

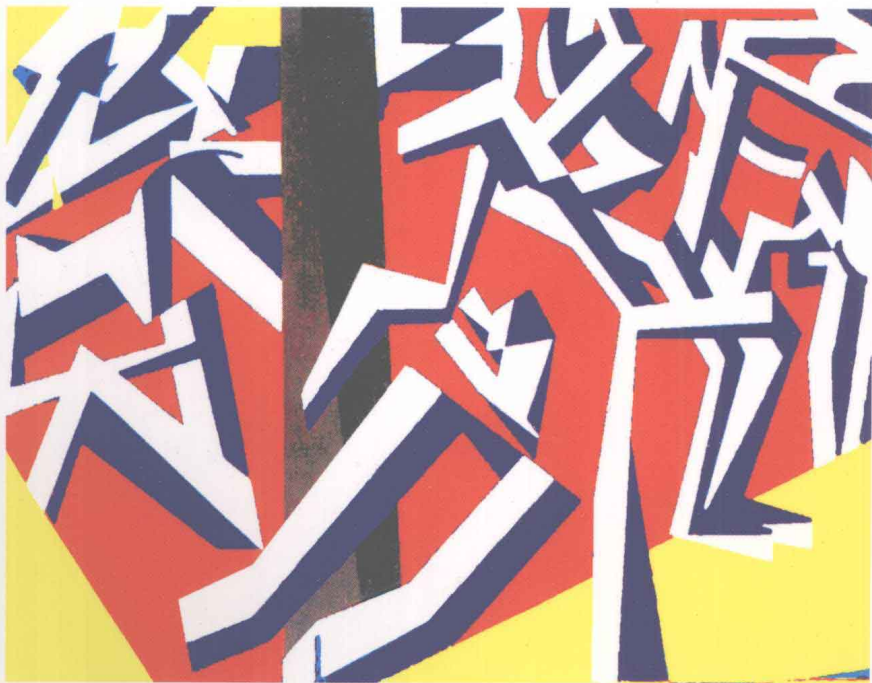


培文书系·人文科学系列

英文影印版

RECENT THEORIES OF NARRATIVE

当代叙事学



〔美〕华莱士·马丁(Wallace Martin) 著



北京大学出版社
PEKING UNIVERSITY PRESS

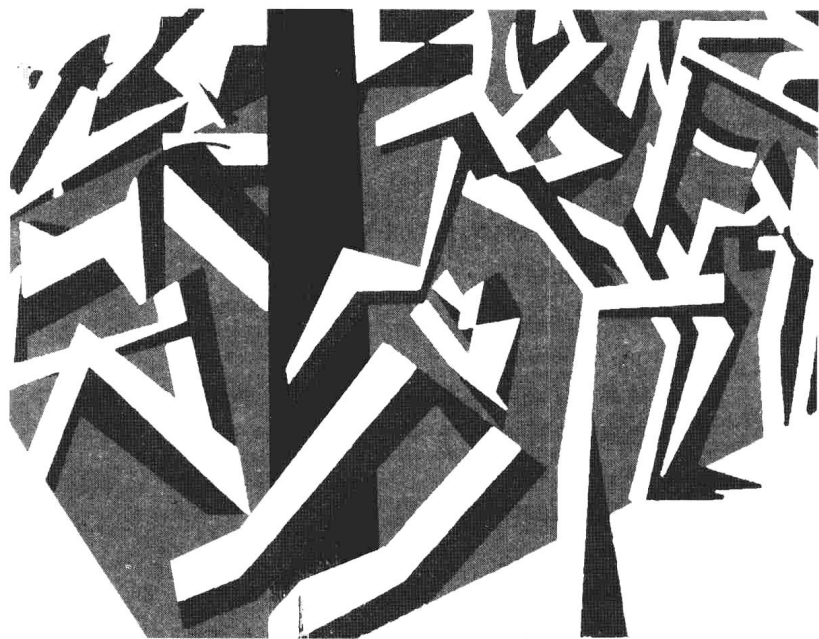


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by Wallace Martin

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前 言

近年来文学批评中显而易见的对叙事理论的兴趣是人文学与社会科学中一个更广泛的运动——托马斯·库恩也许会称之为“范式改变”(paradigm change)——的组成部分。自 19 世纪以来,各种自然科学方法一直是其他学科进行合理化的模式。但是在过去 20 年间,事实已经证明,对于理解社会和文化来说,这个模式有不足之处。直到不久以前还统治着心理学的行为主义已经让位给对于认识过程和目的行动的探索。历史哲学家已经指出,叙述并非仅仅是用以代替可靠统计材料的泛泛印象,而是一种自有其道理的理解过去的方法。生物学家、人类学家和社会学家已经得出了结论:在解释动物发展和社会个体之间的互动时,研究模仿行为的重要性并不下于定量分析。在哲学中,基于意图、计划和目的这些概念而提出的“行动理论”已经表明其自身对话语分析和人工智能这些新兴学科的有用性。作为为理解生活而必不可少的诸种解释方式,模仿(mimesis)与叙述已经从其原来的仅为“小说”(fiction)的不同方面这一边缘地位上一跃而占据了一些其他学科的中心。

我们不必到学校去学习如何理解叙事在我们生活中的重要性。世界的新闻以从不同视点讲述的“故事”的形式来到我们面前。全球戏剧每日每时都在展开,并分散成众多的故事线索。这些故事线索只有当我们从某一特定角度——美国的(或苏联的,或尼日利亚的)、民主的(或共和的,或君主制的,或马克思主义的)、或基督教的(或天主教的,或犹太教的,或穆斯林的)——理解时,才能被重新统一起来。在这些不同观点的每一个之后都有一部历史,以及一个对于未来的希望。我们每个人也有一部个人的历史,亦即,有关我们自己的生活的诸种叙事,正是这些故事使我们能够解释我们自己是什么,以及我们正在被引向何方。如果我们从一个不同的视点来解释这个故事中的各种事件,从而修改这个故事,那么很多可能都会改变。这就是为什么叙事——当其被作为文学来研究时仅被认为是一种娱乐形式——在被实际写在报纸、传记和历史中时,竟成为一个战场。

相对于上述背景来看,我对叙事的讨论范围比较狭窄。我试图回

顾过去 20 年间批评家们提出的各种有关文学叙事的理论,间或涉及更早一些的理论和其他学科。但即使是这一有限的领域也还是难于在一本书中概括。正如西摩·查特曼在《故事与话语》(*Story and Discourse*)中特别提到的,“图书馆中有关特殊文类的研究汗牛充栋”,有关叙事理论的个别方面的研究也俯拾即是,但是“英语著作中却几乎没有通论叙事的专著”。日益增长的专题研究是源于以前的文学研究所揭示的问题的复杂性,以及对其他学科的分析方法的引进。当法文、德文和俄文理论著作的英文翻译与英美理论家的著作汇合时,也许就是再想写这样一本通论叙事的专著也不太可能了。

然而查特曼还是写了这样一本书,汇集了该书 1978 年出版之前 15 年间的结构主义研究成果。多端特·科恩的《透明的意识》,一本全面研究叙事中的意识呈现的书,也于同年出版。此后我们又有了热拉·若奈特的《叙事话语》和弗朗兹·斯坦泽尔的《叙事理论》的译本,……不过我现在已经变成在开列书目了,而这应该放在本书的最后。我试图概括这一专题的目的与上述作品在两方面有所不同:我的书综述了范围更为广阔的材料,而且我是一一列举它们,而不是把它们纳入一个统一的理论。既然这种广泛的和非系统的处理方法的短处显而易见,因此它需要某种辩解;但是首先我将指出本书以下处理的是叙事理论的哪些领域。

导论章始于对 1960 年以前流行的各种小说理论的阐述,并回顾了它们在本世纪早期的先河,然后介绍将在以后各章中被讨论的诸批评家和诸思潮。第二和第三章涉及在最近叙事理论发展中的两个最为关键性的问题:研究角度的两种变化,其一源于对一般叙事的研究而非仅对小说本身的研究,其二则源于现实主义之开始被视为文学成规而不再是值得信任的对生活的再现。后者将涉及今后几年内叙事理论中一个也许将会被证明是最重要的发展:它在历史、传记、自传和精神分析诸研究中的应用。第四章讨论结构主义者和其他一些人试图确认支配着叙事序列的成规的做法,无论这些叙事序列是虚构的还是事实的。结构主义分析的最有影响的提倡者——罗兰·巴尔特,若奈特和查特曼——将是第五章的主题。

处在故事与读者之间的是叙述者,他决定着讲什么和让人怎么看。视点,它被美国和德国批评家认为是叙事的规定性特点,在过去几年中也开始具有了新的重要性,学者们对于这一题目的最近的研究是第六章的论题。在第七章中,视点将被作为从作者到读者——他们可能共享也可能并不共享同样的假定和解释成规——的叙事交流的一个方面

来看待。这样,从第四章到第七章,我们就从叙事分析的抽象的、“语法的”模式前进到基于成规与交流之上的模式。第八章涉及滑稽模仿(parody)或元小说(metafiction)这类叙事形式是如何突破诸理论参考框架的,然后我们将回到构成这整个研究领域的那些基本问题:虚构作品与叙事的特性。

讨论文学理论而不证明它们可以如何被运用是很困难的——如果不是一无用的话,但是如果泛论它们如何应用于一大批作品,而某些读者对此可能又不熟悉,那么这种讨论就是无的放矢。作为一个不能尽如人愿的折中,我将所讨论的这些理论应用于基于传统民间故事主题“失而复得的情人礼物”的一系列故事,以及曼斯菲尔德的小说《幸福》(二者皆见附录),并用于欧内斯特·海明威的《弗朗西斯·麦康伯夫妇的短促幸福生活》和《哈克贝利·芬历险记》。对于同样作品的反复分析将使我们有可能比较和评价各种理论。

通过附有注释的书目和散见于本书中的人物,我试图弥补两个缺陷,它们是在努力综览一个巨大领域时产生的:对于所讨论的理论的不尽充分的概括,以及对于这些理论之间的异同的过分简略的论述。在叙事理论中,术语的大量繁殖并非源于粗率或者毫无必要地铸造新词以取代已经流行的术语。理论家们的目的以及由此而来的分析框架是不同的:它们不可调和,我们没有办法把他们的思想压缩成为一套共同词汇而又不抹杀每一个的特定价值。在提供他们所使用的术语的分栏对照表时,我有时把他们的术语移入一个共同的参考框架,但更经常的则是突出它们之间的不同。

为了尽力把握每位理论家的要点与基调,我会让他们互相针对自己的理论对手而说话;在有些情况下,我让他们事先评论某些他们写作时尚未存在的理论。我这样做的目的不是制造麻烦,而是刺激读者的好奇心,使他们转向我所讨论的文章与专著。以这样的非完整的方式来对待复杂的理论显然有不少缺陷。如若为这一方法辩解,我只能提出下列说法。

在每一种理论之内,无论或显或隐,总是存在着来自另一个理论角度的反对之声。一个理论家的思想是被别的理论家的思想引发的,他们两人相对互动的竞技场实际上就是理论之间的空间,这一空间本身即构成批评的语境。为一种理论提供全面、准确的阐述这样一种方法有助于肯定该理论的自身统一以及其与其他理论的隔绝。这样一来,这一方法就重复了那种温和地顺从或根本就不管其他的批评家说什么的姿态,批评家们就是以这种姿态来避免争论的,因为他们认定那是粗

暴无礼的行为。但是,一种理论除了是通往对话途径上的必要的一步,还能是什么呢?如果不是作为对他人的反对或对问题的回答,它又是为什么被创造出来的呢?我希望把捉的东西正是一个作为整体的叙事理论,以及激发着有关这一理论的活跃辩论,并正在使之成为一个最令人感兴趣的文学批评领域的那些问题。

在那些本来至少也应加以简单论述,但本书却没有涉及的理论领域中有对主题与类型的研究,文体学,不可靠叙述,符号学,以及话语(discourse)与文本分析。后面几种研究的技术性太强,根本不适于简单的介绍。第四章中所介绍的细密的结构主义叙事分析其实也是如此。不过乔纳森·卡勒,罗伯特·斯科尔斯和查特曼的著作已经使广大读者可以接近这些理论了。有关叙事最重要的一本近著是弗雷德里克·杰姆逊的《政治无意识:作为一种社会象征行为的叙事》,但它也是不适于让人概括的。不过,尽管我没有讨论它,但我却把它和威廉·道林的《杰姆逊,阿尔都塞,马克思:〈政治无意识〉导论》一起推荐给读者。

感谢多瑞特·科恩、安·哈莱曼、和理查德·谢尔登,他们为我提供了一些对于此书十分重要的未发表材料。托利多大学给我的休假期为我提供了研究和写作的必要时间。托马斯·佩维尔和卢伯米尔·多列热应请对手稿的部分章节惠予评论;在一项其中错误可能会层出不穷的工作中,他们已经使我避免了一些。学生们通过自己提出的正确问题,也对本书目前所获得的明晰性有所贡献;我曾向他们中一些人提出过种种问题,其中四个人(尼古拉斯·康拉德,德博拉·雷斯尼克,约瑟夫·科思雷尔,约翰逊·恩瓦布维)提供的答案我已用在本书之中。是那些其思想构成本书实体的批评家们,他们在我对叙事的了解上教给我的东西最多。对他们我只能给予感谢和歉意:原谅我没有更加充分和准确地描述他们的思想。为康奈尔大学出版社评审此书的读者已经使这本书比它本来可能的还要好。责任编辑凯·朔伊尔,以及帕特里夏·斯特林对本书进行了一丝不苟的编辑工作。感谢克劳德·布雷蒙允许从其《民间故事形态》中复印那个出现于本书图4b中的图表。

为了尽量减少文献引用方面的混乱,我删除了脚注。本书中所涉及者的资料来源可在书后的书目中发现,它们是根据书中章节划分的。

华莱士·马丁
托多利,俄亥俄
(伍晓明译)

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Preface

The interest in theories of narrative that is evident in recent literary criticism is part of a broader movement—what Thomas Kuhn might call a “paradigm change”—in the humanities and social sciences. Since the nineteenth century, the methods of the natural sciences have served as a model for the rationalization of other disciplines. But during the past two decades that model has proved inadequate for an understanding of society and culture. The behaviorism that dominated psychology until recently has given way to an exploration of cognitive processes and purposive action. Philosophers of history have shown that narration is not just an impressionistic substitute for reliable statistics but a method of understanding the past that has its own rationale. Biologists, anthropologists, and sociologists have concluded that a study of mimetic behavior is as important as quantification in explaining animal development and social interaction. In philosophy the “theory of action,” based on intentions, plans, and purposes, has proved relevant to emerging disciplines such as discourse analysis and artificial intelligence. Mimesis and narration have returned from their marginal status as aspects of “fiction” to inhabit the very center of other disciplines as modes of explanation necessary for an understanding of life.

We need not go to school to understand the importance of narrative in our lives. News of the world comes to us in the form of “stories” told from one or another point of view. The global drama unfolds every twenty-four hours—split up into multiple story lines that can be reintegrated only when they are understood from the perspective of an American (or Russian, or Nigerian), a Democrat (or Republican, or monarchist, or Marxist), a Protestant (or Catholic, or Jew, or Muslim).

Preface

Behind each of these differences there is a history, and a hope for the future. For each of us there is also a personal history, the narratives of our own lives, which enable us to construe what we are and where we're headed. If we were to revise that story by interpreting its events from a different point of view, much might change. That is why narrative, considered a form of entertainment when studied as literature, is a battleground when actualized in newspapers, biography, and history.

Viewed against this backdrop, my own discussion of narrative is relatively narrow. I have attempted to review theories of literary narration proposed by critics during the past two decades, with occasional reference to earlier theories and other disciplines. Even this circumscribed area is difficult to summarize in a single book. As Seymour Chatman notes in *Story and Discourse*, "libraries bulge with studies of specific genres" and aspects of narrative theory, but "there are few books in English on the subject of narrative in general." Increasing specialization results from the complexity of the problems revealed by previous literary research, as well as the introduction of analytic models drawn from other disciplines. When translations from French, German, and Russian are added to the writings of English and American theorists, the only alternative to few books on narrative in general might appear to be none at all.

Yet Chatman produced one, drawing together the results of structuralist studies during the fifteen years preceding its publication in 1978; and Dorrit Cohn's *Transparent Minds*, a comprehensive study of the presentation of consciousness in narrative, appeared the same year. Since then we have had translations of Gérard Genette's *Narrative Discourse*, and Franz Stanzel's *Theory of Narrative* . . . but already I am dwindling into bibliography, which belongs at the back of the book. My own attempt to encompass the subject differs from these books in two respects; it surveys a wider range of materials, and it juxtaposes them, rather than subsuming them in an integrated theory. Since the disadvantages of such broad and unsystematic treatment are apparent, it will require some justification; but first I will indicate what areas of narrative theory the following pages treat.

The introductory chapter begins with an account of the predominant theories of the novel in the years before 1960, glances back to their antecedents in the early part of the century, and then introduces the critics and trends to be discussed in subsequent chapters. The second and third concern the two issues that have been most crucial in the development of recent theories of narrative: the changes of perspective that result from studying narrative in general rather than

the novel, and from viewing realism as a literary convention rather than as a trustworthy representation of life. The latter topic involves reference to what may prove to be the most important development in narrative theory during the next few years: its application to the study of history, biography, autobiography, and psychoanalysis. Chapter 4 discusses the attempts of structuralists and others to identify the conventions governing narrative sequences, whether fictional or factual. The most influential exponents of structural analysis—Roland Barthes, Genette, and Chatman—are the subject of chapter 5.

Between the story and the reader is the narrator, who controls what will be told and how it will be perceived. Point of view, which American and German critics consider the defining feature of narration, has taken on renewed importance in the past few years, and recent studies of the subject are the topic of chapter 6. In chapter 7, point of view is treated as one aspect of narrative communication from an author to readers who may or may not share the same assumptions and conventions of interpretation. Chapters 4 to 7 thus progress from abstract, “grammatical” models of narrative analysis to models based on convention and communication. The eighth chapter concerns the ways in which such narrative forms as parody and metafiction step outside theoretical frames of reference, and then returns to the basic questions that constitute the entire field of study: the specific characteristics of fiction and narrative.

To discuss literary theories without showing how they can be applied is difficult, if not useless, but to mention in passing how they apply to a wide range of works with which some readers may not be familiar is pointless. As an unsatisfactory compromise, I have applied the theories discussed to a series of stories on the traditional folk motif of “the lover’s gift regained” and Katherine Mansfield’s “Bliss” (these appear in the appendix), and to Ernest Hemingway’s “The Short Happy Life of Francis Macomber” and *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*. Repeated analysis of the same examples makes it possible to compare and evaluate theories.

By means of the annotated bibliography and the figures interspersed in the text, I attempt to compensate for two of the shortcomings attendant on an effort to survey a vast field: inadequate representation of the theories discussed, and cursory treatment of the differences between them. The proliferation of technical terms in narrative theory does not result from carelessness or the needless coinage of new words to replace others already in circulation. The purposes, and hence the analytic frameworks of the theorists, differ;

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they are not commensurate, and there is no way to reduce their ideas to a common vocabulary without effacing what is of particular value in each. In providing tabular comparisons of the terms they use, I have sometimes displaced their words toward a common frame of reference, but have more often highlighted their differences.

Attempting to catch the point and tone of each theorist, I would have them address each other; in some cases I make them proleptic commenters on theories that did not exist when they wrote. My intention in doing so is not to stir up trouble but to stimulate the curiosity of readers and steer them toward the essays and books I discuss. The disadvantages of such fragmentary treatment of complex theories are obvious. In defense of the method, I can offer only the following comments.

Within each theory, whether overtly or implicitly, there is the opposing voice of another theoretical perspective. The theorist has been incited into thought by the thought of another; the arena in which the two interact is the virtual space *between* theories that, in its entirety, makes up the context of criticism. The expository method that provides a complete and accurate account of a theory helps confirm its integrity and its isolation from others. Thus it reproduces the genial gesture of deference or dismissal through which critics avoid controversy, on the assumption that it is an ill-mannered and ill-tempered activity. But what could a theory be, other than a necessary step on the path to dialogue; and why would it be created, if not as a reply to another or an answer to a question? It is a sense of narrative theory as a whole, of the issues animating its lively debates and currently making it the most interesting area of literary criticism, that I hope to capture.

Among the trends not mentioned that would ideally have received at least cursory treatment are studies of themes and types, stylistics, unreliable narration, semiotics, and discourse and text analysis. These last are too technical for brief presentation. The same can be said of detailed structural analysis of narrative, introduced in the fourth chapter; but the writings of Jonathan Culler, Robert Scholes, and Chatman have already made them accessible to a wide audience. One of the most significant recent books on narrative, Fredric Jameson's *The Political Unconscious: Narrative as a Socially Symbolic Act*, does not lend itself to summary; not having discussed it, I recommend it to readers, along with William Dowling's *Jameson, Althusser, Marx: An Introduction to "The Political Unconscious."*

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To minimize the clutter of documentation, I have eliminated footnotes. The sources for references in the text can be found in the bibliography, which is subdivided by chapter and section.

WALLACE MARTIN

Toldeo, Ohio

