Trito-Isaiah, penitential prayer and apocalypticism

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An analysis of the research on the compositional development of Isaiah 56–66 indicates that the redefinition of Judean identity played a major role in the formation of these chapters. Scholars very often refer to the penitential prayer in Isaiah 63:7–64:11 to indicate this redefinition of identity. A study of the background of these chapters shows that Hanson's theory of a developing apocalypticism is usually upheld, whilst his identification of a Zadokite opposition is either rejected or replaced by an acknowledgement that it is not possible to identify these opponents. The suggestion of this article is that the term 'qualified inclusivism' can be used as the mark of those responsible for this section of the book of Isaiah.

Introduction

During the Second Temple period (515 BCE – 70 CE) at least two opinions existed with regard to Judean identity. In Ezekiel, and also in the books Chronicles and Ezra–Nehemiah, an inclination towards an exclusivist viewpoint is found. An opposing inclusivist point of view is present in the biblical books Ruth, Jonah, Job, Ecclesiastes and Esther, as well as in deuterocanonical books such as Judith and Tobit.

Boccaccini (2002:88) states that 'in the early Second Temple period, Third Isaiah and Ruth still testify to the vitality of the prophetic movement … and **to their opposition against Zadokite exclusiveness'** (boldface by the author). This remark points out three issues:

- The prophetic movement was still under way and it stood in opposition to 'Zadokite exclusiveness' (Boccaccini 2002:88).
- Indications of opposition to this Zadokite exclusiveness is found in books such as Ruth and Trito-Isaiah (Is 56–66). Whether one agrees with Boccaccini's view that a recognisable Zadokite party was in existence when Trito-Isaiah was written or not, it is indisputable that an exclusivist trend was already in existence. Ruth and Trito-Isaiah represent an opposing inclusivist trend.
- During the Second Temple Period there were different parallel streams or movements of progressive Israelite thinking. During these six centuries existing viewpoints were developed into new forms; inclusivist and exclusivist viewpoints existed simultaneously, although they underwent separate developments.

In this article I continue my research on these opposing viewpoints during the Second Temple Period. I focus mainly on the issue of Judean identity being inclined towards either an exclusivist or an inclusivist stance. The article focuses on Trito-Isaiah and investigates the probability that Isaiah 56–66 represents the first stages of an inclusivist stance in the earliest phases of the Second Temple Period.

It is noteworthy that studies on the redactional growth of Isaiah 56–66 investigated here very often refer to the issue of identity. In their research scholars show time and again that the concept of 'Yahweh's children' found in Isaiah 40–55 was reformulated in Trito-Isaiah to redraw the borders of the people of Israel. In this section of Isaiah even members of the traditional enemies of Israel are included in a future dispensation, whilst Israelites who are unfaithful to Yahweh are excluded. This shift can be illustrated by analysing the penitential prayer in Isaiah 63:7–64:11 and by studying the redactional development of the lament in Isaiah 56–66.

For a better understanding of this reformulating of Israelite identity in Trito-Isaiah, the probable social background of the book has to be studied as well. Boccaccini (2002, quoted above) sees this development as part of a prophetic movement in opposition to other contemporary movements. One has to ask several questions in this regard. Is Hanson correct when he sees this development in tandem with the 'transformation of prophetic eschatology into apocalyptic eschatology' (Hanson 1979:43)? Is this moving towards apocalypticism also an indication of a developing inclusivism in Israelite identity? And in opposition to whom and against whom is the obvious polemical speeches in Trito-Isaiah directed? Can the contents of the views on identity in Trito-Isaiah's group be further delineated by identifying their opposition? And for the purpose of this study: do we

already have an early stage of a developing conflict between two views on identity here?

This article investigates questions like these by firstly paying attention to redactional studies of Trito-Isaiah. Secondly, it uses these results to investigate some theories on the probable background of the ideas found in Isaiah 56–66. It endeavours to contribute to the study of Trito-Isaiah by demonstrating that the polemics in Trito-Isaiah are to be understood first of all in terms of a developing Israelite identity. The thesis is then developed that Trito-Isaiah represents an early trajectory in the growing debate between an exclusivist and an inclusivist stance, a debate which was continued and intensified during the rest of the Second Temple Period.

The book of Isaiah and Trito-Isaiah

The term 'Trito-Isaiah' is understood here as a nomenclature to indicate Isaiah 56 to Isaiah 66 rather than simply as the name of a person or a group. Beuken (1989:204) sees the book of Isaiah as the result of a 'complicated process in which extensive *Vorlagen* of the current three major parts[1] have been joined together by means of fundamental editing'.[2] According to his view Isaiah 65 to Isaiah 66 not only concludes the third section of Isaiah (56–66), but also links the third section to the second section of Isaiah (Is 40–55) and to the first section of Isaiah (1–29).[3]

Isaiah 65:1–66:14[4] uses the words 'servants' (plural) seven times, indicating that the topic of the servants of Yahweh is the central issue in Trito-Isaiah (cf Beuken 1989:207). This third section extends the concept of 'the servant' (singular) in Isaiah 40–55 into that of 'servants' (plural) and gives to it a new connotation (cf Beuken 1989:205). Isaiah 66:15–24 fulfils a double function. Verses 15 to 20a conclude Deutero-Isaiah (Is 40–55) as well as Trito-Isaiah.[5] The last two verses of chapter 66[6] end the whole book of Isaiah, unifying 'the three Isaiahs into one expectation of God's final act with regard to Zion' (Beuken 1989:221).[7]

1. See Sommer's (1998:187–195) reference to Torry, Kaufmann and Haran in defence of the theory that Isaiah 40–66 stems from one author and should be viewed as a single composition.

2. See Williamson's (2000:734–739) discussion on the theory that Trito-Isaiah was working under the influence of Jeremiah. See also Sommer's (1998:32–72) chapter 2 on Deutero-Isaiah's use of Jeremiah.

3. Emmerson (1992:39) remarks that 'the message of Third Isaiah must be considered in its own right as a prophetic word, but it must also be understood in relation to the whole canonical book of Isaiah'. With regard to research on Isaiah Berges (2010:552) points out that 'the situation has changed so fundamentally in the last twenty years that at present a preoccupation with partial compositions has to take the entire book into consideration'. Childs (2001:441) strongly supports the move by scholars such as Beuken, Rendtorff and Steck to interpret chapters 56–66 as part of a larger literary collection rather than an independent corpus only peripherally connected to the large book of Isaiah. Consequently this study focuses on Trito-Isaiah as eventually part of the final phase of a long history of growth.

4. The text numbering of the Hebrew Bible used in the *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia* is followed throughout in this article.

5. See Oswalt's (1997:177–191) view that Trito-Isaiah is not a mere reflection on the previous sections of Isaiah, but was written in full knowledge of chapters 1–55 and 'function[s] to unify that corpus' (Oswalt 1997:178). It is rather a 'circling back ... to tie the two sections together (Oswalt 1997:191). Was it not for Trito-Isaiah, there would have been a 'very serious conflict' (Oswalt 1997:179) between chapters 1–39 and chapters 40–55. Sweeney (1997:455–474) identifies Isaiah 65–66 as the conclusion of the book of Isaiah as a whole.

6. See Sweeney's (1997:455–474) view of a 'literary envelope' (Sweeney 1997:455) connecting Isaiah 1 and Isaiah 65–66.

7. This theory of Beuken renders the traditional division of Isaiah into three parts (cf Duhm's well-known thesis of 1892) untenable. It is now only possible to refer to three 'probable' sections.

According to Beuken (1989) the concepts 'servants' and 'Zion' play a central role in the book of Isaiah in its entirety. Both are important for the aim of this article, namely to investigate the identity of Israel.

Trito-Isaiah

The following section investigates redactional research on the growth of Isaiah 56–66. It will become clear that redaction criticism substantiates the viewpoint held here that a change took place in the concept of identity.

Whilst Beuken's synchronically oriented analysis focuses on the final compilation of the book of Isaiah, using Isaiah 66:15–24 as the linchpin for reading the book's 66 chapters, other scholars pay closer attention to the forming of Isaiah 56–66 as the third main section.

In his contextual–typological analysis Hanson (1979:41) utilises a 'contextual–typological method'[8] whilst at the same time being sensitive to the important sociological factors that affected both the form and contents of the literature. Hanson (1979:45) identifies a 'living, ongoing tradition' behind the formation of Isaiah 65–66.

According to Hanson the message of Isaiah 40–55 is summarised in Isaiah 60–62 as a programme of restoration. New applications of its message are looked for in a new situation. Hanson (1979:60) finds 'the heart of …. the visionary group's program of restoration' in chapters 60–62. The people responsible for this literature were disciples of Second Isaiah and formulated the features and themes that would be developed further in Isaiah 56–59 and Isaiah 63 to Isaiah 66. The promise of restoration, when Zion's children will be gathered from the nations and receive the wealth of the nations, is repeated here. In this development of what Hanson (1979) called 'prophetic eschatology' and which is found in Isaiah 60–62, there is a reapplication of the words of former prophets, as well as a movement from the individual office of the prophet to 'a collective office according to which the community of visionary leaders claims as a body to continue the office of the servant of Yahweh' (Hanson 1979:69).[9] Again, the concept 'servant' and the identity of that servant play a role here.

Smith's (1995) investigation also focuses on the people and their identity. He extends the kernel of chapter 60–62 to include Isaiah 63:1–6 as well. He takes Isaiah 60:1–63:6 to be the basic departing point for the forming of Trito-Isaiah. Smith (1995:6) points out that the question of the authorship of Isaiah 56–66 cannot be avoided 'since this deals with the issue of the levels and coherence of the material within Isaiah 56–66, whether this is formulated in terms of authors, redactors or literary levels.'

Smith's theory is that chapters 56–66 can be attributed to two authors (Smith 1995:204). 'In the context of an act of

8. Schramm (1995:86) refers to Hanson's exegetical approach to Third Isaiah as 'a combination of prosodic analysis and a typology of prophetic genres'.

9. See Beuken's (1989:207) argument that the servants of Yahweh are the central issue in Trito-Isaiah.

universal divine judgment' (Smith 1995:205). Trito-Isaiah created Isaiah 60:1–63:6 during the early post-exilic period. To this existing literature a second author, called TI2 by Smith (1995:205), consecutively added five sections. In these sections the meaning of the concept 'the people of Yahweh' was gradually developed. Isaiah 56:1–8 was added, *inter alia*, to modify the text's attitude towards foreigners (Smith 1995:205). The section Isaiah 58:1–59:20 showed that only 'those who repent of their injustice and change their ways will inherit Yahweh's salvation' (Smith 1995:205). The section Isaiah 56:9–57:21 indicated who would be able to participate in Yahweh's salvation.

Isaiah 65:1–66:17 was a response to the exilic 'community lament' that was quoted in 63:7–64:11 (Smith 1995:205). These verses indicated that the time had run out for the people and that Yahweh was about to intervene to bring salvation to his faithful people. Finally, Isaiah 66:18–24 and Isaiah 59:21 were added as an appendix to round off Isaiah 56–66.

According to Smith a second author then modified the contents of Isaiah 60:1–63:6 to develop a new viewpoint on the identity of the people of God and those who would be included in God's future salvation. The exilic 'community lament' of Isaiah 63:7–64:11 was also modified to indicate that those who were faithful to the Lord were the Israel of the future.

Stromberg (2011) also sees Isaiah 60–62[10] as the basic point of departure in the forming of Trito-Isaiah. Reviewing the research done on Trito-Isaiah, Stromberg (2011:11) remarks that two broadly agreed positions have emerged from the debate over the formation[11] of Trito-Isaiah. The first agreement is that the earliest material in Trito-Isaiah is found in Isaiah 60–62. This was the core around which later material was added. The second consensus in present-day research is that Isaiah 56:1–8 and Isaiah 65–66 was the last material added, with the intention that it should form a frame or bookend around the whole of Trito-Isaiah. Isaiah 56:9–59:21 and Isaiah 63–64 was put between the core and the framework (Stromberg 2011:11).

Stromberg (2011:12) attributes Isaiah 60–62 to 'a different hand than at least some of the material around it.' The surrounding material was 'written as a conscious development of it' (Stromberg 2011:12). This core material in Isaiah 60–62 comes from 'an author who was slightly later than, and heavily influenced, by the words of Deutero-Isaiah, but whose own work was earlier than the bulk of the remaining material in chapters 56–66' (Stromberg 2011:13).

The book-end framework of Isaiah 56:1–8 and Isaiah 65–66 comes from a later redactor who used these passages 'to

form a frame around the whole of TI' (Stromberg 2011:15) and who kept the whole of the then existing Isaiah in mind when he did so.

The first part of the framework addition, Isaiah 56:1–8, has a concentric structure[12] with God's offer of salvation for all mankind (Is 56:2) balanced by his promise to bring those who are obedient amongst the nations to his temple (Is 56:8). In the centre of Isaiah 56:1–8 God's offer of salvation is extended to all mankind, including the foreigner and the eunuch.

The second part of the framework, Isaiah 65–66, is governed by the structure of a twofold address in 'the form of a prophetic report containing a first person speech by the Lord addressed first to the wicked … followed by an address to the righteous …' (Stromberg[13] 2011:43). A 'textual network of interrelations' (Stromberg 2011:49) binds Isaiah 65 and Isaiah 66 together, suggesting a degree of textual coherence. Being a response to the lament in Isaiah 63:7–64:11, both chapters have the same theme (Stromberg 2011:49–51) and originate from the same author.[14] Even Isaiah 66:18–24 is an integral part of Isaiah 65–66. Stromberg (2011:65) opposes Smith's (1995) opinion that these final words in Isaiah 66:18–24 form a separate unit and move beyond the focus on inner-community interests found in the previous sections. Stromberg (2011:65) states instead that the future role of the nations will continue to function in terms of Israel's role. They act in terms of God's people. They are to bring the righteous remnant of Israel (distinguished from the wicked section of Israel in Isaiah 55) to God's holy mountain. Although God's eschatological plans are extended to the nations, even to the point of including them in the temple service, they are still qualified in terms of service to Israel. This is a very important statement to which we shall return later. It is a qualified definition of identity.

Stromberg (2011:14–15) indicates several factors which bind the two sections in Isaiah 56:1–8 and Isaiah 65–66 together so that they form a framework around Isaiah 56:9–64:12. Three of these factors are of concern for our study. Firstly, in both cases 'an eschatological movement' can be seen in the idea that those who are obedient will be brought to God's holy mountain (Is 56:7) and that those who survive will bring the nations to God's holy mountain (Is 66:19–20). Secondly,[15] in both passages (Is 56:1–8 and Is 65–66) this movement culminates in the viewpoint that all the nations will be included in the cult. Foreigners are not only granted access to the temple ('a house of prayer for all nations' – see Is 56:7), but are even permitted to join the priesthood (Is 66:21). Thirdly, both passages promise the ingathering of the nations (see Is 56:8 and Is 66:18) as a result of the movement towards the temple.[16] Although Isaiah 66:18–24 'has the

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10. Westermann (1969:296), who calls Isaiah 60–62 the 'nucleus' of Trito-Isaiah, sees Trito-Isaiah as a 'definite person, a prophet of the early post-exilic period' (Westermann 1969:299) and dates this passage between 537 BCE and 515 BCE (Westermann 1969:296). See also Koole (1995:25–27) for the same argument and proposed structure.

11. Stromberg's (2011:6) study is, in his words, 'text-based' rather than 'event-based'. Although he focuses on the 'editorial history' and seeks to 'uncover a stage in the development of Isaiah' (Stromberg 2011:6), he takes cognisance of the widely held view that much of Trito-Isaiah was composed in the first century of Persian rule. He acknowledges that Hanson (1975) contributed largely to the analysis of the specific communities and their particular conditions. They were the probable source of the material (see Stromberg 2011:6–7).

12. Stromberg (2011:42) got this analysis from Smith (1995).

13. Stromberg follows Sweeney (1997) to a large extent in this analysis.

14. Stromberg's study focuses on the redactional history of Isaiah 56–66 and he argues in this section (Stromberg 2011:51–67) that Isaiah 65–66 comes from a single hand. His argument is used here to trace the probable ideological development in Trito-Isaiah's thinking regarding the role of the nations.

15. Stromberg (2011:14) refers to the work of Koenen (1990) in this regard.

16. Here Stromberg (2011:14) also refers to the work of Koenen (1990).

character of a visionary program, [while] 56:1–8 stands more as an exhortation'[17] (Stromberg 2011:17), and although they have different literary functions at the beginning and end of Trito-Isaiah, the two sections originated from a single author.

The two sections of the framework also have a similar function. Isaiah 56:1–8 was consciously written both as a new beginning after Isaiah 1–55, and as 'a programmatic introduction to TI' (Stromberg 2011:17). Isaiah 65–66 was created to conclude both Trito-Isaiah and the book as a whole.[18]

If Isaiah 60–62 was the core material, then the framework in Isaiah 56:1–8 and Isaiah 65–66 presupposed and developed that core, as indicated by several scholars (see Stromberg 2011:28–29). Isaiah 56:1–8 'develops 60–2, transforming its view of the nations into a more inclusive vision' (Stromberg 2011:29). Whilst there is no openness to foreigners in Isaiah 60–62, especially regarding the temple, the frame in Isaiah 56:7 redeploys the concept of the foreigners 'along the lines that are significantly more inclusive with respect to the non-Israelite' (Stromberg 2011:28). This more inclusive vision of the foreigner is also found in Isaiah 65–66 where a new openness of the cult to foreigners is propagated (see Is 66:21). In both passages the idea is found 'that individual righteousness (rather than nationality) is the criterion for salvation' (Stromberg 2011:37). However, a different set of ideas regarding the corporate personality of Zion is developed in Isaiah 65–66 (see Stromberg 2011:29). Isaiah 65–66 divides the community into righteous and wicked individuals – a division not found in Isaiah 60–62 – and limits the promise of restoration to righteous individuals only.

Stromberg's reconstruction of the redactional growth of Trito-Isaiah can be summarised as follows: around the core of Isaiah 60–62, written by somebody very much influenced by Deutero-Isaiah (Is 40–55), a first framework was formed by adding Isaiah 59:15–20 and Isaiah 63:1–6. To this was added the present text of Isaiah 56:9–59:14, Isaiah 63:1–6 and the lament in Isaiah 63:7–64:11. The outer framework of Isaiah 56:1–8 and Isaiah 65–66 was added partly as reaction to the lament in Isaiah 63:7–64:11 and partly as bookend framework for Isaiah 56:9–64:11. In this redactional process 'an eschatological movement' can be seen developing the identity of Yahweh's people 'into a more inclusive vision' (Stromberg 2011:29). Not all of Israel, but rather those who are obedient, even those not belonging to Israel, will experience Yahweh's eschatological salvation.

In all three of the studies discussed above (Hanson, Smith and Stromberg) the theories presented on the redactional growth of Trito-Isaiah indicate that a development took place in views about the identity of God's people. The border between Israel and the nations was replaced by a division between the obedient and the transgressors. Other nations could be included on either side of this division.

17.Stromberg (2011:18) also calls it 'an eschatological narrative'.

18.See Beuken (1989) above.

Isaiah 63:7–64:11: The penitential prayer

As can be seen from the review of scholarly research above, a remarkable number of scholars refer to the lament or penitential prayer in Isaiah 63:7–64:11 to investigate the contents and meaning[19] of Trito[20]-Isaiah[21]. Their research substantiates my thesis that the concept of identity plays a large, if not the main, role in the redactional development of Trito-Isaiah.

Although Hanson[22] (1979), Smith (1995) and Stromberg (2011) locate the lament in Isaiah 63:7–64:11 differently in their hypotheses of the development of Trito-Isaiah, all three agree that this older prayer[23] was used to modify the identity of the people of Israel.[24] They agree that a traditional lament[25] was used in a new way to indicate those who were part of God's people and those who were not.

Hanson (1979:86–87) dates the 'communal lament' in Isaiah 63:7–64:11 later than Isaiah 60–62 and Isaiah 57:14–19, but earlier than the other oracles in chapters 56–66 (Hanson 1979:87–88). He is of the opinion that this lament was written as a trajectory in a visionary tradition where a prophetic group found itself being denied its rightful position of leadership.

According to Hanson's commentary (1995:232) the Divine Warrior Hymn (Is 63:1–6) and the lament in Isaiah 63:7–64:12

19.Two examples will suffice. Westermann (1969:300–301) says that the purpose of putting the nucleus in Isaiah 60–62 within the framework of the two laments found in previous chapter 59 and and the following chapter 63, is to link the proclamation of salvation in the nucleus 'with the nation's lament: it gives God's answer to the supplication' (Westermann 1969:300). When he altered and expanded the text, Trito-Isaiah included these laments into his message firstly to identify himself with the people who experienced the fall of Jerusalem, and secondly to reject the anxiety in the laments – God would no longer be silent; his glory would rise up (Westermann 1969:301). Dim (2005:41–43) studies the eschatological implications of Isaiah 65 and 66 as the conclusion of the book of Isaiah. He investigates the relationship between the lament in Isaiah 63:7–64:11 and chapters 65 and 66 to illustrate his thesis on the eschatological role of these last two chapters.

20.If it is accepted that his traditional lament is older than the rest of Trito-Isaiah, the question is: What is the relationship of the lament to Deutero-Isaiah? That in turn opens up the whole problem of the relationship between Isaiah 56–66 and Isaiah 40–55. In opposition to Zimmerli, who uses citations and allusions to indicate that Third Isaiah spiritualised Second Isaiah's eschatological message for a new postexilic situation, Childs (2001:442) is of the opinion that Third Isaiah quoted and alluded to Second Isaiah to stress the authority of Second Isaiah and extend the message of Second Isaiah. Childs (2001:442) would 'stress the deictic rather than the midrashic function of Third Isaiah's use of Second Isaiah'. However, in the case of this 'communal complaint', Childs (2001:522) points out that the theme of God as Father in the lament 'is expanded in a way unknown to Second Isaiah' (Childs 2001:522).

21.Williamson (1990:50) uses Isaiah 63:7–64:11 not only to defend the position that this passage was an exilic lament incorporated into Trito-Isaiah, but also to criticise Hanson's argument that the passage 'reflects one side's view of an inner-community rival rather than [being] a lament by the whole of the community in the face of their difficult circumstances'.

22.See below for Hanson's view of the lament.

23.Westermann (1969:300–301) says that the community laments in chapters 59 and 63–66 'cannot be compositions of Trito-Isaiah himself'; their provenance is rather Israel's worship. Emmerson (1992:27, 54) suggests that this lament comes from the early exilic period, as it is 'consistent with the early years of the exile' (Emmerson 1992:60).

24.Emmerson (1992:27–30) indicates that Isaiah 59:1–14 is also a lament counterbalancing the lament in Isaiah 63:7–64:11 in the overall symmetry of the structure of Isaiah. Both laments end on the silence of God; both are concerned with the temple and sacrifice (cf Emmerson 1992:19–20). However, the lament in Isaiah 59:1–14 does not follow the conventional form of a communal lament (Emmerson 1992:28), consists of a lament and epiphany linked together, and because of its position in Isaiah, translates the old antithesis of Israel and their enemies into 'the antithesis of righteous and transgressors within the community itself' (Emmerson 1992:30).

25.Koenen (1990:159) says that there is no direct relation between Isaiah 63:7–64:11 and the rest of Trito-Isaiah. Two possibilites exist: either it is a later insertion or it was an existing composition that was included by the redactor in his book. Choosing for the last option, Koenen (1990:159) sees Isaiah 65:1–66:17, especially Isaiah 65:1–7, as an answer to the 'Psalm / Klagelied' (lament) as he calls it.

were added to chapters 60–62 to amplify themes found there. The hymn and lament are addressed to those who continue to maintain faith amidst further delays in the promised redemption of Israel (Hanson 1995:232). An appeal to God to act is followed by a long lament in which the community appeal anew to God to break his silence and to come down to save them. The lament therefore includes a reminder of God's saving actions on Israel's behalf in past eras and also a confession of sin.

Using a familiar genre from the Psalter, the prophet takes up the role of mediator in this communal lament. Mediating between two sides of an endangered relationship, the prophet appeals to God on behalf of the people and to the people on behalf of God. In the lament he bases his appeal for God's help upon a recitation of God's merciful deeds in situations from the past when the people had been similarly threatened. An intolerable tension between things as they had been in the past and as they are in the present is created as a means of shocking alienated parties into an honest confrontation of the causes of the tragic impasse (see Hanson 1995:236). By creating tension and pointing out the sins of the people and urging them to confess, the prophet lays the groundwork for an appeal to God to act (see Hanson 1995:237). Chapter 65 provides an answer to the questions and complaints raised by the lament (see Hanson 1995:241). However, the dualism between Israel and the nations in the lament is then replaced by the awareness that Israel itself is a house divided. It is a pronouncement presenting a promise of salvation to the group within the community who are obedient to God's will.

Williamson (1990:55) defends the view that Isaiah 63:7–64:11 'is a liturgical text from the Palestinian community during the time of the exile'. Some scholars have compared it to some of the Psalms, such as Psalms 44, 74 and 89, and even to Lamentations.[26] However, none of these contain both elements of the lament, namely historical recital and confession of guilt. The nearest example to the lament can be found in Psalm 106 and in the prayer in Nehemiah 9[27] (Williamson 1990:56). All three shed 'light on the liturgical concerns of the late exilic period, very probably on the ruined site of the temple itself' (Williamson 1990:58).

Sweeney (1997:458) refers to the fact that Isaiah 65–66 follows directly upon the lament in Isaiah 63:7–64:11 'and constitute[s] the report of YHWH's response[28] to the lament' (Sweeney 1997:458). Here Yahweh reiterates his decision to provide salvation for the righteous, but now he extends his invitation to all who become part of the covenant community at Zion. It seems as if this lament forms the turning point in Trito-Isaiah, opening up a new vision of the future for the people of God.

Dim (2005:41–44) points out that the lament was made in the name of the entire community. In reality, it reflects 'the fragmented nature of the Jerusalem community of this period' (Dim 2005:41). Dim agrees with scholars who see Isaiah 65 and Isaiah 66 as an answer to the queries made in the lament, but opts for a more sophisticated definition of this answer (Dim 2005:43). For instance, the flagrant idolatry that pervades chapters 56 and 66 is not found in the lament. These chapters are therefore not 'the direct answer to that lament' (Dim 2005:43). Although similar prayers in Psalms 44, 77 and 79 end with a positive response, it is lacking in this case. Isaiah 65:1–9, following directly upon the lament, provides the reason for this lack of a positive result: the false worship in Israel thwarts the divine readiness to respond positively (Dim 2005:43–44). The concept 'Israel' is redefined in chapters 65 and 66: the Judaic community is henceforth divided between those who tremble at Yahweh's word and those who rebel against him (Is 65:8–16) (Dim 2005:1). God brings about a new world where the congregation of all nations will occur in Jerusalem (Dim 2005:2).

According to Bautsch (2006:86) the prayer[29] in Isaiah 63:7–64:11[30] comprises seven sections[31]:

1. historical section (63:7–14)
2. lament (63:15–19a)
3. appeal (63:19b–64:4a)
4. confession of sin (64:4b–6)
5. final appeal that asserts confidence (64:7–8)
6. second lament (64:9–10)
7. conclusion (64:11).

Bautsch (2006:83) believes that the classic lament[32] was not lost during the exilic era, but was retained and adapted in later post-exilic compositions such as Isaiah 63:7–64:11. Bautsch (2006:86–90) identifies two original laments in Trito-Isaiah: Isaiah 63:15–19a and Isaiah 64:9–10. These laments are linked to a confession of sin (Is 64:4b–6) and framed by an appeal (Is 63:15–19a and Is 64:9–10) to God to visit them once more to re-establish his covenant with them (Is 63:7–14). As was done in the prayer in Nehemiah 9 and in contemporary texts in Elephantine (Bautsch 2006:89–90), earlier complaints are here worked into a post-exilic composition. However, in this process of regaining the lament by linking it to a confession of sin, the theological polarities of the classical lament is reversed so that the cause of the lament is now linked to human sin and the focus shifts to God's eventual vindication (Bautsch 2006:90). Using the form of a traditional lament, but

26.See Koole (1995:29), who pointed out a similarity in words and world view.

27.Both passages have been identified as examples of the penitential prayer in recent research.

28.Koenen (1990:161) sees Isaiah 65:1–7 as an answer to the Psalm in Isaiah 63:7–64:11. Isaiah 65:8–66:17 also functions as answer to the contents of the lament. The historical overview and confession of guilt become a 'Gerichtsbotschaft' (message of judgement) (Koenen 1990:162) in Isaiah 65–66.

29.Isaiah 63:7–64:11 is a unity containing a mixture of genres, the controlling genre being the sermon-prayer. Newman (1999:113) calls the prayer 'another example of a scripturalized prayer'.

30.The numbering of the Masoretic texts is followed here.

31.Gärtner's (2006:146–150) demarcation differs from this: urge for commemoration (63:7), two historical reflections (63:8–10 and 63:11–14), petition and complaint (63:15–17), consequence of Yahweh's lack of devotion (63:18–19a), urgent plea for theophany (63:19b–64:2), intervention from Yahweh (64:3a–4a), confession (64:4b–6b), petition and lament (64:7–11). Oswalt (1998:603) indicates four structural elements in this 'community lament': historical reminiscence (63:7–14), complaint (63:15–19a), confession (63:19b–64:6) and appeal (64:7–11). Dim (2005:41, note 45) identifies as key elements: recalling Yahweh's past (63:7–9), rebellion against God (63:10), God's acts in Exodus (63:11–14), request for Yahweh's intervention (63:15–64:11).

32.'... a type of prayer comprising formal elements that often included bitter complaint against God for the misfortune and distress at hand' (Bautsch 2006:83). It is a 'poignant prayer of penitence' (Bautsch 2006:83).

also changing its original polarity by adding confession of sin to it, the prayer justifies God and 'serves as defence against charges that God mistreats the people' (Bautsch 2006:98).

The reference to the motif of the hardness of heart (Is 63:17) and the description of God's people as servants (Is 64:8) are both found in the lament. Gärtner (2006:162) indicates that these two themes connect two main lines of prophetic self-perception in First and Second Isaiah. Isaiah 63:7–64:11 contains many allusions to the rest of the Book of Isaiah 'and in effect summarises the book's main topics' (Gärtner 2006:163). The prayer cannot be understood without the context of the rest of the book, and it simultaneously 'embodies the theology of the whole preceding book of Isaiah' (Gärtner 2006:163).

Investigating the redactional significance of Isaiah 63:7–64:11 in the book of Isaiah, Gärtner (2006:145–163) takes 'the matter of the people's guilt' (Gärtner 2006:150) as vital for understanding the prayer. Here the combination of the people's entanglement in guilt and the consequent wrath of Yahweh determine the relationship between Yahweh and the supplicants. Within this context the pressing demand for Yahweh's return to his people forms the centre of the prayer (Gärtner 2006:150) or 'communal lament' (Gärtner 2006:156).

Isaiah 65–66 is a continuation of this lament (Gärtner 2006:155, 156). The lament ends in Isaiah 64:11 with the question whether God will keep silent and punish his people beyond measure. In the following 'divine speech' (Gärtner 2006:151) in Isaiah 65:1–7 God's silence is attributed to the misdeeds of the people. Isaiah 65:8–12 redefines the people and divides them into two groups. Yahweh's requested return has different consequences for these groups: salvation for the righteous and judgement for those who forsake the Lord. In the section of Isaiah 65:13–25 a new universal aspect is brought to the fore. It is linked to previous Deutero-Isaianic statements about God as creator but now goes beyond those statements and refers to God as creator of a new heaven and new earth. A universal rearrangement will take place that will integrate the whole cosmos and all the nations. God's dealing with the righteous and the sinners are put on a universal level. The nations will join God's people and be judged on the same level.

Isaiah 66:1–24 presents a 'universalized temple theology' (Gärtner 2006:154). In this section creation and temple form the 'foundation of salvation for all flesh that escapes judgment' (Gärtner 2006:155). Three concepts converge in this passage: nations being gathered for judgement; survivors from the nations going on pilgrimage to Zion and diaspora Jews being repatriated (Gärtner 2006:154–5). Diaspora Jews and other nations come to Zion to perform a cultic function there. Yahweh will even take Levitical priests from the nations (Gärtner 2006:155). Those who escaped the judgement will enjoy the privilege of cultic participation with God's people. 'The community of God's people is now composed of all flesh …, including all the righteous from amongst God's people

and the nations that endured YHWH's judgment (Is 66:23)' (Gärtner 2006:155).

According to Stromberg (2011:16, see also Stromberg 2011:30) it 'is widely agreed' that Isaiah 65–66 'was composed as a response to the preceding lament in 63:7–64:11'. In a 'critical, yet attentive manner' (Stromberg 2011:30) Isaiah 65–66 responds to the lament, to the complaint about the absence of God, God's silence, the appeal to God to appear like fire, the request to God to pay heed to his servants, God's temple devoured by fire, and the request to look from heaven upon his people. A remarkable shift is found in the definition of God's people. In the lament (Is 64:6,9) 'your servants' are 'all of us'; in the reply God's people are a righteous group within the people. Judgement will take place, but not all will be punished. 'The reply is thus attentive to the request, but critical of its underlying assumption' (Stromberg 2011:31). Similarly the expression my or his or your people (Is 63:8, 11, 14, 18) is qualified in the response as 'my people who seek me' (Is 65:10). Salvation will come, but only to those who qualify.

From the above it seems that there is agreement amongst scholars that the lament is linked to the next section (Is 65–66) to indicate the shift in the definition of the identity of God's people. The penitential prayer in Isaiah 63:7–64:11 is not only used to refer back to Proto (Is 1–39) and Deutero (Is 40–55) Isaiah's views on the people of Yahweh but simultaneously used as basis for developing a new universal and eschatological definition of God's people.

Trito-Isaiah as polemical writing

This new definition of Israelite identity will now be investigated against the socio-historical background in which it was developed. Boccaccini (2007:263) refers to 'the archaeology of ideas'. What he means is that a document can be described as a complex of ideas. By 'excavating' the text these underlying ideas can be uncovered. However, the ideas are always found in a specific social context. It is no easy task to regain this context if the text does not give any clear clues about its socio-historic context. Fisk (2001:127) refrains from theorising on the real social context in which a text is read, and opts to refer to 'basic social settings' such as moral lapse, a text failing to have direct moral, religious and theological values, and a time of crisis. Fisk (2001:127) refers to 'general patterns of interaction between exegesis and social context'. With these restrictions kept in mind, an effort nevertheless has to be made concerning the socio-historic context of Isaiah 56–66 and the probable provenance of its ideas. There is great diversity in the research on the background of Trito-Isaiah. Hanson is one of the main players in this debate, but is severely opposed by several other scholars. We therefore now turn to a review of scholarly theories on the provenance of Trito-Isaiah's viewpoint regarding a new identity.

Hanson's 1979 publication, *The Dawn of Apocalyptic*, is by far the best known endeavour to reconstruct the socio-historic background of Trito-Isaiah. In Isaiah 56–66 he

finds two dominant characteristics: 'an eschatological ideal of the community and its destiny' (Hanson 1979:42) standing in harmony with the theology of Isaiah 40–55, and 'a pervasive polemical element' (Hanson 1979:42) in defence of that eschatological ideal against an obviously anti-eschatological position.

From his literary analysis of the material, Hanson (1979:42) moves to an 'extrapolation of the community situation reflected by the material'. According to Hanson's research Isaiah 56–66 represents a time when classical prophetic forms were changing. This was a time of 'transformation of prophetic eschatology[33] into apocalyptic eschatology'[34] (Hanson 1979:43).[35] However, it is the polemical element that he identified that draws the most attention.

Hanson (1979:60) finds the centre of the visionary group's future expectation of restoration in Isaiah 60–62. The words used here are linked to several features and themes in the prophecy of Isaiah 40–55. These themes are developed further in Isaiah 56–59 and Isaiah 63–66. The idea that Zion's children will be gathered from the nations and receive the wealth of the nations is repeated and extended upon in these sections. A movement from the individual office of the prophet to a collective entity of visionary leaders is found here. This movement represents, according to Hanson (1979:70–71), a prophetic tradition entering the period of 'early apocalyptic'. In a period of 'anonymous reapplication of older themes' (Hanson 1979:71) the foundation is laid for the forming of the canon and also for the future use of 'pseudonymity' as legitimising device.

When Isaiah 56–59 and Isaiah 63–66 is compared to Ezekiel 40–48 it becomes clear to Hanson (1979:71) that there were two rival programmes of restoration. He theorises that there was a fierce intra-community struggle for control of the temple between visionary and hierocratic groups in early, post-exilic Judah. The visionary programme in Isaiah 56–66 that was based on Isaiah 40–55 'was written in conscious opposition to that originating with Ezekiel and adopted by the hierocratic group led by the Zadokites' (Hanson 1979:71). Each group had its own idea for the restoration of the cult of Yahweh and its community. Whilst the hierocratic programme regulated the cultic life of the community and safeguarded the holiness reserved for the few, Isaiah 60–62 presents a glorious vision of a restored Zion when the sealed gates (Ezk 44:1ff) would be cast open for everybody, because 'all the people will be righteous and holy' (Hanson 1979:73). In these two polarised

points of view (Ezk 40–48 and Is 60–62), standing in tension and even in conflict with each other, 'we have the seeds of the two currents which run parallel throughout subsequent Jewish history' (Hanson 1979:77). They were not exclusive to each other, but were always in dialectical tension.

Isaiah 56–59 shows how the older theme of comfort and healing for the whole nation, based on Yahweh's pardon (Is 57:14–21), is extended in accordance with the joyous message in the rest of Isaiah 56–66 to the oppressed and the humble (Hanson 1979:77–79). Arduous opposition and the realities of frustration and decaying circumstances caused the visionaries to qualify the whole nation in terms of wicked and righteous people. Restoration hope believed, counter to perceived reality, in the intervention of God on behalf of the oppressed righteous, and this belief served as 'the context for the development of apocalyptic eschatology' (Hanson 1979:79).

Especially in Isaiah 58–59 Hanson finds traces of the continuing struggle between the visionary and the hierocratic factions in post-exilic Judah. The visionary group was oppressed by a powerful group controlling the cult and excluding them from participation in cultic matters. The visionary group used, but altered,[36] the prophetic traditions. The old line between the people of Israel and the nations changed into a division between 'two segments within Israel, the prophetic circle, and the adherents of the defiled cult' (Hanson 1979:125). This was also the time of 'the unfolding or apocalyptic eschatology' (Hanson 1979:113). Detached from real history and using mythical language, including the Divine Warrior motif (Hanson 1979:126–134, 184–185), 'prophetic eschatology is beginning to be transformed into apocalyptic eschatology' (Hanson 1979:129).

Isaiah 65:1–25 refers to a new sociological setting that demands a new form of prophetic oracle: 'the salvation–judgment oracle' (Hanson 1979:150). 'The glorious promises of Second Isaiah, which applied to the servant Israel, have been narrowed to a small segment within Israel, and the classical forms of the judgment and salvation oracles have been fused to account for the new division within the people' (Hanson 1979:153). The restoration hope is no longer applicable to all the people, but only to those who seek God. Those who have defiled the cult are condemned whilst the oppressed section is encouraged by the promise of salvation.

Although the hopes of the prophet remain the same, the context has shifted from the real historical events of the nation of Israel to a situation which is detached from the contemporaneous situation:

> Myth has provided a means of envisioning the restoration on a plane insulated against the frustrations of an historical order which had demonstrated itself to the visionaries to be completely hostile. (Hanson 1979:161)

Moving away from traditional prophecy, Isaiah 65 presents the essential characteristics of apocalyptic eschatology:

33.Hanson (1979:11–12) defines prophetic eschatology 'as a religious perspective which focuses on the prophetic announcement to the nation of the divine plans for Israel and the world which the prophet has witnessed unfolding in the divine council and which he translates into the terms of plain history, real politics, and human instrumentality; that is, the prophet interprets for the king and the people how the plans of the divine council will be effected within the context of their nation's history and the history of the world.'

34.Apocalyptic eschatology Hanson (1979:12) sees as 'a religious perspective which focuses on the disclosure (usually esoteric in nature) to the elect of the cosmic vision of Yahweh's sovereignty – especially as it relates to his acting to deliver his faithful – which disclosure the visionaries have largely ceased to translate into the terms of plain history, real politics, and human instrumentality due to a pessimistic view of reality growing out of the bleak post-exilic conditions within which those associated with the visionaries found themselves'.

35.Koenen (1990:220, 221) agrees with Hanson's point of view. He indicates Trito Isaiah as belonging 'zu den Wegbereitern apokalyptischer Vorstellungen' (to the pioneers of apocalyptic presentations). With his dualism Trito-Isaiah was preparing the way for the 'Zwei-Äonen-Lehre' (two aeons doctrine) (Koene 1990:221).

36.See Bautsch's (2006:90) remark above that the classical lament is used in Trito-Isaiah, but with its theological polarities reversed.

the present era is evil; a great judgment separating the good from the evil and marking the crossroads between the present world and the world to come is imminent; a newly created world of peace and blessing ordained. (Is 65)

These teachings of future world epochs, of universal judgement and of a modified dualism 'are the basic components of later apocalyptic eschatology' (Hanson 1979:160).

Hanson (1979:162) suggests that visionaries of the middle 5th century BCE added a framework consisting of Isaiah 56:1–8 and Isaiah 66:17–24 to the oracles that had already been collected. Isaiah 66 itself comes from 520 BCE (Hanson 1979:172). Chapter 66 also deals with the struggle between the hierocratic and the prophetic groups. In this chapter it is brought to climax that:

a century-long struggle between two concepts of salvation, that nurtured by a visionary tradition which placed sole emphasis on the great imminent acts of Yahweh and that promulgated by the temple priests which emphasized cultic orthopraxy. (Hanson 1979:178)

A schism in the 6th century cuts deeply into the post-exilic community, dividing the visionaries from the ruling hierocratic sections. The visionaries were excluded from normal cultic activity.

Koenen also proposes a situation of conflict and he links the sin holding back the fulfilment of God's salvation (see Isaiah 57:14–21) to the *Zwischenmenschlichen Bereich* [social, human-related sphere)] (Koenen 1990:217). The conflict occurred between different social groups; Trito-Isaiah takes the part of the oppressed and reprimands the upper class for its political and economical oppression. According to Koenen (1990:223) the second redactional layer of Trito-Isaiah belongs to the time of Ezra and Nehemiah, that is the second half of the 5th century BCE. In Isaiah 56:3–8 foreigners complain that they are excluded from God's people. This reflects Ezra and Nehemiah's nationalistic *Isolierungspolitik* [isolating politics] (Koenen 1990:224) and *Separationspolitik* [policy of separation] (Koenen 1990:224). The redactor of Trito-Isaiah opposes this policy. He promises those outcasts who have turned to God, that God will bring them to his holy mountain (Is 56:6f) and even make priests of them (Is 66:21) (Koenen 1990:223). This brings Koenen (1990:224) to the conclusion that Ezra and Nehemiah and their compatriots were the opponents Trito-Isaiah refers to in Isaiah 65:8–66:17.

Emmerson also pays attention to the socio-historical background of Trito-Isaiah, but differs from the opinions of the scholars mentioned above. Emmerson (1992:58) remarks that the chapters of Trito-Isaiah 'are singularly devoid of identifiable historical references'. What is clear is that the community is no longer in exile and is now concerned with regulating its religious life in its homeland. Stromberg (2011:7) also points out that Trito-Isaiah 'yields precious little information about its precise setting, with the result that a fully satisfying reconstruction of the social-historical situation behind it remains elusive'. Although there is general agreement that much of Isaiah 56–66 was composed during the first century of Persian rule over Judah, uncertainty still

remains as to the circumstances under which the material was created and collected. As it is a composite text arising out of several sets of circumstances, it is even more difficult to identify with any degree of certainty who the real authors or contributors of this text were.

According to Emmerson (1992:87) one of the main objections to Hanson's carefully constructed hypothesis is the unfortunate ambiguity of much of the evidence. Some of 'the key passages on which Hanson bases his argument are capable of a very different interpretation' (Emmerson 1992:90). She uses the lament in Isaiah 63–64 (discussed above) as a case in point to prove that Hanson is wrong. He links this passage to the Levites, but Abraham, mentioned in the lament, points the passage to the individual patriarchs. Following Williamson, Emmerson (1992:92) remarks that the returning community never called itself Abraham and the passage cannot be understood in 'sectarian terms'. Criticism can also be directed to 'the impossibility of substantiating his argument by any independent historical evidence' (Emmerson 1992:90).

Another objection to Hanson's thesis is the fact that he uses Isaiah 56–66 and Zechariah 1–8 to propose opposing visionary and apocalyptic parties. This makes it impossible to read a text like Zechariah, with its obvious apocalyptic elements, as a pro-apocalyptic text. She refers to R.J. Coggins who accused Hanson of not paying sufficient attention to the eschatological element in both Haggai and Zechariah (Emmerson 1992:91).

Emmerson (1992:91) refers to the divergent conclusions reached by scholars to indicate the grave difficulties and uncertainties involved in proceeding from the written text of Isaiah 56–66 to an understanding of its social and political context.

According to Emmerson (1992:82), some of the community problems which are clearly indicated in Third Isaiah had already begun to appear during Second Isaiah's ministry. Internal divisions in the community marked the period after the return from exile. Isaiah 65:8–16, 66:5 and the framework of chapter 57 (verses 1–2 and 19–21) indicate a:

conflict of interests, together with a divergence in theological orientation, between those who had remained in the land during the period of the exile and those who, through having been deported to Babylon, had come under powerful foreign influences. (Emmerson 1992:82)

The attitude of the visionaries found in Isaiah 56–66 also occurs in Zechariah 8–11 and Zechariah 12–14. A hierocratic stance is not only found in Ezekiel 40–48 but also in Haggai, Zechariah 1–8 and the Chronicler. According to Emmerson (1992:89) 'the contrast between Third Isaiah and Ezekiel is seen also in the attitude of the visionaries towards holiness'.

Emmerson (1992:62–63) notes that Trito-Isaiah and the mid–5th century Ezra–Nehemiah had three mutual concerns: building the temple; observing the Sabbath; and liberating

the deprived. There are also obvious differences. The invitation given to foreigners to share in the worshipping community[37] (Is 56:3, 6–7), could have been motivated by opposition to Nehemiah's exclusionary attitude towards those not of Israelite stock. Nehemiah and Ezra excluded those who were not adherents of the Jewish faith, whilst Trito-Isaiah welcomed them as individual proselytes (Emmerson 1992:62).

Schramm (1995:85) challenges[38] Hanson's thesis 'that the polemics of Third Isaiah are directed against the Zadokite priesthood and, more specifically, against the priestly, Pentateuchal theology that it espouses'. Schramm (1995) defends the thesis:

> that Third Isaiah and the Pentateuch would most likely have had a common opponent, namely, traditional pre-exilic Israelite religion, and that in this respect the visionary disciples of Second Isaiah and the Zadokite temple priests would have been allies. (p. 111)

In addition, he intends to show 'that Third Isaiah is indeed a true forerunner of Ezra and that the theological positions of these two books are complementary' (Schramm 1995:114). Schramm has no axe to grind with Hanson regarding the origins of apocalypticism[39] in Israel (Schramm 1995:108). Schramm (1995) even agrees with Hanson:

> that the standard prophetic mode of viewing the world as divided into two parts, Israel on the one hand and the nations on the other, undergoes a fundamental change in Third Isaiah. (p. 181)

He also agrees with Hanson that the 'change in prophetic world-view manifests itself in a bitter, intracommunity struggle in which "Israel" is divided off from "Israel"' (Schramm 1995:181). However, he completely disagrees with Hanson regarding the identity of the protagonists of Trito-Isaiah and the theological issues that are at stake in this conflict.

According to Schramm (1995:52) the basic question posed in Trito-Isaiah is: Who are the people who will take part in the coming salvation and who are those who will be excluded from the restoration community? The indication in Second Isaiah that the recipients of the proclamation of salvation will be either Jacob and/or Israel (Is 40–48) or Zion and/or Jerusalem (Is 49–55) is replaced by the plural designation 'my servants'. The prophets' traditional view of the world as being divided into two parts, Israel on the one hand and the nations on the other, undergoes a fundamental change in Third Isaiah. 'Israel' is no longer simply equated with 'God's people' (Schramm 1995:83).

The polemic against those who are excluded in Third Isaiah is not directed outwardly, toward foreign nations, but inwardly (Schramm 1995:83). Indeed, Schramm (1995:181) proposes that Third Isaiah was in conflict with 'traditional, syncretistic YHWHists, people whose religious practices had a long history in the (pre-exilic) kingdoms of Israel and Judah'. The people who were being excluded from the community were the traditional members of the people of Israel.

Schramm cannot agree with Hanson that Trito-Isaiah attacks Pentateuchal cultic theology and the Zadokite priests. According to Schramm (1995:108) it was none other than the Zadokite priests who were responsible for the production of the Pentateuch. If Trito-Isaiah is dissident literature, written by the 'the people of the land', 'an out-of-power, disenfranchised group' (Schramm 1995:108), against those who returned from the Babylonian exile, how can it be explained that their work became part of the Hebrew Scripture?[40] The production of the unified book of Isaiah was 'one of the major accomplished merits of post-exilic Judaism' (Schramm 1995:110). Such 'a massive undertaking would have required close access to the religious power structures of the day' (Schramm 1995:110). How could a disenfranchised group possibly succeed in getting their literature accepted by those who were their enemies?

The major weakness in Hanson's thesis, according to Schramm (1995:110), is Hanson's interpretive move to understand the literature symbolically or metaphorically when it suits him to do so. When the Canaanites are charged with child sacrifice, necromancy, offering sacrifice to Gad and Meni, eating pork and participating in fertility rites, he takes the charges simply at face value. However, when he argues that the salvation–judgement oracles in Third Isaiah are intra-community polemics, he supposes that it is the Zadokites who are being attacked and he interprets all the accusations symbolically and metaphorically. He ignores the obvious fact that all the accusations made against the group in question are consistently and repeatedly condemned in the Pentateuch itself.

Smith's (1995:206) redactional analysis brings him to the conclusion that Isaiah 56–66 can be dated between 538 BCE and 515 BCE, in the Persian period, between the first return from exile and the subsequent building of the Second Temple. Smith (1995) finds no:

> reason to understand the background for the compilation of these chapters as the supposed exclusivism of the period of the work of Ezra and Nehemiah in the mid-fifth century B.C. (p. 206)

It is, on the contrary, the divisions and tensions in the community caused by social injustice and syncretistic practices that forms the background for these chapters. Trito-Isaiah and 'a loyal minority' (Smith 1995:206) opposed these practices. There is no firm evidence to suggest that this

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37. Baltzer (2010:270) points out that the idea that foreigners can become Levite priests (Is 66:21) is not in accordance with the Zadokite view: 'Only the priest and scribe Ezra (Neh 8:1–8) was permitted to read the Scripture, not the "governor" – and hence layman – Nehemiah.'

38. For a discussion of Hanson's thesis see: Smith (1995:192–4), Williamson (1990:48–58), Bedford (2001:281–285), Emmerson (1992:85–94). Oswalt (1998:11, note 24) remarks that Hanson's recreation of the setting of Isaiah 56–66 'flies in the face of what the book itself seeks to do'. According to Oswalt (1998:11) the historical setting we need if we are to understand these chapters (he sees Isaiah 40–66 as one book) is that 'of Jerusalem between 739–700 B.C. (sic)'.

39. See also Dim's (2005:15–20) positive discussion of Hanson's ideas on the development of eschatology.

40. Schramm seems to attribute the forming of the prophetic books (Nebiim = prophets) to the Zadokites as well. Berges (2010:567) points out that the formation of the Pentateuch and the *corpus propheticum* (prophetic collection) occurred side by side in post-exilic Jerusalem 'in discourses in which each position considered the other'. Two parallel formations occurred, recognizing each other, but different from each other – whoever the people responsible for each were.

faithful minority were members of one specific religious or socio-economic faction. This minority group:

> may have taken on certain traits which might be called sectarian, on the basis of the evidence in Isa. 56–66 we can speak of the birth of sectarianism in this period only in the most guarded and qualified way. (Smith 1995:206)

The failure of the people to fulfil the demands made in Isaiah 56:1–2 requires Yahweh's intervention in Isaiah 59:15b–20. This intervention is directed against the nations on the one hand, and against enemies within the Jewish community on the other hand. It will bring salvation for those who are faithful to the Lord and exclude all others. 'It is no longer race or nationality, but faithfulness and justice which determinate one to be a member of Yahweh's people' (Smith 1995:106). Isaiah 65:1–66:17 confirms that the decision has been taken concerning those who are to receive salvation and those who are to receive judgement. Definite divisions are now drawn and God's people are identified (Smith 1995:207).

Bedford (2001) endeavours to reconstruct the social history of the early Achaemenid time (538 BCE and later). Judean identity had to be developed anew in a new political context – Judah was no longer a monarchical state. The basic sources for the study of this time are the books Haggai, Zechariah 1–8, Isaiah 55–66, Joel, Malachi, I and II Chronicles, Ezra and Nehemiah. Recent research 'on the social history of Achaemenid Judah has read the[se] biblical texts from the Persian period within one of two interpretive schemes' (Bedford 2001:10). The one schema interprets the texts in terms of social and political conflict. They use the information in Ezra and Nehemiah to identify a conflict, for example, between the repatriated Judeans from Babylonia and those who stayed in the country during the exile, or between eschatologists and theocratists disagreeing vehemently on the nature of Judean identity, or between monotheists[41] and syncretists.[42] The other main interpretive schema 'uses extra-biblical data to discern patterns of social and political organization in the Achaemenid Persian empire' (Bedford 2001:24). He does not deny the existence of social divisions in the early Achaemenid period, but Bedford (2001:28) proposes that the Jerusalem temple 'was at the centre of a struggle amongst competing groups for socio-economic and political power and for the authority to define Judean identity'. Bedford (2001:301) dismisses the idea of a sharp division in the Judean community and proposes that the reconstruction of the temple was, instead, an act of 'social integration bringing both repatriates and non-repatriates together' (Bedford 2001:299).[43]

41.Morton Smith (1996) refers to the monotheists as the 'Yahweh alone' group and their opponents as those who worshipped other gods alongside Yahweh.

42.See Bedford (2001:11–23) for extensive references to different proposals in this regard.

43.Oswalt (1998:617) sees no justification to interpret the message of Trito-Isaiah 'on the basis of a hypothetical historical setting that is neither explicit nor implicit in the book, and that is not supported by any historical source'. Furthermore, neither Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi, Ezra nor Nehemiah from the postexilic era gives any 'evidence of the kind of conflict Hanson hypothesizes' (Oswalt 1998:617). Childs (2001:448) indicates that historicizing the enemies in Trito-Isaiah 'misunderstands the theological function of the enemy'. They are not 'to be understood chronologically, but rather ontologically' (Childs 2001:448). Evil will always be there and rebellion will be present in every period of history.

Boccaccini (2002:88) sees Third Isaiah as part of a prophetic movement. According to Boccaccini (2002) the Zadokites returned from exile:

> to dominate the province of Judah by transforming the strategies of survival they had developed in Babylon … into an effective means of social control over against their neighbors and former compatriots. (p. 82)

They were, however, fiercely opposed by several other contemporary groups; the Samaritans, the Tobiads and the prophets (see Boccaccini 2002:83–89) all took part in the struggle against the dominating Zadokites. Because the boundary between prophecy and priesthood was not clearly drawn and prophets were traditionally involved in temple affairs, the Zadokite priesthood did what they could to minimise the influence of the prophets. Third Isaiah, as part of a prophetic movement, was still testifying 'to the vitality of the prophetic movement faithful to the heritage of the Davidic monarchy' (Boccacini 2002:88). However, the prophets began to weaken as an autonomous group. According to Boccaccini (2002:88) 'a credible anti-Zadokite opposition … did not build up around the prophets'. The priestly opposition came from what Boccaccini (2002:89–103) calls 'Enochic Judaism'.

Dim (2005:21) disagrees with Hanson 'on the identities of the actors in that conflict'. He refers to the eschatological implications of Isaiah 56 and Isaiah 66, with which the book is concluded (Dim 2005:22). In these two chapters Dim (2005:370) finds the indication of a 'final division in the restoration community after the exile'. These two groups live together, side by side. However:

> for the identity of the two groups in consideration in Isa 65–66, no definitive conclusion could be drawn from these two chapters – and even from Trito-Isaiah as a whole – because the two groups are not explicitly named therein. (Dim 2005:371)

The servants of Isaiah 65–66 stand in the same line 'with that gôlâ restoration group' (Dim 2005:371) who worked with Ezra. They are against 'the majority of other Israelites steeped in syncretism and even outright paganism' (Dim 2005:371). This view opposes Hansons' view of the priestly Zadokites opposing the Levitic prophetic party.

Doak (2010:9,14) refers to Otto Plöger's (1959) and Hanson's (1979) studies of apocalyptic origins in the early post-exilic period. Both Plöger and Hanson refer to a deprived, visionary, proto-apocalyptic group who is marginalided by a more powerful group and shut out of prominent positions in the revised temple cult. Cook (1995) opposed their view that apocalyticism originated from disadvantaged groups and attributes it to elite and powerful elements of the post-exilic Zadokite priesthood. Doak (2010:10) explores the 'possible inter-relationship between emerging sectarian phenomena and the material in Isaiah 56–66'.

Using the work of Mary Douglas and Max Weber, Doak (2010:11) defines a sect as 'a group where membership is voluntary, members are recruited by conversion, and the outside world is viewed through the lenses of separatism and hostility'. He uses Douglas' indications of four characteristics

of a sectarian organisation as a heuristic tool to 'understand the goals and mentality behind the Trito-Isaian material' (Doak 2010:17). The four characteristics are: the members inside the group are seen as good in opposition to those outside, who are bad; the inside group feels threatened from the outside; human wickedness is seen as a cosmic phenomenon; and their ideas are used for political manipulation (cf Doak 2010:16–21). These characteristics are all present in the Trito-Isaian material. Doak (2010:21) therefore concludes that the placement of the 'universalistic-sounding material' of Isaiah 60–62 in the middle of the Trito-Isaiah corpus 'surrounded as they are with the sectarian-sounding passages in chapters 56–58 and 65–66', was the re-appropriation of the promise of blessing and recognition by the nations to a 'limited group … who now consider themselves to be the totality of the "true" restored nation and the true inheritors of Second-Isaiah's prophetic heritage'.

Doak's (2010:21) thesis is that chapters 60–62, enhanced by the surrounding chapters, sets a 'new goal to Second Isaiah's 'politico-religious imagery', namely a 'new, more exclusive community within the broader confines of what Second-Isaiah had previously considered "Israel"'. What was universalistic in Second Isaiah is now turned 'into something socially exclusive and bitter' (Doak 2010:21).

Doak (2010:21) is of the opinion that there could 'have been more than two broad groups competing for political and religious hegemony in the early post-exilic period'. The material in Isaiah 56–66 'represents the views of only one of these groups as they are formulated against the other' (Doak 2010:21). Nothing suggests that the opponents were specifically legalistic. Neither can we deduce from the material 'the specific shape of the Trito-Isaian community' (Doak 2010:22). All that we can say about this group is that:

> they were caretakers of, and contributors to, the nearly two hundred year old Isaiah tradition in the mid-6th century BCE and continued to redact that textual corpus in terms of both the historic Isaianic themes and their own sectarian emphasis. (Doak 2010:22)

Doak's views seem not only to summarise the debate up to the present time, but also to indicate a better theory. Hanson's view on developing apocalyticism still stands. However, his identification of the opposition as the tradents of Trito-Isaiah, seems to be too speculative to be accepted. Stromberg's (2011:65) idea of a qualified definition of identity, which states that the future role of the nations should still be seen in terms of Israel, seems to be correct. It is not really possible to pinpoint exactly who the opponents were. In Isaiah we deal with the ideas of just one of the groups in the Judean community who redefined the contents of the identity of God's people. Extending the tradition of Isaiah, they see themselves as an exclusive group which includes foreigners but stand in opposition to groups having a different concept of Judean identity.

Conclusion

Research of the redactional growth of Isaiah 56–Isaiah 66 indicates that the theme of identity played a role in forming this third section of the book of Isaiah, as well as the book as a whole. Scholars pay special attention to the penitential prayer in Isaiah 63:7–64:11 to indicate a shift in the view of Israelite identity. My investigation into the socio-historic context of these chapters indicates a movement from prophetic literature to apocalyptic literature. However, it is not possible within the confines of our present knowledge to identify the person or people responsible for these developments, nor can we identify their opponents by stating that they were priests or Zadokites. Using my review of the research done on the redactional growth of Trito-Isaiah, the role played by the communal lament of Isaiah 63:7–64:11 in this process, and the theories on the probable provenance of this redactional activity, I propose that we are dealing here with a developing definition of identity that can be called 'qualified inclusivism'. It invites believers from other nations to become members of the group, but specifically exclude those who do not really believe in the Lord, even though they may be fellow Judeans. This stance was in opposition to exclusive policies that excluded people who did not comply with the requirements set out by priestly groups. This in turn represents an early phase of a developing conflict about identity during the Second Temple Period.

Acknowledgements

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