The productivity of the zero degree

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Summary

This paper deals primarily with the accounts of structuralism postulated by Deleuze in the article 'How Does One Recognise Structuralism?' (1975) and by Barthes in the article 'The Structuralist Activity' (1972). An analysis of these articles shows that structuralism functions as a critique, aiming to reveal the conditions of possibility of any given structure. The term 'structuralism' when used in this sense is not limited to theoretical activities, but applies also to the literary text, when it aims to reveal its own conditions of possibility. An analysis of Barthes' articles 'Literature and Discontinuity' and 'The Metaphor of the Eye' shows that the literary text spontaneously provides a structuralist-critique of systems of signification.

Opsomming

Hierdie artikel handel hoofsaaklik oor die verskillende weergawes van strukturalisme soos uiteengesit deur Deleuze in die artikel 'How Does One Recognise Structuralism?' en deur Barthes in die artikel 'The Strucuralist Activity'. 'n Ontleding van hierdie artikels bring aan die lig dat strukturalisme as kritiek (in die spesifieke sin van 'critique') funksioneer, met die doel om die voorwaardes vir die moontlikheid van enige gegewe struktuur bloot te lê. Die term 'strukturalisme' soos in hierdie konteks gebruik, word nie alleen tot die teoretiese beperk nie, maar ook in die literêre teks aangewend indien dit ten doel het om sy eie voorwaardes van moontlikheid bloot te lê. 'n Ontleding van Barthes se artikels 'Literature and Discontinuity' en 'The Metaphor of the Eye' toon dat die literêre teks spontaan 'n strukturalistiese kritiek van sisteme van betekenis voorsien.

Structuralism as a method of research, has been implemented in a large number of divergent studies; its popularity and indeed fashionability have often had the result of obscuring the aims and procedures of the structuralist project. In an article entitled 'How Does One Recognise Structuralism?' Deleuze postulates a model common to structuralist studies, in an attempt to clarify not only the defining features of structuralism, but also its contribution to twentieth century systems of thought. His goal is shared by Barthes, in the article 'The Structuralist Activity'. My aim in this paper is to analyse the Deleuzian and the Barthian understandings of structuralism, and the implications of the two structuralist configurations proposed for the individuation of a poetic structure.

Although Deleuze does not specifically set out to address the question of a structuralist poetics, this type of application is relevant to the general concern of his article. Through an investigation of the common features in the works of such divergent thinkers as Jakobson, Lévi-Strauss, Althusser, Lacan, Foucault, Barthes and the writers of the 'Tel Quel' group, Deleuze aims not to collapse these various fields of investigation into one another, but to 'gather up a system of echoes between totally autonomous authors, exploring totally different fields, as well as the theory of these echoes which they themselves propose' (1975:216).[1] He goes so far as to say that 'the most important fact is

the extreme variety of the fields which they explore. Each of them finds problems, methods, solutions which sustain relations of analogy, as participants of an atmosphere of the times, of a spirit of the times, which is however measured by the singular discoveries and creations in each of these fields. Words ending in -ism are in this sense, perfectly founded' (1975:194). Structuralist poetics, although in a process of ongoing development, is an important part of this system of reciprocal exchanges of knowledge, as can be witnessed by its contributions to the study of natural languages, as well as other fields. My aim in this paper is to give a synopsis firstly of the criteria set forth by Deleuze for the individuation of a structure, and secondly of the structuralist activity as it is understood by Barthes. It will be seen that the two configurations not only have many points of convergence, but supplement each other in the specification of poetic structure.

The overriding concern of the structuralist project as it is defined in the Deleuzian perspective is to reveal underlying conditions of possibility for any system of intelligibility. In this sense, structuralism will always function as a critique.[2]

In terms of the 'model' postulated by Deleuze, structuralism is defined by:

- The discovery of a third order, the symbolic, which exists beyond the first and second orders of the real and of the imaginary and is irreducible to them.[3]
- The postulation of an element which acts as a third term to an unreal and unimaginary system and which underlies the real and the imaginary.[4]
- The definition of the underlying structure as a coexistence of purely formal symbolic elements, which have no intrinsic or extrinsic meaning but only a meaning of position. The order dependence of the symbolic elements and the system of positions in which they are located is primary to any real objects or beings or imaginary attitudes or roles which occupy them only subsequently.[5]
- The reciprocal determination of symbolic elements, held in differential relations.[6] The reciprocal determination of symbolic elements is prolonged into the complete determination of singular points which correspond to and derive from the differential relations of the symbolic elements but cannot be reduced to them. While the differential relations between symbolic elements are actualized or constitute qualifiers for the occupants of the positions of the structure, the singular points are actualized or constitute attitudes.

- The necessarily unconscious nature of the underlying structure since this structure is not and can never be, actual. Deleuze defines the underlying structures as virtual since 'the virtual has a| reality of its own, and which cannot be confused with any actual reality, or with any present or past reality, it has an ideality of its own, and which cannot be confused with any possible image, or with any abstract idea' (1975:202).[7] The underlying structure is defined as a virtuality of coexistences which pre-exist the objects or beings which come to occupy its positions. The structure as virtuality is differential but undifferentiated; it has a differentiating effect.

The actualized structures are or become differentiated since actualization is equivalent to differentiation.[8] Although the underlying structure is not generative, actualization necessarily occurs in a certain amount of substructures, and according to two directions: species and parts. The differential relations are actualized in qualitatively distinct species and the singular points in the extended parts and figures which characterize each species.[9]

– The postulation that the underlying structure is essentially problematizing. The structure itself poses the questions or forms those questions which it will be possible to ask as well as the solutions which must necessarily be coherent with the point of actualization reached. In this sense the individuation of a structure is purely objective.

– The constitution of at least a second series corresponding to but irreducible to the first is necessary for the functioning of the structure. The series are subject to variations which are not secondary to the structure but immanent and essential to it.[10] In this sense it is possible to speak of metaphor and metonomy as *the* two structural factors, defining the two degrees of liberty in shifting: from one series to another or internal to one series.

– The postulation that this shifting and variation is made possible by the existence of an empty set or empty position, which is defined also as the 'object = x' or as the 'third term'. The empty set is defined as being always shifted or lacking with respect to itself. It belongs to none of the series: in this it is the eminently symbolic element,which because of its constant shifts, allows the relative shifting of all other elements of all series. Because it is an empty position, defining a zero degree, it is that element of the structure which allows the articulation of the series and structures with one another. Being undefinable in itself, it makes the setting up of a hierarchy between the different structures impossible.[11]

– The impossibility of either a being or an object occupying the empty set. Unoccupied, it is nonetheless accompanied by an eminently symbolic instance – the subject. The subject in structuralism is a nomadic subject, accompanying the shifts of the empty set, and constituted by them. In this sense it is unstable and dispersed.

– The subjection of the structure to two 'accidents' – either the complete emptying (the loss of accompaniment) or the filling up of the empty set, both of which lead to the occlusion of the empty set, giving rise to contradiction within the structure.[12] Structuralism aims to reveal the functioning of the structure by releasing the empty set from that which occludes or fills it. It is at this point that the 'structuralist hero' comes into play, being that nomadic subject devoid of identity, and constituted by non-personal individuations and pre-individual singularities. The only guarantee that the structure will not once again initiate contradiction will be the ability of this hero to survive the shifts in the structure and to himself set in motion the variations of the relations of symbolic elements and the redistribution of singular points, according to the functioning of the structure.

Structuralism as outlined by Deleuze in this article is inseparable from atheism and anti-humanism and from a new transcendental philosophy which

accords structure the pre-eminent position. As has been seen, because of the nature of its object, structuralism is necessarily problematizing but also necessarily objective, if it attempts to individuate the species, parts, singular points, differential relations and empty set in accordance with the variations and shifts of the structure.

Deleuze's account of structuralism allows from the positioning of several divergent structures within a general structure, in which they coexist and articulate together, but in terms of which no particular structure is given pre-eminence. While the temptation may exist to see structuralism as being dependent upon a linguistic model, this becomes untenable as the object and functioning of structuralism become apparent. Deleuze places the linguistics of Saussure and of the Moscow and Prague schools at the origin of structuralism. However, the object of structuralism is not to extend the linguistic model or to apply an analogous method to other fields but is instead to reveal necessary conditions of possibility for any system of intelligibility. Because there can be no intelligibility except where there is signification, there is no structure where there is no 'language'. The 'language' of various systems need not however function in the same manner as verbal or natural languages which are the object of linguistics, since as Deleuze points out, different symbolic elements and differential relations may be discovered for each structure, whose mode of signifing may be non-verbal or even esoteric.

The status of the linguistic model is a point of divergence between the two accounts of structuralism. For Barthes, linguistics is 'the true science of structure' (1972: 213). The recourse to the linguistic model may seem limiting to the structuralist project, yet Barthes' 'model' of structuralism has the same goal and indeed proceeds in the same manner as that of Deleuze. The concern is once again the revelation of an underlying structure, through the construction of a 'simulacrum' of the object which 'makes something appear which remained invisible or, if one prefers, unintelligible in the natural world' (1972:215). The structuralist decomposes and then recomposes the real: while the operation is mimetic, it is based not on the analogy of substances but on the analogy of functions, or homology (in the sense in which Lévi-Strauss will use it): 'we recompose the object in order to make certain functions appear, and it is, so to speak, the way that makes the work; this is why we must speak of the structuralist activity rather than the structuralist work' (1972: 216).

Barthes' concern is with the determination of the functioning of the structure. The procedure used does indeed depend upon the linguistic model. However, the distinction made by linguistics between the paradigmatic and syntagmatic axes maintains the important distinction between virtual and actual structures.

The typical operations of the structuralist activity are dissection and articulation, corresponding to the paradigmatic and syntagmatic axes. The operation of *dissection* entails the determination of mobile elements which have no significance except in so far as they can be distinguished from other virtual units of the same class; they constitute a paradigm, or associative field, which is virtual by definition. The elements are held within a particular paradigm by a relation of affinity and of dissimilarity with each other: they must 'resemble

each other somewhat in order that the difference which separates them be indeed evident' (1972: 217). Thus the elements are held in a coexistence of differential relations in the virtual structure of the paradigm. Actualization can thus only occur through 'an act of citation' (1972: 217), whereby the elements gain an actual significance, i.e. articulation.

The operation of *articulation* proceeds according to the rules of association of the syntagm, and entails a submission to regular constraints which are both formal and stable (repeatable). The rules of combination are forms which guarantee the intelligibility of the structure: 'it is by the regular return of the units and of the associations of units that the work appears constructed, i.e. endowed with meaning' (1972: 217).

To Deleuze's structuralist hero corresponds 'structural man' 'defined not by his ideas or his languages, but by his imagination – in other words, by the way in which he mentally experiences structure' (1972: 214); this definition extends over the activities of both analyst and 'creator'. For Barthes, the concern of structural man is not meaning but the fabrication of meaning. Structuralism is above all an activity which 'refers the exercise of the work and the work itself to a single identity: a serial composition or an analysis by Lévi-Strauss are not objects except insofar as they have been made: their present being is their past act, they are having-been-mades; the artist, the analyst recreates the course taken by meaning, he need not designate it' (1972: 219). And it is precisely because literature is a second-order system of signification entirely exhausted by its technique (Barthes, 1972) that it is in a position to interrogate the production of meaning. In this sense, structuralism as an analysis will resemble poetics; both are elaborated within the same space. A similar conception of the lack of distinction between structuralist 'theory' and 'creation' exists in the Deleuzian model.

Deleuze stresses throughout his article that there is a fine dividing line between the practice of structuralism as 'theory' and its practice as 'creativity', (or as Barthes will put it in *Critical Essays*, the 'technique of combination and variation' – Barthes, 1972: xviii). If this is so, it is in the manner of constituting series that this division will be most unstable. Presupposing a true 'dramatisation' it is at the point of the constitution of series that 'structuralism implies on the one hand a true creation, and on the other an initiative and a discovery which are not devoid of risk' (1975: 207). The objectivity and creativity of the structuralist project go hand in hand. Deleuze suggests that the structuralist problematic is objective only in the extent to which the eminently structural element, the empty position, reveals its own objectivity in the entirely formal functioning of the constitution of series, 'such that structuralism is often felt to be close to music' (1975: 207).

Thus on the one hand, we have actualization which occurs by means of the constitution of at least two series, made possible by the mobility of the empty position within the structure; on the other we have syntagmatic articulation, constituted by a paradigmatic virtuality. Both these accounts enable the determination of the specificity of the poetic structure which is the overriding concern of Barthes' work. It seems however that the postulation of an empty position is significantly lacking in Barthes' exposition of structuralism. In the

articles 'Literature and Discontinuity' and 'The Metaphor of the Eye' however, it becomes evident that the construction of a poetic structure is dependent upon a zero-degree or neutralisation of oppositions (Barthes, 1972).

Deleuze points out that literature, or indeed any 'aesthetic' practice, functions as a structuralism when 'it proposes to reveal its own virtualities' (1975: 210), i.e. its underlying structure. However, structuralism as a textual practice not only functions as a critique, but is also necessarily contestatory of traditional literature, since it 'lays bare' the techniques of the literary production of meaning and reveals its conditions of possibility. When Butor's *Mobile* (the topic of 'Literature and Discontinuity') reveals that discontinuity underlies the apparent continuity of literary language, it is simultaneously attacking the very 'idea' of the Book, 'an object which connects, develops, runs and flows, in short has the profoundest horror vacui' (1972: 273). Any attempt to fragment continuity is viewed with mistrust, since it threatens the cohesion and order which literature is meant to convey. Thus attention may be paid to schema, but not to detail. In *Mobile* instead, schema are of no account, whereas detail is the bearer of structure. The discontinuity of *Mobile* reveals the fabricated and laboured artificiality of continuity in the language of the literary work, the occlusion of which is fundamental to the myth of literature as an ineffable creation.

The critique of literature is limited to dramatisation: it cannot state what the underlying structure of a discourse is, but it can dramatise the functioning of this structure. Thus, if it attacks traditional literary language, it is only by an inversion of the mechanisms of this language; if it reveals, it reveals only by contrast. For example, the disturbance of typographical norms in *Mobile* reveals, by a process of inversion, that what could be called the smallest unit of continuity in the literary work (or its basic guarantee) is in fact its adherence to typographical norms:

> If everything which happens on the surface of the page wakens so intense a susceptibility, it is clear that this surface is the depositary of an essential value, which is the continuity of literary discourse. (1972: 173)

Similarly, to destroy (through neutralisation) accepted norms of classification is to reveal the extent to which classification, i.e. a system of oppositions between marked and unmarked elements, is fundamental to all meaning. In *Mobile*, cultural classification is reduced to a zero-degree by means of the alphabetical presentation of the states and cities of America. The use of the alphabet in *Mobile* functions simultaneously on two levels, that of contestation and that of critique. By the implementation of the alphabet, *Mobile* is contestatory of the traditional literary acceptance of dominant modes of classification (the realist order of objects). This does not however mean that the alphabetical listing of objects in *Mobile* is a negation. Since the alphabet is neither phoneme nor syntactical object, it is instead the institution of a neutrality of order. It is itself the void of meaning which is systematically occluded by 'realist' literature. The use of the alphabet in *Mobile* constitutes a system homologous to neutrality; being non-significatory, it neutralises para-

digmatic oppositions, as well as the denotative hierarchy on which continuity implicitly depends, replacing it with poetic contiguity of details.

The alphabet is the primary structuring factor of the work, controlling the distribution of details. As a formal device it has the power of 'surprising' 'a particular collusion of man and nature, i.e. a meaning' (1972: 177), and ultimately a system of intelligibility. What it reveals here 'is a certain knowledge concerning America' (1972: 178), by crossing the primary structuring factor with another – time. The fragments which form the structure of *Mobile* are arranged in three 'bundles': the time of the Indians, 1890, today. The details taken from these 'bundles' are not however separated; they are instead mixed together and are thus contiguous to one another. Through the repetition and shifts of these details, taken in an historical perspective, *Mobile* reveals 'the institution of America for the Americans', the transformation of nature into culture and its subjection to an intelligible order. The real exists in *Mobile* in each object, each unit of nature as it is rendered intelligible through a process of institutionalization over time. This is not to say that the object is presented as a 'real' object, but rather as what Barthes calls an 'oneiric' object – that which is grasped solely by the imaginary. It is a 'mediator of culture', a 'producer of hallucinations' and is shown to be an 'essential accessory' (1972: 180) to the construction of the intelligible. *Mobile* may not be able to make explicit the conditions of possibility of this intelligibility, but it can show the process of its institution, or of its fabrication, once again through the operation of homology.

The manner in which *Mobile* reveals this 'knowledge' is through a particular system of articulation: 'That this knowledge should not be enunciated in intellectual terms, but according to a particular table of signs, is precisely ... literature' (1972: 178). This system of articulation or 'table of signs', imposes a discontinuity which refers us to an 'infinitely sensitive mobility of closed elements' (1972: 178). The arrangement of the elements, regulated by formal devices, allows only for the repetition and variety of units: a repetition without development and a variety which is not variation but purely combinatory. The units are defined only by their function; they are structural units which exist only in distribution i.e. by relation to other units:

> These units are – and must be – beings so perfectly mobile that by shifting them throughout his poem the author engenders a kind of huge animate body whose movement is one of perpetual transmission, not of internal "growth": thus, the title of the object: Mobile, i.e. a scrupulously articulated armature all of whose breaks, by shifting very slightly (which the delicacy of the combinatory method permits), produce paradoxically the most connected movements. (p. 181)

The use of the alphabet is a formal aesthetic device artificially placed in the position of a symbolic structure and the arbitrariness of which guarantees the discontinuity of the elements. In itself it is non-significatory, being neither marked nor unmarked; it is unarticulated. It does however institute the system of articulation which is the work *Mobile*, by the very fact of neutralising paradigmatic oppositions. Neutralisation makes it possible to list all of the possible paradigmatic oppositions one after another (as with the names of

cars, or the flavours of ice cream), thus bringing them into a relation of contiguity with each other, or by mixing them with other paradigms (as with the colours of cars and of people), and thus forcing a contiguity with distant paradigms. Thus it is the neutralisation of oppositions which makes the construction and mobility of this structure possible: it is the unarticulated which makes the articulated possible. The syntagm here consists entirely of the repetitions, combinations and shifts of the elements. Defined as a mobility of closed elements, the operation of varied connection as it is implemented here, is not subject to the syntagmatic rules of association, since it is constituted by a neutrality of order which erases paradigmatic oppositions. It thus exceeds the paradigmatic/syntagmatic distinction, revealing that underlying any system of articulation i.e. of meaning, is a neutrality of pure order, a zero-degree of meaning. In the same way the mobility of this structure institutes contiguities, but exceeds metonymic functioning. The technique of meaning used in *Mobile* is not rhetorical, but proceeds according to the total and irreducible arbitrariness of the alphabet.

Mobile can thus be understood as a true dramatisation of a system of articulation which constructs itself, and is set in motion by a constitutive neutrality, which is at the same time a virtuality, regulating and constituting the positions and shifts of each element. Ultimately, the composition of such a work as *Mobile* is concerned with the generation of possible meanings: the question which this type of literary formalism releases is addressed to the very possibility of the world's meanings.

While Butor in *Mobile* neutralises paradigmatic oppositions by the implementation of the alphabet as underlying structure, Bataille in *Histoire de l'oeil* – the topic of Barthes 'The Metaphor of the Eye' (1972) carries out this operation by embedding the constitution of series precisely in personal biography, in such a way however, that these biographical details in no way guarantee the meaning of the text, setting it instead on the course of a rigorous formalism. In *Histoire de l'oeil* it is the very 'being' of the author, style or the personal imaginary, which acts as virtual structure, The story of the eye as an object is here 'that of a migration, the cycle of avatars it traverses far from its original being, according to the tendency of a certain imagination which distorts yet does not discard it' (1972: 239). The personal imaginary contains and constitutes all the possible paradigmatic substitutions of the eye. Since in a rhetorical system of articulation, metaphor is the instance of the paradigmatic axis, *Histoire de l'oeil* is essentially a poetic, metaphoric composition, to which, however, the intervention of the metonymic is necessary. Barthes shows the personal imaginary to be a field of associations constitutive of the literary paradigmatic structure, the virtuality of which is actualized in the narrative, metonymic structure.

The substitutions and variations of the metaphor of the eye proceed according to the constraints of the paradigm – each substitutive object sustains with the eye a relation of affinity and dissimilarity. The form of the metaphor of the eye is that of an associative field which splits into two series. The first paradigm is constituted by the shift from 'eye' to 'egg', a variation of form (in French, the words 'oeil' and 'oeuf' have a common and a differentiated

sound), and of content (both objects can be said to have the common se-
memes of 'globular' and 'white'). To this series will be added 'testicles',
reinforced by current French usage which refers to the testicles of certain
animals as 'eggs'. A second paradigm branches off from the first and is
constituted by the liquids associated with each object. Thus the second series
will consist of such terms as 'tears', 'egg yolk', 'sperm', etc. Any of the terms
of one of the paradigms can act as a substitution for the terms of the other:
'the mere presence of one of the two series invokes the other' (1972: 241).
None of the terms of either one of the paradigms predominates since the first
term cannot be determined. The paradigms are not constituted in depth, they
have no 'secret' they are chains of signifiers which can only shift laterally: 'the
image system developed here has no sexual obsession for its "secret"; if this
were the case, we should first have to explain why the erotic theme is never
directly phallic' (1972: 242). Furthermore, any decipherment of the work is
made futile by the fact that Bataille 'declares his sources', by giving the
biographical details at the end of the book, which ultimately however, func-
tion as just one more lateral shift. 'Bataille thus leaves no other recourse than
to consider, in *Histoire de l'oeil,* a perfectly spherical metaphor: each of the
terms is always the signifier of another (no term is a simple signified), without
our ever being able to stop the chain' (1972: 242). The lack of hierarchy in the
terms of the paradigmatic series reproduces the unorganized nature of the
associative field, in which, according to Saussure, no single term can be
assigned pre-eminence. The series are constituted around the lack of a defini-
tive signified, or denotative meaning for the 'eye' of which this work is the
'story'.

The narrative as it is used here is only a vehicle for the metaphoric sub-
stance, but it is nonetheless necessary for its actualization:

> As a reservoir of virtual signs, a metaphor in the pure state cannot constitute
> discourses in and of itself: if we recite its terms – i.e., if we insert them in a
> narrative which cements them together, their paradigmatic nature already yields
> to the dimension of all speech, which is inevitably a syntagmatic extension. (1972:
> 243)

The narrative is however wholly determined by the exchange of the terms of
the double paradigm: it is this exchange which makes the syntagm immedi-
ately possible. The exchanging of the two chains is 'possible by nature, since
Bataille is not dealing with the same paradigm (the same metaphor), and
because consequently, the two chains can establish relations of contiguity
between themselves' (1972: 243). The structuralist move here is to shift
around the terms and dislocate their traditional associations (e.g 'break an
egg', 'poke out an eye'), assigning them instead to different lines. In this way
a corresponding disturbance is brought about in both series: 'break an eye'
produces 'poke out an egg'. It is the crossing of the two paradigms, the
exchange of terms, which has the immediate effect of crossing out the signi-
fied, such that the signifier is caused to float incessantly between the two
paradigms. Thus the paradigmatic oppositions of the two series are neutral-

ised. Neutralisation underlies the possibility of the syntagm i.e. of articulation. The syntagm will thus consist entirely of he actualization of the technique of exchanging. Once again the composition will be a dramatisation of the operation of neutralisation, through exchange:

> all these associations are both the same and different; for metaphor, which varies them, manifests a regulated difference among them, a difference which metonymy, which exchanges them, immediately undertakes to abolish. (1972: 245)

The eroticism of *Histoire de l'oeil* proceeds along the lines of metonymic displacement. The transgression of values here never exceeds literary techniques of transgression:

> for metonymy is precisely a forced syntagm, the violation of a signifying limit of space; it permits, on the very level of discourse, a counterdivision of objects, usages, meanings, spaces, and properties, which is eroticism itself: thus what the interplay of metaphor and metonymy, in *Histoire de l'oeil*, ultimately make it posible to transgress is sex: not, of course, to sublimate it; quite the contrary. (1972: 246)

What is revealed in *Histoire de l'oeil* is not only (once more) that the neutral or the zero-degree of meaning is the conditions of possibility of articulation but that a system of values is implicitly a system of classification which it is possible to transgress by a discursive violation or counterdivision of classification, set in motion by neutralisation.

Butor's *Mobile* and Bataille's *Histoire de l'oeil* are a dramatisation of the functioning of the structure of literary intelligibility, and through this of broader systems of intelligibility. Texts of this kind permit the determination of the specificity of poetic structure; they are texts in which the metalinguistic function coexists with the language object, such that embedded within the construction of the work, is the critique which reveals its conditions of possibility. The text in itself, provides a spontaneous poetics of structuralism.

Notes

1. References to the Deleuze article are from the Italian version entitled 'Da che cosa si riconosce lo strutturalismo?', since the original French article was not available to me at the time of publication. All translations from this article are my own.
2. When testing the applicability of the label 'structuralism' to a structuralist literary theory, as well as to the literary text as a 'creativity', the ultimate questions to ask are: Can the theory/text function as a critique? If so, at what levels?
3. These terms are used in a psychoanalytic (Lacanian) sense, but are further qualified as in Barthes (1975): *Barthes par Barthes.*
4. The third term is *the symbolic element of the structure,* and will be elucidated in discussion of the empty position.
5. For example, when Althusser speaks of economic structure, it is the *positions* in a topological and structural space, defined by the relations of production, which are of primary importance in the structure, and not the real beings which come to

occupy its positions, nor the roles they assume – Deleuze (1975:198), Althusser (1965:157 as referred to by Deleuze).

6. Deleuze uses the following to clarify this point: while 2/3 is an instance of a real relation, and $x^2 + y^2 - R^1 = 0$ is an instance of an imaginary relation, $\dfrac{dy}{dx}$ is an instance of a symbolic relation, where the elements have no determinate value in themselves but are nonetheless reciprocally determined in the relation. Examples of this are modern algebra, the system of phonemes, and Lévi-Strauss' kinship system.

7. The phoneme, for example, is not an actual letter, syllable or sound, but neither is it a fiction or associated image (Jakobson 1963 – as referred to by Deleuze).

8. Since the underlying structure consists of symbolic elements held in differential relations, and defined by their un-real and un-imaginary status, it is not possible to think of them, or of the symbolic structure to which they belong, or of the differential relations in which they are held, as being in any way actual. The terms 'differentiation' and 'differential' as used by Deleuze, have a generic sense and a mathematical sense (linked to differential calculus) respectively.

9. Deleuze uses Althusser's specification of economic structure as an example of this: firstly, a total society comprising every possible element, relation and value of production is not possible. The underlying economic structure is actualized in various substructures, e.g. capitalism. Secondly, every mode of production is defined as a 'species' made up of 'parts' corresponding to each of the possible modes (Deleuze 1975:203).

10. It will become evident, in the following discussion of the empty position, why it is that shifting is a property of the structure, and not something externally imposed upon it. Note that the constitution of series is an essential factor in the consideration of the literary text as a structuralist dramatisation as well as for an understanding of the metonymical exchange of terms in *Histoire de l'oeil*.

11. Examples of different characterisations of the empty position are 'mana' or the 'floatig signifier' in Lévi-Strauss' individuation of mythological structures, the zero-phoneme in Jakobsonian terms or the phallic symbol in Lacanian terms. None of the above can be considered to be identifications of the empty position, since to identify it would be to 'fill' its emptiness and thus to occlude it.

12. Since the structure is necessarily primary to any possible actualisations, contradictions within the structure are not imaginarily or ideologically imposed on it but are made possible by its functioning and derive from it.

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