while society is viewed as a phenomenon *constructed* through the interaction of individuals as directed by mind and self, and therefore subject to alteration or change, such change exhibits an unpredictability that cannot be explained adequately by the concept *self* in its present definition. Therefore Mead employed two concepts first developed by William James – the *I* and the *me* (Brown 1979:117-118; Turner 1982:316; Strauss 1988:215-216). Mead proposed that we think of the self as having these two components – the *I* is the active element of the self, while the *me* is the passive, 'shaped' element.[34] The *me* is to be seen as the social self, and includes all the social roles we play (Brown 1979:117). Turner's formulation:

> For Mead, the *I* points to the impulsive tendencies of individuals, while the *me* represents the self-image of behavior after it has been emitted. With these concepts Mead emphasized that the *I*, or impulsive behavior, cannot be predicted, because the individual can only

> 'know in experience' (the *me*) what has actually trans-
> pired and what the consequences of the *I* have been.
>
> (Turner 1982:316)

When Mead describes society as organized activity regulated by the generalized other, in which individuals make adjustments and cooperate with one another, the description points to the mutual interaction between individual and society. What the description really asserts is that society shapes mind and self, and that mind and self affect society (Turner 1982:317; see Berger & Luckmann 1967 for a similar assertion in the sociology of knowledge). While this is an important insight, it remains vague in the concepts used to denote the nature of social organization or society and the exact points of articulation between society and the individual (Turner 1982: 317).

In an attempt to fill in this broad description by Mead, theorists formulated a series of concepts to indicate the basic units from which society is constructed, and thereby clarify the relations between society and individuals. The problem of Mead's synthesis resided in an unsatisfactorily explanation of 'how participation in the *structure* of society shaped individual conduct, and vice versa' (Turner 1982:317). In an attempt to resolve the vagueness, attention was focused on the concept of *role*, and this line of inquiry eventually became known as *role theory*.

Built on the insights of Mead, there grew a theoretical perspective that is known as *symbolic interactionism*. This perspective focuses on how the symbolic processes of role-taking, imaginative rehearsal, and self-evaluation by individuals adjusting to one another, form the basis for social organization, or society (Turner 1982:320).

Another (more recent) theoretical course that makes use of the symbolic processes described by Mead is that called role theory; 'it focuses primary analytical attention on the *structure of status networks and attendant expectations* as they circumscribe the internal symbolic processes of individuals and the eventual enactment of roles' (Turner 1982:320).

Both symbolic interactionism and role theory represent a variant of interactionism.[35] However, they differ substantially in emphasis, and should therefore be discussed in their own terms. This will be done in an abbreviated manner in the next two sections.

3.5.3.1 Symbolic interactionism

As we have indicated above, the concept *symbolic interactionism* refers to a school of thought based on the work of Mead. Symbolic interactionism emphasizes the patterns of interdependency in microsystems on the interpersonal level. According to this theory the interdependency is the result of shared/common symbols by which

individuals negotiate in their interaction so that a structured whole develops and can be maintained (Steyn 1984:6). The maintenance or changing of the social reality depends therefore on symbolic communication (cf Foote 1964:665).

The meaning of the term *symbolic communication* is obvious – humans use symbols to communicate with each other. Such communication consists not only of language, but also of facial gestures, voice tones, body posture, and other symbolic gestures in which there is common meaning and understanding (Turner 1982:324). The process of *role-taking* is regarded as the basic mechanism by which interaction occurs (Turner 1982:324). In fact, interaction could not occur but for the ability to read gestures and to use them as a basis for putting oneself in the position of others (Turner 1982:324). Contemporary interactionists emphasize the phenomenon of interaction in society as a uniquely human endeavour. Society is actually made possible by the capacities that humans acquire as they grow and mature in society (Turner 1982:324). Present-day interactionists recognize the same human capacities as Mead: the genesis of mind and self (Turner 1982:325). However, newly included in the concept of *mind* is what is known as *the definition of the situation*. This refers to the fact that, with the capacities of mind, people (or *actors*)[36] 'can name, categorize, and orient themselves to constellations of objects – including themselves as an object – in all situations. In this way they can assess, weigh, and sort out appropriate lines of conduct' (Turner 1982:325; see also Brown 1979:121-122 on the subject). All this serves to emphasize the symbolic character of interaction (Foote 1964:665). In Turner's words:

> Humans create and use symbols. They communicate
> with symbols. They interact through role-taking, which
> involves the reading of symbols emitted by others.
> What makes them unique as a species – the existence of
> mind and self – arises out of interaction, while conver-
> sely, the emergence of these capacities allows for the in-
> teractions that form the basis of society.
>
> (Turner 1982:325-326)

Two prominent names associated with symbolic interactionism are that of *Herbert Blumer* and *Manford Kuhn*, associated with the so-called *Chicago School* and *Iowa School* of symbolic interactionism, respectively (Turner 1982:322; Strauss 1988:217). Both schools follow Mead's lead, yet Blumer and Kuhn often diverge, and in fact represent 'the polar extremes of symbolic interactionism' (Turner 1982:322). The divergence, according to Turner (1982:326), concerns the following issues:

> (1) What is the nature of the individual? (2) What is
> the nature of interaction? (3) What is the nature of so-
> cial organization? (4) What is the most appropriate
> method for studying humans and society? And (5)
> What is the best form of sociological theorizing?

From an investigation of their positions on these issues[37], it becomes clear that Chi-cago School interactionists view individuals as potentially spontaneous, interaction as constantly in the process of change, and social organization as fluid and tenuous (Turner 1982:330; Strauss 1988:217). Iowa School interactionists on the other hand are inclined to regard individual personality and social organization as structured, with interactions being constrained by these structures (Turner 1982:330). From these differences in assumptions there grew varying conceptions of how to investi-gate the social world and how to build theory (cf Turner 1982:330-338 for a discus-sion of the diverging assumptions about causality, diverging methodological proto-cols, and diverging theory-building strategies).

A major criticism of symbolic interactionism is that it ignores the structural as-pects of society (cf Brown 1979:137-138; Strauss 1988:218). Blumer and Kuhn have tried to erect a total theory of society on the basis of symbolic interactionism. Blu-mer, especially, advocated that sociological theory be built through inductive rea-soning 'from the ongoing symbolic processes of individuals in concrete interaction situations' (cf Turner 1982:339). However, this strategy has failed to link concep-tually the processes of symbolic interaction (interaction of the selves) to the forma-tion of different patterns of social organization (structures like institutions, organi-zations or societies) (cf Turner 1982:332). 'Furthermore, the utility of induction from the symbolic exchanges among individuals for the analysis of interaction among more macro, collective social units has yet to be demonstrated' (Turner 1982:339). However, on the positive side symbolic interactionism did focus atten-tion on the need to conceptually link the structural categories to classes of social processes that underlie these categories. This need has arisen because macro-socio-logical theorizing (such as functionalism or conflict theory) has traditionally re-mained detached from the processes of the social world it attempts to describe.

To conclude, then, symbolic interactionism in its present form can provide a supplement to macro-analysis 'by giving researchers a framework, and measuring in-struments, to analyze micro processes within macro social events' (Turner 1982: 342).

3.5.3.2 Role theory

Role theory constitutes the other direction – besides symbolic interactionism – in which Mead's synthesis developed (cf 3.5.3 above). Because that synthesis did not adequately explain how the structure of society shapes individual conduct, and vice versa, the concept of *role* came to denote the point of articulation between the individual and society (Turner 1982:317, 349). The following people contributed towards an understanding of what role theory is about:

Robert Park (1926:135) uttered the well-quoted line (cf Ralph H Turner 1968: 552; Turner 1982:318): 'Everybody is always and everywhere, more or less consciously, playing a role...It is in these roles that we know each other; it is in these roles that we know ourselves.' Park emphasized that roles are linked to structural positions in society, and that self, in turn, emerges from the multiple roles that people play. In this way he directed attention to the nature of society and how its structure influences the processes of mind, self, and society (Turner 1982:318).

Jacob Moreno, who pioneered the use of *role-playing* as a tool in psychotherapy and role-training (cf Sarbin 1968:546), viewed social organization as a network of roles that constrained and channelled behaviour (cf Turner 1982:319). Distinguishing three different types of roles – psychosomatic roles, psychodramatic roles, and social roles[38] – Moreno conceptualized social structures as organized networks of expectations that require varying types of role enactments by individuals. This led to an understanding of social organization as 'various *types* of interrelated role enactments regulated by varying *types* of expectations' (Turner 1982:319).

Ralph Linton distinguished the concepts of *role, status*, and *individuals* from one another. He held that roles consisted of behavioural prescriptions or norms bearing one-to-one correspondence with social status (R Turner 1968:552). To Linton, *status* is a collection of rights and duties, and a *role* represents the dynamic aspect of status – to put rights and duties into effect is to perform a role (Sweeter 1964:609; Ralph Turner 1968:553; Turner 1982:319). According to this insight, social structure reveals these distinct elements:

> *(a)* a network of positions, *(b)* a corresponding system
> of expectations, and *(c)* patterns of behavior which are
> enacted with regard to the expectations of particular
> networks of interrelated positions.
>
> (Turner 1982:319)

Park, Moreno, and Linton provided more conceptual insight into the nature of social organization, and thereby made clearer the interrelations among Mead's categories of *mind, self*, and *society*.

Turner (1982:343) suggests that the differences between role theory and symbolic interactionism could best be visualized as a continuum, at one end of which individuals are seen as players in the theatre, while at the other players are considered to be participants in a game. Turner explains:

> When human action is seen as occurring in a theater, interaction is likely to be viewed as highly structured by the script, directors, other actors, and the audience. When conceptualized as a game, interaction is more likely to be seen as less structured and as influenced by the wide range of tactics available to participants.
>
> (Turner 1982:343)

This *dramaturgical metaphor* (Sarbin 1968:546) expresses the assumptions of role theory about the social world. The concept of *stage* contains assumptions about the nature of social organization; the concept of *players* contains implicit assumptions about the nature of the individual as an actor in society; and the concept of *script* contains assumptions about the relationship of individuals to patterns of social organization (Turner 1982:345).

Turner (1982:345) describes how role theorists view the social world as a network of variously interrelated *positions*, or *statuses*, within which individuals enact roles.[39] Coupled to each position are certain expectations about the behaviour of anyone occupying that position. Social organization, or social structure (Steyn & Van Rensburg 1985:92) is therefore visualized as composed of various networks of status and expectation (Turner 1982:345). In accordance with the dramaturgical analogy to a play (noted above), three general classes of expectation seem to typify the way in which role theory views the world:

- Expectations from the 'script', referring to the norms in social reality that specify individual behaviour relevant to a specific position. Ralph Turner (1968:555) describes this class of expectation as *organizational goal dominance*:

> To the extent to which roles are incorporated into an organizational setting, organizational goals tend to become the crucial criteria for role differentiation, evaluation, complementarity, legitimacy of expectation, consensus, allocation, and judgments of adequacy.

- Expectations from other 'players', which are interpreted through the process of *role taking*. Such expectations represent a powerful force shaping human conduct (Turner 1982346); and
- Expectations from the 'audience' – that is, the audiences of individuals occupying statuses. The description of such audiences may differ – sometimes it is a one-person audience, sometimes a small-group audience, sometimes a large audience. And sometimes it is a symbolic audience, 'as in a writer's imagined picture of his reading audience' (Sarbin 1968:551). Such 'real or imagined' audiences 'comprise a frame of reference, or reference group, that circumscribes the behavior of actors in various statuses' (Turner 1982: 346-347).

Role theory therefore assumes that much of the social world is structured in terms of status and expectation. An important question that flows from this is the determination of the types of expectations attendant upon a given status or network of positions (Turner 1982:347).

As far as the *individual* occupying a position or playing a role is concerned – role theory understands such a person as having two interrelated attributes: (a) self-related characteristics, and (b) role-playing skills and capacities (Turner 1982:347-348). *Self-related concerns* have to do with the way in which self-conceptions influence the interpretation of certain expectations that guide conduct in a particular status (Turner 1982:348). *Role-playing skills* refer to the capacities to perceive different types (sets) of expectations, and to follow a selected set. However, according to this conceptualization the individual can contribute very little in the form of creative, unique responses with which to change and alter social structures. The creative consequences of mind and self for the construction of society are underemphasized (Turner 1982:349).

The nexus (= point of articulation, cf 3.5.3 above) between society and the individual is expressed in the concept of role, and 'involves individuals who are incumbent in statuses employing self and role-playing capacities to adjust to various types of expectations' (Turner 1982:349). The concept of role includes three different components – prescribed roles, subjective roles, and enacted roles. Depending on which component is emphasized, a different line of thinking is embarked upon.

The component of *prescribed roles* indicates a conceptual emphasis upon the expectations of individuals in statuses. Accordingly, the social world is conceived as composed of relatively clearly defined expectations, which the individual must live up to by means of his/her self and role-playing skills. Analytical emphasis is therefore accorded to the degree of conformity to the demands of a particular status (cf Turner 1982:349-350) – in other words, performance is rated against expectations.

The component of *subjective roles* indicates a conceptual emphasis upon the way in which the individual perceives and interprets certain expectations. Accordingly, the social world is seen as structured in terms of the individual's subjective appraisal of the interaction situation. As a consequence analytical emphasis is accorded to the interpersonal style of individuals in their assessment of, and adjustment to, expectations (cf Turner 1982:350).

The component of *enacted roles* indicates conceptual emphasis upon overt behaviour. Accordingly, the social world is understood as a network of interrelated behaviours. When overt role enactment is emphasized, less analytical attention is accorded to either expectations or interpretations of them (Turner 1982:350).

Taken separately, these three conceptual notions are inadequate to explain the structure of the social world. Any overt human behaviour inevitably involves a subjective assessment of various types of expectation. In fact, there is a complex causal relationship among these components (Turner 1982:350). Turner (1982:350-353) discusses what he calls the 'causal imagery of role theory' in terms of the general causal sequence among analytical units, specific causal chains among analytical units, and specific causal linkages within analytical units. He comes to the conclusion that little theoretical attention has been paid to the following connections:

> *(a)* broader social and cultural structure and specific patterns of interaction, *(b)* enacted role behaviors and their effect on role-playing capacities, *(c)* these role-playing capacities and self, and *(d)* enacted roles and the self-assessments that occur *independently* of role-taking with specific others or groups. Rather, concern has been focused on the relations between self and expectations as they affect, and are affected by, enacted roles.
>
> (Turner 1982:353)

Another deficiency of theoretical role concepts is the fact that, in the discussion up to now, they provide only a means for *categorizing* and *classifying* expectations, self, role-playing capacities, role-enactment, and relationships among these analytical units. 'The use of concepts is confined primarily to classification of different phenomena, whether attention is drawn to the forms of status networks, types and sources of expectations, relations of self to expectations, or the enactment of roles' (Turner 1982:354). Two tasks that need attention from role theorists are pointed out by Turner (1982:354):

- They must fill in the gaps in their causal imagery, developing propositions that specify the linkages between concepts denoting more inclusive social and cultural variables, on the one hand, and concepts pointing to specific interaction variables, on the other.
- The current propositions that do exist in role-theoretic literature should be reformulated so that conditional statements specifying when certain processes are likely to occur, will be more explicit.

Methodologically speaking, the study of expectations is a difficult enterprise. The problem with inferring from observed behaviour the expectations that guided that behaviour, is that expectations can only be known as a *consequence* of the behaviour they are supposed to circumscribe. This means that expectations cannot be measured independently of behaviour, and therefore role behaviour cannot be *predicted* from the expectations (Turner 1982:356). This kind of problem needs to be resolved because, if not, the implications would be that theory could be built with concepts that are not measurable, 'even in principle' (Turner 1982:357).

Substantively, role theory can be criticised for the overly structured vision of human behaviour that it connotes. Turner (1982:358) describes the problem as follows:

> Role theory assumes the social world to be structured in terms of status networks, and corresponding clusterings of expectations, within which individuals with selves and various capacities enact roles...The main analytical thrust is on how individuals adjust and adapt to the demands of the 'script,' other 'actors,' and the 'audiences' of the 'play'...The connotative impact of the concepts loads analysis in the direction of assuming too much structure and order in the social world.

The *causal imagery* (cf discussion above) of role theory has contributed to this problem. The inability to measure the causal nexus has resulted in role theory concentrating on the consequences of role-enactment for self-related variables, but at the same time underemphasizing the consequences for social-structural variables – that is, for changes in the organization of status networks, norms, reference groups, the responses of others, and other features of social structure (Turner 1982:359). Finally, there is also a *logical* problem in role-theoretic analysis, comprising the following:

> The vagueness of just how and under what conditions
> social structure affects self and role enactment leaves
> much of role analysis with the empty assertion that so-
> ciety shapes individual conduct.
>
> (Turner 1982:359)

Role theory is seen to have enormous potential for the study of organizations, groups, and individual conduct. However, the applicability of its concepts to more macrosocial structures and processes still needs to be demonstrated. It will have to develop theoretical propositions that incorporate its body of classificatory concepts, considering both self-related and social-structural variables (cf Turner 1982:360).

3.5.3.3 Evaluating interactionism

> ...interactionism focuses almost exclusively upon the re-
> lationship between the individual and society. How do
> individual actions shape the profile of society? And,
> conversely, how does society constrain and circumscribe
> the individual?
>
> (Turner 1982:361)

These questions are approached from different viewpoints – some emphasize the process of interaction, others the structure of personality and situation, and still others the expectations of social structures as these interact with self- and role-playing skills to produce role-enactments. However, from this diversity there emerge a number of key *substantive*, *methodological*, and *theory-building* issues. According to Turner (1982:361) the future of interactionist theory hinges upon resolution of these issues.

Substantive issues are those connected to the way in which a theoretical perspective portrays social organization. All interactionist theories employ the concepts of person, interaction, other, self, role, situation, and society. They are clearly differentiated, however, in terms of their differences in emphasis. Turner (1982:362-363) identifies three related substantive issues, the resolution of which may determine the future of interactionism. First, what is the range of phenomena to which interactionist theory applies? Is it only suitable for examining the micro-social world of individuals, or can its concepts also be applied to macro issues? Second, can the propositions and concepts of interactionism give a satisfactory account of processes related to the creation and maintenance of *relations*, and of concepts relating to the maintenance of patterns of *social organization*? Third, and very importantly – to

what extent are events in the world determined by causes? Is human action of a fully determinate nature, or is some (or all) of it simply unique and unpredictable?

The *methodological* problem revolves around the question of *how* the concepts and theories of the interactionist perspective are to be *measured*. In order to remain in contention as a *theory*, interactionism has to generate testable theoretical propositions (Turner 1982:363-364).

As far as *theory-building* matters are concerned, there are two basic standpoints. One states that sociological theorizing can, at most, consist of a body of sensitizing concepts which may allow for a partial understanding of social events. The other contrasting view sees interactionist theory as conforming to all other theory, consisting of clearly defined concepts grouped into abstract propositions that can explain why events occur. If it must be testable, interactionism cannot remain a general orientation – it will have to formulate verifiable abstract propositions. Turner (1982:364) emphasizes that such an effort is built on the assumption that the processes of the world are determinative and therefore measurable and predictable.

One strategy for accomplishing what has been set out above is the 'role theory' proposed by Ralph H Turner. Having consistently criticised role theory on several scores (cf Turner 1982:365), Ralph Turner sets out to build a theory by developing abstract propositions about key social processes. He starts off by formulating a series of statements that indicate what *tends to occur in the normal operation of systems of interaction* (Turner 1982:371). The purpose of highlighting such *main tendency propositions* is to link *concepts* to *empirical regularities* – the first step in developing a more integrated interactionist theory. These propositions are grouped with respect to the following issues (cf Ralph Turner 1968:552-556, and Turner 1982:371-376 for detailed discussions):

- The *emergence and character of roles*, based on observation of the social world. These observations reflect tendencies for role differentiation and accretion, for meaningfulness, for role cues, for behavioural correspondence, and for evaluation of rank and social desirability (cf Ralph Turner 1968:553; Turner 1982:371-372).
- *Roles as interactive framework*, based on the assumption that interaction cannot proceed without the identification and assignment of roles. Roles provide a means for interaction to occur by the tendency to interact *in terms of* roles, the tendency towards role complementariness, and for stabilized roles to be assigned the character of legitimate expectations (cf Ralph Turner 1968:553-554; Turner 1982:372-373).
- *Role and actor*, concerning the relationship between actors and the roles that provide the framework for interaction. Here observations confirm ten-

dencies for stabilized role structures to persist, regardless of a change in actors, tendencies for consistence in role allocation, role-taking as an adaptation of the ego's role to the alter's role, for assessing role adequacy in terms of a comparison between role behaviour and role conception, and for role reciprocity (cf Ralph Turner 1968:554-555; Turner 1982:373).

■ *Role in organizational settings*, noting the tendencies for organizational goals to become important criteria for role differentiation, evaluation, complementariness, legitimacy or expectation, consensus, allocation, and judgments of adequacy, for legitimate role definers, for linking statuses to roles, for role sets, and for formalization (cf Ralph Turner 1968:555; Turner 1982:373-374).

■ *Role in societal setting*, displaying tendencies for similar roles in different contexts to become merged, resulting in an economy of roles. Also, the differentiation of roles in a social context tends to link roles to social values. Finally, there is a tendency for individuals in society to be assigned or to assume roles that are consistent with each other (cf Ralph Turner 1968:555-556; Turner 1982:374-375).

■ *Role and person*, indicating a category where the emphasis is on the manner in which an individual manages the several roles he/she assumes or is allocated. Observations reveal tendencies to resolve role strain arising out of role contradiction, role conflict, and role inadequacy; the tendency to be socialized into a common culture by adopting a repertoire of role relationships to serve as a framework for own behaviour, and as a perspective for the behaviour of others; the tendency to self-conception by favouring certain roles as being more in concert with the self than others; at the same time self-conception stresses those roles which facilitate effective adaptation to relevant others, and reflects a tendency for the adaptiveness of self-conception; finally, the tendency for assigning role distance in the event that roles must be played that contradict the self-conception, demonstrating lack of personal involvement (cf Ralph Turner 1968:556; Turner 1982:375-376).

The *second step* in this strategy (cf p 141 above for the first step) concerns generating and organizing empirical propositions. The purpose of this is to determine the *independent variables* on which the above *dependent variables* are based (cf Turner 1982:376-381).

Having determined what the underlying empirical conditions are that shape the degree or rate of variation in tendency propositions, the *third step* in the process is to develop *explanatory propositions*. Ralph Turner identifies two explanatory proposi-

tions – one about *functionality*, and the other about *tenability* (cf Turner 1982:381-384 for a detailed discussion).

The *functionality proposition* can be defined as *the process using roles to achieve ends or goals in an effective and efficient manner*. In other words, roles are regarded as functional in obtaining certain goals.

The *tenability proposition* is intended to indicate that tenability exists when *the conditions surrounding performance of that role make it possible to play it with some personal reward*. In other words, what is the reward to the individual for playing a particular role?

Ralph Turner's strategy indicates the direction that interactionism will have to take, emphasizing both the theoretical and operational aspects of the perspective. In the words of Jonathan H Turner (1982:385):

> ...Turner's role theory represents an effort to incorpo-
> rate all varieties of symbolic interactionism and role
> theory into a conceptual framework and strategy that
> stresses theory building and theory-testing.

3.5.4 Social science theory: Conclusion

In this section we have looked at different theoretical perspectives within the social sciences – functionalism (section 3.5.1 above), conflict theory (section 3.5.2 above), and interactionist theorizing (section 3.5.3) comprising symbolic interactio-nism (section 3.5.3.1) and role theory (section 3.5.3.2).

These, of course, are not the only theoretical perspectives in the social sciences. Turner (1982:197-301) gives much prominence to *exchange theorizing*, which comprises different exchange perspectives such as the *exchange behaviourism* as advocated by George C Homans (cf Turner 1982:212-241); *exchange structuralism* as advocated by Peter M Blau (cf Turner 1982:242-273); and R M Emerson's alternative to exchange theorizing (cf Turner 1982:274-301).

Exchange theory does not generally seem to be used in social-scientific studies of the Bible, although the *patron-client analogy* – posited by Malina (1988a:2; cf also Elliott 1987a) as the hermeneutical key used in synoptic theology to understand and present God – strongly suggests a theoretical base into which propositions of exchange theory have been assimilated.

Modern exchange theory is a merger of two traditions – the behaviourist tradition in psychology (cf Turner 1982:208-211), and the utilitarian heritage in economic theory (cf Turner 1982:197-200). The basic assumption of exchange theory is that people act in a certain way towards one another in order to receive a reward. Rewards do not have to be tangible – *emotional* rewards form the basis of many social

exchange relationships (Popenoe 1980:66). Finding their interaction rewarding, people form and maintain stable patterns of interaction, or institutions (Popenoe 1980:66). The notion of *reward* is borrowed from behaviourists, while from the utilitarian heritage the concept of *utility* has been dropped, but that of *cost* has been retained to indicate that an organism has to forego alternative rewards in seeking to obtain a particular reward (Turner 1982:209).

Exchange theory has been strongly criticised for neglecting the part that meanings and values play in social life, but the importance of exchange relationships in societies cannot be denied (Popenoe 1980:67; see also Steyn & Van Rensburg 1985:79-80).

There are also *alternative forms of theorizing* (Turner 1982:387) to each of the major theories discussed above.

Alternatives to functional and structural theorizing are found in the *structuralism* of Claude Lévi-Strauss, the *systems theory* of J G Miller, and the *macro-structuralism* of P M Blau (cf Turner 1982:444-471).

Alternatives to conflict theorizing are found in *critical theory* (cf Papineau 1978: 179-184), *dialectical theory*, and R Collins' *synthetic conflict theory* (cf Turner 1982: 416-443).

Alternatives to interactionist theorizing are found in *phenomenology*[40] (cf Brown 1979:141-163; Turner 1982:390-399) and *ethnomethodology* (cf Papineau 1978:96-107; Brown 1979:163-170; Popenoe 1980:62-64; Turner 1982:399-415).

These alternatives have been listed for the sake of completeness. However, we shall forfeit a discussion of their characteristics because – except for phenomenology as incorporated in the sociology of knowledge – they do not at this stage figure prominently in social-scientific studies of the Bible.

The social-scientific theoretical perspective (cf Turner 1982:13-14; 14, note 13 & 14, and Elliott 1986:7-8 on the difference between 'theoretical perspectives' and 'models') which, in my estimate, naturally presents itself as the design by which to conduct the investigation, is that of 'role theory'. Being focused on the micro-social world – patterned in terms of status – and on interaction between individuals conducted in terms of role-playing and (symbolic) communication, it would blend easily with narrative criticism, itself making use of compatible equivalent categories such as *characterization* and *point of view*.

In his investigation of status and roles in the letters of Paul, Aloys Funk (1981: 12) indicates the bias of his own work: 'Die Begriffe Status und Rollen werden vorwiegend nach der strukturalistischen und funktionalistischen Theorie konzipiert.' The structural-functionalist approach in the social sciences understands society as a system composed of interdependent parts that all function to keep it in equilibrium

(cf 3.5.1 above). On the *interpersonal level* it is understood that individual roles are complementary and integrate in a harmonious way as a result of a shared value-orientation, and on the *institutional level* the harmonious interdependency and functional value of institutions are emphasized (Steyn 1984:5-6). The systems approach, which is a feature of especially the structural-functionalist perspective, is reminiscent of mechanical and organismic system models (Buckley 1967:1; see also Steyn 1984:6), and is therefore seen as having its roots in the fields of physics, mechanics and mathematics (Buckley 1967:8) where the terms *inertia* and *equilibrium* denote the desired condition (Steyn 1984:6), or in biology where the term *homeostasis* is used to refer to the self-regulating capacity of the biological organism to retain its desired state (Buckley 1967:12).

I do not regard structural functionalism as the best approach with which to study the Gospels. In this respect I am in agreement with Malina (1988b:13): 'The conflict approach seems far more appropriate to the study of Mark and the rest of the New Testament...than the structural functionalist approach, if only because of the agonistic quality of Mediterranean social life.' The present study, investigating role and status in Luke's gospel by means of *role theory*, therefore presupposes a view of society from the perspective of *conflict theory* rather than structural-functionalism. This means that the results obtained through an analysis on the micro-social level of interaction situations portrayed in the narrative will be subject to interpretation on the macro-social level constituted by the *narrative world*. This latter interpretation will be conducted in accordance with the assumptions pertaining to conflict theory as set out in section 3.5.2 above. In terms of literary criticism it is also correct to subject the interpretation of a smaller literary unit to correction by the interpretation of the larger whole of which it forms part.

3.6 Endnotes: Chapter 3

1. I understand this remark of Malina to mean that 'emic' data refers to informa-
    tion given and/or perceived by a contemporary of the author, that is, as
    understood at a specific time and in a specific place in history.

2. According to *The Concise Oxford Dictionary* the term 'intension' has the
    following lexicographic definitions:

    -   Intensity, high degree, of a quality.
    -   Strenuous exertion of mind or will.
    -   (Logic) internal content of a concept.

    The last definition seems applicable to Sartori's usage.

3. Louw, however, would use the term *connotation* in reference to *usage*, and
    would indicate the possible relations between *designatum* and *denotatum* as the
    so-called *lexical meanings* of a word.

4. The following lexicographic definitions for the term 'extension' are reported in
    The Concise Oxford Dictionary:

    -   Extending or being extended; extent, range; (Logic) group of things
        denoted by a term; prolongation; enlargement.
    -   Additional part (of railway, plan, theory, etc.); (Number of a) subsi-
        diary telephone-distant from main instrument; extramural instruction
        by university or college (*extension course*).

5. 'Theology' is used here not in the generic sense of referring to a specific
    discipline with its own epistemology and field of study. Reference is rather to a
    phenomenon that is denoted by the genitive, 'theology *of* Matthew/Mark/
    Paul...', by which is meant the author's understanding of the relationship
    between God and man and the subsequent ethical expression of that
    relationship in concrete interpersonal behaviour, as expressed in his work.

6. For all lexicographic definitions *The Concise Oxford Dictionary* will be used.

7. It is maintained by Goldberg (1987:29) that Marx did not advocate such a
    unidirectional influence of the economic base on the superstructure. The

mechanistic views of social change formulated in Marxist terms are, according to Goldberg, really based on a misunderstanding of both Marx and Engels.

8. Schreiter (1985:48-74, quoted by Du Toit 1989:96), in a discussion of the 'semiotic study of culture', suggests that society should also be perceived and studied as a text. Such a text consists of the total society in all the forms it takes, within which cultural and other sign systems are hierarchically constructed.

This is an interesting reverse of the view held in this dissertation that a text should be viewed as a social system (albeit an imaginal one), and should be studied inter alia by social-scientific means.

9. Schnell works only with what he terms the *subsystems* of 'culture' and 'social system', leaving out of consideration for this work the components of the individual and the biological organism.

10. Van Aarde does not use the term 'social system'. He equates *culture* with *social context*: 'In this connection, therefore, the term "culture" can be replaced by the term "social context"' (Van Aarde 1988c:237). The term 'social context' presumably is used to render the expression 'behavior of the people' in the quote from Uspensky and Lotman (cf Van Aarde 1988c:236-237). Behaviour, however, in the context of the quotation refers to the actions of a collectivity of people. Such actions are called 'interaction', and this term properly belongs within a definition of the concept 'social system' (see the immediately following discussion in the text). In this connection, therefore, the term 'social context' can be replaced by the term 'social system'.

11. Nida & Reyburn (1981:6) maintain that the content of any message is derived principally from two different sets of relations:

    – The relation of verbal symbols to one another, which is known as the *formal meaning*, involving both syntactic and rhetorical levels.
    – The relation of verbal symbols to features of the nonlinguistic world, known as the *referential meaning*.

These two categories seem to correspond to Van Aarde's 'linguistic' and 'perceptual' dimensions.

12. From whose vantage point? The author or the reader? Presumably the reader.

13. From whose vantage point, again? The author or the reader? Presumably the reader.

14. From whose vantage point this time?

15. Smit (1988:451-452) also noticed and commented upon Van Aarde's 'somewhat ambivalent description of the method employed'.

16. The difference between Van Tilborg and Van Aarde regarding their under-standing of ideology is that Van Aarde concerns himself with ideology as pertaining to the *narrative world*, while Van Tilborg analyses the concept in the *contextual world.*

17. Fanaeian (1981:47) indicates that the French Neo-Marxist, Althusser, dis-tinguished three 'instances' in any social formation – the economic, the political, and the ideological.

18. See Gottwald 1979:647-649, 667-709 for broader views. Here he (1979:66) explicitly indicates that ideology as presently used has nothing to say about the 'truth' or 'falsity' of the religious ideas, and does not imply any particular view about the genetic or causal relationship between the religious ideas and the social relations.

19. *Symbolic processes* are explained as 'processes of signification that refer to realities other than those of everyday experience' (Berger & Luckmann 1967:95).

20. The discipline of textual criticism is perhaps an exception to the extent that there cannot be anything like the 'sociological imagination' (cf Elliott 1981:5) at work in seeking the original text. The text is based only on existing evidence, and no construction is allowed.

21. Vorster (1988b:32) states: '..."post-critical" describes the period after the domination of historical criticism and the application of the so-called historico-critical methods. However, the term "post-critical" should not only be regarded as a name for a period of time. The term implies progress in New Testament research. It refers to new epistemologies and to new perceptions of what New

Testament science really is. "Critical" is not only the opposite of "uncritical" in the word "post-critical"; it refers to a new view of science.'

22. Jonathan H Turner (1982:14) lists the following four basic theoretical perspectives: (1) functional 'theory'; (2) conflict 'theory'; (3) exchange 'theory', and (4) interactionism and role 'theory'.

23. *Reconstruction* here indicates that whatever is to be constructed (i e the social world of the apostle Paul) must in some way be reality-based. Otherwise such constructions would be pure figments of the imagination.

24. Moore (1987:30, note 2) considers the term to have originated in New Testament scholarship and not in literary criticism.

25. Cohen (1968:34) contends that Spencer's fundamental concern was not to draw functional analogies between the processes of organisms and societies, but 'to show that sociology should aim to analyse the structure of societies in order to show how each part contributed to the functioning of the whole'.

26. Turner (1982:113) in fact maintains: 'As for the charge of conservatism, there is nothing inherently conservative in functionalism.'

27. Although there are several dialectical conflict models, the one by Dahrendorf is chosen for discussion because he 'is the most conspicuous conflict theorist in contemporary sociology' (Turner 1982:140, note 3).

28. Gottwald strongly disagrees with the notion of likening the functionalist view of society with a photograph portraying a static and unchanging society (a 'synchronic metabolism'). He states: 'Thus, functional models are never to be taken as photographs (they never attempt to include everything), but as highly selective dimensional models that trace significant relationships and are necessarily open to cross-questioning and reformulation' (Gottwald 1979:610-611).

29. For a discussion of the variables associated with each of Coser's propositions, see Turner 1982:158-172.

30. This is sometimes called the 'implicit functionalism' in conflict theory (Turner 1982:180; see also the discussion on Coser's 'conflict functionalism' in Turner 1982:154-174).

31. See Turner (1982:175, note 3) for a substantial list of conflict theories and theorists.

32. Becker (1964:657-658) distinguishes three main definitions of the concept *social interaction*:
    - The least sophisticated notion of the term is that of reciprocal influencing among persons or social forces.
    - The second kind of definition, used by sociologists and anthropologists, asserts that interaction, as applied to human beings, should be called *symbolic interaction*. This type of interaction is described as follows: 'Social interaction may be defined operationally as what happens when two or more persons come into contact (not necessa-rily physical contact) and a modification of behavior takes place' (Wilson & Kolb 1949: 681, quoted by Becker).
    - A third kind of definition regards the self as socially interacting with itself: 'A single individual in a room working at a problem, talking to himself or thinking out loud is...technically regarded as engaged in interaction, and insofar as the interaction is with the self – a social object – the actor is regarded as engaged in social interaction' (Bales 1953:31, quoted by Becker).

33. Swanson (1968:441) gives the following definition of instrumental activity: 'An activity is instrumental only if the probability of its appearance is affected by the relevance to the organism's needs of that activity's prior occurrence in similar situations. The term "learning" refers to changes in such probabilities.'

34. Parsons (1968:436) uses the terms 'acting agent' and 'object of orientation' to describe the 'I' and the 'me' respectively.

35. Strauss (1988:216-217) distinguishes seven variants *within* the symbolic interactionist perspective. He uses the term *symbolic interactionism* to refer to what Turner (1982:303) calls *interactionist theorising*.

36. Swanson (1968:441) explains: 'In his capacity as a minded organism, the individual is called an "actor". Groups or other collectivities can also be conceived of as actors, to the extent that they make decisions and relate to their own instrumental processes and to those of other collectivities.'

37. See Turner (1982:326-330) for a more complete discussion of the points of divergence.

38. Turner (1982:319) describes the reference of these categories:

    Psychosomatic roles refer to behaviour related to basic biological needs as conditioned by culture. Role enactment is typically unconscious.

    Psychodramatic roles refer to behaviour by individuals which is in accordance with the specific expectations of a *particular* social context (group, organisa-tion or society).

    Social roles refer to behaviour by individuals which conforms to the more *general* expectations of various conventional social categories (worker, Christian, mother, father, etc).

39. Steyn & Van Rensburg (1985:93) do not accept the identification that is made here between 'status' and 'position'. They wish to maintain a definite distinction between the two terms, in which *position* indicates the specific place of an individual within an interaction situation, and *status* refers to the esteem or prestige of a position compared to other positions. Status therefore implies a hierarchical order of positions (Steyn & Van Rensburg 1985:93, note **). Analytically, status is seen to consist of two elements – *prestige*, described as the appreciation and respect adhering to a position, and esteem, seen as appreciation and respect based on personal qualities and achievements (Steyn & Van Rensburg 1985:192-193).

40. The sociology of knowledge, as explicated by Berger & Luckmann (1967), is an example of the application of the theoretical principles of phenomenology derived from the philosophies of Edmund Husserl and Alfred Schutz (cf Brown 1979:141; Turner 1982:390-399).