

- CHAPTER I: SECTION B -

THE COMMUNICATION PROCESS AS A HERMENEUTICAL-EXEGETICAL MODEL:
ORCHESTRATING A SYMPHONY

1. HERMENEUTICS

1.1 DEFINITION

It has become clear in the discussion up till now that the dilemma in biblical scholarship is predominantly a theoretical-methodological issue (i.e. hermeneutical-exegetical in theological terms). It is evident that the process of understanding is complex and therefore one has to start by outlining the parameters of the hermeneutical issue in order to deal with the problem in its totality.

New Testament hermeneutics obviously has the intention to operate "scientifically" (cf. Michell 1984). This endeavour to maintain a scientific approach is not only directed against the isolation of the New Testament for insiders only, but also to engage in a dialogue with other sciences and non-Christians concerning a meaningful understanding of the reality in which we live. This is to my mind the correct interpretation and actualization of 1 Peter 3:15 in an era in which reason, technology and science form the foundation of dialogue: "Always be prepared to make a defence to any one who calls you to account for the hope that is in you..." (Revised Standard Version). This is especially urgent in the light of the embarrassing cacophony echoing from the theological debate within the church and biblical scholarship.

New Testament hermeneutics and exegesis are therefore challenged to save face and give credibility to the exposition of the New Testament. To reach this goal New Testament hermeneutics should emphasize the sound principle that the Bible is to be explained no differently than other books (cf. Luther's and Turretini's views on this as quoted in Kuemmel 1973:22-3 & 58 respectively; cf. Nida 1969:7; Barr 1961:296). This implies that New Testament hermeneutics should therefore benefit from the insights of other sciences which deal with written communication (e.g. semiotics, linguistics, literary science and communication science) in order to construct a comprehensive and problem-solving method for textual analysis. Therefore both Deist (1980:113) and Schneiders (1981:32) describe hermeneutics appropriately as an interdisciplinary endeavour. I have thus joined the company of the new hermeneutics initiated by G. Ebeling and E. Fuchs in which

the hermeneutical debate has been broadened to include the whole question of "understanding and interpretation" in all its complexity (cf Roberts 1977:66-67; Thiselton 1977:308-333; Ramm 1971:130-140). Van Luxemburg et al (1982:75-80 & 84-85) showed, interestingly enough, that the term "hermeneutics" has also become relevant in literary science with regard to the "interpretation" of texts. They also emphasize the necessity for multiple and interrelated criteria for a literary theory.

Having established the prerequisites of New Testament hermeneutics as a scientific and interdisciplinary endeavour, I shall first proceed by defining New Testament hermeneutics as such as well as its parameters which will be able to solve the problems of the dissonant instruments responsible for the cacophony in biblical scholarship. These hermeneutical considerations are, to a large extent, based on an article I wrote in 1982-1983 (published in 1984). In section B 2 of this chapter I shall discuss the fascinating similarities between my hermeneutical parameters and current communication models as a motivation for my choice to solve the hermeneutical-exegetical impasse in terms of a communication paradigm.

Obviously one could define New Testament hermeneutics elaborately and in more than one way. I prefer to define it in terms of its minimum requirements: New Testament hermeneutics is the sub-discipline within New Testament science which theorizes on the understanding and interpretation of the New Testament. This definition is reconcilable with the general description of hermeneutics by biblical scholars (cf Roberts 1977:67; Schneiders 1982:58-59; Stuhlmacher 1979:15; Westermann 1963:10). This definition based on the minimum requirements for hermeneutics has the advantage that it doesn't preconceive and limit the scope of hermeneutics. For this very same reason the definition demands some explanation.

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1.2 HERMENEUTICAL PARAMETERS

In the light of the above-formulated definition as well as the problems facing us, I believe that New Testament hermeneutics as the "understanding and interpretation of the New Testament" should include at least the following aspects in its theory:

1.2.1 Giving account of scholars in the totality of their being.

This refers to aspects such as the scholar's life-and-world view, commitments and presuppositions which are part and parcel of the hermeneutical process. The view of man in terms of a "tabula rasa" (i e a blank page) has long since become untenable. Man

and his understanding of reality is influenced by a series of factors: philosophical, economical, political, social, et cetera (cf Thiselton 1980:3-10; Van Luxemburg et al 1982:81-85; Herzog II 1983:115; Du Toit, H C 1984:52-65). We will have to give account of these factors if we hope to reach a solution in the current confusion regarding the interpretation of Scriptures. This very point has been clearly illustrated in the discussion of the dilemma regarding the interpretation of 1 Peter where the commitments and presuppositions of different scholars have been exposed as responsible for their different views (cf Rousseau 1985). Because commitments and presuppositions operate on "gut level", it is not strange that scholars often defend their respective views fanatically and immorally. This inevitably results in an impasse in biblical research. Therefore it is essential that these cards which primarily represent premises "outside" the parameters of New Testament science as such, should also be placed on the hermeneutical table.

In exposing this serious deficiency in scientific research, I have committed myself to express my own commitments. I have chosen to do this within the parameters of the philosophy of science which explicitly deals with theoretical and methodological issues in science as well as the possibilities and limitations of human knowledge (cf I A 3.1). Therefore, in order to double-check the possibilities of my communication paradigm as an answer to the hermeneutical-exegetical dilemma, I have to take notice of the results of the philosophy of science. I will have to evaluate and match both my own hermeneutical-exegetical presuppositions as well as my ultimate commitments in the light of the philosophy of science's debate on epistemological and paradigmatic issues. This will be dealt with in section C of this chapter.

1.2.2 Giving account of the science model and methods of the scholar.

Every scientific discipline has certain presuppositions with regard to its practising of science. The evaluation of these presuppositions and scientific models is part and parcel of any hermeneutical procedure. De Jonge (1982:76-77) emphasizes that "... tot op de wortels doorvragende en eigen interpretatiemethoden en modellen voortdurend kritisch beschouwende wetenschap blijft een onontkoombare opgave." This is currently one of the major emphases in the philosophy of science as we shall see in section C.

We have already seen how different methods (each with their own philosophical background) applied to the exposition of 1 Peter led to a cacophony of echoing answers and results. We found that the linguist, historian and theologian would give us three

different answers with regard to 1 Peter - obviously because they ask different questions and consequently implement different models and methods with regard to the Bible (cf Cain 1972:29-32). I have already suggested that the different methods express different questions asked to the text. Van Luxemburg et al (1982:82-83), for example, discerns six different sets of criteria which could be used for a literary analysis revealing six different literary facets: expressiveness; intentionality; reality-boundness; sociological influence; emotive reception; and the relationship with tradition. These distinctions as well as the diverse menu of questions with regard to biblical analysis could, in my opinion, be related to primarily linguistic-literary, historical and theological-philosophical questions. This was confirmed when we traced the contours of the developments in the history of research on 1 Peter in particular and philosophy in general.

Therefore in the construction of a theoretical model for New Testament hermeneutics one will have to give account of the scholar's overt, but also covert methodological presuppositions. These presuppositions are primarily premises "within" the parameters of New Testament science as such. It is obvious that this is the point where New Testament hermeneutics and exegesis meets. Especially in our evaluation of methods and models we will have to evaluate whether appropriate methods are applied and whether there is some relationship, hierarchy and chronological order in which we should apply the methods to the texts. Malbon (1983:222) rightly emphasizes in this regard that "... hermeneutics need to reaffirm that all inquiry is interrelated." The importance of an exegetical methodology and the honouring of the specific nature of the New Testament texts in this regard will become clear in the discussion of the next hermeneutical boundary.

1.2.3 Giving account of the specific nature of the New Testament writings as study object

To understand the New Testament according to its specific nature and intention, is one of the cornerstones of a sound hermeneutical model. It is clear that the nature of the New Testament writings supplies New Testament hermeneutics with important building blocks in the construction of a hermeneutical model. On the other hand we find that New Testament hermeneutics has important guidelines for the understanding of New Testament texts. We are therefore caught in a vicious circle "within" the parameters of New Testament science.

The only way to break this vicious circle is to apply hermeneutical theory in terms of an exegetical analysis and to evaluate from time to time whether justice is done to the

"understanding of the New Testament writings" (cf Plett 1975:12-13 where he argues that textual analysis is the basis for the empirical verification of a text theory). The proof of the pudding is in the eating thereof. Thus the hermeneutical symphony will only succeed to the extent in which the exegetical performance adequately interprets the textual music. In this regard I have already suggested that the multidimensional and plurimodal nature of the New Testament texts should be fully accommodated. The illustration of the interpretation of 1 Peter has sufficiently exposed the deficiencies of one-mode approaches which distort the complex nature of 1 Peter as a text.

1.2.4 Giving account of the research history

Finally, it is important to acknowledge that the endeavour to understand the New Testament has a long history. Therefore we have the privilege of gaining important insights from those scholars who wrestled before us to understand the New Testament. It is, however, not only a privilege but also imperative to take notice of the research history through a literature study in order to free us from a one-sided and biased understanding of the New Testament. "This obviously implies the desirability, indeed the necessity, for people of as many backgrounds and worlds as possible to enter into the work of interpretation" (Herzog II 1983:115). It was especially in the dialogue and counter-arguments of scholars over decades that theories were tested to the utmost. In the dialogue on 1 Peter it has been invaluable to expose the deficiencies and advantages of different hypotheses. Therefore, we will have to take notice of our brothers and sisters in faith (i.e. those who belong to our church tradition: reformed, presbyterian, etc); our cousins in faith (i.e. those Christians who belong to other Christian families: RCC, charismatics, etc); our grandparents in faith (i.e. our Christian forefathers: Luther, Calvin, Augustine, etc); our children in faith (i.e. the young churches which are the result of our missionary work: black, coloured, indian and third world churches). The bibliography of this dissertation is evidence of taking this hermeneutical parameter seriously. It should be stressed, however, that research in the twentieth century faces the dilemma of an unserveable and indigestible wealth of literature.

In addition to the acknowledgement of research history "within" the boundaries of New Testament science, we will also have to move "outside" these boundaries to listen to our neighbours in the scientific (cf the interdependence of disciplines in scientific research), but also the everyday world (cf man's search for meaning or understanding in general). This once again confirms the importance of accommodating the insights from the philosophy of science in section C of this chapter.

These remarks on the definition of New Testament hermeneutics form the foundation and parameters for my construction of a comprehensive, interrelational and integrating hermeneutical model. It is appropriate at this point to turn our attention to communication science and its fascinating possibilities for New Testament hermeneutics. We will soon see how the above-discussed hermeneutical parameters are comprehensively and meaningful integrated within a contemporary model of the communication process.

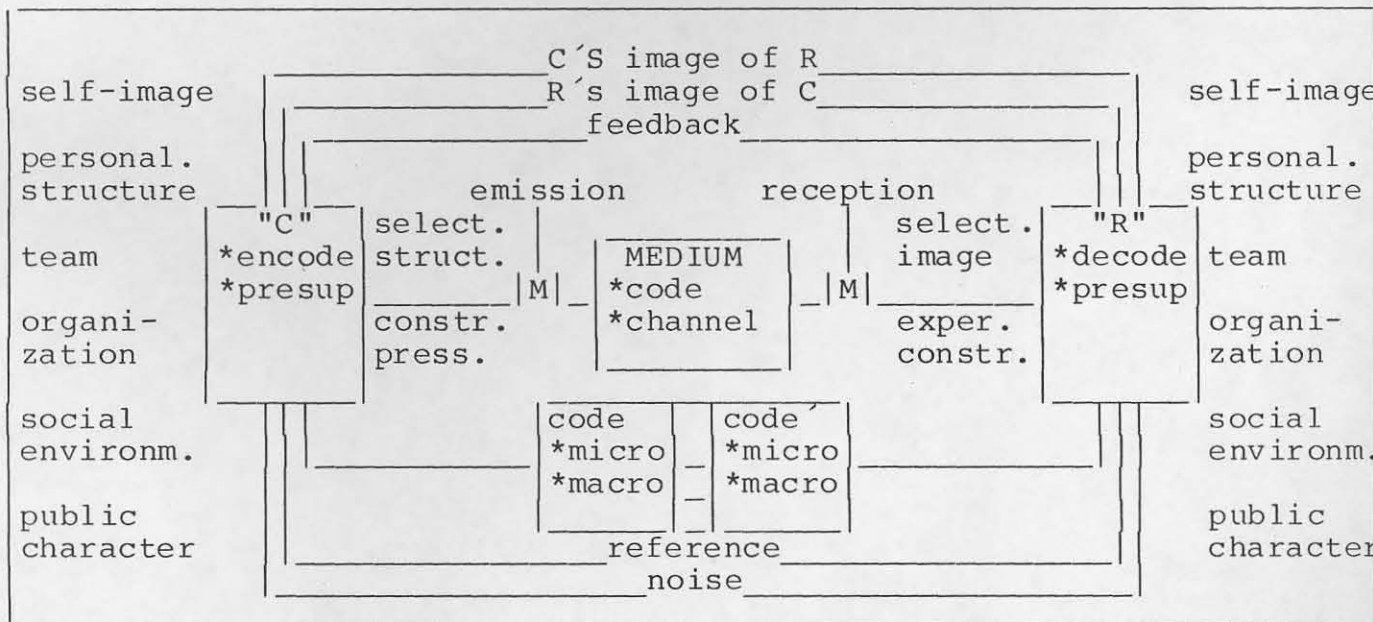
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2.-COMMUNICATION SCIENCE AND HERMENEUTICS

2.1 THE COMMUNICATION PROCESS

I am convinced that biblical scholarship can benefit tremendously by integrating the above-mentioned considerations in a communication paradigm. It is especially the insights from communication science that deserve serious attention and could help New Testament hermeneutics to find a comprehensive hermeneutical-exegetical model which in fact does account for most of the theoretical considerations discussed above.

Since Lasswell's simple linear model in 1948 which initiated communication science in our century, the full complexity of communication has come to be acknowledged, and models of communication nowadays strive to account for this process in its totality and its interrelatedness. A German scholar, G Maletzke, proposed a comprehensive model, which is relatively dated and not without fault, but nevertheless accounts usefully for most of the factors involved in the communication process. "This methodically and thoroughly built up model shows mass communication as a social psychologically very complicated process, in which explanations are more likely to be of a multi- than of a single-factor type" (McQuail & Windahl 1981:36). The following illustration of the communication process is based on Maletzke's model with some modifications from the models of H F Plett and E U Grosse:



(copied from McQuail & Windahl 1981:36-41; Plett 1975:40-46 and Grosse 1982).

.1 The four basic components of communication - that is communicator ("C"), message ("M"), medium ("Mm") and receptor ("R") - are obviously the building blocks of Maletzke's and Plett's models. A number of factors, however, determine the interrelationship between the four basic components. These factors can in my opinion be divided into static, dynamic and dialectic parameters. This means that each static component has its unique or dynamic contribution to the communication process but each constituent is also dialectically limited by the other components. These three parameters will prove to be decisive for my communication theory of ancient canonized texts. However, let us first have a look how these parameters express the communication process in general.

In a schematization like the one above everything appears, unfortunately, very static. Plett's model, however helps to express the dynamic and dialectic nature of the communication process (which lacks in Maletzke's model) by describing the activities of the communicator with "encoding" and "emission" and those of the receptor with "reception" and "decoding". When dialectic interaction occurs via feedback or dialogue the roles of communicator and receptor dynamically interchange. The basic activity which is at stake in every communication process is the emission and reception of the message (cf the definition of communication under 2.2). In this process all four static components have a unique and dynamic contribution but always within their dialectic relationship to each other. Let's have a look.

2.The message needs a medium through which it could be transferred. Plett's distinction between the code and channel of the medium is an improvement to Maletzke's undefined "medium" and is of great importance. The code of the medium could range from gestures to Morse code to language with all its subcodes (e.g. English, German, Greek, etc). The different codes could be channeled differently, for instance sound-acoustical or graphical-optical. This distinction between the code and channel of the medium is important because different codes and channels have a unique influence on the communication process in general and on the message in particular. Therefore my distinction between static, dynamic and dialectic parameters is applicable here to the extent that both the medium and message dynamically (uniquely) constitutes (statically) the dialectic communication process. This is also true with regard to the other constituents in the communication process.

.3 Maletzke argues that the relationship between the communicator

and his message is influenced by dialectic dependent variables - that is the communicator's selection and structuring of the message, on the one hand, and the message's constraints and pressures limiting the communicator on the other hand.

The selection and structuring are amongst other things dialectically dependent on the pressure or constraint from the message content (cf the difference between a report of a funeral and a gossip column) and the medium (cf the different requirements of communicating through a newspaper or television). Furthermore, psychological and sociological factors dynamically determine the communicator and his selection and structuring of his message (cf Kelley 1977:37-53). Compare the communicator's self-image and personality structure (whether he regards himself as or has the make-up of an interpreter, crusader, conformist, etc); his working team; organization; and social environment (e g their values and expectations) as well as the public character of the media content (e g control exercised through public and professional opinion) as factors influencing his "gatekeeping" in the communication process.

.4 The dialectic relationship between the medium and receptor is likewise complicated by two factors namely the pressure / constraint of the medium on the receptor and the receptor's image of the medium. This influences the receptor's reception and selection of the media content on the one hand, and effects his experiencing of it and responding to it on the other hand (i e dialectic dependent variables).

The above-mentioned dynamic variables in the dialectic medium-receptor interrelationship are dependent upon the receptor's dynamic (unique) self-image; social context (e g people tend to reject information that is contrary to their own or group values); his personality structure (e g some people are more easily influenced than others); and whether he is part of the public or not (e g people react differently in mass communication and in face-to-face communication).

.5 In the dialectic relationship between the communicator and receptor a number of factors should be taken into account. The communicator's image of the receptor (i e the implied receptor) is a factor which help to determine his selection and structuring of his message and medium. On the other hand the receptor's image of the communicator and his values (i e the implied communicator) determines whether the receptor identifies with the communicator and his message (cf Lategan 1985:99-107). In this regard the notion of "feedback" is also important in the development and success of the dialectic communication process.

Three additional factors which are especially important for the

success of the dialectic communication between communicator and receptor, are to be mentioned. The first two factors are related to the medium of the communication act. For any communication to succeed one has to accept that there are a common competence and frame of reference with regard to the medium (i.e. code and channel) used as well as the "real world" reference of the medium and its micro and macro codes. Grosse's distinction (1982:100-113) between the micro and macro structure of the medium is enlightening. He distinguishes between the "Darstellungsschemata" of the basic syntactics as the micro structure and the "Ordnungsschemata" of the genre and "Weltbild" as the macro structure. In textual communication this micro and macro structure expresses and presupposes the substratum of the author's psycho-sociological world and background. On the other hand, the micro and macro structure supra impose a superstratum on the reader confronting his evaluative "Weltbild". The decisiveness of this superstratum for persuasive communication should be evident.

The last factor is the notion of "noise" which could be any kind of disturbance which hampers communication. Thus "noise" could include a number of disturbances depending on one's definition. In contrast to Plett (1975:41) who limits the notion of "noise" to disturbances within the channel itself, Kelley (1977:29) includes the possibility of psychological and sociological factors as "noise".

This concludes my outline (based on the models of Maletzke, Plett and Grosse) of the static, dynamic and dialectic parameters the communication process. It should be evident that the prerequisites of the communication process are complex making the success or outcome of any communication act dependent on a variety of factors. Jakobson's (1960:353-359) six factors involved in communication (i.e. sender, receptor, message, context, code and channel) correspond, by and large, to the above-discussed communication model contributing, however, valuable insights with regard to the different functions of these factors in the communication act (cf also Van Luxemburg et al 1982:102-105). We will return to Jakobson's contribution at a later stage (cf II A 2.3.1.1). The semiotic and textual implications of the above-illustrated model (as spelled out by Plett) are discussed under I B 3.2. The exegetical-methodological application of this communication model to the texts of the New Testament is done in the introduction to chapters II, III and IV. With this outline of a communication model, let us try and define the phenomenon of "communication" with its static, dynamic and dialectic parameters.

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2.2 DEFINITION OF COMMUNICATION

The complexity of the communication process makes it very difficult to formulate a definition that does justice to all the factors involved. Jordaan (1971:1-3) dealt with this dilemma and showed how different definitions are one-sidedly focussed on one or more facets of communication. Therefore, some scholars in communication science try to formulate a definition on the basis of the minimum requirements for the communication act. Kelley's (1977:9) definition seems to me the most appropriate: "communication occurs whenever we create meaning from our interaction with the world". This existential definition was already proposed by Barnlund in 1964 (cf Barnlund 1973:44) and has since gained wide acceptance (e.g. Jordaan 1971:3; Roelofse 1982:3-4, 11; Budd & Ruben 1979:94-126; Trent et al 1973:58-67). This definition accommodates intentional and unintentional; direct and indirect; verbal and non-verbal; organismic; intra-, inter- and mass communication; and recognizes man as the primary factor in communication (emphasis on this insight is also reflected in the recently developed interest in the receptor or audience-centered approach).

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2.3 COMMUNICATION SCIENCE AND HERMENEUTICS

The above-mentioned definition of communication is inextricably intertwined with New Testament hermeneutics which deals with the theory of the "understanding" of the New Testament writings (cf I B 1.1). The fact that they are both scientific disciplines operating on an interdisciplinary basis establishes the common ground between them. This will be illustrated in my discussion of the communication process in terms of a text theory (cf I B 3).

.1 The parallelism between the definitions of hermeneutics and communication science is clear (cf I B 1.1 and I B 2.2). Both are sciences theorizing on the act of creating meaning (i.e. understanding) in man's existence in and through his interaction with the world (of which the New Testament writings are part). This implies that the parameters of a communication approach to the New Testament will, to a large extent, coincide with the boundaries of the earlier discussed hermeneutical considerations.

.2 Hermeneutics as a discipline, as well as the New Testament as ancient written texts, are ultimately and essentially concerned with the communication process. Therefore hermeneutics and communication science coincide structurally (cf the four static-dynamic components of the dialectic communication process

in both, viz communicator, medium, message and receptor) and functionally (cf the dialectic process of "understanding" and that of "creating meaning").

.3 The "creation of meaning from the New Testament" implies a dialectic interplay between the static subject with his / her dynamic (unique) premises (i e premises outside New Testament science) and the dialectic understanding of the static object (i e the New Testament) with its dynamic (i e uique) nature (i e within New Testament science). This clearly coincides with the relationship between communicator and receptor (as subjects) and the medium (as object) conveying a certain message. This will involve the first three hermeneutical parameters discussed previously (cf I B 1.2.1 - 1.2.3).

.4 In my outline of the communication process the two main causes of the dilemma in biblical scholarship (i e a lack of a comprehensive methodology and a theoretical reflection on presuppositions) were extensively given account of. Compare in this regard the schematization above with the variety of factors involved in the dynamics of the communication process as a whole (cf I B 2.1). This could serve as a checklist not only for the scholar in evaluating his own presuppositions and background, but also for the construction of a text theory for textual communication (cf the hermeneutical parameters in I B 1.2.1 - 1.2.3).

.5 The hermeneutical parameter of giving account of the research history (cf I B 1.2.4) as a crosscheck on research results is paralleled by the interests of reception-aesthetics within communication science and its focus on the phenomenon of multiple interpretation.

Therefore, the communication paradigm is not only an appropriate hermeneutical approach in order to understand and interpret biblical texts, it is also the proper key to unlock the deadlock situation of a jammed and stripped "understanding" of biblical texts. Therefore, we shall now try to orchestrate a symphony out of the the existing cacophony in biblical scholarship.

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3. THE COMMUNICATION PROCESS AS A HERMENEUTICAL-EXEGETICAL MODEL FOR ANCIENT CANONIZED TEXTS

3.1 INTRODUCTION: CONSTITUENTS THE COMMUNICATION PROCESS AS AN ORCHESTRATED SYMPHONY

I have already mentioned how my pursuit for a comprehensive hermeneutical-exegetical approach led to an encounter with Heinrich F Plett's "Textwissenschaft und Textanalyse" at the end of 1984. In this section it will become clear how my text theory links to Plett's and how his theory reshaped mine and stimulated new initiatives. I was challenged to accommodate the semiotic, linguistic and literary disciplines and their insights in an hermeneutical-exegetical model. The tendency nowadays, fortunately enough, is indeed to study texts on an interdisciplinary basis (cf Plett 1975:11-13; Van Dijk 1980:1-3). This tendency is to be noted for example in linguistics which became communication science orientated (e.g. pragmalinguistics) since the initiatives of Roman Jakobson in 1958, as well as sociologically orientated (cf sociolinguistics as a relative new discipline). Therefore, Plett (1975:12) argues that linguistics changed from a structural (generative-transformational approach) to a "sozio-kommunikativen Orientierung". This gave rise to new terminology such as "Textwissenschaft", "text linguistics" and "text theory" in which the scope of traditional linguistics and literary science were broadened to accommodate a communication approach and an all-type literary interest (cf Plett 1975:11). These new developments in text theories will most definitely be able to assist my quest for a comprehensive hermeneutical-exegetical model in terms of the interrelated communication process and its static, dynamic and dialectic parameters. Let me first give an outline of how I should like to proceed in doing this with regard to textual communication.

It is obvious that written texts (as one form of communication amongst others such as intrapersonal oral, verbal, non-verbal, etc) have their specific characteristics and requirements. As the New Testament is part of written communication we first have to spell out the implications of a communication model for written texts in general. The reader will note that in my two articles published in 1984 and 1986 three aspects were distinguished and interrelated as constituents in written communication (i.e. texts). Interestingly enough, these three aspects of texts were also identified by Lategan (1982:50-52) with regard to the New Testament. Lategan, however, didn't define the interrelationship of these aspects at all. I pursued this very goal during 1982-1983 which resulted in the article published in Scriptura (1984) and which I refined in terms of a communication model during 1984 (i.e. a paper I read at the New Testament Society of South Africa and published in

Neotestamentica 19 in 1986). Although the description of and the interrelationship between the three aspects as constituents of textual communication constitute the foundation of my text theory, the reader will note, however, that important improvements were made.

The first constituent in the communication process of texts is the static text itself. The communicators and receptors of the New Testament writings have long since passed away and the media (i.e. copies of the original texts) are, phenomenologically speaking, our only "gateway" (as a matter of fact and also on account of the primary communicators choice) to uncover those ancient "communication acts". This coincides with Plett's (1975:44) observation that the absence of the communicator in written communication implies that the static medium (e.g. the book) becomes the secondary sender or text producer. In my article in Scriptura (Rousseau 1984:61-63) I referred to the sign aspect of texts as the gateway of textual analysis. In this dissertation I decided to refer to the "intratextual dimension" of the static medium or text as the gateway in the communication process.

A second constituent in the communication of written texts is the role of the communicator/s, media and receptor's within their unique and dynamic "worlds". This means that we have to reckon with the time- and historical boundness of texts (e.g. the New Testament writings as media of "communication acts" of almost 2000 years ago). The medium has already been identified as the gateway and therefore the starting point in uncovering the communication between the historical or fictional communicator/s and receptor/s (interlocutors) within their dynamic "worlds" (i.e. contexts). The second phase is therefore to determine the dynamic reference between the medium, the ideal interlocutors and their contextual worlds. I previously referred to this phase as the historical analysis (Rousseau 1984:63-66). In this dissertation I decided to stick to this terminology by referring to both the inter- and extratextual dynamic reference of the text, the ideal interlocutors and their worlds, as the "historical dimension". Therefore, the reader will find that I have often used "inter- and extratextual dimension" as an alternative for "historical dimension".

The third and final constituent has to do with the event of the dialectic communication process itself. This differs considerably with my previous interpretation of the third constituent as the faith or theological aspect of texts (Rousseau 1984:66-69). Although this final constituent does focus on the message of the text as such, I now propose to accommodate the message as part of the final dialectic communication event. In this phase the "success" of the communication of and reception of

the message through its static medium and within its dynamic socio-communicative context is to be determined. I have named this constituent the "metatextual dimension" of textual communication in the light of the fact that it transcends the static and dynamic dimensions of textual communication by incorporating the dialectic between the text and real receptors.

Now the intratextual, historical and metatextual dimensions of textual communication were defined in terms of static, dynamic and dialectic parameters respectively as well as in three phases following each other chronologically, which are prerequisites for the successful interpretation and communication of written texts (Rousseau 1984:69-75). These dimensions could ultimately provide us with the basic parameters for a secondary communication of ancient canonized texts. This is then the embryonic conception of my communication model which I believe could resolve the existing cacophony in biblical exegesis. It should be clear that the analyses of the static and dynamic aspects of texts form the foundation for the reconstruction of the dialectic interlocution between texts and receptors. Therefore the analysis of the symphonic communication of texts should proceed in three distinct phases: the prelude in which the intratextual and static text of the music is experienced and analysed; the interlude in which the dynamic reference of the music is determined; and the finale in which the dialectic interlocution and reception of the symphony are evaluated.

The dominant modes and characteristics of these dimensions as well as their relationship towards each other have to be argued and motivated in a detailed text theory. As I have mentioned earlier, the text theory of Heinrich F Plett proved itself to be most appropriate for my communication paradigm. His theory enabled me to refine and interrelate the three dimensions of the communication process.

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3.2 SEMIOTIC, LINGUISTIC AND LITERARY THEORY WITHIN A COMMUNICATION PARADIGM: H F PLETT AND MY MODEL

3.2.1 The integrating text theory of H F Plett

Plett develops his text theory in a circular fashion. He starts off with a theoretical discussion of literary concepts from which he deduces a threefold semiotic approach to texts (i e his text linguistics) to conclude finally with a systematic literary text model. In this whole exercise Plett emphasizes that in the construction of a text theory the text analysis is the empirical verification basis of the theory (cf Plett 1975:12-13).

3.2.1.1 Literary concepts and texts

Plett (1975:16-19) argues that literary science is in a crisis because it has great difficulties in defining its field. This is the result of a terminological impreciseness and the lack of criteria for the evaluation of a hierarchial classification of literary types. With reference to M H Abrams and his book "The Mirror and the Lamp" published in 1958, Plett (1975:19-20) discusses four different concepts of literature: mimetic, expressive, pragmatic (i e receptive) and objective (i e rhetorical). This is taken as a starting point in the discussion and construction of his text theory.

.1 The mimetic literary concept deals with the relationship between the text and the world in terms of fiction and reality. Through the centuries (starting with Plato and Aristoteles) different evaluations of the fictionality and reality of literature have been encountered (cf the eras of Romanticism, Idealism and Realism) (cf Plett 1975:20-23; Van Luxemburg et al 1982:31-46).

.2 An expressive literary concept has to do with the emotional, spontaneous and creative expression of the artist or author. The author becomes the absolute determinative factor in his work. The text represents the author (Plett 1975:23-25).

.3 A receptive literary concept deals with the effect of the text on the audience or readers. This includes the effect of the mimetic, expressive and stilistic characteristics of the texts on the reader. The criterium in this literary concept is the reader who is influenced by a number of factors. Psychogogical factors such as morals, aesthetics and affections influence the evaluation of literature (e g a strong ethical or aesthetic approach would result in totally different evaluation of "acceptable" literature). Nowadays the emphasis is rather on the sociological effect of literature (e g books that changed world history). As a result of this there is also research done on the



effect of texts on texts (i e diachronically) to determine cultural influence and the continuity thereof. This implies the overstepping of time, spatial and cultural boundaries. It is possible, therefore, to discern psychological, sociological and philosophical receptions of texts. Within this literary concept the receptor becomes the author. The reception of texts, however, is a very complex phenomenon and many answers still have to be found (Plett 1975:25-29).

.4 The rhetorical literary concept deals with the literary form of literature. Important is the deviation of literature from the everyday language to establish a literary work of art. The distinction between literary and non-literary work is, however, one of the main issues of debate (cf Plett 1975:29-30; Van Luxemburg et al 1982:17-30).

Although scholars through the ages often emphasized one or more of these literary concepts (usually at the cost of others), it is very important to note that the different concepts of literature do not exclude each other, but are interrelated, for example, a mimetic text surely is an expression of the author in a rhetorical form which has an effect on the reader. Likewise a rhetorical text is an expression of the author which in some way relates to reality (without which it would be totally incomprehensible) and effects the readers thereof. In fact, each one of these four concepts are essential for the communication of all texts (cf Plett 1975:30-34).

3.2.1.2 Literature as a semiological phenomenon

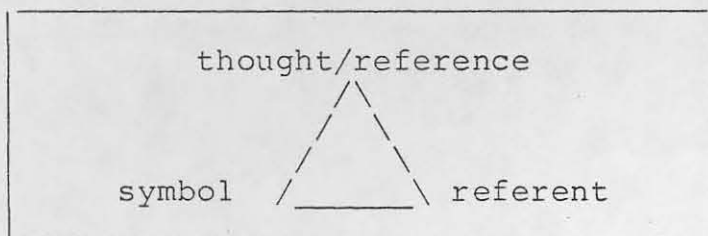
These distinctions described above are also relevant for semiotics (i e the science of signs). In the semiological process the following are presupposed: a communicator (which emits signs - i e expressive); a receptor (which receives signs - i e receptive); a referent (which refers to reality - i e mimetic) and the code (which represents the repertoire of signs - i e rhetorical) (Plett 1975:34). To my mind, it is especially communication science which emphasized the interrelatedness and dynamic characteristics of these components. These insights regarding the interrelatedness of literary science and semiotics have the advantage of placing literature within a universal framework of sign systems and consequently in a communication paradigm. Plett (1975:34-37) envisages that this will lead to a better understanding of literary and non-literary works. Naturally one should be careful of oversimplifying the matter and forcing it into a system. Plett's criteria (1975:34-37) for determining the textuality of texts must, however, first be discussed.

3.2.1.3 Texts as a semiological and communication phenomena

Plett (1975:39) argues that the text is the macro or super sign which also consists of the different semiotic components. Joining Eco (1976:32), Plett regards semiotics as part of the communication process through which semiotics is defined comprehensively and dynamically. Plett's text theory is based on the following semiological and communicational distinctions. Note that this is Plett's (1975:40-46) application of the communication process (as discussed in I B 2.1) on the phenomenon of written texts:

.1 In a semiotic definition of signs, distinctions must be made between linguistic and non-linguistic signs as well as literary and non-literary signs. It is therefore possible that the materialistic body of the signs can differ (e g acoustical, graphical, gestures). Written texts are based on a graphical system of signs (i e language).

.2 Texts as semiotic signs consist of linguistic signs based on social conventions. Ogden and Richard's triangle is important when dealing with language as a social convention. They distinguish in their triangle between symbol, thought / reference and referent. The arbitrariness of signs is obvious in the light of the different possible interrelations between these distinctions. In the light of Ogden and Richard's triangle one has to distinguish different relationships to reality in textual reference: "Die Art und Weise, wie die Beziehung zwischen Referent und Textzeichen interpretiert wird, bestimmt den Wahrheits- und Wirklichkeitsgehalt des Textes" (Plett 1975:43).



Petersen (1984b:5-9) shows clearly that this distinction between symbol and reality is one of the most crucial differences between the old and the new linguistics. Whereas the old linguistics conceived signs as referring directly to real world objects (i e "thinking history"), the new linguistics (traced to De Saussure) rediscovered the Stoic insight that signs mediate objects to us not directly but much more complicated namely through concepts or images (i e "thinking story before thinking history"). De Saussure requires that one first moves from the signifier to the

signified and only then to the referential object. These distinctions should be kept in mind for the whole issue of text and reality. This important principle will be taken up again in section B 3.3.2 of this chapter in the discussion of text semantics.

.3 Texts can therefore be defined as macro- or superlinguistic signs consisting of smaller signs (Plett 1975:39). The different distribution and application of the smaller signs make different text types possible. One can also distinguish codes and subcodes in texts (e g English vs London English). These codes channel a particular message. This could be done through different channels for example sound-acoustical or graphico-optical. Written texts are obviously channeled through graphico-optical means. "Noise" could hamper this communication (e g poor letter or paper quality). Furthermore, one could distinguish different medial objects of communication such as a tape recorder and radio for acoustical communication and manuscripts and books for optical communication.

.4 The communicator is the author who encodes the text while the receptor is the reader who decodes the text. When the communicator is not the author (e g a book) the medium is called the secondary sender. Communicators and receptors have certain presuppositions in common as well as differing presuppositions. Therefore textual communication isn't an isolated phenomenon but part of the human communication act in its totality.

.5 Ultimately the most significant in Plett's (1975:46-51) text theory is his matching of the insights from communication science and literary science with the semiotical distinctions of Buehler and Morris.

* In 1934 Karl Buehler described language in his "Relationsmodell" as an organ ("organon") or instrument in the communication over something between people. In this model he distinguishes between the linguistic signs as "Ausdrucks-(Symptom-)Zeichen" as in relation to the communicator; the "Appell-(Signal-)Zeichen" as in relation to the receptor; and the "Darstellung-(Symbol-)Zeichen" as in relation to reality (cf Plett 1975:47). His model correlates with the literary model which was discussed earlier: mimesis ("Darstellung"); expression ("Ausdruck") and reception ("Appell"). The sign-immanent (rhetorical) dimension of texts lacks in his model.

* In 1938 C W Morris made the following distinctions within his semiotic model: syntactics (i e the relation between signs); semantics (i e the relation between signs and referents) and pragmatics (i e the relation between signs and its interpreters). The reader should note that my reference to these

semiotic modes (i.e. syntactics, semantics and pragmatics) in the rest of this dissertation is based on Morris's definition. In this model all four literary concepts are accounted for: syntactics = rhetorical; semantics = mimetic; and pragmatics = expression and reception. These three aspects are part of one process and cannot be separated.

This led Plett (1975:46-51) to combine the insights of Buehler and Morris in a semiotic model consisting of syntactics, semantics and pragmatics which would be able to accommodate the theoretical insights of literary science, semiotics and communication science. This text theory of Plett prompted me to combine certain aspects of my approach with his - especially my distinction between the intratextual, historical and metatextual dimensions. Ultimately my text theory is redescribed and simplified with the aid of three notions: thrust, perspective and strategy. Let me explain.

3.2.2 My multidimensional and plurimodal text theory

Plett (1975:52-56) emphasizes that the above-discussed dimensions of a text are interrelated and cannot be isolated - that is the formal-structural or syntactic; the communicative or pragmatic and the significative or semantic. "Eine isolierte Syntaktik verzichtet auf Zeichenbenutzer und Zeichenrealitaet und folglich auf die kommunikative Signifikanz des Textes. Eine isolierte Pragmatik hingegen vernachlaessigt die Kombinatorik der Textelemente und ihren denotativen Gehalt. Und schliesslich ermangelt es einer isolierten Semantik an der zeichenstrukturellen Relation und ihrer kommunikativen Einbettung in konkrete Situationen der Textuebermittlung" (Plett 1975:52). This is an "integrativen Textwissenschaft" where the closely knitted interrelationship between syntactics, pragmatics and semantics is honoured. This interrelationship was neglected for the greater part of this century. Since Ferdinand de Saussure syntactics was isolated from pragmatics and semantics into a "immanentes Relationssystem" as "langue" (in De Saussure's terminology) and "competence" (in Chomsky's terminology) (Plett 1975:56-57). The historical approach was exchanged for a intratextual approach (cf Lyons 1968:45-50). The intention was to gain maximum generalizing and predictability. But this led to the neglecting of the creation, reception, historical boundness and intertextuality of texts (Plett 1975:56-57).

Plett argues that in the analysis of a text these three dimensions (i.e. "modes" in my model) - syntactics, semantics and pragmatics - are relevant whether the text is analysed from a theological, sociological or linguistic interest. Furthermore, in the relationship between these modes one can discern a number of combinations in which the different modes are in turn dominant



or subordinate to the others (cf Plett 1975:54). This insight of Plett is very important as we will see now and also later on (cf I B 3.3 - 3.5).

At this very point I would like to incorporate aspects of my text theory which is, in my opinion, an improvement and clarification of the interrelationship of the different textual modes. The three modes of texts (i.e. the syntactic, semantic and pragmatic) are part and parcel of all three dimensions of textual communication as introduced earlier (cf I B 3.1) - that is the intratextual, historical and metatextual dimensions. The intratextual dimension was identified as the static dimension of the text or medium; the historical dimension as the dynamic inter- and extratextual reference of the medium and the ideal interlocutors within their "worlds"; and the metatextual dimension as the dialectic communication and reception of the message of the text. The keen observer will have noticed that there are extraordinary parallels with the three semiotic modes: like the intratextual dimension, text syntactics (i.e. the relationship between signs) is primarily a static mode; like the historical dimension, text semantics (i.e. the relationship between signs and referents) is primarily a dynamic mode; and like the metatextual dimension, text pragmatics (i.e. the relationship between signs and its interpreters) is primarily a dialectic mode.

These parallels obviously made me think. Not only did I realize the inextricable intertwinedness between the different dimensions of textual communication and the different semiotic modes of texts, I also realized that it opened new possibilities to give account of the multidimensionality of textual communication. On the other hand, I also realized that the complexity of this interrelationship should be simplified. This led me to relate the different dimensions and modes in terms of their common denominators - that is their static, dynamic and dialectic parameters. It is in this regard that my notions of "the static thrust, dynamic perspective and dialectic strategy" were conceptualized as the culmination of my communication model. It was actually as a result of my analysis of 1 Peter in terms of the above-discussed dimensions and modes, which brought me to the insight that the trimodal bases of the intratextual and historical dimensions constitute the static, dynamic and pragmatic parameters for a metatextual dimension. I found that these three notions gave some expression of the complex communication process in a simplified but integrated way. Let me explain it with the aid of the x- and y-axes of a graphic grid.



DIMENSION: (PARAMETERS:)	INTRATEXTUAL PRELUDE (STATIC)	HISTORICAL INTERLUDE (DYNAMIC)	METATEXTUAL FINALE (DIALECTIC)
X:-----			
MODE: (PARAMETERS)			
SYNTACTIC (STATIC)	##### # # # #	* * * *	#####: STATIC THRUST % % % %
SEMANTIC (DYNAMIC)	##### # # # # #	* * * * * *	#####: DYNAMIC PERSPECTIVE % % % %
PRAGMATIC (DIALECTIC)	##### # # # #	* * * *	#####: DIALECTIC STRATEGY:% % % % %

The x-axle represents the different dimensions of textual communication whereas the y-axle represents the different semiotic modes. Note how the dimensions and modes are interrelated in terms of their respective static (#), dynamic (*) and dialectic (%) parameters to constitute the metatextual thrust, perspective and strategy of textual communication.

In textual communication the medium is the static constituent in the sense that the words, sentences, paragraphs, tradition units and ultimately books (even the New Testament as a compendium of books) are syntactically and intratextually structured and frozen. This implies that the the "static thrust" is constituted by the interrelationship, chronological order and hierarchy of the frozen intratextual and historical text units. Therefore the static thrust is the combination of the static parameters of the x- and y-axles. Obviously the text-syntactic mode is decisive in determining the text thrust. In the metatextual dimension as the outcome of the communication process, the text thrust represents the static autonomous constituent determining the dialectic interplay between the text and its receptors.

In contrast to the static intratextual dimension, the historical dimension represents the dynamic constituent which is dominated by the semantic inter- and extratextual references. Of the utmost importance in the textual communication, however, is to determine the "ultimate referent" of a text. This represents the ultimate commitment or text "perspective" which inspired and explains the existence of the enscriptured communication. It is especially in the historical dimension that the perspective as the ultimate semantic referent dominates the other text modes. The metatextual perspective, however, is determined by the sum total and dynamic tension between the static intratextual semantic reference thereto (i.e. the x-axle) and the dynamic historical referent thereof (i.e. the y-axle). The dominance of the semantic mode in the reconstruction of the dynamic perspective is obvious. Ultimately the perspective constitutes and explains the dynamics of text creations and interpretations and is therefore obviously vital in the metatextual finale.

Finally, the success of the metatextual communication is determined by a third dimension - that is the metatextual dimension which represents the dialectic constituent of textual communication. Once again both the intratextual and historical dimensions of the text-functional and style-rhetorical signals determine the dialectic strategy of textual communication. This third notion is dominated by the pragmatic mode and is, like the thrust and perspective, vital in the metatextual communication. Even though it is possible that the thrust and perspective of a text could clearly be distinguished, it could still fail to fulfill the aim of the communication act (whether it is to persuade, shock or comfort the receptors).

Ultimately, the success of the metatextual communication is determined by the dialectic interplay of the intratextual and historical dimensions of the thrust, perspective and strategy of the text and the real receptors thereof. The theoretical bases of these static, dynamic and dialectic parameters of textual communication will be outlined in sections 3.3, 3.4 and 3.5 respectively. Obviously this text theory will have to be implemented in terms of a methodology which in turn has to be tested in the analysis of Peter in chapters II and III. It is only in chapter IV that I shall be able to draw some conclusions with regard to the success of my text theory.

Let us now proceed with my text theory by first attending to the intratextual dimension of textual communication.

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3.3 THE INTRATEXTUAL DIMENSION (THE PRELUDE): THE STATIC MEDIUM / TEXT

3.3.1 Introduction

I have already argued that the medium is the gateway and therefore the starting point in the analysis of textual communication. As a medium, an enscriptured text is a static and a syntactic intratextual interrelation of linguistic signs (cf Lategan 1985:108). This brings a number of insights from different disciplines into play, for instance semiotics, linguistics, literary science and communication science (cf Plett's theory above in I B 3.2.1).

3.3.2 Semiotic, linguistic and literary theory within a communication paradigm: the static medium / text of the intratextual prelude

In my outline of the communication process I have already distinguished between the code and channel of the medium. Let us apply these theoretical considerations to the New Testament. The New Testament as written texts presupposes a graphico-optical channel (i.e. the perception of symbols or codes on some durable surface). The code of the New Testament writings is Koine Greek and was initially written on papyrus and parchment scrolls. It is important to recognize that the New Testament is actually a compendium of Greek writings which initially were not part of "one book". Furthermore, we don't have the original copies of the New Testament writings - only numerous copies which differ to some extent from each other. This has certain implications as we will see later on. Whereas the channel and code are part and parcel of the medium, I will from now on use the term "medium" to refer to the linguistic-literary expression of the New Testament which presupposes and includes the graphico-optical channel and Koine Greek as the code.

Having identified the New Testament as part and parcel of communication by means of an enscriptured textual medium, some basic implications should be highlighted.

We have seen in the introduction (I B 3.1) that it is important to define the relationship between the intratextual, historical and metatextual dimension to written texts. The fact that the medium is "methodologically" (cf Luz 1982:503; Loader 1978:6; Petersen 1984b:20) the gateway in the analysis of enscriptured communication (cf I B 3.1 & 3.2 above), makes it imperative to start off with an intratextual analysis of the medium in all three modes (i.e. syntactic, pragmatic and semantic). It is important, however, to note that the intratextual dimension is dominated by the static parameters of the syntactic mode. This



implies that an intratextual analysis of a text concentrates on the the text-immanent syntactics (e g the relationship between words), pragmatics (e g the strategy and function of words and sentences) and semantics (e g the dominant and recurrent reference to certain themes and motives) of the frozen and static text.

I will now make a few observations with regard to the intratextual dimension and its syntactic (i e the dominant mode), semantic and pragmatic modes as means of reconstructing the intratextual thrust, perspective and strategy. The methodological implications thereof will only be dealt with in chapter II section A.

.1 Syntactically an intratextual approach to texts would imply the analysis of the relationship between letters, morphemes, words, sentences and paragraphs. Therefore, the New Testament texts presuppose knowledge from the communicants on five levels: phonological, lexical, syntactic, conceptual and pertaining to beliefs (Miller 1973:8). These aspects of language are of course inextricably intertwined (cf Van Luxemburg et al 1982:98-101). It follows that insights from general linguistics (with all its subdisciplines) are relevant and of the utmost importance for an hermeneutical-exegetical model for the New Testament. The analysis of the syntactic mode of the static text will expose the intratextual thrust which the communicator-author wanted to establish through his organizing and structuring of the syntactic elements such as words, sentences, paragraphs and bigger text units. In my discussion of the model of the communication process (cf I B 2.1) this was referred to as the selection and structuring of the message which was determined by the communicator as well as the message content and its medium. This encoding resulted in a frozen and static textual enscripturation. It is in this respect that the emphasis of the text-immanent approaches on the "autonomy of the text" could be extremely useful. The exposure of the "genetic" and "referential" fallacies in this regard is important. Scholars from the historical paradigm were accused (often justifiedly) that they interpreted ancient texts in terms of their origin and socio-cultural world which often lead to a missing of what the text itself wanted to say (cf J G Davies 1983:45-47). This confirms the procedure of using the medium / text as the gateway in textual analysis - that is first to listen to what the text wanted to say in its own right. This decontextualized and dehistoricized autonomy of a text inevitably leads to the problem of valid textual interpretations which is in need of a historical check (cf J G Davies 1983:52-53; Schneiders 1982:62-63 & 68). This issue will be raised again in the next section (cf I B 3.5). Nevertheless, we will have to acknowledge the autonomy of the static text in the analysis of textual communication.



Therefore the intratextual dimension is dominated by the syntactic analysis in order to reconstruct the static text thrust as expressed on micro and macro level (cf Grosse's distinctions in I B 2.1). In determining these levels (especially the macro level) we have to incorporate the syntactic analysis of the semantic and pragmatic modes of the intratextual dimension.

.2 Semantically the intratextual dimension has to do with the text-immanent occurrence and recurrence of themes and their intratextual reference to each other in some hierarchy or inter-relationship. This defined interrelationship between and hierarchy of different themes and motives within a text help us not only to reconstruct the thrust of the text but also the perspective and master symbols of the communicator-author. According to the model of the communication process (cf I B 2.1) the communicator's selection and structuring of the message within the medium are determined by a variety of factors such as values, attitudes and beliefs. This correlates with Grosse's reference to "Weltbild" as part of the macro structure of texts. It is in this regard that my notion of text perspective is crucial. It gives account of the ultimate reason for the existence of a particular text. Kelley (1977:38) refers to these values, attitudes and beliefs which determine the communicator's message and medium as his "perception". Ricoeur speaks of the "existential referent" which led Michell (1984:46-47) to remark: "This does not imply a return to the romantic 'divination' of the author's intention but refers to a commitment that is mediated by the entire explanatory procedure that precedes and engenders it." Obviously the perspective as an existential referent is not only expressed within the static text of the intratextual dimension, it also entails an extratextual reference which brings the historical dimension into play.

The notion of text perspective is especially relevant for the communication of more serious existential literature (e.g. religious texts). Guided by the work of Gadamer, Schneiders (1982:64) remarks that classic works have perennial significance for the very reason that they interpret the existence of man with abundance of truth and beauty. James Barr (1973:33) confirms this view with the following statement: "It is perhaps possible to maintain that any literary appreciation implies, or induces, or is related to a general view of the world, a way of understanding life, a 'spirituality.' In this sense, it may be said all great literature, whatever its subject matter, possesses a theological dimension" (cf Du Preez 1983:33-34). Ricoeur (1975:34-35) confirms this with regard to parables which reflect limit expressions of limit experiences in human life. The frozen expression of this text perspective will have to be syntactically analysed. In this frozen form it is to be determined within the



parameters of the intratextual semantic mode of the text thrust. We will return to the notion of text perspective in my discussion of the historical and metatextual dimensions.

The implications of the semantic mode once again confirm my communication model which presupposes that the intratextual and historical dimensions are indispensable constituents in the communication process. Especially the notion of perspective draw our attention to the extratextual reference of the text semantics. This is again related to the phenomenon of polysemy or multiple meaning which is also determined by the extratextual context and symbolic connotation. This was, interestingly enough, acknowledged by structuralists such as Propp and Levi-Strauss (cf Collins 1983:242-243). However, the phenomenon of multiple meaning and interpretation, even in the intratextual dimension, will confront us again within the parameters of the historical dimension and will therefore be discussed more elaborately under I B 3.4.

.3 The pragmatic implications of the intratextual dimension have to do with the function of words, sentences, pericopes and text units within the text. "Die Pragmatik als Wissenschaft widmet sich der Analyse von Sprechakten und allgemeiner von Funktionen sprachlicher Aeusserungen und ihrer Merkmale in Kommunikationsprozessen" (Van Dijk 1980:68). Style, rhetorics and text functions are thus the relevant issues in this regard. Just as sentences can be semantically true or false, sentences (and texts as a whole) can pragmatically succeed or fail (cf Van Dijk 1980:71). This is especially important with regard to the New Testament writings which are in the form of a library of literary documents. This implies that New Testament scholars should benefit from contributions made by those literary critics who share a common literary sensitiveness with New Testament scholars (cf Barr 1973:10-33). In its static intratextual form the text pragmatic mode helps to constitute the text thrust. It should be clear, however, that text pragmatics also has a historical dimension which can be reconstructed through the gateway and on the foundation of the intratextual text pragmatics.

Barnlund (1973:48) argues that there are at least 6 people involved in the pragmatics of intercommunication - that is the source's self-view, the receptor's view of the source, the source's idea of the receptor's view of him and vice versa (this relates to the distinction between real and ideal author / reader - cf Segers 1980:19-25; Van Luxemburg et al 1982:88-94). This distinction between the real and ideal interlocutors could be extremely useful in determining the strategy of the communicator-author as well as the possible outcome of the communication act as a whole, namely the reaction of the receptor-readers. This distinction between the real and ideal



interlocutors confirms that the text pragmatic strategy of a text is determined by both the static intratextual expression thereof and the dynamic historical reference thereof. Furthermore, it is already obvious that the strategy will play a decisive role in the metatextual finale as we will see in section B 3.5 of this chapter.

This concludes the theoretical considerations of the intratextual prelude as the gateway in the communication process. In the implementation of analytical-exegetical methods and aids for a intratextual analysis the predominantly syntactic parameters of the trimodal static text must be acknowledged as the basis for the reconstruction the intratextual thrust, perspective and strategy. The discussion of the intratextual dimension of the text semantics and pragmatics already gave an indication that more is to come. Let us therefore turn our attention to the historical dimension and its predominant semantic parameters as well as its dominating notion - that is the "dynamic perspective".

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3.4 THE METATEXTUAL DIMENSION (THE INTERLUDE): THE DYNAMIC INTER- AND EXTRATEXTUAL REFERENCE

3.4.1 Introduction

Texts are devised instruments or artifacts for communication amongst human beings. The fact that language and literature are the creation of man, implies that the historical aspect is the most fundamental characteristic of textual communication. Symbols and texts are the product of mans cultural-historical creativeness. From a communication paradigm "... it should be noted that all three constituents of the communication process are addressed by the historical paradigm..." (Vorster, W S 1984a:105) - that is the medium, the communicator and receptor. The autonomous and independent medium remains the "gateway" through which the historical dimension in all its facets can be discovered. That was one of the reasons why we started off with the medium as the static expression of a specific communication act. Nevertheless, this static text is frozen history reflecting the dynamics of a historically determined creativeness, reference and interpretation of man. The fact that history is the dynamic creation of man implies that communication (as a product of man's creativeness) is also dynamic. This issue is especially relevant in the text-semantic mode. This is illustrated by the fact that there are internal (biological, psychological and sociological) and external (temporal, geographical and contextual) presuppositions determining the interlocution of every communication act and thus also the semantic value of texts from word to text level.

The previous paragraph explains and confirms the necessity to incorporate the dynamic world of texts as a constituent in the communication process. With enscriptured communication this can only be done in the second phase (interlude) of textual communication after the autonomous static text has been analysed. The dynamics of the communication process, indeed necessitates the analysis of the interaction between the ideal interlocutors, the medium and their inter- and extratextual "worlds". This is of great importance when we are confronted with the dynamics of ancient and culturally-distant texts. The necessity of some kind of validation for a secondary reception becomes even more imperative when ancient texts are used as canonized texts.

3.4.2 Semiotic, linguistic and literary theory within a communication paradigm: the dynamic inter- and extratextual semantic reference of the historical interlude

In the light of my introductory remarks it has become clear that communication is amongst others a historical endeavour which is



semantically determined through the dynamic inter- and extratextual reference between text and "context" (i.e. the socio-psychological or communicative background) (cf. Van Dijk 1980:69; Steyn 1984). My distinction between inter- (i.e. between texts) and extratextual (i.e. the socio-cultural frame of reference) reference coincides, to a large extent, with Eco's (1979:20-22) distinction between "intertextual" (i.e. reference to other texts) and "common frames" (i.e. the interlocutors' encyclopedic knowledge). For Eco (1979:20) a "frame" is a "data structure" which is essential for communication to take place. Humans are programmed with these frames (including intertextual and common frames) which enable them to encode and decode (i.e. to communicate). Therefore, the historical dimension focusses on the "frames of reference" without which communication is impossible. Now, we have already seen that "reference" is a semantic issue. Therefore, the historical dimension is predominantly determined by the dynamic parameters of the semantic mode. Although the semantic mode is dominant in the historical dimension of texts, the threefold semiotic distinction of syntactics, semantics and pragmatics are also relevant and must be accounted for.

.1 The historical dimension of the text syntactics has to do with intertextuality or the text-historical aspect of the text. It is possible to detect (although always with a lesser or greater degree of probability) a historical intertextuality within a communication act. This is done through a historico-critical analysis in the sense of the German "Historische Kritik". The intertextual syntactic detection of tradition material in the communication act will be the starting point, whereafter the historical extratextual comparison and history could be undertaken: "The literary critical notion of the autonomy of the text can be taken too far, but as a matter of method, even of historical method, it is still the best procedure to elicit from the text we are concerned with what it has to say before relating what it says to other texts" (Petersen 1984b:20). The frozen and static enscripturing of intertextual reference is the basis for the historical analysis of the text thrust. The communicator-author has the freedom to create his own intention through his selection and structuring of tradition material within his textual composition constituting an inter- and extratextual thrust which should be honoured by the receptor-readers. Ultimately, however, the intratextual and historical constitution of the text thrust is the expression of a perspectival frame of reference. This brings us to the text-semantic mode which dominates the historical dimension.

.2 The historical approach of the text semantics deals with the reference of the text to the communicator, receptor and their extratextual "world" or socio-cultural background. First and

foremost this presupposes an analysis of the real communicators and receptors within their worlds of meaning. The interlocutors are part of and therefore influenced by their physiological, psychological (cf Hovland, Janis & Kelley 1964:1-134; Miller 1973:3-12) and sociological (Uribe-Villegas 1977:9-44; Best 1983:181-94) background (cf the illustration of the communication model in I B 2.1; Plett 1975:79-82). This is reflected in the meaning or message they create (Jordaan 1971:3-7). Thus the semantic mode of the communication process is especially important to expose the dynamic historical parameters of text creations. This doesn't mean an ignorance of the intratextual basis of the text semantics (cf I B 3.3.2 and 3.4.2), but it is important to note that communication is made possible by the interaction between text information (text) and the historical memory (i.e. the register of semantic references) of the interlocutors. In fact, interlocution is based on historically determined communication conventions which are part of the interlocutors frames of reference (cf Lategan 1985:110; Steyn 1984). For communication to succeed between the communicator and receptor, it is necessary to have in common a language competence, frame of reference (which includes the socio-cultural, linguistic, literary and philosophical background) and actuality experience (Anderegg 1973:9-26; Fritz & Muckenaupt 1981:102-5; Van Dijk 1980:82-95). As I have said earlier, this is even more important in the analysis of ancient documents because we are so far removed from their world. One should remember, furthermore, that the interlocutors' semantic world or frame of reference includes both the socio-cultural and text-historical facets.

A word of caution, however, is appropriate at this stage. Text-historical and socio-cultural reconstructions are always hypothetic with a higher or lower degree of probability. Especially when we encounter a "Kontextverlust" (as is often the case with the Bible as ancient texts), semantic gaps are created and require that the receptor becomes the "Texthersteller" which leads to big differences in interpretation between receptors (cf Plett 1975:86-91 & 99).

The last remark in the previous paragraph necessitates some remarks on the issue of multiple meaning and interpretation within the communication process (cf Lategan 1984; Combrink 1984). This is closely linked to the basic presupposition in communication science and reception theory which implies that readers differ in their interpretation of texts because the receptor ascribes meaning to his world which includes texts. The communication model is accounting for this in the communicator and receptor's "selection and structuring of the medium content" (cf I B 2.1). Communication is therefore a creative process (Iser 1974:129). This means that the realities we encounter are



ultimately created by ourselves (cf Blignaut & Fourie 1970:26-47; Budd & Ruben 1979:115). This has the implication that each and everyone can interpret a text in his own way (cf Herzog II 1983:110-111 following H-G Gadamer against E D Hirsch Jr). The problem arises with canonized texts (like the New Testament) when different (even opposing) interpretations of the same text are presented as "Gods will". This kind of problem is studied by the recently developed reception theory which compares the different receptions of a text in order to shed more light on the multiple interpretation thereof (cf Segers 1980). If we as biblical scholars do not acknowledge this fact we shall continue to live in a fool's paradise where everyone believes that he alone has the whole truth. William R Herzog II (1985:115) remarks in this regard: "I would judge that the difficulties raised by the spectre of living tentatively, even more modestly, in faith are not to be compared to the miseries caused by zealous certainty." On the other hand one should guard against the fallacy that there is no meaning at all (cf Combrink 1984). Nevertheless, the accommodation of the dynamics of semantic reference in the historical dimension of the New Testament texts is a prerequisite for a successful primary and secondary communication and interpretation of the message (which is the goal / finale of the communication act). This will free biblical scholars from a positivistic and dogmatic approach which is to a large extent responsible for the cacophony and resulting moral crisis in theology. This is in accord with the developments in the philosophy of science which nowadays rejects the idea of objective or absolute truths and operates with relational truth (cf section C of this chapter). The subjectivity and multiple interpretation of texts "...werden in der Wissenschaft dadurch kontrolliert, dass vor Analysebeginn stets die Praemissen, unter denen die Analyse stattfindet, genau vereinbart werden. Auf diesem Wege der 'Intersubjektivitaet' scheint allein pragmatische Textforschung moeglich. Andernfalls herrschen Intuition und Spekulation" (Plett 1975:92). The phenomenon of multiple meaning and interpretation is closely linked to the importance of perspective, master symbols and metaphors in the historical dimension of the communication process as we will see in the next paragraph.

In fact, the notion of text perspective does not only explain the phenomenon of multiple interpretation in textual communication, it also represents the ultimate extratextual referent of text-semantic reference (cf I B 3.2.2). The perspective/s expressed in the communication act consist of a number of master symbols which are basically semantic and metaphoric-symbolic (cf Du Preez 1983:2-4; Chryssides 1985:146-147). Therefore we will find in my methodological considerations on the historical perspective that a text theory on "metaphors" is very useful for the analysis of a text perspective (cf II A 2.2.1 & 2.2.2). It is



obvious that different perspectives and different sets of master symbols explain the phenomena of multiple meaning as well as multiple interpretation. Therefore, determining the perspectives involved in a communication act is decisive for the metatextual finale as we shall see in I B 3.5. With regard to the text semantics of the historical dimension, however, Plett illustrates the far reaching text-semantic implications of possible different reality models as an expression of different perspectives and master symbols. Related to the issue of reality models is also the "text-reality" issue which is important in the theological debate. Therefore let us turn our attention to the issue of text and reality in the light of Plett's discussion of reality models. The following paragraph will also prove to be relevant for the metatextual communication and reception of texts.

Plett (1975:99-102) defines semantics as the relationship between signs and reference. He furthermore distinguishes between text signs as referring to conceptual or mental phenomena (i.e. designative) and text signs as referring to reality or empirical phenomena (i.e. denotative). This relationship between designatum and denotatum is difficult to determine and depends on which reality model the semiotics are based. A positivistic reality model would reject every sign that doesn't have a denotatum as speculation whereas an idealistic reality model accepts "dass Bewusstsein" as the only norm for reality. A third possibility would be to decide on a "socio-communicative referentiality" where the reference of the signs are determined by the norms of the community and its communication. Underlying these three approaches, Plett argues, are three different concepts of truth: a factual concept (i.e. syntactic-semantic); a logical concept (i.e. semantic); and a communicative concept (pragma-semantic). This coincides with the distinctions in the philosophy of science between objective, subjective and relational concepts of truth respectively as we shall see in section C. Obviously these different master symbols concerning man's concept of truth are determined by a person's life-and-world perspective. These master symbols are crucial for the metatextual finale of the communication process. This means that communication between interlocutors with different concepts of truth is very problematic and often impossible (e.g. a realist vs an idealist; a fundamentalist vs a relativist; a Christian vs a communist, etc). Plett decides for the socio-communicative or pragma-semantic concept of truth. It is a comprehensive and dynamic reality model in the sense that it accommodates multiple interpretation of texts and the related different reality models as well as the different frames of reference of the interlocutors (Plett 1975:99-102). Thus Plett as a linguist has opted for a relational perspective of truth which has important implications for the "text-reality" issue.



The perspective on the relationship between text and reality is important for biblical scholarship in two respects. In the first place it explains and validates the phenomenon of multiple interpretation in biblical scholars' quest for ultimate truth (cf the discussion above). In the second place it is important issue to determine the degree and manner (direct or fictional) in which texts refer to reality outside the text (Van Luxemburg et al 1982:31-38) or create their own reality within the text (Anderegg 1973). This is a major concern in Christianity - especially in the quest for the historical Jesus. This issue has become a tug-of-war between text-immanent and historical paradigms amongst biblical scholars. As a preliminary remark I would suggest, however, that the text is the only sure basis of reconstructing the historical facets (the interlocutors and their background as well as the reality referred to) and the relevance thereof. We will have to return to this issue in chapter IV.

Ultimately, however, communication is only possible if there is some kind of relationship between text and reality: "... even the so-called selfcontained texts can communicate only because of the underlying existence (although not explicitly expressed) of a relationship or tension between the text and extratextual reality, between sign and referent. "We belong to history before telling stories and writing history" (Ricoeur as quoted by Lategan 1985:121-122). This confirms my observation at the beginning of my discussion with regard to the historical dimension, namely that the historical aspect is the most basic constituent of a text although we use the linguistic-literary aspect as our gateway.

.3 The historical dimension of the text pragmatics has to do with the conventions determining the function or strategy of the text. In this analysis the relationship to other texts is crucial - thus a literary comparison is implied. The literary frame of reference of the original communicator and receptors is decisive for recognizing the literary signals which determine the success of the communication act. The implications and relevance of different literary signals within different literary text types should therefore be analysed. This requires the competence to distinguish between different text types (genres): narratives (cf Anderegg 1973 and Eco 1979:3-43), expositions, argumentative texts, descriptions and lists (Vorster, W S 1983:6). The demands that the different text functions (e g informative, normative, critical, etc) and perspectives (materialistic, apocalyptic, Christian, agnostic, etc) put on the understanding of different text types must be acknowledged. The New Testament authors had the freedom to choose the medium, structure and strategy through which they wanted to communicate. This has the important implication with regard to the New Testament that we should honour the author's choice of text type and strategy as well as



the constraints which the text type imposes on the author and the reader (cf the communication model in I B 2.1) - otherwise we could totally misunderstand the author's intention through his writing. It should be obvious that this text-pragmatic choice of the communicator-author is determined by the perspective he wanted to communicate. This confirms once more that the historical dimension is dominated by the semantic mode and its ultimate referent or cosmologic perspective.

That concludes the theoretical considerations of the historical interlude as the second phase in the communication process. In the implementation of analytical-exegetical methods and aids for a historical analysis in section A of chapter II we will therefore have to accommodate the predominantly semantic parameters and dynamic nature of the interlude in the communication process. Let us now turn our attention to the finale of the communication process.

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3.5 THE METATEXTUAL DIMENSION (THE FINALE): THE DIALECTIC PRAGMATIC COMMUNICATION

3.5.1 Introduction

The final communication of texts is determined by the communication process in its totality and interrelatedness. It is only now that the parameters of the intratextual and historical dimensions have been accounted for that the dialectic parameters for the metatextual communication can be outlined. The dialectic relationship between these basic constituents of the communication process (i.e. the static medium and its dynamic semantical reference) determines the outcome of the communication of the communicator's message. The question is whether it is possible to construct a theory of "parole" (performance) in addition to "langue" (competence) (Plett 1975:79-82).

3.5.2 Semiotic, linguistic and literary theory within a communication paradigm: the dialectic pragmatic communication of the metatextual finale

The ultimate goal of any communication act is the successful communication of the message between communicator and receptor. Although the actual interpretation of the communication act is in everyday life normally done spontaneously by paying attention to the communicator, the respective roles of the intratextual and historical dimensions in textual communication have not been solved amongst biblical scholars. As a matter of fact, this is one of the main reasons for the impasse amongst scholars in theology. I would now like to venture on untrodden paths (cf Van Iersel 1979:67-68) by trying to give theoretical guidelines and criteria for the third dimension of the communication of ancient canonized texts. This can only be done on the basis of the interrelationship and interplay between the parameters of the intratextual dimension of the medium and the historical dimension of the ideal and real interlocutors' world. This third dimension in textual communication is one of the missing keys which could help us to unlock the deadlock situation between the intratextual and historical approaches. Ultimately the reconstruction of the metatextual primary textual reception is the only way to reconstruct analogical parameters for a secondary reception (cf Ricoeur 1975:134).

Once again the interplay between the intratextual and historical analysis should be accounted for in all three semiotic modes of the text (i.e. syntactic, semantic and pragmatic). In this metatextual finale (as the dialectic outcome of the communication process) the dialectic parameters of the pragmatic mode are dominant and therefore determine the syntactic and semantic modes of the metatextual finale. As pragmatics involves the



communication between the interlocutors through a particular medium, it is obvious that successful communication is, on the one hand, determined by the receptor in his existence and interpretation of the different modes of the text. This implies that text pragmatics is "dynamic" but also "relative". Plett (1975:92) confirms this in his statement: "Pragmatische Textualitaet ist nur in der diachronen Dimension vorstellbar. Der diachrone Textbegriff kennt keine Statik, sondern allein die staendige Dynamik fortschreitender Textbildung". On the other hand, communication is determined by the fixed syntactic, pragmatic and semantic modes of the text (which are "static" and "absolute"). Apart from this static intratextual constituent, the dynamic historical inter- and extratextual world is likewise constitutive for all communication acts. Therefore, although the pragmatic mode is dominant in the metatextual dimension, it is only within the multidimensional interplay that we will be able to set some parameters for the metatextual dimension of the communication act. This will be outlined with the aid of my concepts of the metatextual thrust, perspective and strategy.

.1 The metatextual thrust is constituted by the syntactic parameters of the intratextual and historical dimensions. The main issue will be to determine whether the text thrust is clear, well structured and coherent or whether it is open for multiple interpretation or even misinterpretation.

The text thrust serves as the static syntactic constituent in the dialectic metatextual finale. This implies that the analysis of the metatextual thrust accounts for both the intratextual and historical structuredness of the text - that is the static and structured text with its interrelated and hierarchy of intratextual-historical themes, motives and tradition units. The analysis of this relationship will not only help to expose the metatextual perspective of the author, but will also give us some insight in the communicator-author's prerequisites for the primary reception of the text. This will obviously provide us with some parameters for a secondary reception of ancient canonized texts.

.2 I have already argued that the semantic mode has an ultimate referent / perspective which is decisive in the creation (i e encoding) of texts. I would now like to focus on the importance thereof for the reception (i e decoding) of texts. In my analysis of 1 Peter I shall speak of the "cosmologic perspective" of the text as the decisive constituent determining the success of the communication act.

The identificaton with the message and intent of a text or communication act is determined by the reality models of the receptors (cf Du Preez:1983:4). The emission (i e encoding) of a



message is done existentially within the parameters of a certain reality model or life-and-world perspective. This is also true of the interpretation (i.e. decoding) of a message. It is clearly an existential matter in which the experiencing and evaluation of the communication act is interpreted in terms of truth, values, aesthetics and actuality. When the perspective of a communicator isn't grasped "adequately" (either because of an incompetent medium, communicator or receptor) the communication act is bound to fail. It is also possible, however, that the communicator's perspective is understood but nevertheless rejected by the receptor. The fact is that the interlocutors (communicators and receptors alike) are sociologically determined by the conceptual system of their respective societies. This usually results in the rejection of any irreconcilable perspective unless the receptor is persuaded to accept it.

As I have noted earlier cosmologic perspectives are conceptual systems which are metaphorically and symbolically expressed (cf Du Preez 1983:2-4). The dominant metaphoric and symbolic concepts in each society function as the master symbols for the meaningful understanding of a complex world and the meaningful interaction between group members (cf Du Preez 1983:1-8). When the world-and-life perspective (which consists of a number of master symbols) of the communicator and receptor differ, communication either fails (the receptor fails to understand the communicator or the communicator fails to convince the receptor) or succeeds (the communicator succeeds to communicate in terms of the receptor's perspective or the communicator succeeds in convincing the receptor to accept his perspective). This boils down to an important principal namely: "We honor the symbol, not the man" (Duncan 1953:123 as quoted by Du Preez 1983:4). This means that the communication process as a whole is ultimately and decisively determined by the life-and-world perspectives (each with its own set of master symbols) of the interlocutors. Rosenthal (1973) argues convincingly that this is especially applicable to non-personal communication (e.g. textual communication) in which the message and its symbols are decisive in the act of persuasion (cf IV A.2).

This excursion above illustrates and confirms that "cosmologic perspectives" and their respective "master symbols" are decisive in determining the encoding and decoding of a message. This implies that the intratextual and historical dimensions of the syntactic, semantic and pragmatic modes of the text find their intention from the communicator's theological-philosophical perspective (Rousseau 1984:68). Even the choice of a text type (as a decisive pragmatic signal for the successful communication of texts) is subordinated to the communicator's perspective. This is only the logical development of the insight that an author first has something (theme / message) in mind which he



utters with the aid of language (cf Louw 1976:122; Keifert 1981:166). This was also confirmed by the definition of communication as the process of creating meaning - and this is obviously done from some perspective! The author's perspective on reality (which includes his life-and-world view, values, commitments, etc) dominates his entire message and is therefore the key in understanding him. Steyn (1984:58) elaborates on this issue from a psycholinguistic approach to texts where he argues that communicators often tend to forget the micro intentions of their writings, "But to assume that the author also forgets his macro-intentions is hard to believe". In addition to the communicator's macro intentions (e g his perspective), the reaction to and evaluation (identification or rejection) of the text is in turn determined by the receptor's "stellung zur Welt und zur Wirklichkeit" (Buerger 1973:15) - (i e the receptor's perspective). In everyday communication this happens spontaneously. I am interested, however, to account for this within my text theory which I will have to test in my analysis of 1 Peter.

It should be clear that the notion of "perspective" is crucial in the communication process. This is not only important for the understanding of texts, but also as an explanation for the canonizing of the different writings. Apart from different factors which enhance the credibility of a message (e g contents, source, presentation, the receptor, etc - Rall 1980:2-3), it is important that certain perspectives and values have to be shared for a message to become authoritative (cf Eco 1979:3-43 and his discussion of the TeStWeSt model; Trent 1973:104-10). Man acts and is manipulated to act in a certain way (e g accepting and identifying with certain texts as normative) by the identification or rejection of symbols / perspectives: "Deur die simbole waarmee geidentifiseer word, te beheer, kan die gedrag van die betrokke persone gemanupileer word" (Du Preez:1983:5). Therefore the perspective of the individual writings of the New Testament played a decisive role in their acceptance as part of the canon. Herzog II (1983:113-114) refers to this canonizing function of "perspective" (or "ideology" and "myth" in their terminology) in human culture and especially religion as the "legitimizing of a social world".

The notion of cosmologic perspective also implies that a New Testament text, for example, shouldn't be seen as a pancake where all words and texts are on the same level - it should rather be seen as a relief map which must be illuminated / understood from a certain perspective (cf Luz 1982:517; Schneiders 1981:29). This will prevent a naive reception of the text. Furthermore, one will be able to recognize that symbols expressing a specific cosmologic perspective are historically and rhetorically determined (Bryant 1973:14). This implies that symbols can become



outdated and esoteric (Hitchcock 1979:178-193). This obviously has important implications for understanding the Bible as canonized texts. What is normative and what is expendable (e.g. baptism, the last supper, liturgical and ethical conduct etc)? This means that the notion of the author's perspective will be the only key to unlock this riddle of normativity which is the essence of the moral crisis in the communication of the New Testament. Ultimately the communication of texts only succeeds when the receptors grasp the author's perspective and reacts according to his intention (cf McGuire 1973:244; Nida 1969:1).

In solving the moral crisis within Christianity, the notion of perspective can also be helpful in another way. In the light of the fact that the moral crisis boils down to an ideological / perspectival confrontation amongst Christians, they should first (laymen and scholars alike) verbalize their own ultimate commitments and master symbols (cf Herzog II 1983). They should put their cards (i.e. presuppositions concerning God, reality, science, the Bible, etc) on the table. As Christians who identify themselves with the Old and New Testament as the primary and canonized documents of Christianity, they should then dialectically compare and evaluate their cosmologic perspectives and master symbols with those of biblical writings. Through this dialectic exercise Christians should be able to re-evaluate and settle their differences satisfactorily although not finally. This will be a giant step towards the solution of Scriptural abuse, on the one hand, and the accommodation of the multiple meaning, dimensionality and interpretation of texts, on the other hand.

.3 Finally within the text pragmatic mode of the metatextual dimension our aim is to determine the parameters of the text "strategy". The metatextual dimension of the text pragmatics, focusses on the communication processes which the communicator-author put into action through the text strategy implemented in his text in order to convince his receptor-readers. Like the metatextual thrust and perspective, the strategy is constituted by the dialectic interplay between the intratextual and historical pragmatic devices. On intratextual level the cola functions, style-rhetorical devices and text structure are all part of the text-pragmatic mode. Ultimately one should remember that "Pragmatische Textualitaet ist nur in der diachronen Dimension vorstellbar" (Plett 1975:92). This entails that the strategy of the text is also determined by dynamic historical conventions which constitute the text type.

Obviously the success or failure of the communication act depends to a large extent on the strategy which is utilized to communicate the communicator's cosmologic perspective. The text strategy is, however, not the only constituent which determine



the communication act. The thrust and perspective are likewise constitutive for the communication act. It is the parameters of this interrelationship between the thrust, perspective and strategy which are to be defined more precisely. In the light of our theoretical discussion up till now, it seems that the text perspective plays a decisive role in the author's creation of a text thrust and his choice of a text strategy. The analysis of 1 Peter will hopefully throw more light on the parameters of the thrust, perspective and strategy for the metatextual communication of ancient texts.

This concludes my theoretical basis for the metatextual dimension of textual communication. In the application of analytical-exegetical methods and aids one should ultimately accommodate the dialectic and pragmatic interplay between the trimodal intratextual and historical dimensions of the communication process as the basis for the metatextual communication of a text.

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3.6 CONCLUSION: THE COMMUNICATION PROCESS AS A HERMENEUTICAL-EXEGETICAL MODEL FOR THE NEW TESTAMENT AS ANCIENT CANONIZED TEXTS

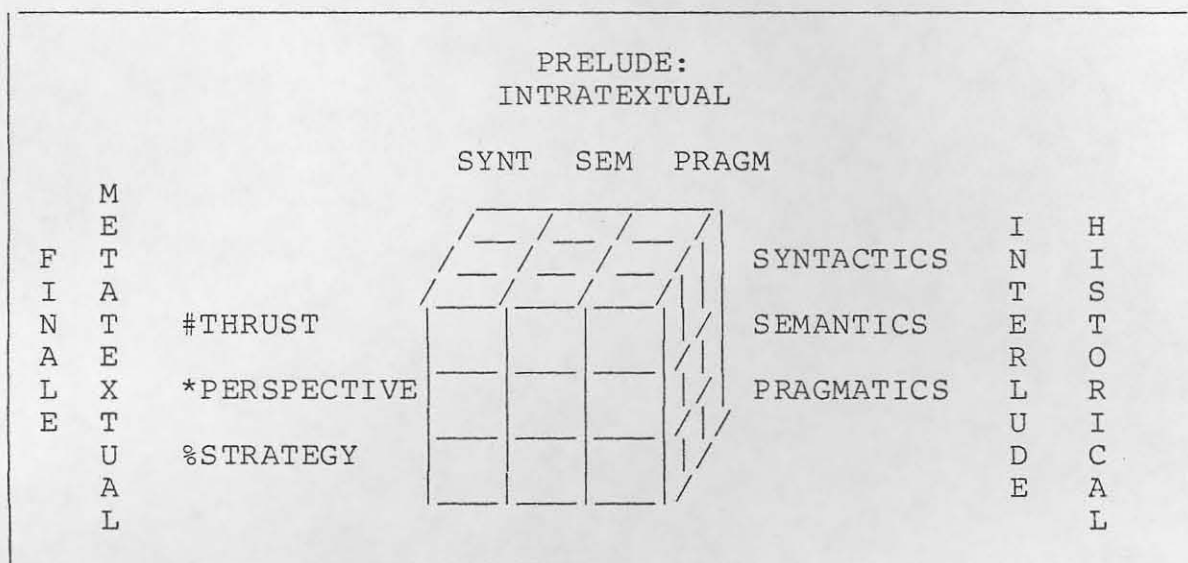
This communication model shouldn't be mistaken for a methodological potpourri. In my opinion, this multidimensional, plurimodal and chronological approach offers a viable answer to the main cause of the hermeneutical crisis, namely the overinterpretation of one dimension and / or mode which inevitably leads to either an over- or underexposure of texts. Thus the different dimensions, modes and phases have been carefully and argumentatively interrelated. In this regard the noteworthy article of P R Keifert (1981:153-168) "Mind reader and Maestro: Models for understanding biblical interpreters" is to be mentioned. His analysis confirms the multidimensionality of textual interpretation showing especially the need for the metatextual finale (i e "performance" in his terminology). His choice for an audience-orientated approach is, however, a case in point which, although he acknowledges the interrelatedness of the different dimensions and modes, neglects to outline this interrelationship. This forces him in his own words to "downplay" (Keifert 1981:167) the historical dimension which inevitably leads to the overexposure of the theological dimension opening the gap for fundamentalism and its counterpart relativism. Therefore I have argued that the communication process is constituted by the totality, chronological order and interrelatedness of the intratextual, historical and metatextual dimensions of the New Testament texts. Thus this comprehensive hermeneutical-exegetical model is clearly defined in a precise determined interrelationship based on the complexity of the dialectic nature of textual communication. Let me then conclude with a schematization of the three distinct dimensions, the three different modes of texts as well as the former established phases of textual analysis (viz prelude, interlude and finale).

3.6.1 The cube of textual communication: multidimensional, plurimodal, chronological and trinotional

I am going to use Rubic's cube to illustrate and integrate my communication model which was reconstructed with the aid of contributions from semiotics, linguistics and literary science. This cube so vividly explains the inextricable intertwinedness and interrelatedness of communication as one phenomenon of our complex reality, that it almost stunningly reveals the inadequacy of our over- and underexposure of textual communication. In this illustration the prelude represents the analysis of the intratextual dimension (which is dominated by the syntactic mode); the interlude represents the analysis of the historical dimension (which is dominated by the semantic mode); and the finale represents the analysis of the metatextual dimension (which is dominated by the pragmatic mode). The ultimate aim of



these three chronologically ordered analyses is to establish the metatextual thrust (#), perspective (*) and strategy (%) as defined above. I have argued that the introduction of these notions will enable us to integrate and simplify the complexity of textual communication into a manageable and comprehensible model which does justice to the static parameters (constituted by the syntactic mode and the intratextual dimension), dynamic parameters (constituted by the semantic mode and the historical dimension) and its dialectic parameters (constituted by the pragmatic mode and the metatextual dimension) of textual communication.



Anyone who have had some experience with Rubic's cube will know for sure that there is no way of getting the cube right without interrelating all the different squares and dimensions in chronological phases. The neglecting of the different dimensions, modes and notions is, to my mind, one of the main reasons for the impasse between the historical, theological and linguistic approaches to biblical texts. Biblical scholars were fools to believe in the illusion that one can solve the complex cube of textual communication by the futile and infantile exercise of turning only one level of squares (whether it be the historico-critical or linguistic-structuralist or theological-fundamentalistic methods) monotonously.

In the light of these distinctions we inevitably need different tools or methods to analyse the static, dynamic and resulting dialectic dimensions of the communication act. In this regard the heuristic criteria of extension, delimitation and coherence will be used to describe and define the syntactic, pragmatic and



semantic modes of texts (Plett 1975:56) and will help us to determine what methods are to be applied to reveal the text thrust, perspective and strategy. The implementation of the heuristic criteria will only be dealt with in my discussion of the exegetical methods and aids applied in my dissertation (cf sections A of chapters II, III & IV respectively). In my methodological outline I will have to treat the different dimensions and modes separately. Elizabeth S Malbon (1983:222) strikingly remarks: "... one cannot focus on everything at once./29/ In this the scholar, whether a traditional historical critic, a structuralist, or a hermeneuticist, is no better off than a child at a three-ring circus - and no worse off either". Although the modes and dimensions are inextricably intertwined (which necessitates me to make cross-references), I (as a child in a three-ring circus) will separate them in order to gain maximum methodological clarity and analytical output. In the light of the fact that the exegetical methods have traditionally been separated in terms of the intratextual and historical dimensions respectively, I shall first analyse 1 Peter intratextually and then historically. Only in my metatextual analysis will I propose a simplified alternative to establish the dialectic parameters of the thrust, perspective and strategy of textual communication.

It is evident that this model where the different constituents of the communication process are in interrelation with each other will have a circular, cross-referential and double-checking effect. It is once again to be noted that this communication paradigm complies magnificently to the hermeneutical-exegetical requirements and parameters which were formulated in order to solve the deficiencies and impasse in biblical scholarship. Obviously the ultimate problem would be for Christians to agree on this communication model - which is presumptuous to say the least. Nevertheless, since we live in a world of uncertainties we are bound to this kind of rhetorics to promote one's view and hopefully influence some (if one is a pessimist) or many (if one is an optimist). However, the proof of the pudding is in the eating thereof. It is exactly in this respect that one has the privilege of checking one's theories with colleagues and scholars over the world by means of their published writings. One such encounter with a theological clone was so rewarding and exciting that it simply could not be left unmentioned.

Therefore, before we proceed to section C where I am going to check my communication model from a philosophy-of-science perspective, I am first going to show some interesting parallels between my text theory and that of Sandra M Schneiders of the Jesuit School of Theology at Berkeley.



3.6.2 Confirmation from a theological clone: Sandra M Schneiders

I have already mentioned the uncanny similarities I discovered between our approaches when I read her two articles during the finishing off of this dissertation at the beginning of 1986. It was indeed a fascinating experience, theologically speaking, to meet my twin sister.

Schneiders shares my discontent with regard to proof-texting and historical criticism as examples of the over- and underexposure of texts (cf I A 3.1): "An exclusively historical critical approach that is one-sidedly concerned with the former [i.e. what the text meant - JaRo] is sterile. But an exclusive and uncritical concern with the latter [i.e. what the text means - JaRo] will result in fundamentalism or uninformed pietism" (Schneiders 1981:37 & 1982:68). Fascinatingly enough, Schneiders (1982:52-58) likewise evaluates these reductionist approaches to Scriptures epistemologically in terms of a "positivistic seduction". Compare in this regard my analysis of the dissonant instruments responsible for the cacophony echoing from biblical scholarship (cf I A 3.1 & 3.2). Almost predictably Schneiders (1981:27-37) acknowledges and subscribes to the current more balanced "... full scale, non-reductive hermeneutical theory which would include both the philosophical and the literary dimensions and within which historico-critical exegesis would be properly seen as an indispensable moment in the full interpretive process" (Schneiders 1982:58; cf I B 1-3).

Via Paul Ricoeur and Hans-Georg Gadamer, Schneiders (1981:32-37; 1982:58-68) outlines a multidimensional approach (contrary to the Ricoeur reception of J G Davies and his polemic against historical criticism in his 1983 article) which has mindboggling similarities with my model (cf I B 3.2.5). She argues for the precedence and autonomy of the text (cf my intratextual prelude / gateway) with reference to Ricoeur's text theory which entails amongst others that: a text is semantically independent of the intention of its author; a text is referentially independent of its originating circumstances; a text is not bound to its original audience in determining its meaning; and a text represents a literary genre which involves the reader in a determinative way (Schneiders 1981:33-34 & 1982:59-60). Ricoeur's text theory also had some important implications for Schneiders' dimension of textual interpretation, namely that interpretation is a dialectic process of interaction between the text, its literary genre and the interpreter; that metaphoric texts are susceptible of multiple interpretation; and that the validation of probable valid textual interpretations is controlled by the interpretive dialectic between text and interpreter (Schneiders 1981:34-35 & 1982:60-61; cf Michell 1984:44-45). On the issue of multiple interpretation Schneiders (1981:34) remarks: "This is one reason



why historical and literary criticism are important in establishing the text, clarifying the genre, getting to the real meaning of words themselves in their own historical context, and so on." In principle Schneiders' view on multiple interpretation and the validation of textual interpretation coincides with my dialectic metatextual finale which presupposes an interaction between the static text and its receptor-readers.

Certainly the most exciting parallel between Schneiders' theory and mine is found in the correspondence between her ontological dimension (i.e. the goal of interpretation and understanding) and my metatextual finale (cf my theory as discussed above in this section). She remarks: "Ricoeur is in substantial agreement with Gadamer that understanding finally consists in a fusion of horizons between the world of the reader and the world of the text, in the act of appropriation by which the reader openly engages the reference or truth claims of the text, risking his or her own 'world' in the confrontation with the world of the text and surrendering to the truth about the subject matter" (Schneiders 1982:62). The notion of "truth claims" / "world" and its role in persuasive communication clearly corresponds with my notion of "cosmologic perspective". I will return to Schneiders' application of Ricoeur and Gadamer's theory in terms of her "paschal imagination" which corresponds to my "Christological perspective" in chapter IV.

With this exciting confirmation of my own thoughts, I will boldly and courageously continue to outline the methodological implications of my symphony of textual communication in detail in the A sections of chapters II, III and IV respectively. But first let us do a final check on my communication model and epistemologico-paradigmatic commitments in the light of the insights from the philosophy of science.

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