PREFACE

Perhaps I must recommend the reader to study this book backwards. The final part (part VII) is probably most interesting for those who for the first time bury themselves in the literary and theological problems which so abundantly occur in the book of Job. However, the conclusions of that final part are firmly based on the previous, rhetorical analyses. I hope to have excited enough interest at the end of the book so that some readers will also take up the study of the structures of the individual poems. Again, I recommend these persevering readers to study these sections backwards, that is to say, in the first place to take notice of the 'comments and summary' (analyses x.6). These 'comments' try to lead the way through the bare catalogues of the preceding analyses (x.3–5). To see the whole problem of rhetorical structures in the book of Job (and of Hebrew poetry in general) in the right perspective one must pay attention to the first part of this study. Maybe some readers will get down to these historical explanations.

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1References to Fokkelman in parenthesis concern these private communications.