Notes

Part 1


3. Fearing the confusion of literature and myth, John J. White, in Mythology in the Modern Novel (Princeton, 1971), manages no more than a revised allusionism; see particularly chap. 1.


10. The term function has been frequently contrasted with the term form; the former, therefore, implies movement, dynamics, and the latter implies stasis, shape, a closed system. In fact, I am not sure that the two can be so easily separated, for "form" carries with it the idea of "informing" or the activity of creating form; its function is to come into being and hold its being or shape against the ever present threat of formlessness.


14. I use the term accommodation here as one of a pair (including assimilation) defined by Jean Piaget; see his Structuralism, trans. C. Maschler (New York, 1968), p. 63. This idea of surplus of experientiality seems to be what the recent structuralist movement most ardently wants to deny. There is, therefore, an antirealism and antixistentialism in structuralists as widely different from one another as Derrida, Foucault, and Barthes. I am willing to accept the idea, taken from Lévi-Strauss, that "the [external, experiential] universe is never charged with sufficient meanings and [that] the mind always has more [potential] meanings available than there are objects to which to relate them." See Lévi-Strauss, Structural Anthropology, trans. C. Jacobson and B. G. Schoepf (Garden City, 1967), p. 178. Yet the idea of a surplus of signifier (potential meaningfulness) implies, to use an old metaphor, a voracious vacuum that strives to be filled. I would, then, get the "experientially real" back into the system through a naive view of "meaning" (to be discussed at length below). The performative act of articulation is an assertion of "being-there," an assertion of one's "self" into an existential dimension. Meaning arises only in this activity (even if it does not speak aloud or write it down), and we find that we never fully exhaust either the infinite potential of the system nor the (at least seemingly) infinite supply of particularized, "experience" (in the Kantian sense), the supply of "events" to which the system can be applied.


17. In The Scope of Anthropology Lévi-Strauss seems to express regret for the traditional split in hermeneutic theory between the positivistic, descriptivistic, logical methodology and an intuitionist, mystical, even irrationalist approach. Interpretation in its fullest sense involves both descriptive "analysis" and intuitive "understanding." For the anthropologist, he says, "logical certainty is not enough," and he argues for the role of "empathy," the "trying" of "intimate experiences of another upon oneself," which is "less a proof, perhaps, than a guarantee." (Lévi-Strauss, The Scope of Anthropology, trans. S. O. and R. A. Paul [London, 1967], p. 16; see also Richard E. Palmer, Hermeneutics [Evanston, 1969] on the various hermeneutical methodologies.)


21. Ibid., p. 28.


25. The best expression of this paradox, I believe, is in the remarkable insistence of contemporary structuralists (Lévi-Strauss, Foucault, Chomsky) that "system" or "structure" does not imply sameness or conformity. Following the philosophy of Gilles Deleuze, structure is seen to arise through "difference"—on the basis of making systematic distinctions. It is an idea of enormous importance to social and political ideology, for it tends to counter the argument that immersion into the collective whole necessitates a surrender of personal identity (as in some forms of totalitarian Marxism). The issue of "individual" versus "system" is a very complicated one. In a fascinating article, "Of Structuralism and Literature," in Velocities of Change, ed. R. Macksey (Baltimore, 1974), Eugenio Donato discusses the theories of Lévi-Strauss and Jacques Lacan, defining how each presents a different view of the individual's assertion of identity. For Lévi-Strauss (particularly in his Elementary Structures of Kinship) Donato says the "ego is spoken by system but ego does not speak the system" (p. 162). In the societies studied by Lévi-Strauss there is a peculiar division between the individual and his function (identity conferring) in the social system (kinship), and Lévi-Strauss is most interested in describing the latter, even to the point that identity seems determined by the individual's function in a closed system of genealogical relationships. My interest in the myth singer as individual is quite different and somewhat more simplistic. His function is "special" and identity conferring. He is, in one sense, a protector of the system; he preserves the elaborate differential character of its systematicity by meeting the eventualities of the experiential world with the infinite terms of the myth's explanatory power, by localizing the system. In this, and in all cases of individual functioning in the system, it is perhaps justifiable to claim that the ego preserves some of its own individuality by virtue of its function. Systematicity does not absorb the individual but projects an identity for him. The essence of such a system is not homogeneity, but difference. This idea leads Lévi-Strauss to speculate that "men can coexist on condition that they recognize each other as being all equally, though differentially, human" (Tristes Tropiques, p. 149). A society unable to do so will, I think, either subordinate the individual to sameness or reduce the vast majority of individuals to absolute subservience to the ruling few.

26. See Elli König Maranda, "Five Interpretations of a Melanesian Myth," Journal of American Folklore 86: 3-13; see also the classic text by Albert B. Lord, The Singer of Tales (New York, 1973), particularly p. 4. That there is a significant element of what we traditionally call "creative" genius in such performances seems undeniable, but we had best be careful about such honorific titles when applied to myth singers, tellers of epic poems, or even writers of literary texts. I am, I believe, moving toward the position of Roland Barthes when he argues that "there exists, of course, an art of the storyteller: it is the ability to generate narratives (messages) based on the structure (the code); this art corresponds to the notion of performance as defined by Chomsky, and it is far remote from the notion of authorial 'genius' Romantically conceived as a
personal, hardly explicable, secret” ("An Introduction to the Structural Analysis of Narrative," New Literary History 6 (1975): 238, fn. 2). The degree of remoteness or nearness of my theory to romantic "genius" is a trivial question, but my sense of the performative act of storytelling carries with it the idea of asserting oneself existentially into the world, into being there. It is not mere "repetition" but repetition-toward, repetition that informs through the nonreversible act of individual parole.

27. By "occasion" I mean not simply the appointed ritual event but the broad historical and geographical milieu of the performance. In terms of language it is similar to what R. Jakobson calls "context" ("Closing Statement: Linguistics and Poetics," in Style in Language, ed. T. Sebeok [Cambridge, Mass., 1960], pp. 350-77), the referential dimension of language that brings into the structure of the speech act the full range of the speaker's empirical being. The occasion encompasses the threat of surplus experience, the "too much" reality, that seems to defy the totalizing drive of structure.

In effect I am rejecting the antieffectualism of Jacques Derrida ("Structure, Sign, and Play") or perhaps reintroducing the experiential into the systematics that Derrida borrows from Lévi-Strauss.


29. I do not wish to minimize the distinction between oral and written modes of articulation; I will take up this issue in more detail in part 2.

30. This makes the writer an imitation of what Lévi-Strauss calls a bricoleur, the craftsman-artist who composes his work out of the bits and pieces of materials that are found "at hand" (Claude Lévi-Strauss, The Savage Mind [Chicago, 1966], pp. 16-22).


32. The chronology of Faulkner's career, therefore, results in an expansive sense of the province of Yoknapatawpha County. Because Faulkner must create the occasion for each performance-work, he both repeats and adds to the details of the background. In the process he also creates a sense of change, diachrony, or history; it is not, however, a simple linear, homogeneous history, but cumulative, multicentered, and experiential. See my "History, Presence, and the Limits of Genre Criticism," MMLA Bulletin (Fall 1973), pp. 38-54.

33. This theme is taken up in detail in David L. Minter, The Interpreted Design as a Structural Principle in American Prose (New Haven, 1969); see particularly chap. 9.

34. See Susanne K. Langer, Feeling and Form (New York, 1953).


39. See Walter Brylowski, Faulkner's Olympian Laugh (Detroit, 1968), for an excellent treatment of the traditional mythical approaches in Faulkner criticism.

40. An earlier story, “A Justice,” details how Sam got his name and, not incidentally, gives us fuller information on Sam's mixed racial heritage. Sam was originally called “Had-two-fathers,” an interesting bit of “doubling” that Ike seems unaware of in Go Down, Moses. In the earlier story it is not Ike who listens to Sam's tales but Quentin Compson; by changing the characters and shortening Sam's name Faulkner rather cleverly conceals information that would surely strike Ike as significantly parallel to the racial confusion in his own family. But the contrast between the two family histories is very significant for the reader in separating the worlds in which the two characters dwell. Sam's doubled patronym is a form of “dispersion,” a kind of denial of the importance of direct male-line descent. The world of Sam's ancestors was remarkably free in the use of proper names; the central figure of “A Justice,” Ikkemotubbe, adopts and casts off names at will. Ikkemotubbe “solves” a dispute over Sam's parentage by calling him “Had-two-fathers.” On the other hand, Ike's discovery of a genealogical doubling through incest in the McCaslin family intensifies and emphasizes the importance of direct male-line descent.


42. We might claim here a literary implementation of the now famous Sapir-Whorf hypothesis: that Sam's language represents a different reality from that of Ike. “The worlds in which different societies live are distinct worlds, not merely the same world with different labels attached” (Edward Sapir, Language [New York, 1921], p. 209). This hypothesis has been called into some doubt by Jane and William Bright, “Semantic Structures in Northwestern California and the Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis,” American Anthropologist 67 (October 1965): 249-58, but as yet it provides insight into the cultural dimension of language usage. It is a point I will refer to in future discussions of the power of language to constitute the world in which we dwell.

43. In “A Justice” Sam's father is not Ikkemotubbe, and Sam has no hereditary claim to being chief. But the burden of this early story is in itself a denial of such hereditary rights. Ikkemotubbe usurps the position of chief through “magic” and intimidation.

44. Sam is a Chickasaw, a tribe that had a “deer” clan. See Alexander C. Kern, “Myth and Symbol in the Criticism of Faulkner's 'The Bear,'” in Myth and Symbol: Critical Approaches and Evaluations, ed. B. Slote (Lincoln, 1963), pp. 152-61.


47. Ibid., p. 177.
48. Ibid., p. 51.
49. Ibid., p. 35.

52. Again we should note here that in "A Justice" the role of Ike is filled by another of Faulkner's storyteller/story-listener characters, Quentin Compson. The change is interesting as a reflection of Faulkner's own stance toward his own stories. He is the teller and reteller whose versions are not always the same. But through the fact of these variations we discover the essential patterns of cultural or mythical understanding that describe the issues, the limits of Faulkner's world. The relationship between Ike and Quentin has been developed at some length by Faulkner scholars (Estella Schoenberg, *Old Tales and Talking: Quentin Compson in William Faulkner's "Absalom, Absalom!"* and Related Works [Jackson, 1977], pp. 17-20), and such a discussion is beyond the scope of this essay. Nevertheless, several general points should be noted here. The reading of Faulkner's novels in the "mode" of folktales (not as folktales) leads to a violation of the belief that each novel stands as an independent unit. The most problematic issue in Faulkner studies concerns the "blending" of *Absalom, Absalom!* and *The Sound and the Fury*, but the appearance of other blends (like that of Quentin and Ike) is equally important in revealing the deep patterns that weave the Faulknerian world. Just as folklore, therefore, can be said to exist "only potentially" (Pratt, pp. 9-10), so too the Faulknerian world must be seen as the horizon for every particular articulation. If Sam's stories reveal his world, the order and patterns of his way of being in the world, so too are Faulkner's stories the opening to his way of being. Crucially, the world or horizon emerges only through the actual telling without which the world remains habitual, unconscious, and mute. Storytelling is intimately involved in belonging to one's world.

54. Ibid., p. 11.
55. See Carl Rowan, *South of Freedom* (New York, 1952) on the "white goddess complex," and Lillian Smith, *Killers of the Dream* (Garden City, 1963) on the confusion of women and slaves in the South's caste system. Also Elizabeth M. Kerr, *Yoknapatawpha: Faulkner's 'Little Postage Stamp of Native Soil'" (New York, 1969), discusses at length the very social and kinship codes that I am at pains to develop here; see particularly p. 110, where she claims that the rape of a Negro woman was "regarded as a physical impossibility."


58. I do not wish to engage here in the ongoing debate about how widespread was the sexual abuse of female slaves in the antebellum South. Statistical factuality is not at issue. I wish only to describe a myth that was at least unconsciously functional and was a basis for a code of behavior even if most white slave owners had the decency not to exercise what they would, perhaps, never have questioned as a cultural privilege.


60. Herbert Marcuse, One-Dimensional Man (Boston, 1964).

61. See Paul Davidson, "A Keynesian View of Friedman's Theoretical Framework for Monetary Analysis," in Milton Friedman's Monetary Framework, ed. R. J. Gordon (Chicago, 1974), pp. 90-110 for an outline of a monetary model of exchange that shows remarkable similarities with the patterns I have been developing.


63. For example, this means that no black woman could substitute for a white woman in the marriage convention, a substitution that Zack Edmonds risks with Lucas's wife Mollie. Lucas, therefore, has this negative law on his side in his confrontation with Zack.


67. Lévi-Strauss, Tristes tropiques, particularly his discussion of the Caduveo culture, pp. 151-97.

68. Derrida, Of Grammatology.


70. I offer here a somewhat different view of "failure" as a theme in Faulkner's novels than that developed by Walter J. Slatoff, Quest for Failure: A Study of William Faulkner (Ithaca, 1960).

71. Cassirer, The Philosophy of Symbolic Forms II, p. 200, an idea he borrows from Herman K. Mosten.


73. The idea is taken from V. Sklovskij; see Ewa Thompson, Russian Formalism and Anglo-American New Criticism (The Hague, 1971), pp. 57 ff., for an excellent discussion of this point. The terms "deconstruction," "demystification," and "defamiliarization" are much in vogue of late, a fact that causes much confusion. My use of them is partly derivative and partly my own invention; the possible confusion I hope will be clarified by my text. See also R. H. Stacy, Defamiliarization in Language and Literature (Syracuse, 1977).

75. Piaget's term, see fn. 14 above.

76. See Thompson on this point, fn. 73 above.

77. See fn. 14 above.


82. Lévi-Strauss, *The Scope of Anthropology*.


85. Of the endless arguments against closed textuality that have come to the fore in recent years I am still most persuaded by the sociological approach of Lucien Goldmann in *The Hidden God*, trans. P. Thody (New York, 1964), particularly pp. 7-21. See also Roland Barthes's wonderful *S/Z*, trans. R. Miller (New York, 1974).


89. Benveniste, *Problèmes*, p. 25: "It is in effect in and through langue that individual and society are mutually determined" (my translation).


91. Ibid., p. 188 (italics original).

92. Ibid., p. 270.


99. For an excellent discussion of literary periods see Guíllén, fn. 95 above.

100. Benveniste, p. 25.

101. I express here my substantial disagreement with the "neo-Aristotelian" school (see Critics and Criticism [Chicago, 1952]) and with similar views put forth by Frank Kermode in *The Sense of an Ending* (New York, 1967), see particularly pp. 133-39.


103. See Lévi-Strauss, *The Savage Mind*, particularly chap. 9, "History and Dialectic."


116. See Malcolm Cowley, *The Faulkner-Cowley File* (New York, 1966), p. 113. Faulkner said that "Rider was one of the McCaslin Negroes," but that fact is missing from the text itself and is relatively insignificant even if we know it while reading the story.

118. Benveniste, pp. 49-55.

119. Ibid., p. 55.

120. My emphasis on the violent disruption of metaphor as a twofold movement of presencing and absencing has parallels in the theory of Gerard Genette, particularly in what he defines as the rhetorical functioning of the "figure." See Figures (Paris, 1966) and the discussion of Genette in Scholes, pp. 157-67.


129. Chomsky, Language and Mind, see fn. 12 above.


133. Barth, "The Literature of Exhaustion."


135. See Deleuze and Guattari, Anti-Oedipus.


Ricoeur, The Symbolism of Evil, p. 82.

Ibid., pp. 161-62.


See Fredric Jameson, Marxism and Form: Twentieth-Century Dialectical Theories of Literature (Princeton, 1971), particularly chap. 4 on Sartre.

The term vision is a difficult one. I use it here close to the sense defined by Murray Krieger, "Mediation, Language and Vision in the Reading of Literature," in Interpretation: Theory and Practice, ed. C. S. Singleton (Baltimore, 1969). Krieger says that he seeks to describe "the vision that comes to be created in the work as the work." But I am not sure that I can accept the strictures of a full-blown contextualism that limits us to the structure of the work as work. Vision involves, as I see it, an element of self-projection, self-creation, a coming to stand in the world. The text becomes, then, a complex embodiment of the "I" of the author as it emerges into being at a particular place and time, swirling out of the rich experiential plenitude of the author's reality and the complex myths and/or cognitive systems that in-form the culture to which he belongs.

PART 2

7. Ibid., p. 194.
8. Ibid., p. 197.
9. Ibid.


23. Ibid., p. 197.


27. Ludwig Wittgenstein, Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus (London). Propositions are cited by number in the text.


29. Martin Heidegger, An Introduction to Metaphysics, trans. R. Manheim (New York, 1961), also defines the term "logos" to mean a "gathering" or "arranging."

30. Black, p. 11.

31. See Uitti, pp. 77-87, for a discussion of the Cartesian rationalist Condillac who seems to find parallels in Wittgenstein's later theory.


34. Kuhns, p. 227.

35. Ibid., p. 225.

36. Ibid., p. 219.


39. Ibid., p. 259.


41. Kenny, p. 80.


43. Ibid., p. 169.

44. Kenny, p. 78.


46. Ibid., p. 41.


52. Cassirer, Language and Myth, p. 57.


55. Kenny, p. 75: "The Tractatus has very little to say about change."

56. Derrida, "Structure, Sign, and Play."

57. Derrida, Of Grammatology, p. 238.

58. Ibid., p. 167.


60. Ibid., p. 81.


63. Jonathan Culler, among others, has argued that the methods of linguistics do not "provide a method for the interpretation of literary works" (Structuralist Poetics: Structuralism, Linguistics, and the Study of Literature [Ithaca, 1975], p. 109). This is, of course, true, but my interest here is in the ideology that the methodology reveals, and thus in his stance toward language Chomsky tells us much about language's many functions, even poetic ones.


65. John Lyons, Noam Chomsky (New York, 1970), p. 120.

68. Ibid., p. 54.
69. Ibid., p. 60.
72. Ibid., p. 35.
73. Kenny, see fn. 55 above.
74. Derrida, "Structure, Sign, and Play."
76. There is no single movement here; I will simply cite works referred to elsewhere in this text by Jacques Lacan, Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, Jeffrey Mehlman, R. D. Laing, and even the works of Michel Foucault, Jacques Derrida, and Claude Lévi-Strauss should be included.
79. Ibid., p. 86.
84. Ibid., p. 261.
86. Ibid., p. 263.
92. Piaget, *Genetic Epistemology*, pp. 9, 47.
93. Ibid., pp. 10, 11.
94. Ibid., p. 15.
95. Ibid., p. 77.
97. Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, see fn. 77 above.
103. Ibid., p. 200.
104. Ibid., p. 264.
105. Ibid., p. 243.
111. Derrida, "Structure, Sign, and Play."
114. Ibid., p. 44.
115. Ibid.
116. Ibid., p. 58.
117. Ibid., pp. 254-56.

PART 3


11. Ibid., pp. 13, 52.


13. Ibid., p. 259.


15. Ibid., see particularly the opening pages of chap. 3.

16. Ibid., pp. 219-25.

17. Ibid., p. 118.


19. Ibid., see chap. 8.


27. Uitti, p. 150.


29. Sapir clearly defines a tradition that is fully developed in cultural historians like V. L. Parrington, V. W. Brooks, Edmund Wilson, and R. H. Pearce. For a discussion of this tradition see Wesley Morris, Toward a New Historicism (Princeton, 1972).

30. Quoted in Uitti, pp. 143-44.

31. R. H. Stacy, Defamiliarization in Language and Literature (Syracuse, 1977), presents a great variety of examples.


33. Ibid.

34. Ibid.


45. Ibid., pp. 157-58; see also W. Ullman, Style in the French Novel (Cambridge, 1957), pp. 2 ff.

46. Ibid., p. 167.


48. Spitzer, pp. 1-29.


52. Ibid.


56. Jakobson, "Concluding Statement," p. 370. It is clear that my reading of Jakobson differs somewhat from that of Murray Krieger, Theory of Criticism (Baltimore, 1976), particularly p. 198, fn. 23. I am arguing that metonymy is never wholly transformed into metaphor, nor should we see this as an "as if" transformation for the sake of marking the limits of the "literary." I am afraid that too often we come to believe in our "as if's" and forget that necessary "impurity" that is the basis for a rich meaningfulness.


60. Bruns, p. 96; see also Barthes, part 1, fn. 97.

61. Eco, p. 314; see also p. 317, fn. 1, for a list of those who have developed the concept through debate.


67. von Wright, pp. 4-5. Of this general approach, which goes under the title of "covering law theory," von Wright says "it consists . . . in the subsumption of individual cases under hypothetically assumed general laws of nature, including human nature"; it is "in a broad sense causal" and opposed to idealistic theory, which "wants to grasp the individual and unique features of their objects." See also Dray, Laws and Explanations in History (London, 1957).

PART 4

2. Ibid., p. 47.
3. Ibid., p. 107 ff.
9. Ibid.
14. Ibid.
16. A distinction must be made here between what I have called translation and Roland Barthes's concept of textual criticism as "transcription." Barthes's interpretive rewriting of the text is restricted to a process of deconstructing and reassembling the linguistic codes of the work. He deliberately brackets the crucial questions of historical meaningfulness that concern me most directly; the text for Barthes is opaque, revealing little about the author or his world. Yet the basic operations on the text of Barthes's transcription seem to me to be valid and profitable.
23. Ibid., pp. 86, 88, 89.
24. I find myself both in agreement with Krieger on the substantiality of metaphor and also concerned that this status not be allowed to rigidify to that of objectivity.


34. Ibid.


38. Robert Scholes, *Structuralism in Literature* (New Haven, 1974), particularly pp. 194-97. Scholes’s account of this debate is clear and concise, but he tends to accept the idea that Sartre and Lévi-Strauss defend either/or positions. The consequence of this kind of polemics is to denature the extremes. In fact, Lévi-Strauss seems more open to allowing history an important place in his philosophy than Sartre is to giving anthropology some degree of legitimacy (that anthropology defined by the structuralists, anyway). But it is clear that each man responds to the challenge of the other and this makes possible a third position that acknowledges both. See also Mark Poster, *Existential Marxism in Postwar France: From Sartre to Althusser* (Princeton, 1975), particularly pp. 306-39.


42. For a somewhat contrary view see Monroe K. Spears, *Dionysus and the City* (New York, 1970).

45. Ibid., p. 71.
46. See Scholes, *Structuralism in Literature*, particularly the final chapter.
48. Ibid.