To speak of the meaning of a work is to tell the tale of its reading.[[1]](#footnote-1) Culler’s axiom acquires a secondary level of authority when related to the interpretative tale, since it is in itself an explanatory reading of the biblical story. What transpires between the reader and the text is difficult to quantify. In the first place, which reader are we speaking of? In the “reader response” school of literary theories there are a plethora of readers and audiences. I do not refer here to any empirical reader whatsoever, but rather to the implied reader. Every author imagines a certain reader, a ‘qualified reader’ capable of fulfilling the semantic blueprints of the text. He is embedded in the text by means of the very rhetoric that is required to build the fictional world. As someone responsive to rhetorical constructs that invite reconstruction, the implicit reader builds the contexts from which the text derives substantiation, cohesiveness and meaning. The advantage of this approach, as Ramon-Keinan [?] notes, is that ‘it implies a view of the text as a system built of structures requiring reconstruction, rather than an autonomous object.’ But the implicit reader does not merely reconstruct the models of reality in the text. Every fiction offers not merely a blueprint of characters and events but also a blueprint of stances, norms and values, and the reader is invited to adopt a certain stance with regard to these constructs.

1. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)