

## Once again methods: Is there a method in the madness?<sup>1</sup>

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### **ABSTRACT**

*The discussion on methodology in the South African exegetical arena is still continuing. Over the past decades, several contributions have kept this debate alive. The aim of this article is to contribute to this ongoing South-African debate concerning methodology. It consists of two main sections: 1) a broad introductory overview is given in order to sketch the past South-African exegetical landscape; 2) a description is given of how the author envisages a future road to travel through the Old Testament exegetical landscape, namely a diachronically reflected synchronic reading of the text.*

### **A INTRODUCTION**

The discussion on methodology in the South African exegetical and hermeneutical debate has not been completed yet.<sup>3</sup> Several contributions during the past years (and decades) have kept this debate well and alive.<sup>4</sup> Although no conclusions with regard to methodological issues have been reached at all – even up to the beginning of the new millennium – it nevertheless seems that the continuous discussion brings some new insights. The duration of the discussion

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<sup>1</sup> This article is dedicated to Professor Wouter C van Wyk. He not only taught me Mishnaic Hebrew during my undergraduate studies, but made a big contribution towards my love for the Hebrew language as well as for the Old Testament.

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<sup>3</sup> Cf Human 1999:354ff and W S Prinsloo 1992b:182ff.

<sup>4</sup> To mention but the following publications of the past thirty years: Abrahams 1994; Bosman 1994; Botha 1989; Coetzee 1994; Cook 1988; Deist 1973; Deist 1978; Deist 1983b; Deist 1983c; Deist 1986; Deist 1988; Deist 1989; Deist 1995; Domeris 1994; Du Toit 2004; Human 1993:17-29; Hunter 1994; Jonker 1986; Jonker 1991; H A J Kruger 1994; P A Kruger 1994; Lategan 1994; Le Roux 1989; Le Roux 1994; Le Roux 1996; Le Roux 1999; Loader 1975:14-28; Loader 1986; Loader 1991; Loader 2002; Malan 2004; Nel 1989a; Nel 1989b; Nel 1994; Odendaal 1994; Olivier 1994; Oosthuizen 1994; G T M Prinsloo 1989:43-53; G T M Prinsloo 1991; G T M Prinsloo 1992; W S Prinsloo 1979; W S Prinsloo 1984:3-7; W S Prinsloo 1988; W S Prinsloo 1990; W S Prinsloo 1992a; W S Prinsloo 1992b; W S Prinsloo 1994; W S Prinsloo 1996; Raidt 1967; Scheffler 1994; Smit 2004; Snyman 1994; Spies 2004; Van Aarde 1988; Van Aarde 2004; Van Dyk 1994; Vorster 1989; Wittenberg 1994.

has brought growth and more understanding for different viewpoints and approaches. The aim of this article is to contribute – yet again – to this ongoing South-African debate concerning methodology. Indeed, in this regard I do not want to exclude the European (and even Anglo-Saxon) world at all, as this debate is being conducted there as well (sometimes even in a quite heated manner).<sup>5</sup>

This article consists of two main sections. First, a broad introductory overview will be given in order to sketch the past South-African exegetical landscape. In the second part I will outline a methodological orientation, that is to say, how I envisage the road to travel the Old Testament exegetical landscape.

## **B THE SOUTH AFRICAN EXEGETICAL LANDSCAPE**

In this section I shall give a broad overview of the South-African exegetical landscape, as well as a brief description of events that have influenced the specific features of Old Testament (OT) scholarship in South Africa (SA) since the 1970's.<sup>6</sup> Before and even during the 1970's, the dominant scholarly approach to the OT can best be depicted as confessional or conservative. For a long period, this kind of approach, or at least some aspects of it, determined OT scholarship in SA.<sup>7</sup> Some of the most prominent exegetes during this period received their training when the theological atmosphere in SA was extremely conservative. It therefore comes as no surprise that theological investigation as a critical science was vehemently opposed. Historical criticism was judged in an exceptionally negative manner.

Against this background, Le Roux<sup>8</sup> justly infers that the missing link in South Africa was – and probably still is – critical scholarship. To define it more precisely: the historical-critical method has never really become an integral part of our scholarly approach to the OT. Of course, this was not the fault of anyone, but the result of historical circumstances beyond our control. The point one can make here is that we as South Africans have missed the *Aufklärung*.<sup>9</sup> In this

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<sup>5</sup> Some recent publications will be mentioned (without claiming to make a complete listing of all relevant publications on this topic): Barr 1995; Barton 1994; Becking 2000; Beuken 1986; Beuken 1994; Beuken 1995; Carr 2003; Carroll 1995; Clines 1993; Clines 1995; Deurloo 1986; Deurloo & Venema 1999; Dijkstra 1995; Dohmen 2003; Hoftijzer 1995; Joyce 1994; Joyce 1995; Labuschagne 1986; Lepore 2001; Noort 1995; Otto 2004; Rendtorff 1988; Rendtorff 1993a; Rendtorff 1993b; Rico 2001; Rogerson 1995; Ryou 1995; Schoors 1986; Spronk 1995; Talstra 1993; Talstra 1995; Talstra 1998; Van Wolde 1995; Vermeylen 2003; Williamson 1995.

<sup>6</sup> Cf Le Roux 1993:16ff.

<sup>7</sup> For a quite extensive outline, cf Deist 1994.

<sup>8</sup> Le Roux 1993:26.

<sup>9</sup> Le Roux 1994:199.

regard, Deist<sup>10</sup> postulates as follows: ‘Weil die Kolonisten ein barres Land zähmen mussten und beinahe völlig von Entwicklungen in Europa abgeschnitten waren, gingen wichtige geistesgeschichtliche Entwicklungen, wie die der Aufklärung, an Südafrika vorüber’. Deist<sup>11</sup> continues as follows: ‘Es war eine unkritische, prä-aufklärerische, konstantinische Theologie, in der Gott und Grossmächte kaum von einander zu unterscheiden waren. Es war eine Theologie, die die Politik sakralisierte. Auch diese Züge übten einen sehr grossen Einfluss auf die südafrikanischen politischen und theologischen Anschauung aus ... Die holländische Theologie, die über Jahrhunderten nach Südafrika exportiert wurde, war eine prä-aufklärerische, orthodoxe, calvinistische, ahistorische, biblizistisch-fundamentalistische, idealistisch-deduktive Theologie. Wie in gewissen Kreisen in Holland wurden die ethischen und historisch-kritischen Richtungen des 19. Jahrhunderts auch in Südafrika kräftig zurückgewiesen und sie sind heute auch noch *anathema*’. At a later stage in the historical development of South Africa, this fundamentalism was even strengthened by the arrival of German missionaries coming from a pietistic tradition, as well as English and Scottish missionaries, who, on the other hand, came from a puritan and spiritual background.<sup>12</sup> This combination of all the above-mentioned factors led to the development of a very strong Biblicist tradition in SA. This is noticeable – even until today – in most churches in SA.<sup>13</sup> According to Deist,<sup>14</sup> ‘ein Fundamentalist ist wesentlich ein unkritischer Mensch. Weil er glaubt, er verfügt über die Offenbarung Gottes, ist er sich des sozialpolitischen Unterbaus seiner Überzeugung nicht bewusst. Dieser Fundamentalismus ist eine Erbe aus früheren Zeiten, die sich nur sehr langsam überwinden lassen wird’.<sup>15</sup> He continues: ‘In einem Sinn kann man sagen, dass der Geist der Aufklärung jetzt erst in Südafrika spürbar ist’.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Deist 1983a:12-13.

<sup>11</sup> Deist 1983a:13-14.

<sup>12</sup> Cf also Deist 1994:34.

<sup>13</sup> Clines (1993:77-78) infers as follows: ‘The church does not really know, I think, how much it needs to be liberated from the shackles of fundamentalism, or how much it needs to abandon the use of the Bible as a tool for social control ... The academy’s biblical criticism inevitably relativizes the authority of the Bible, and the church can only benefit from such a humanizing of the Bible’.

<sup>14</sup> Deist 1983a:14.

<sup>15</sup> In this regard Soggin (1996:35) infers as follows: ‘One of the main characteristics of Protestant Fundamentalism is its anti-scientific bias and especially its rejection of Darwinism, all this with the otherwise laudable intention of defending the Bible and its truths against what is deemed to be an attack by ‘liberal’ forces, especially in theology ... Fundamentalism can be the reaction of ignorant people and of the poor against certain aspects of natural sciences and of culture in general, which they feel as threatening their simple faith, the ‘old time Religion’, which was “good enough for Moses – is good enough for me”’. He continues ‘(e)ssential elements in fundamentalistically oriented Churches and groups are: faith in the Holy Trinity,

Le Roux<sup>17</sup> infers that in South Africa we specifically did not experience Kant's Copernican Revolution, and specifically the effects this revolution had on both theology and the understanding of biblical texts. According to Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) – one of the greatest and most influential philosophers of the Enlightenment (*Aufklärung*) – we should turn to the light of reason, and we should investigate pure reason in order to determine what it is capable of and what not.<sup>18</sup> He furthermore postulates that absolute knowledge is impossible because an object conforms to the nature of our faculty of intuition and not the other way round. In other words, objects conform to our perception. He did not accept that all knowledge could be derived solely from experience. In order to understand our experiences, we have to have some concepts or tools ('categories' such as quantity and causation) that are not learnt from experience, but that enable us to make sense of the natural world through our experience. The order and coherence of the natural world, the laws of nature, are then not inherent in nature but constructs imposed upon it by our minds: the order and regularity in objects, which we entitle nature, we ourselves introduce. The understanding is itself the lawgiver of nature.<sup>19</sup> This (Kantian) view had an enormous effect on both the theology and science of exegesis. Out of the *Aufklärung* the historical critical method of exegesis developed.<sup>20</sup> South Africa, however, missed all this.

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Divinity of Jesus Christ, Virgin Birth, Atonement for our sins through His Blood, all humanity being naturally sinful, Final Judgement at the end of times' (Soggin 1996:36-37). Cf also Barr 1981<sup>2</sup> and Barr 1984 for an extensive discussion of this phenomenon.

<sup>16</sup> Deist 1983a:13.

<sup>17</sup> Le Roux 1993:26.

<sup>18</sup> Kant ([1784] 2003:54) defines *Aufklärung* as follows: 'Enlightenment is man's release from his self-incurred tutelage. Tutelage is man's inability to make use of his understanding without direction from another. Self-incurred is his tutelage when its cause lies not in lack of reason but in lack of resolution and courage to use it without direction from another. *Sapere aude!* [Dare to know!] 'Have courage to use your own reason!' – that is the motto of enlightenment'. The original German (as quoted in Kraus 1988:77) is as follows: 'Aufklärung ist der Ausgang des Menschen aus seiner selbst verschuldeten Unmündigkeit. Unmündigkeit ist das Unvermögen, sich seines Verstandes ohne Leitung eines anderen zu bedienen. Selbstverschuldet ist diese Unmündigkeit, wenn die Ursache derselben nicht am Mangel des Verstandes, sondern der Entschliessung und des Mutes liegt sich seiner ohne Leitung eines anderen zu bedienen. *Sapere aude!* Habe Mut, dich deines *eigenen* Verstandes zu bedienen! ist also der Wahlspruch der Aufklärung'.

<sup>19</sup> Kant 1990:20-41 [1781<sup>1</sup>].

<sup>20</sup> Kraus (1988:80) infers as follows: 'Die historisch-kritische *Wissenschaft* entsteht im Zeitalter der Aufklärung'.

Since the beginning of the 1970's, a change took place with regard to the study of the OT in SA.<sup>21</sup> The beginning of the 70's signalled the heyday of OT scholarship in SA: a movement started which led to the study of the biblical texts on a scale we had never experienced before. On 3 March 1971 a paper, which was read in Pretoria by the late Willem Vorster at a New Testament Society meeting, had far-reaching effects – not only for New Testament scholarship, but eventually for OT studies as well. Willem Vorster urged NT scholars to take cognisance of the results of modern linguistics.<sup>22</sup> Vorster's views were based on those of Jannie Louw, professor in Greek at the University of the Orange Free State (Bloemfontein), who had already explored the possibilities of the newer linguistic and linguistics theory.<sup>23</sup> Vorster's paper reflected a specific approach and terminology that would be decisive for future developments of biblical sciences in SA. His approach reflected the following: concentration on the final text and the rejection of information about the text's historical growth. The terminology used also reflected the emphasis of this approach: immanent, synchrony, structural analysis. Willem Vorster's speech in March 1971 was decisive. It can even be described as the starting point of biblical scholarship in SA. From that day onwards, the OT was approached in a different manner.

Jimmy Loader (at present professor in Vienna) was the one who applied this new approach to the OT – he explained it in such a manner that it became accessible to many people. In an article, he worked out and described the method of structural analysis as a means of interpreting the OT correctly.<sup>24</sup> His ideas shaped the thoughts of a whole new generation of scholars. He explained the method and its application to the OT to his students at the Department of Semitic Languages at the University of Pretoria. He had quite a number of students who followed him in this new paradigm. His article was the outcome of some of the lectures that he had presented in collaboration with Jannie Louw. Loader's success in this regard can be ascribed to the following – to quote Le Roux: 'he supplied the terminology to describe the process of understanding and he provided the scholarly community with a method which could be applied in a few easy steps'.<sup>25</sup> The late Willem Prinsloo reinterpreted this method and made it the dominant model of exegesis for theological students at the University of Pretoria.<sup>26</sup> Prinsloo made a meticulous study of the work of Wolfgang Richter, and reinterpreted Loader in the light of this. Prinsloo eventually shaped the minds of generations of theological students studying the OT.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Le Roux 1993:27ff.

<sup>22</sup> Vorster 1971:139-148.

<sup>23</sup> Louw 1966:73-88; Louw 1967:9-19; Louw 1970:8-18.

<sup>24</sup> Loader 1978:1-40. Cf also J A Loader 1986:128-142.

<sup>25</sup> Le Roux 1993:29.

<sup>26</sup> Cf for example Prinsloo 1994:78-83.

<sup>27</sup> Le Roux 1993:32.

The late Ferdinand Deist, on the other hand, had a different emphasis: he approached the OT from a historical point of view. In this regard he rendered an invaluable service to biblical scholarship in SA, as historical criticism had been very much neglected in the SA situation. Deist therefore took great pains to explain, describe and to put this approach into practice.<sup>28</sup>

This section will now be concluded. Before the 1970's, the dominant scholarly approach in SA was confessional and conservative. Willem Vorster's talk in March 1971 caused far-reaching changes in biblical scholarship in SA. The past three decades have been dominated by the emphasis on either a synchronic reading of the text or a diachronic reading of the text. The emphasis was, however, much stronger on the synchronic reading.

In the light of the foregoing discussion, I will now outline my viewpoints on exegetical methodology. Although in the coming section I will mostly refer to developments within exegesis of the Psalms, I believe it is just as applicable for all other biblical *corpora*; whether it be the Pentateuch, Prophets or the Writings.

## C METHODOLOGICAL ORIENTATION

At the beginning of the twenty-first century, psalm studies are very different from what they were a few decades ago. What holds for all fields of study of the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament, holds no less for the interpretation of the psalms: in recent decades traditional hypotheses and methods have undergone such a process of refinement that they have practically disintegrated.<sup>29</sup> The last decades of psalm studies have been characterised by a widespread questioning of 'assured results' and a willingness to ask new questions and venture down new avenues. New insights question the old suppositions as well as the epistemologies underlying these suppositions.<sup>30</sup>

It is important to note the following general remarks with regard to exegesis of the Psalms. Since Gunkel and Mowinckel, psalm scholarship has been dominated by the form-critical and cult-functional approaches.<sup>31</sup> Form criticism, with its fixation on the types of psalms, has, however, shown little interest in the composition of the Psalter as a whole.<sup>32</sup> The psalms were treated as songs that were composed independently of each other, so that each psalm was treated as a closed unit. These approaches ignore the canonical order of the psalms and

<sup>28</sup> Le Roux 1993:33ff. Cf also for example Deist 1973:75-81; Deist 1978:260-271; Deist 1983b:26-48; Deist 1983c:73-88; Deist 1988:39-54; Deist 1989:56-63; Deist 1995:37-48.

<sup>29</sup> Berges 1999:118-120; Berges 2000:168-171; Zenger 1994:37ff.

<sup>30</sup> Spieckermann 1998:144f and Zenger 1994:43.

<sup>31</sup> Spieckermann 1998:137ff and Zenger 2000:399ff.

<sup>32</sup> See also Zenger 2000:414.

rearrange psalms according to the genre and *Sitz im Leben* of each psalm; the result, however, has – by no means – been satisfactory. The insight has been growing that these approaches have a limited value in studying the psalms, and consequently their gains have begun to diminish. Furthermore, today it is acknowledged that these approaches represent one methodological aspect of psalm analysis among others. The shaping of the Psalter has softened the edges of the form-critical categories thus without diminishing their validity as an exegetical and a heuristic tool.<sup>33</sup>

Psalms studies, like biblical studies, have undergone a paradigm shift in the past decades. Texts are now read as texts, that is, as literary entities and canonical wholes. This assumption is manifested in psalm studies in several ways, the most important of which is the attention paid to the Psalter as a book, as a coherent whole. As a result, one notices an increasing interest in psalm exegesis from the point of both redaction criticism as well as composition criticism.<sup>34</sup> When specific elements in a text are perceived as additions, the emphasis in exegesis is, at present, more on a possible ‘reconstruction’ of the theological agenda of these stages of growth together with the ‘potential’ group/groups responsible for these stages of growth.<sup>35</sup> The redaction-critical endeavour is combined with a canonical

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<sup>33</sup> Janowski (1998:397) infers as follows: ‘Wie in jüngerer Zeit schrittweise erkannt wird, ist der kanonische Psalter das Ergebnis eines komplexen Sammlungs- und Redaktionsprozesses. In dessen Verlauf wird jeder Einzelsalm in einen grösseren Kontext gestellt, durch den ihm oft ein neuer Sinn und eine zusätzliche Funktion wächst’. Cf in this regard also Millard 1994; Weber 2001; Weber 2003; Wilson 1985.

<sup>34</sup> Zenger 1994:43.

<sup>35</sup> According to Le Roux (1993:53) ‘*redaction history* examines the text’s growth from the first written edition through all the stages of development, compilation and editorial commentary, to its final form. This comprises an explanation of the fusion of transmissions or traditions, the many additions and their influence on the text’s final shape. In short, redaction history endeavours to organise and explain in terms of history. The importance of redaction history for the exegesis of the Old Testament is obvious. First, a theological framework of the final redactor is provided. At a specific point in time, the final editor shaped the final text and conferred a ‘final’ meaning to it. Second, this meaning can be explained in terms of theological views of an earlier stage of development’. Cf in this regard also Deist (1994:288): ‘*Histories* het hier ‘n *ideologie-kritiese* bodem. Die teks (met sy boodskap word beskou as ‘n *produk* van sosiale en ander omstandighede. Die historiese analise van die teks (gepaard met ander historiese inligting oor die tyd) moet derhalwe die ideologiese tendense uit die tekste rekonstrueer. Vir dié doel het die histories-kritiese eksegetiese metode homself aangebied, terwyl ‘n spesifieke geskiedteoretiese raamwerk die resultate van dié teksanalises in ‘n samelewingskonteks plaas’. Cf also O H Steck’s discussion of the ‘redaction historical approach’ in his book on *Old Testament exegesis* (1995:79-98).

reading of the text: that is, the question regarding the significance of the individual text's position for the interpretation of this specific individual text.<sup>36</sup> Some recent studies have begun to note ways in which the shape of the Psalter may suggest the presence of some editorial purposes.<sup>37</sup> Admittedly, the results that have come from these studies are by no means conclusive, perhaps because the editors had a variety of purposes, but the probing that has begun suggests new ways of approaching psalm studies. In this approach, we may be concerned to ask questions about what the editors of the canonical book of the psalms intended to convey by the particular selection of psalms that they have made available to us. In the Psalter, we may therefore note the contribution of both the creators of the original psalms and that of the editors. According to Spieckermann, the objective of a compositional-critical reading of the text can be summarised as follows: to observe the literary microcosmos of the text within the macrocosmos of the text in a balanced manner.<sup>38</sup>

It is important to note that the net result of this recent interest in the Psalter is to bring it into the same arena in which most biblical books, for decades, have found themselves: one where they are treated as unified compositions and are mined for the treasures to be found in their whole message, as well as in their component parts. It furthermore also concurs with recent trends, for example, in the study of the twelve Minor Prophets (the Dodecapropheton). Much recent research on the

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<sup>36</sup> In this regard, Zenger (1999:443) infers as follows: 'Als wichtigste neue Perspektive beurteile ich selbst den Versuch, die Einzelpsalmen in ihrem größeren literarischen Kontext zu sehen, sei es als Teiltexthe einer Psalmengruppe, sei es als Teiltexthe des gesamten Psalmenbuchs'.

<sup>37</sup> A helpful survey of recent publications on this trend is offered by W S Prinsloo (1995:459-469). In this survey, he indicates the roots of this approach in the work of Gunkel and Mowinckel, while also highlighting the differences in current European and North American research. Compare also Howard (1999:329-368) and Mitchell (1997:48-65) for extensive bibliographical overviews.

<sup>38</sup> Spieckermann (1998:145) postulates as follows: 'Primäre Orientierung der Auslegung an der Textebene bedeutet: Orientierung der Auslegung am einzelnen Psalm und am Psalter als Buch. Literarischer Mikrokosmos und Makrokosmos müssen in einem balancierten Verhältnis wahrgenommen werden. Einerseits gäbe es ohne die Mikrokosmen der Psalmen mit ihrer je eigenen Geschichte und Individualität den Makrokosmos des Psalters nicht. Und andererseits ist der Psalter nicht einfach das Konglomerat von 150 Psalmen, sondern eben ein literarischer Makrokosmos, ein weithin überlegt gestaltetes Gebilde, in der kanonisierten Endfassung gleichsam die endgültige Manifestation der einem jeden Psalm innewohnenden Intention, über seine Ursprungssituation hinauszuwachsen und in einem Ensemble von Stimmen dem Gotteslob in seiner ganzen Spannweite und Tiefe Stimme zu geben'.



Book of the Twelve has focused on the book as an edited whole.<sup>39</sup> Scholars conducting this research do not advocate abandoning attention to the individual books or even the individual messages of the prophets, but they do advocate going beyond such readings to a more canonical approach. They begin with the observation that the Twelve constitute one book in the Hebrew canon. They point to superscriptions, catchwords as well as catchphrases at the onset and ending of each respective book, allusions, shared themes, and even an overall plot as evidence of a deliberate unity. They hold that reading the Twelve as a whole, supplements usual techniques of reading and yields insights missed by reading them only in isolation from one another. Therefore, this new development in psalm studies can only be a salutary one.

A second area in which there have been far-reaching changes in the past few decades is in the studies of Hebrew poetry. These studies naturally range beyond the book of psalms, but the psalms are the largest corpus of Hebrew poetry. The individual psalms have increasingly been seen as individual works of art. Poetic analysis has recourse to different approaches which are all – taken *in sensu lato* – within the domain of the literary sciences: poetology, structural analysis of different provenance, metaphor research, aesthetic theory of style and rhetoric, reader-response-criticism et cetera.<sup>40</sup> These different analyses are combined with the so-called ‘final-text exegesis’, which attempts to take the end form of the text seriously as opposed to the historical-critical exegesis which (sometimes) attaches more importance to the first or more original form of the text.<sup>41</sup>

## D CONCLUSION

The fact must thus be recognised that Old Testament scholarship, at the beginning of the twenty-first century, is faced methodologically with a fundamental challenge, namely to combine synchronic and diachronic textual reading. It is thus no longer a question of either synchronic or diachronic reading of a specific text. Synchronic reading can no longer regard historical refinement as a redundant endeavour – the same can be postulated for the opposite.

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<sup>39</sup> Barton 2000:33-37 and Jeremias 1998:122-136. Compare Redditt (2001:47-80) for an extensive overview in this regard.

<sup>40</sup> Spieckermann 1998:144.

<sup>41</sup> Zenger 1994:43. Cf in this regard also W S Prinsloo (1985:2): ‘Historical criticism must face the charge that, on the strength of its romantic supposition that the earliest source is the most authentic or the best, it has often failed to take proper account of the final text. In its attempt at reconstructing the so-called ‘original’ text it makes so much of the origin and growth of the final version that the latter is largely neglected’.

In this regard, Berges<sup>42</sup> infers as follows: ‘Die Herausforderung an die aktuelle alttestamentliche Exegese liegt nicht in einem methodologischen *aut-aut* von Diachronie oder Synchronie, sondern in einem spannungsvollen *et-et*. Einer so geforderten ‘diachron reflektierten Synchronie’ methodisch und inhaltlich den Weg zu bahnen, scheint die Aufgabe der Zukunft zu sein’.<sup>43</sup> This new theoretical understanding therefore necessitates a diachronically reflected synchronic reading of the text. In this regard Barr<sup>44</sup> states as follows: ‘... the diachronic consideration explains the synchronic ... fact’; that is to say; they are thus inextricably intertwined and linked to one another.<sup>45</sup> Therefore, it can be deduced that synchronic analysis without diachronic input seems to touch only the textual surface.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> Berges 2000:170. See also Berges (1999:119-120): ‘De uitdaging waarvoor de huidige exegese van het oude testament staat is dat ze niet zozeer methodologisch moet kiezen tussen ofwel diachronie ofwel synchronie, maar beide tegelijk in spanning tot elkaar moet hanteren ... zo’n ‘diachroon bereflecteerde synchronie’ ... lijkt onze opdracht voor de toekomst’.

<sup>43</sup> In this regard Deist (1983c:86-87) infers as follows: ‘What we need is a marriage of structural and historical awareness *within the perceiving mind of the exegete* ... An exegete has to be trained to be constantly on the lookout for all sorts of structural and historical indicators in the text and to integrate them into the process of understanding. From this integrated process of perceiving he has to create his story (or narrative) of what the text means’. See also Barton 1994:15; Beuken 1994:26-27; Deist 1995:44-47; Dohmen 2003:167-169; Human 1999:357-360; Joyce 1995:127; Rendtorff 1993a:52; Ryou 1995:4-7; Talstra 1993:264-265; Talstra 1995:207-208.

<sup>44</sup> Barr 1995:7.

<sup>45</sup> Compare also Deist (1995:46): ‘... synchronic interpretation still demands the incalculation of *the time factor* ...’.

<sup>46</sup> In this regard Spieckermann (1998:145) postulates as follows: ‘Auch in der Psalmenexegese gilt: Synchronie Textbeschreibung bleibt ohne diachrone Analyse oberflächlich. Diachrone analyse bleibt ohne Ausrichtung auf die Synthese und das dort gegebene synchronie Miteinander der Textelemente museal’.

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